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The Go-Giver

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Thoughts and Analysis of The Go-Giver

This book was quite the read. After reading what felt like endless non-fiction-based books, it was refreshing to read a book based in non-fiction principles, translated through a fictional story. The fictional story aspect of the book made me want to turn the pages. Instead of being filled with dense, fact-based, information (nothing wrong with this), the light-hearted and fictional sequence of events made the story so much more enjoyable.

Another aspect I loved about the book was the way it addressed “othering”. Traditionally, the word othering is used in a negative sense, portraying people or groups for which are not “normal” and are considered “others”. However, this also applies to extremely successful, wealthy, or influential people. Take many professional athletes for example, many people simply consider professional athletes to be inherently different from themselves—as what these athletes have accomplished is simply beyond the realm of possibility for a “normal” person. The Go-Giver deals with this phenomenon concerning business and even just interactions. The book does an excellent job in explaining how to treat these feelings and eventually let them go. (Side note - my personal beliefs on this are inherently paradoxical as I am a hard determinist (free will doesn't exist), however, I still believe one will be better off if they act like free will exists. Which inherently makes no sense and is something I have been grappling with for some time now). In

relation to the book, it does a wonderful job both acknowledging that feelings of incompetence exist and how to handle these feelings. I feel it is especially effective because it is portrayed through the lens of a fictional story. The author was able to craft and mold the story however they saw fit, allowing for a precise and oriented view on this exact subject.

I loved how the book was not naive when speaking about the utility and methods of giving. Although the book is primarily centered around the art of giving, the authors do a brilliant job of making the lessons applicable outside of fantasy. When reading the first couple of chapters, I was initially worried about this it seemed like this book was just written by a pacifist who was writing about the world he wished existed, not reality. However as the book progressed, the utility and functionality of these teachings in the real world presented themselves with clarity.

The book is structured around the “5 principles of stratospheric success”. The story is centered around the main character, Joe. A hardworking young man and go-getter, Joe still lacks something in his life to feel complete and he gets desperate to acquire a sale at the end of the quarter to meet his quota. He eventually gets in contact with a mentor-like figure, Pindar, who guides him through the 5 laws. The five laws are outlined as such:

1. **The Law of Value** - *Your true worth is determined by how much more you give in value than what you receive in payment.*
 - a. This law was interesting and I actually did not understand it at all, until coming to the end of the second law. This law is essentially the law of potential, the worth that one assigns you will never be exactly what you are truly worth. This is seen best in the fluctuations of stock price, buyers' willingness to buy, and sellers'

willingness to sell. Regardless of how much you are getting paid, the true value of what you are worth is decided by how much you can give.

2. The Law of Compensation - *Your income is determined by how many people you serve and how well you serve them*

- a. This was easily my favorite law and helped me to connect the dots on so many real-life phenomena about compensation. This law would be more aptly named, the law of impact. This is why sports players with the biggest fan bases and sports leagues with the most watchers make the most money. This is why although the job of grade school teachers is of extreme importance, compensation remains low. This is why the higher-up one is at any firm, the more they get paid, and explains why the structure of responsibility is related to compensation in the way it is. In the book, this was explained by a school teacher who transitioned into creating a SaaS company for education. Although she was doing the same thing in both jobs, the scale of impact she operated on was completely different, leading to different compensation.

3. The Law of Influence - *Your influence is determined by how abundantly you place other's interests before your own*

- a. This law was very interesting and I found it to be the most ambiguous out of the 5. In this section, the author spoke about “enlightened self-interest”, genuinely helping other people and knowing in the future you will also receive help one day. This view was initially (and still is) difficult for me to fully accept because of the seemingly binary nature of selfishness and selflessness. I feel that the world we

live in propagates the idea that either an action is selfless or selfish, with little room in between and seldom both. However, the concept of enlightened self-interest is a mesh of these concepts, and very interesting to contemplate whether or not you think it is a righteous trait, or simply a cop-out to make yourself feel better about wanting something in return for generosity.

4. The Law of Authenticity - *The most valuable gift you have to offer is yourself*

- a. I love this law. As I have developed my interpersonal communication skills, frequently speaking or networking with individuals whom I have never had prior contact with, I have found that authenticity is the only sustainable way to build relationships. It's interesting, although I believe that authenticity is an integral part of relationship sustainability, I think it would be easier to develop more relationships being disingenuous. However, these relationships would soon falter and crumble, and the most crucial part of a relationship is the foundation. This is a law that transcends business and money completely, simply understanding that authenticity is the best means of foundational relationship-building can be applied to all realms of life.

5. The Law of Receptivity - *The key to effective giving is to stay open to receiving*

- a. I take it back, this is easily the most ambiguous law. I think the beauty of this law is in interpretation, as the laws progressed in the book, it seemed the author was leaving more room for reader interpretation. Personally, I interpreted this law as “opposites attract”. In my experience, to be a good chef, you should also be a good eater, to be a good mentor you should also be a good mentee, etc.

Developing acumen on “both” sides of any given scale will give additional increases to both sides. Being a good receiver makes you a better giver, referencing the section above, this seems more difficult to conceptualize because of the seemingly binary nature of giving and receiving. It seems easy to imagine a chef who’s good at eating and cooking, however, when the concepts get more abstract, centering around ideas such as ethics, the lines seem to be blurred and more defined at the same time, making a distinction, but also integration difficult.

If you got this far, I really appreciate you reading through my review! Please reach out to discuss aspects of my thoughts you found intriguing or things you disagree with—always open to conversation!