

New You! Who Knew? Surprising Foundations to Get More Done, Feel More Connected, and Stay Balanced in a Rapidly Changing World

David R. Edwards

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Comprehensive yet succinct, New You! Who Knew? is a self-help book about taking control of one's life based on personalized core values.

David R. Edwards's logical self-help text *New You! Who Knew?* empowers people to improve at work and in their personal lives.

Asserting that certain skills are essential for working toward one's personal vision, the book introduces the helpful concept of three pillars of self-improvement: adhering to one's core values, maintaining self-efficacy, and growing in self-esteem. Within each of these categories, it says, exist certain life skills (including mindful awareness, goal-setting, empathy, and positive self-talk). Such skills are defined alongside activities for developing them.

Each chapter builds on the last, expanding on ideas and increasing specificity in a logical order. The first chapter is devoted to one's core values and delves into the importance of living in alignment with principles like integrity, humor, faith, and loyalty—principles articulated in ways that differ from person to person based on their own experiences, ideologies, and intended self-identity. Building on such an understanding of core values, the next two sections concern self-efficacy (the ability to control one's own life) and self-compassion (which acts as the foundation of self-esteem). These sections make up the bulk of the book, growing out of a developed sense of self-awareness.

The book's rational organizational structure, paired with its candid and didactic prose, helps when it comes to breaking the book's vast self-improvement program into manageable, adaptable pieces. Each concept (including flexibility, or "adapting to match the circumstances," and "doing," or "pursuing your intent") is defined in succinct terms that connect back to its purpose. Though this work is sometimes dry, its tone is authoritative and empathetic. There are examples of the values and skills in practice; these are generic, though, as with the instance of someone coming home after a hard day and taking it out on their spouse but then using self-awareness skills to dissect and readjust their actions.

Concept-aligning affirmations begin each chapter; they use optimistic language to boost self-esteem. Takeaway summaries conclude each chapter in concise form. A worksheet that promotes self-reflection follows the text; it is identical for each chapter, though. The appendices contain thorough explanations for each of the book's components, adding to a sense of the book's purposeful construction.

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AIMÉE JODOIN (October 29, 2022)

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