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Self-Help

The Good Among the Great: 19 Traits of the Most Admirable, Creative, and Joyous People
Donald Van de Mark
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For some people success may be measured in the fatness of a bank account or the amount of press garnered; but for truly admirable individuals, success includes intangible but vital properties like exuberance, appreciation, and autonomy, believes first-time author Donald Van de Mark.

While working for two decades as a broadcast journalist, Van de Mark interviewed scores of high-achieving individuals, from holistic medicine pioneer Andrew Weil to renowned CEO Jack Welch. After talking to a range of Silicon Valley entrepreneurs, he noticed patterns of behavior and began to see common themes in past interviews. Those who seemed the most happy and successful tended to be people who approach work with a sense of creativity, joy, and service. By being ethical and kind, they exhibit a deep goodness that sets them apart from those considered "great" thanks to their financial acumen.

In this uplifting guidebook to work and life, Van de Mark provides a road map for emulating these successful people, and recognizing their impact. He writes, "There is a list of traits that we can identify in the good among the great and most of us can develop these traits within ourselves." He encourages readers to surround themselves with these types of people, and notes, "The first step in bringing these good souls into your orbit is knowing whom and what to look for, and that's where this book comes in."

Van de Mark makes good on that promise, clearly articulating nineteen specific traits that elevate certain people to higher levels of accomplishment and satisfaction. Grouped into four major sections, the traits lead to a life in which one may develop a true, whole self, assess the world clearly, interact with others effectively, and earn a personal payoff. Throughout each chapter, Van de Mark includes insights from "the good among the great," emphasizing his theories with in-the-trenches experience. His list of subjects ranges from those he interviewed personally, like Warren Buffett, to historical figures like Benjamin Franklin, and these glimpses

into the minds of truly successful people proves invaluable for giving power to Van de Mark's advice.

"Takeaways" at the end of each chapter provide a handy summation and to-do list, encouraging readers to achieve goals through actions like: "Be honest with yourself about your evolving needs, wants, likes, and dreams." For those who want to achieve a higher level of success in work, relationships, and inner growth, Van de Mark's well-written, straightforward guide will be valued as a strong catalyst for personal evolution.

Elizabeth Millard