

The Success Genome Unravelled: Turning men from rot to rock

Agona Apell

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Apell offers logical and compelling methods for harnessing our innate ability to succeed.

Ugandan writer Agona Apell turns his analytical mind to discovering the qualities that lead to success—qualities that he says lie rooted in the very nature of human sexuality and that, once understood, can be acquired, displayed, and used to one's advantage. In prose both precise and conversational, Apell reveals the foundation upon which all success rests: self-improvement sufficient to meet the challenges of today's world, yet based upon eternal truths.

Apell was spurred to study success by the realization, made when he was in his thirties, that in spite of having been at the top of his class, he had been outpaced in worldly success by his classmates. Unable to find a scientific method for achieving success in books, despite his eleven years of higher education, Apell undertook to develop his own. The result is a clearly written, thoughtful, and enjoyable study of the topic that will be helpful to anyone who wishes to develop his or her own "Success Genome."

From basic survival to the full flowering of human potential, Apell relates what it takes to become, from God's perspective, "a successful human being"—one who "possesses that which he needs to meet the life-preservation demands that are his natural responsibility." Apell's perspective owes much to biblical teachings on the man/woman power differential and corresponding role expectations, and he ties these to leadership and subordination in all areas of professional and social interaction.

The things that turn a man "from rot to rock," as his subtitle suggests, are the very characteristics that would make that man appealing to a woman as a potential mate: the characteristics of the Success Genome, including beauty of person and personality, boldness and courage, conversational and oratorical prowess, problem-solving capabilities, zeal, a history and record of past successes ("Midas Touch"), and sensitivity to the unstated needs of another.

Apell bases much of his discussion on well-known success strategies and puts them together in a logical and compelling manner. The book, however, would do well with source references, especially when propounding "the child likeness principle" and the "child sex principle," through which Apell says he is able to describe the conjugal compatibility and characteristics of a couple. Also questionable, though certainly widely practiced, are the author's suggestions that success seekers master techniques like deception, and the advice to "make our ethical baggage as lean as possible," which Apell claims may serve to obtain one's goals when all else has failed.

Apell's well-written and carefully thought-out book is practically error free. The cover design is attractive, but additional information about the author's background would lend further credibility.

In a day in which get-rich-quick schemes abound, Apell has provided a challenging, refreshing, and hopeful book that reveals how success is available to all and can be obtained, in most cases, by a systematic remedying of one's defects.

KRISTINE MORRIS (September 11, 2013)

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