

Personal Success Through Appreciative Intelligence

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Have you wondered why some people seem to accomplish great deeds, while others flail away at life as if every event is a troublesome insect?

I've read quite a bit on this subject in the past few years, and I've come to a number of conclusions. When I look at my own success, I see that there is a certain persistence. I just keep at it no matter what else may be happening.

A new book by Tojo Thatchenkery and Carol Metzker (from Berrett-Koehler) provides a few answers, although some of the "how" is still missing.

The story goes something like this:

Back when the Hubble Space Telescope was sent into space, everyone was thrilled that we'd have all these crisp and clear images of the solar system and beyond. We'd suddenly know how we got here and whether or not Martians were green.

NASA looked like a bunch of fools when they discovered that a minor flaw in a mirror made everything look like it London through a thick fog. Nobody could see how to fix the problem, which caused much gnashing of teeth and helped a few therapists build their practices.

However, one man - Charles Pellerin - didn't give up. He figured out how to fund the repair project, got everything together, and brought us to the point where the Hubble is indeed providing many profound glimpses into our past.

What happened? After all, all of these folks were rocket scientists.

The difference is what Thatchenkery and Metzker have coined "Appreciative Intelligence." It's a catchy way of saying that some people can see the oak within the acorn. They can see the inherent potential in things, and can see possibility where others see failure.

It's that "never give up" attitude with an eye toward potential and possibility. So, how does this apply to writers, publishers, agents, and others in the writing/book business?

Simple. Every one of us faces times when we hear "no" more often than "yes." Someone has tampered with our little mirrors and the whole world suddenly looks fuzzy. We call it writer's block or producing a dud. What it comes down to is focus of INTENTION and perspective.

The more clear your intention, and the more emotionally attached to that intention you are, the easier it will be for you to stick through the tough times. Your perspective then determines how you SEE the problems and obstacles you face.

The authors say that you can improve your appreciative intelligence by:

- Rewrite your experiences from a different perspective. Change the ending of negative experiences so that you can see them as positive experiences.
- Seek out stories of successful people you admire.
- Imagine yourself in the role of a successful character in a book.
- Envision yourself in the role of a successful leader, able to see possibilities and overcome obstacles.
- Find positive and long-term benefit from the best, worst or seemingly ordinary experiences.
- Write down all you accomplish in a success journal.
- Instead of asking yourself why you're not successful, ask yourself HOW you CAN be successful.

You may not be a rocket scientist, but you're certainly capable of building your appreciative intelligence.

May you wish upon a star and have that wish come true.