

SHIV KHERA'S *YOU CAN WIN*: A BOOK FOR ALL AGES

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Abstract:

You Can Win by Shiv Khera is a book that boosts up a person's will power even during his hardest times of life. It gives extra meaning to life. There are instances in the book that seem to be directly referring to our problems and there itself we get immediate solutions. For many people, life is a big hard nut which cannot be broken at times and this is how people start losing interest in life. This book is filled with examples that explain in a very simple language, that hurdles cannot be avoided; instead every hurdle has a remedy right at its roots. The Chapters are all very interesting as they are stuffed with meaningful short instances, stories or anecdotes. Khera takes us to the problem without our knowledge and then slowly releases us from the fears that surround the problem and we happen to feel that we had no problem at all. Every person has a dream of victory, and through this book we realize that everybody is born to win, and that winning must be made a practice by continual and wise efforts.

Key Words: *Hurdle, boost, solution, remedy, interest, problem, effort.*

Shiv Khera says that the first step to alter our lives is to adopt a positive attitude in life. We must take everything in a positive way whatever we do or wherever we live. If the path is right, then the destination will also be rewarding. Without getting into any self-help jargon, Khera concentrates on developing the 'self' or one's personality. He goes on to illustrate every bit with an interesting and engrossing story, followed by a moral. These morals make the reader believe that nothing is impossible. So, it's all about getting together the right recipe for success through the web of life.

In the very first Chapter, he writes, "it's what inside that counts". He is talking about the attitude that one develops towards oneself. It is similar to what Bacon speaks of temperament in his essay, *Of Nature in Men*. We always think that what we think is right and what people speak is not apt. This is a kind of one-sided thinking. We should have a broader outlook of things before we conclude with our opinions. The inside of us must be very strong and bright. Being strong doesn't mean being honest to our beliefs alone, instead we should have a deeper sense of understanding of life. And we have to brighten ourselves with the light of tolerance. In the third Chapter, Khera talks of success. He writes, "Success leaves clues. If we identify and adopt the qualities of successful people, we too shall be successful....Success is no mystery. It is simply the result of consistently applying some principles." This is again very interesting. Success is not limited to a specific few. It is rather present in every person's life, but the problem is that he or she fails to realize its presence. Nobody gifts us success or that nobody takes us towards it. If we choose the road that interests us and trains us to overcome its hurdles, then we are eligible to success on our own. No doubt, people help us in our journey, but they are mere lighthouses and that's all. It's only we who have to traverse and not our guides.

In the sixth Chapter, Khera says, "Our character is revealed by our choices of books, music and movies." It means that, some essential reading is very important in life, whatever our age is. And there are heaps of books around us. Some books are for mere reading and supply no real wisdom or joy to us. Spending time on such books is not a path finder's job. Books must build our personality and allow us to

cope with all kinds of situations in life. Similarly music is a great healer of souls. Symphony must also be one of our passions. And movies instruct us along with entertainment. In all, we need to be wise choosers and not losers. In the seventh Chapter, he writes, "to an egocentric person, the world begins ends and revolves around him. An egotist can be funny by default. A boss asked one of his employees how badly he wanted a raise. The employee said, "real badly. I have been praying for one." The boss replied, "you are not going to get it because you went over my head." An egotist talks down to and looks down on others." Ego has ruined many great personalities in the world. Shelley refers to ego and its emptiness in his poem, 'Ozymandias'. We do not know when and how this ego starts ruling us. It imprisons us in its venomous web and brings us great pain and harm. That is why we need to keep an open mind where we consider the feelings of other people and put ourselves into the shoes of others, and thus develop a free thinking and a sense of tolerance. We can build trust only when we shun our ego. We can look at the merits of others only when we stop praising ourselves in all situations. Consistency in relations is possible when we develop a free will. Openness is necessary because we must be bold enough to accept our faults and at the same time strive for improvement.

In the eighth Chapter, the author comments that societies are not destroyed so much by the activities of rascals but by the inactivity of the good people. If good people can tolerate destruction by being inactive, how can they be good? The question is, are they discharging their social responsibility? Nations don't develop because its citizens are not willing to work hard and work diligently. The inherent knowledge dies away because of inactivity. People are sometimes so lazy that they don't even rise to give their opinions during times of urgent needs. The question is, what makes people idle and ignorant? One of the answers could be, stillness of mind or sterility of mind. This seems to be one of the greatest curses of modern life style. This is very ironically examined by T. S. Eliot in his poems.

In the ninth Chapter, there is a very nice instance that tells us how to be conditioned in life. Khera gives an example of an elephant: "think of the mighty elephant that can lift in excess of a ton of weight with just its trunk. How does an elephant get conditioned to stay in one place, tied with a weak rope and a stake, when it could easily uproot the stake and move wherever it wants? The answer is that when the elephant was a baby, it had been tied by a strong chain to a strong tree. The baby is not to being tied, so it keeps tugging and pulling the chain, all in vain. A day comes when it realizes that tugging and pulling will not help. It stops and stands still. Now it is conditioned." This is a good example to illustrate the saying, "Practice makes man perfect." In order to inculcate certain good habits, we need to condition ourselves very strictly and also wisely. Sometimes we have to put lots of restraints on our daily routine activities, thoughts and performances. Trimming oneself is an art. But we must also be careful that no external force should unnecessarily condition our best sides. And in the last Chapter, there is a beautiful paragraph on success. "Winners live and work every day as if it were their last day because one of these days it is going to be and nobody knows which one. But when they leave, they leave as winners." We must see to it that, success must become our mantra. We must have a passion for success. This is how the entire book gives us a step by step approach to success.

You Can Win is a must in everybody's bag for all age groups. The very first reading of it will encourage the readers to the second and further readings. This is how we become great friends of this most inspiring book. Bacon has truly said, "Some books should be tasted, some devoured, but only a few should be chewed and digested thoroughly."

References:

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2. Khera, Shiva. *You Can Win*. New Delhi: Macmillan, 2012