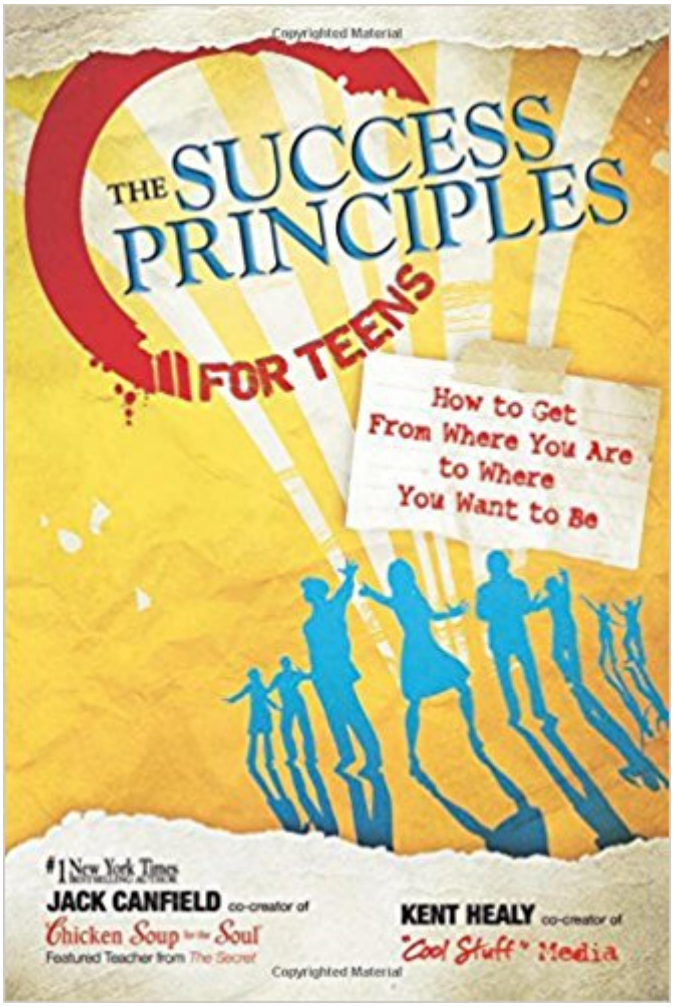
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The Success Principles For Teens: How To Get From Where You Are To Where You Want To Be



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Synopsis

WITH COURAGE AND HEART, YOU CAN BE SUCCESSFUL! Ã Â Everyone wants to be successfulÃ¢â ¬â ¢and surely you are no exception. After the massive success of Jack Canfield's The Success Principles, thousands of requests came rushing in to develop the most important success strategies for today's teenagers. Your calls have been answered. Ã Â Jack Canfield, cocreator of the famed Chicken Soup for the Soul series, has teamed up with successful author and young entrepreneur Kent Healy to design a fun and engaging book that offers the timeless information and inspiration to help you get to where you want to be. Ã Â The Success Principles for Teens is your road map whether your goal is to become a better student or athlete, start a business, make millions of dollars, or simply find guidance and direction. The principles in this book always work, if you work the principles. Ã Â This is not merely a collection of 'good ideas.' This book includes 23 of the most important success strategies used by thousands of exceptional young people throughout history. With the right tools, anyone can be successful. This book will give you the courage and the heart to get started and get ahead. Ã Â

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Customer Reviews

Jack Canfield began as a passionate teacher dedicated to helping young people succeed by building self-esteem and confidence. Today, he is the cocreator of the Chicken Soup for the Soul series, developing forty New York Times bestsellers. He is America's leading expert in creating

peak performances for entrepreneurs, corporate leaders, educators, and students. Canfield is a popular radio and television talk-show guest. He is also a syndicated columnist through King Features and has a nationally syndicated radio show. Visit Jack Canfield at www.chickensoupforthesoul.com and www.jackcanfield.com.Kent Healy started his first business at age fifteen and by seventeen began writing his first book, 'Cool Stuff' They Should Teach In School. The success of this book and speaking engagements has made Healy one of the most popular and sought-after young experts on the topic of success. At age twenty-two, he taught a course called The Science of Success at a local high school. He is a syndicated columnist and a highly regarded gueston television and radio shows. Today, at age twenty-three, Healy has become a spokesperson for today's young generation. Visit him at www.coolstuffmedia.com and www.kenthealy.com

CHP 01TAKE 100%RESPONSIBILTYFOR YOURLIFE You must take personal responsibility. You cannot change the circumstances, the seasons, or the wind, but you can change yourself. Ã¢â ¬â ¢ Jim RohnSelf-made millionaire, success coach, and philosopher It's going around like a bad flu. It's infecting innocent people and restricting their potential. What is it? The shocking myth that we are simply entitled to a great life. How could this happen? Well, many of us today believe that somehow, somewhere, someone (certainly not us) is responsible for filling our lives with continual happiness, exciting career options, entertainment, money, amazing friendships, and relationÃ Â- ships because . . . well . . . we exist. Isn't that enough? We wish! If you're reading this book, we're sure you are aware that the answer is 'no.' Unfortunately, life doesn't work that way. There is one major defining factor that separates those who hope for a better life and those who have a better life. This determining factor is also the one lesson that this entire book is based on. Here it is: The only person responsible for the quality of your life is Ã¢â ¬Â¦ YOU. 1.1Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â The Straight Facts If you want to be successful, retire early, gain the respect of others, and just have more fun, then you need to take 100% responsibility for everything that you do and experience in life. This includes the level of your achievements, the quality of your relationships, your emotions, the results you produce in and out of school, and the state of your healthÃ¢â ¬â ¢yes, everything! But let's get one thing straight: This is not always easy.In fact, most of us have been conditioned to blame something outside ourselves for the parts of our life that we don't like. We blame our parents, teachers, friends, MTV, the weather, or even the star-sign forecasts! It's crazy! Most of the time we don't even know we're doing it. The truth is, the real problems or challenges we face usually have little to do with our 'outside world.' We're often scared to look at the source of it all . . . ourselves. Sure, we will all experience our own unique challenges that happen out of our control, but taking

responsibility means that we don’t dwell on the problem, ignore it, complain about it, or blame someone or something else for what we’re experiencing. Instead, it means that we take control of our thoughts and our actions, and do whatever we can to improve the situation. Sure, life’s challenges come in all shapes and sizes, but there is always something that we can do differently to change what we are currently experiencing. And we must first believe this before we will find any new solutions. Whether someone is super-successful or struggling to survive, the quality of their life depends on their thoughts, actions, and beliefs. Do you notice a trend here? These three things all have to do with the individualÃ¢â ¬â ¢not the teacher, the weather, or outside circumstances. The truth is, success starts with one person . . . That person is you. 1. 2 When I First Met Jack Nathan, 18 (Indianapolis, IN): I didn’t meet Jack Canfield under the best circumstances, but looking back, I’m glad we crossed paths.Jack was at my school working with a group of teachers when he heard me arguing with one of my teachers outside the staff room. He left his meeting, walked over to me, and asked me to explain the situation. I told him (in a loud voice) that I had just been suspended from the baseball team and that this wasn’t fair. They couldn’t do this to me. Not now!’What’s not fair? And why not now?’ asked Jack.I said, ’We’re about to go to the state championships next week, and there will be all kinds of scouts for college teams there, and if they see me pitch, I can get a scholarship to college. I can’t afford to go to college without a baseball scholarship. This is my only chance. It’s not fair!’ I expected some sympathy, but instead, Jack said, ’Let me ask you a question.’’Okay.’’When did you first learn that school was not fair? Really . . . tell me the truth.’’When I was in grade school,’ I told him.’Okay, so why are you standing there pretending to act like you don’t know that school is not fair? Every teacher has a different set of rules. Some teachers enforce some rules and not others. Sometimes good kids get bad breaks, and kids who don’t play by the rules get away with breaking them. Isn’t that true?’ asked Jack.’Yes.’’So it’s not about whether school is fair or not. The real question is ’What did you do to get yourself suspended?’ I doubt they just randomly picked your name out of a hat. So how did you create this situationÃ¢â ¬â ¢getting yourself suspended?’’I was late to school.’’Just once?’’No, several times.’’How many times?’’I’m not sure. Maybe six or seven times.’Jack then turned to my principal who was now watching our conversation and asked, ’What’s the rule here? How many times do you have to be late without a legitimate reason before you get suspended from an athletic team?’’Three times,’ my principal said. Jack turned back to me and asked, ’Were you aware of this rule?’’Yes.’ ’Then why did you break it so many times?’’Well, after the third time nothing happened, so I didn’t think they were serious.’Jack turned back to the principal and said, ’So this is where the school participated in creating this situation. By not consistently enforcing the rules, you helped him believe there were no rules. This is

why he claims it’s unfair.’ Jack turned back to me and said, ’But that doesn’t let you off the hook. You did know the rule, and you chose to ignore it. So, what did you make more important than playing baseball and getting a scholarship to college?’I looked Jack straight in the eyes and said, ’Nothing’s more important than playing baseball. It’s the most important thing in my life.’Jack responded by saying, ’Not true.’As you can imagine, this made me angry. He continued, ’You made something else more important than getting to school on time so you could play baseball. What was it?’I could feel the pressure, and there was no way to back out. I thought about his question for a moment and then said, ’You mean sleeping in?’’I don’t know. You tell me,’ Jack responded.’I guess that would be it.’’Is sleeping in really more important to you than playing baseball?’’No. No way!’’Then why didn’t you get up?’’Well, when the alarm goes off, I hit the snooze buttonÃ¢â ¬â ¢sometimes more than onceÃ¢â ¬â ¢and then I end up being late.’We talked for a little longer, and then Jack convinced my principal to give me one more shot now that I was more aware the situation and was accepting full responsibility. But, we all agreed, if I was late one more time, I would be suspended with no rights to complain or fight about it.There was one last problem to solve. I needed a new strategy to make sure I would get up on time. Hitting the snooze couldn’t be an option. We brainstormed and came up with several strategies. First, I had to put my clock on the other side of the room so I would have to get out of bed to turn it off. And, second, if I wasn’t up by a certain time, I had to pay my mom a dollar to pour ice water on me. I knew my mom would be very happy to do that!I was not late anymore. Jack helped me realize what it really meant to take 100% responsibility. The rest of my baseball season went wellÃ¢â ¬â ¢even my coach commented on my change of attitude. Now, I’m attending college on a baseball scholarship. It’s a good feeling to know that I was able to take control and make it happen. 1. 3 Inside Out Night has fallen, and the city has become dark. A man is on his hands and knees searching for something under a streetlamp when a young woman passing by asks the man what he is doing. He explains that he lost a key and is desperately looking for it. The young woman offers to help him search for the key. An hour later, the woman says in a confused tone, ’We’ve looked everywhere for it, and we haven’t found it. Are you sure you lost the key here?’ The man replies, ’No, I lost it in my house, but there is more light out here under the streetlamp.’This is a great example of how we look outside of ourselves for the solution to our problems because it’s easier than searching for the real cause, which is inside us. We are the source of our problems, and we need to face that fact because until we do, we can’t change anything. We need to look life straight in the eyes and face the factsÃ¢â ¬â ¢no matter how uncomfortable it may be. Of course, we all want things to get ’better,’ but it simply won’t happen if we refuse to see things as they are right now. Change can only begin

once we acknowÃ Â- ledge that there is something we need to change. You might be happy with the way things are in your lifeÃ¢â ¬â ¢and that's fantasticÃ¢â ¬â ¢but every successful person knows there is always room for improvement. The very first step to achieving major success and enjoying the things that are most important to you is to take 100% responsibility for your life. Anything short of that won't get you what you really want. Ã Â 1. 4 Excuses or Excellence? You Choose Ã Â Ninety-nine percent of all failures come from people who have a habit of making excuses.Ã¢â ¬â ¢George Washington CarverAmerican agricultural researcher and educator Like opposite forces of a magnet, success and excuses just refuse to work together. They simply cannot co-exist. It's either one or the other.Taking responsibility means more than just taking initiative and owning up to mistakes. It also requires that we stop making excuses. As long as there are excuses, there will be no positive results. Think about it: Every excuse is like pushing the ejection button on an airplane. The minute you push it, you've committed to exit the plane. In that instant you're heading in a completely new direction, leaving the opportunity for success behind. Excuses allow us to give up mentally and justify why something can't be done or why we're not good enoughÃ¢â ¬â ¢and once that happens . . . game over. Kent: Truly successful people know that even the best excuses don't help anything. It doesn't even matter if the excuses are truthful and accurate. A few years ago, my brother and I learned this lesson the hard way while we were writing our first book. When we started the project, we were in school, playing sports, working, and trying to write the book as well. There were many times we barely had enough energy or time to finish our homework, let alone work on our book. 'How's the book coming along?' people would ask us. We'd tell them the truth, 'Well, we just haven't had the time lately. By the time we finally get home from Ã Â- morning practice, school, and afternoon practice, we are exhausted. Then we have homework. So we haven't been able to work on the book.' It was almost as though people expected to hear this response. They listened to our explanation (which was really an excuse) and responded with a simple, 'Huh, okay.' That was it. Nothing more. The truth was, we really were tired, and we were short on time, but believing that we couldn't do anything to change the circumstances meant we weren't really taking full responsibility. Taking 100% responsibility means that we are committed to finding a solution to the challenges we face. Here's what we learned: No matter how truthful your excuses are, people don't want to hear them. All excuses do is slow us down, and nobody benefits from them. The only way my brother and I were able to finish our book was when we stopped making excuses, stopped complaining, and just got to work.So, what's step number one? Believing that we have the power to make things better and produce the results we really want. We all make excuses for different reasons, but it really doesn't matter what those reasons are. All that matters is

that from this point forward we chooseÃ¢â ¬â ¢that's right, it's a choiceÃ¢â ¬â ¢to act as if we are 100% responsible for everything that does or doesn't happen to us. In short, YOU must decide to be in control.A lot of people roll their eyes when they hear the word 'responsibility.' They say, 'Yeah, yeah, yeah . . . I've heard all of that before!' (And, yes, we were two of 'those people.') But there is a big difference between 'knowing' about something and 'acting' on something. Jack: When I wrote the original The Success Principles book, taking responsibility was also the very first principleÃ¢â ¬â ¢and that book was designed for adults! Sometimes we just need to be reminded of what we already know so we can put the ideas into practice. Ã Â 1. 5 The Blame and Complain Game All blame is a waste of time.No matter how much fault you find with another,and regardless of how much you blame him,it will not change you.Ã¢â ¬â ¢Wayne DyerBestselling author and inspirational speaker Ã Â Question: What are the two easiest things to do when we don't get the results we want? Answers: 1) Place the blame on someone or something else2) Complain about itHow do we know this? Because we've been guilty of both these things. Believe us, we know how easy this is. Anyone bold enough to admit it would also say that they, too, have fallen into this trap. But just because it's easy doesn't mean it's right. Let's take a look at the first trap: blaming. Taking responsibility means that you don't blame other people or things outside of yourself. If you think about it, blaming is really just another form of excuse-making. It's a way for us to come up with a reason why we didn't perform. And, you guessed it, all it does is slow us down.Blair, age 22 (Salt Lake City, UT): I wanted good grades; I wanted to be MVP on my volleyball team; and I wanted to be fit and healthy . . . but I guess that wasn't enough. My intentions were good, but achieving all of this was a much bigger commitment than I thought. When I didn't get the grade I hoped for or I didn't make a good serve on the volleyball court, I immediately looked for things that other people weren't doing right. I refused to admit that I was probably the cause.I blamed my teachers for not teaching well enough. I blamed my teammates for not trying hard enough. And I blamed my piles of homework for the reason I Ã Â couldn't exercise enough. This made me feel good in the moment because, after all, 'It wasn't my fault.' Nothing was my fault . . . and that's where I ran into trouble.Blaming became a habit that I wasn't even aware of. I didn't see it at the time, but my blaming made me a 'good' complainer as well. Finally, someone challenged me. He said, 'What are you going to do to change things?' I quickly responded by saying, 'I can't do anything. It's out of my control.' My friend then said, 'So, are you saying that other people control your life, your results, and your happiness?' Wow! I was taken by surprise. I never looked at the situation like that before. I noticed that the reason I never achieved my goals was because I was letting the world walk all over me. I realized that I do have the power to change things. I'm now twenty-two, and I have

accomplished more of my goals in the last year than in the previous twenty-one years of my life. For me, the power of responsibility was life-changing.TIP: Instead of pointing the finger at other people, use it to identify a new solution. Now let's look at trap number two: complaining.The man who complains about the way the ball bounces is likely the one who dropped it.Ã¢â ¬â ¢Lou HoltzFormer football coach at Notre Dame Blaming and complaining work really well together . . . too well. Sure, we can blame our problems on someone else or something else and complain all we want. We certainly aren't going to stop youÃ¢â ¬â ¢and it's likely that no one else will either. But if you do this, realize you're only hurting yourself because life will move on . . . with or without you. There's another way to look at complaining that most people don't think about. Consider this: In order to complain about something or someone, you have to believe that something better exists. Hmmm . . .In order to complain, part of you must believe that something can change for the better. You need to have a reference point of something you prefer, something that you don't yet have. Look at it this way: People usually complain about things they can actually do something about. We don't complain about the things we have no power over. Have you ever heard anyone complain about gravity? No way!Here's the raw truth: The circumstances we do complain about are, in actuality, situations that we have the power to changeÃ¢â ¬â ¢but have chosen not to. We can always study more, eat healthier, change classes, work out harder, practice longer, choose better friends, and feed our minds different information. Yes, we do have that control. Now, you might be thinking, 'Well, Kent and Jack, if it's that simple, then why don't more people have what they really want?' Good question! The answer is that these actions require change, and they also involve risk. For most people, the risk of losing friends, being alone, or being critically judged by other people is much scarier than sitting back and just 'letting life happen' to them.By taking responsibility and changing things, we run the risk of failure, confrontation, or being wrongÃ¢â ¬â ¢and these fears hold a lot of us back. So, to avoid any of those uncomfortable feelings and experiences, it's easier to stay put, blame others, and just complain about it. However, every successful person we've had the opportunity to meet believed that we all have two choices in life: 1) -Accept that you are making the choice to stay where you are and stop complaining.2) -Step up to the challenge and take the risk of creating your life exactly the way you want it.To get from where you are to where you want to be, you're going to have to take some risks. That's just part of life. 1. 6 The Power of YOU Most people dance around the truth and deny that they are the reason for the quality of their life. If you want to be a winner, you have to acknowledge the truthÃ¢â ¬â ¢it's you who took the actions, thought the thoughts, created the feelings, and made the choices that got you where you are now. But here's the good news: If it's you who got you to where you are now, it's also you who can get you to where

you want to be. You can change anything and everyÃ Â- thing simply by doing or thinking something different. Einstein once said that insanity was 'doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result.' Amen! If we continue to eat junk food, we won't become healthier. If we continue to ignore our homework, our grades won't get better. If we continue our current behaviors, our life will not get any better. It's that simple. Fill in the blank: 'In order to change my life, I must first change _____.' 1. 7 The Law of Life If you truly understand this law of life, you will have complete control of your Ã Â- destiny. E + R = O No need to worry; this isn't algebra. It's much simpler than that! It stands for: Event + Response = OutcomeThe basic idea is this: Every outcome we experience in life (whether it's success or failure, health or illness, happiness or frustration) is the result of how we have responded to an earlier event (or events) in our lives.If you don't like the outcomes you are currently getting, there are two choices you can make:1) You can blame the event (E) for your lack of results (O). In other words, you can blame your parents, your teachers, your friends, your teammates, your childhood, the weather, racism, your lack of support, and so on. But how useful is the 'blame game'? Sure, these factors do exist, but if they were the deciding factors, nobody would ever succeed. -Ã Â Ã Â Michael Jordan would have never made it to the NBA. Helen Keller wouldn't have been able to inspire millions of people. Martin Luther King Jr. would never have influenced our entire nation. Oprah Winfrey wouldn't have had the country's top daily talk show, Bill Gates would never have founded Microsoft. Need more? The list goes on . . .-Ã Â Ã Â Lots of people have overcome these so-called 'limiting factors'Ã¢â ¬â ¢so it can't be these factors that limit you. It's not the external conditions or other people that stops usÃ¢â ¬â ¢it's us! We stop ourselves. We think limiting thoughts, defend our self-destructive behavior, ignore useful feedback, waste time on gossipÃ Â- ing, eat unhealthy food, fail to exercise, spend more money than we make, don't plan for the future, avoid risk, and fail to tell the truthÃ¢â ¬â ¢and then wonder why our lives don't work. As you know, this option is not beneficial. 2) You can instead simply change your responses (R) to the events (E)Ã¢â ¬â ¢the way things areÃ¢â ¬â ¢until you get the outcomes (O) you want. This is the option that creates wealth, opportunity, freedom, and so much more. At any given moment, we can change our thoughts, change the way we look at ourselves, and change our behaviorÃ¢â ¬â ¢that's the power of YOU. And that's all we need to control anyway. If you don't like your outcomes, change your responses. Ã Â Ã Â Unfortunately, for many people these factors are controlled by old habits. We tend to react without thinking things through. HowÃ Â- ever, the moment we take reÃ Â- sponsibility and commit to making a change, we can take back that control. It's not someÃ Â- thing that happens overÃ Â- night, but catching ourselves in the middle of a negative thought and changing our behavior just a couple of times each

day can make all the difference. In the end, it’s not what happens to us; it’s how we respond that matters. And how we respond is completely up to us. It’s like poker; you can’t determine the cards you’re dealt.But you can determine how you play them. 1.8 Response in Action Kent: It was Tuesday, and the school day had just started. The principal announced over the intercom, ’Today, during first period, the junior class will be taking a surprise examination. Please meet in front of the gym.’ Immediately following the announcement, I heard an uproar from the studentsÃ¢â ¬â ¢moaning, groaning, and complaining. I’ll admit it . . . I wasn’t very happy to hear about an exam either. As I made my way to the gym and waited in line, I could hear students complaining and see them bickering with each other. ’I can’t believe we have do this!’ ’What a waste of time!’ ’I’m probably going to fail it.’ ’Me, too.’Then I noticed a different group of three or four people who appeared to be unaffected by this surprise exam. They were smiling at each other and laughing, and I wondered why. I walked over to them and listened to what they were saying. ’What do you think is going to be on the test?’ one girl asked. Her friend replied, ’If it’s multiple choice, I can do it with no sweat.’ ’Yeah, I’m not worried about it either. I’ve been doing all my classwork. Besides, since I don’t know what the test is on, there is nothing I can do right now to prepare for it, so there is no point in stressing about it. Right?’ She laughed.Then I saw someone else who was listening to his iPod as he read a book. I remember thinking to myself, ’Hmmm, if the test was really the determining factor to the way people felt, then everyone should be upset.’ But not everyone was. It depended on one thing: their response.It was each individual’s response (R) to the exam that gave each person his or her own unique outcome (O). It was a combination of attitude and behavior that created their completely different experiences. Ã Â Ã Â©2008. Jack Canfield and Kent Healy. All rights reserved. Reprinted from The Success Principles for Teens. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, without the written permission of the publisher. Publisher: Health Communications, Inc., 3201 SW 15th Street, Deerfield Beach, FL 33442

I haven’t read this story since middle school. Seeing the movie, helped me form a better foundation for the story. One of the things i couldn’t understand was why i hated Daisy and desperately wished Jordan would pair up with Gatsby instead. Having this idea i thought it was due to me not understanding the plot fully. There is no comparrision to my comprehension of when i was in middle school to now. The way i would describe Gatsby, "self-adbsorbed, obsessive borderline almost paranoid" a very complex individual whose only reason to continue his pursuit is for a love that he holds on a pedestal with no regards to time, and changes. In his mind, Daisy is the same which is

quite the opposite. Daisy as i would describe her "coward, self-centered, paternally absent." It was made clear throughout the story that very little interest was shown to her daughter much less anything or anyone that would not fit in her perfect world. Having no problems, leaving Gatsby to his fate, and scared at the time of what her fate would be if she decided to leave with him she stayed with Tom. Jordan was nothing more if not spectacular in this triangle. Nick, was a friend that many wish to have. Tom, in short was Tom. He is who is, not much disappointment. Unlike Gatsby who at one point i got desperate enough, that i wanted to tell him to move on from this air-headed bimbo. Seeing his child-like expressions whenever she would come near almost like candy made me disturbed. I feel sorry for Gatsby, if i pity him yes. I feel sorry for Daisy forever being told and reigned of his path and future by an alpha male too scared to independent and brave.

F.Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby is a story about self-made millionaire Jay Gatsby, who uses his vast wealth to buy his way into Long Island society.He provides parties Most of all, Gatsby wants to win back the love of socialite Daisy Buchanan,now married to Tom Buchanan,who comes from a rich family. Calmly observing the passing parade is Nick Carraway, Gatsby's best friend,who acts as the narrator of the story.Fitzgerald's novel provides the reader a view about the decadence of a person brought about by materialism and the so-called American Dream.It obviously provides us a great view of the Roaring Twenties when this novel was written.Added to that,it also examines themes about love,betrayal,starting all over again and the recklessness of youth.No wonder it is a great read that many would surely enjoy and many Americans could relate to.If Jay Gatsby were alive today,he would have probably said "This is a classic novel,Old Sport!!!" when asked about it after reading the novel.

Prior to starting this novel, I was convinced I had read it some time in school while I was growing up. Throughout my public school education, we had read a variety of classics from Steinbeck, Dickens, Hemingway, Miller, etc. So I really thought I had read this one along the way. After a couple of paragraphs, I realized that I hadn't, because I think I would have remembered the different feel this one seems to have from most classic American literature.The length of the novel alone is enough to show you that it's not quite the same as some of those other novels. Fitzgerald seemed to have more of a sense of what to cut out and what to include than some of his contemporaries, because at no point during this reading did I sit and think "Will you just get ON with it?!?" I'm sad to say that I have done that with plenty of other authors, so I was a bit worried I'd have that reaction when going through The Great Gatsby. I very happily enjoyed this novel and hope to read more of Fitzgerald's

work in the future.The book itself is the tragic tale of our title character, Jay Gatsby. Having never been satisfied with the life he came from, Gatsby invents a new self and goes about trying to find the person he wants to be. Along the way, he meets Daisy, who becomes the big driving force in his life. I think in today's day and age, we might call Gatsby a stalker - he's obsessive and goes so far as to buy his house in Long Island because of his ability to see Daisy's across the way. While this would seem creepy if we were telling it from a modern perspective, it strikes me as being rather sad. Gatsby goes from only knowing he wants to make money, to knowing he wants to make money for Daisy. At one point during the story, he even says that he decided doing things was less important than telling Daisy about all the things he wanted to do. It's really a sad case of lost boy syndrome, in my book.Something that really stuck out to me throughout the book was that people seemed to want to be around Gatsby, but no one necessarily seems to like him, going so far as to spread random rumors about how he acquired his fortune and what his past was like. This theme carries through to the end when we learn that our narrator, Nick Carraway, is the only one who is truly there for Gatsby in his time of need. While Gatsby isn't a model citizen, he doesn't seem all that scandalous to me, and certainly doesn't deserve the rumor mongering that follows him throughout the course of the novel. Maybe it's just the fact that I'm looking at it from a modern perspective, so his actions don't seem any worse than things we see on TV on a daily basis.I picked this book up for Banned Books Week, and found it rather amusing when I was investigating the reasoning behind the banning of this book. It was basically for language and some mild sexual content, which is just ridiculous. I certainly didn't see any bad language when reading it, and the only references to sex were along the lines of "so and so left the room for awhile". Again, maybe it's a more modern perspective, but those things are just silly. I'm totally against the banning of books anyway, so I guess I've got a skewed perspective twice over.The only questionable thing for me is really the behavior of Daisy's husband, Tom Buchanan. I found Tom to be annoying, as arrogant as he is described, and a bigot to top it off. It's made worse by the knowledge that men like Tom did exist, and to an extent they still do. Still, that's no reason to ban a book, it's just a reason to dislike Tom and root for Gatsby.I really would be curious to see what kind of things Fitzgerald would have come up with if he lived in our time. It's a shame we lost him all too soon, because I think he has a unique voice and I would have liked to see more from him.

I just turned 60 and FINALLY got around to reading this great American novel, and honestly, I don't know what all the fuss was about. I've read so many books that had better character development, plot, and storyline than this one. I'm clearly not an expert on literature, but I know what I like, and

this wasn’t it. To me, it came across as shallow rather than compelling, and there wasn’t one character that I felt--positively or negatively--enough about to care what happened to them. I’d love to find a Great Gatsby discussion group and find out what I’m missing.

This is the version of the American classic that i recommend, either in hardcover or paperback. Reportedly, the artwork was commissioned before the novel was published, and Fitzgerald was so impressed that he wrote the cover into the story. This classic tale of rags to riches still entertains and informs, although it was written 90 years ago, in 1925. Fitzgerald is not only a great storyteller, but he has a beautiful command of the English language. The final words of the novel adorn his tombstone:And so we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past.If you have never read this classic or you just want to read it again, this edition is trustworthy and easy to read.

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