

FOREWORD BY JOHN C. MAXWELL

THE HEART OF LEADERSHIP THE ART OF ENCOURAGEMENT AND SERVING

HOW TO LEAD TEAMS,
SPREAD LOVE, AND
SERVE FROM THE HEART

JORDAN MONTGOMERY

Additional praise for *The Art of Encouragement*

“If you want to become a better spouse, parent, friend, or colleague, *The Art of Encouragement* is a must read. This book includes timeless principles and practical tips for leading in all areas of life.”

— **Brandon Scherff,**

5x All-Pro Offensive Lineman with Jacksonville Jaguars

“Jordan’s vulnerability in sharing personal stories from some of the hardest times in his life lends this book an undeniable authenticity. He beautifully illustrates the transformative power of genuine encouragement and selfless service to others, guiding readers toward fostering meaningful connections with those around them.”

— **Tyler Shatley,**

Offensive Lineman, Jacksonville Jaguars,
franchise record holder for games played

“Jordan has an unparalleled ability to lead and communicate. He brings infectious energy to every interaction and environment. *The Art of Encouragement* allows readers to learn from one of the top encouragers on the planet and put Jordan’s unique principles into action.”

— **Fran McCaffery,**

Head Coach, Iowa Men’s Basketball

“At a time when so many are looking to tear others down, I have never met anyone so anxious TO LIFT PEOPLE UP! Jordan is the very definition of someone who leads from the front and does so enthusiastically, authentically, and every single day. *The Art of Encouragement* is the right book at the right time and an absolute must-read!”

— **Jim Rome,**

Top American radio personality and
host of the award-winning *Jim Rome Show*

“Jordan has been extremely impactful in my development not only as an athlete, but a man as well. I’m thankful for his friendship and mentorship!”

— **Trey Smith,**

Offensive Lineman and 2x Super Bowl Champion,
Kansas City Chiefs

“*The Art of Encouragement* was written by a first-class encourager of others! Jordan Montgomery models what it means to encourage the heart of others and he’s written this book to help you do the same! This is a powerful read for anyone who wants to win more with people and grow deeper relationships!”

— **Heather Monahan**,
top podcaster, acclaimed keynote speaker,
best-selling author of *Overcome Your Villains*

“Jordan’s ability to express the true, real-time definition of ‘encouragement’ is unrivaled! *The Art of Encouragement* is a book EVERYONE needs – literally one spark of true encouragement can change the entire trajectory of someone’s life. Jordan lives and breathes what he preaches. This will be the best book you read all year!”

— **David Nurse**,
NBA Optimization Coach and best-selling author of *Do It*

“Jordan Montgomery has become well known for his ability to encourage, but perhaps his greatest gift is the ability to teach the art of encouragement to others! I’ve known him personally for years and every time we connect, I feel like I can conquer the world. So will you, once you read this book!”

— **Jon Acuff**,
New York Times best-selling author of
Soundtracks: Give Yourself the Gift of Done

“‘Encourager’ is one of the most overlooked qualities of a leader but it is the quality that employees feel the deepest. Jordan Montgomery is to encouragement what Picasso is to painting. *The Art of Encouragement* is the road map that every leader needs in order to elevate their leadership and organization to even higher heights.”

— **Carlos Whittaker**,
best-selling author of *Moment Maker*

THE ART OF ENCOUR AGEMENT

HOW TO **LEAD TEAMS,**
SPREAD LOVE, AND
SERVE FROM THE HEART

JORDAN MONTGOMERY

WILEY

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*To my wife Ashley and my children, Audrey, Claire,
Olivia, and Mackoy. Your love and encouragement
mean everything to me.*

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Foreword

There have been many books written on leadership and personal growth, but there are few written by authors who genuinely live out the subject they teach. At this stage in my life, I'm looking to learn from leaders whose lives match the lessons they share with others. That's why I couldn't wait to read this book. Jordan Montgomery is one of the greatest encouragers I've ever known.

You've heard it said, encouragement is oxygen for the soul. I'll never forget my father asking me, "John, do you know how I know if someone needs to be encouraged?" After a brief pause, he answered his own question, "If they're breathing!" In other words, everyone needs to be encouraged. That's why every leader needs to read *The Art of Encouragement*.

As a mentor and friend of Jordan, I've had the privilege of observing his leadership journey and witnessing his commitment to personal growth. Jordan is not content with merely navigating life. He is constantly seeking wisdom by asking profound and thoughtful questions to better himself and those around him. His curious spirit propels him forward, and he embraces every opportunity to expand his impact on the world.

The Art of Encouragement is a timely message for any leader. We are living in a world where negativity gets the headlines,

and division has become the norm. I see too many leaders doing whatever it takes to win, even if it's at the expense of others. This type of leadership is self-centered and destined to fail. The truth is self-centeredness and leadership are incompatible. You cannot be all about yourself and lead well at the same time. Because leadership is all about others.

As a motivational speaker and coach, Jordan has integrated the principles of encouragement into his work, leaving an unforgettable impact on everyone around him. He is one of the most well-connected young leaders I know. Why? Because his influence shines with optimism and belief in others.

In the book, Jordan teaches 10 “arts” of encouragement, each revealing his sincere goal of empowering others to better their lives and the lives of those around them. He and I share this desire—that you would be gripped by the reality that there is transformative power in uplifting words. And that you would apply these timeless lessons to your life.

I believe this book will serve as a catalyst for the positive change Jordan is destined to bring to the world. He embodies the spirit of encouragement, and as you navigate the pages of *The Art of Encouragement*, you'll find yourself in the capable hands of a guide who not only talks the talk but walks the walk.

—John C. Maxwell

Acknowledgments

I want to give a very special “thank you” to John Maxwell, Mark Cole, Chad Johnson, Jared Cagle, and the entire Maxwell Leadership team. It’s an honor to have the Maxwell Leadership stamp on this book. Your unwavering support and belief in my work has made this book possible. I am eternally grateful for your guidance and friendship. I want to also extend my deepest appreciation to Elanie Welch. I am forever grateful for your support and contribution to this book. Thank you also to the Wiley Publishing team for helping to get this message out into the world. Your support has been wonderful!

Introduction

A note: Out of respect for the individuals involved, some names, facts, quotes, associations, companies, and identifying details have been changed in order to protect anonymity and keep privacy intact. Quotes have also been approximated to the best of my memory, or paraphrased for narrative flow.

As a performance coach, I have had the privilege of coaching people from various backgrounds and walks of life, people who are involved in different industries and who are from different parts of the world. As you might expect, these individuals have different personalities with very different worldviews and belief systems. It has been a tremendous honor to do this work, but with it comes a deep sense of responsibility. I must be very thoughtful about how I choose to engage with the people I coach; as in any relationship, establishing trust is paramount, and this requires me to show that I see and understand each client as a unique person. I must give a great deal of consideration to their individual traits and characteristics, taking into account their background and life experience. I must understand and match their communication style, and in a matter of minutes, create a meaningful connection. These individuals are placing

their trust in me as a coach and will share with me the intimate details of their life—oftentimes, in our very first conversation.

I have learned that every client is different. Some people want me to simply listen, and others almost immediately ask for advice. Some show up with detailed agendas while others prefer an open framework for discussion. Some are more skeptical while others are more trusting. While each conversation with each new coaching client is unique, I have learned that one thing is true with all of these people and in every interaction. They all understand one language: the language of encouragement. They all want to feel seen, heard, and understood. They want to be appreciated and acknowledged. Encouragement is a universal language heard and understood around the world. Everyone loves to hear it spoken, and not enough people are speaking it.

In this book, my hope is that you will discover some new truths about the language of encouragement, a language that you may already be familiar with. While encouragement is a simple topic, it isn't something that we should dismiss or take lightly. It is also not a tool to be wielded for manipulation, used for getting what you want out of people or from people. The purpose of this book is to help you apply the Art of Encouragement so that you can lead, love, and serve from the heart.

As you begin to dive into this book, I invite you to ask yourself some reflective questions on the topic of encouragement—how well are you doing at encouraging your spouse, your children, or your coworkers? Most likely, if you are being honest with yourself, you will admit that your ability to encourage others needs a little work. Nobody is perfect. In full transparency,

I myself have a great deal of work to do in learning to be a better encourager, and I wrote a book about it! We often struggle with putting what we know into practice. It seems there is a gap between knowing and doing as it relates to this topic. In other words, most people know that encouragement matters, but few people put it into action intentionally and consistently. Common sense isn't always common practice.

For the last several years I have engaged in an onboarding exercise with new coaching clients in our executive coaching practice. Most of these individuals have had at least some level of success, whether in business, sports, or life in general. As part of our discovery work, we ask new clients to supply us with contact information for two people who know them well: one person who knows them well personally, and one person who knows them well professionally. I want to get to know our client through the eyes of the people who know them the best. This type of exercise and debrief is typically very encouraging. They get the opportunity to hear from their spouse, best friend, significant other, etc. about their strengths, abilities, and opportunities for growth.

Once I have acquired the responses to the questions, I bring them to my client. I set the table, letting them know that they don't have to do anything with this information, they simply get to receive it and allow themselves to be encouraged by it. I am sure to read the responses slowly, as I want the words to truly resonate with my client.

As we finish the exercise, I always ask the same question: "So, how does that make you feel?" And almost every single time there is an emotional response. I hear comments like "Wow, that