

RANDOM HOUSE  BOOKS



Chicken Soup for the Soul

Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen

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Contributors

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About the Book

Chicken Soup for the Soul is a heartwarming collection of tales that will inspire you to live your dreams. The stories demonstrate the best qualities we share as human beings: compassion, grace, forgiveness, generosity and faith and they share a collected wisdom on love, parenting, teaching and the overcoming of obstacles.

The Chicken Soup series has touched the lives of millions of people worldwide. Discover how your life could be turned around too.

About the Authors

Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen are bestselling authors and motivational speakers who have dedicated their lives to enhancing the professional and personal development of others. They are the co-authors of many bestsellers including *Chicken Soup For The Teenage Soul*, *Chicken Soup For The Mother's Soul* and *Chicken Soup For The Woman's Soul*.

OTHER CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOUL® TITLES

A 2nd Helping of Chicken Soup for the Soul

Another joyful collection of stories full of shining examples of the best qualities we all share as human beings: compassion, grace, forgiveness, hope, courage, dedication, generosity and faith.



Chicken Soup for the Mother's Soul

Chicken Soup for the Mother's Soul pays tribute to motherhood - the vocation that requires the skills of a master mediator, mentor, cook, chauffeur and counsellor. These heartwarming stories celebrate the defining moments of motherhood - from birth to letting go as your children leave the nest.



Chicken Soup for the Pet Lover's Soul

Do you talk to your pets like they're real people? Do you sign your cat's name on greeting cards? Does your dog's wild 'welcome home' make your day? Now there's a book written for you and anyone else who has ever been touched by the love of the pet.



Chicken Soup for the Soul™

Stories that restore your faith in human nature

Jack Canfield
and
Mark Victor Hansen

Vermilion
LONDON

*If there is light in the soul,
There will be beauty in the
person.*

*If there is beauty in the person,
There will be harmony in the
house.*

*If there is harmony in the
house,
There will be order in the
nation.*

*If there is order in the nation,
There will be peace in the
world.*

Chinese Proverb

With love we dedicate this book to our wives,
Georgia and Patty, and our children,
Christopher, Oran, Kyle, Elisabeth and Melanie,
who are chicken soup for our souls.

You are constantly opening our hearts and
rekindling our spirits. We love you very much!

Introduction

We know everything we need to know to end the needless emotional suffering that many people currently experience. High self-esteem and personal effectiveness are available to anyone willing to take the time to pursue them.

It is difficult to translate the spirit of a live presentation into the written word. Stories we tell every day have had to be rewritten five times to work as well in print as they do live. When you are reading these stories, please forget everything you ever learned in your speed-reading classes. Slow down. Listen to the words in your heart as well as in your mind. Savor each story. Let it touch you. Ask yourself, what does it awaken in me? What does it suggest for my life? What feeling or action does it call forth from my inner being? Let yourself have a personal relationship with each story.

Some stories will speak louder to you than others. Some will have deeper meaning. Some will make you cry. Some will make you laugh. Some will give you a warm feeling all over. Some may hit you right between the eyes. There is no right reaction. There is only *your* reaction. Let it happen and let it be.

Don't hurry through this book. Take your time. Enjoy it. Savor it. Engage it with your whole being. It represents thousands of hours of culling the "best of the best" from our 40 years of combined experience.

One last thing: Reading a book like this is a little like sitting down to eat a meal of all desserts. It may be a little too rich. It is a meal with no vegetables, salad or bread. It is all essence with very little froth.

In our seminars and workshops we take more time to set up and discuss the implications of each story. There are more explanations and explorations of how to apply the lessons and principles to your everyday life. Don't just read these stories. Take the time to digest them and make them your own.

If you find yourself moved to share a story with others, do it. When a story makes you think of another person, call the person it brings to mind and share it. Engage these stories and let them move you to do whatever comes up for you. They are meant to inspire and motivate you.

For a lot of these stories we went back to the original source and asked them to write it or tell it in their own words. Many of the stories will be in their voice, not ours. We have attributed every story we could to the original source. For all of those that are from fellow speakers and trainers, we have included a contributors section in the back of the book where we have listed their name, address and phone number so you can contact them yourself if you wish.

We hope you will enjoy reading this book as much as we have enjoyed writing it.

Share With Us

We would love to hear your reactions to the stories in this book. Please let us know what your favorite stories were and how they affected you.

We also invite you to send us stories you would like to see published in future editions of *Chicken Soup For The Soul*. You can send us either stories you have written or stories written by others that you have liked.

Send submissions to:

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We hope you enjoy reading this book as much as we enjoyed compiling, editing and writing it.

1

ON LOVE

The day will come when, after harnessing space, the winds, the tides and gravitation, we shall harness for God the energies of love. And on that day, for the second time in the history of the world, we shall have discovered fire.

Tielhard de Chardin

Love: The One Creative Force

Spread love everywhere you go: first of all in your own house. Give love to your children, to your wife or husband, to a next door neighbor. ... Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God's kindness; kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile, kindness in your warm greeting.

Mother Teresa

A college professor had his sociology class go into the Baltimore slums to get case histories of 200 young boys. They were asked to write an evaluation of each boy's future. In every case the students wrote, "He hasn't got a chance." Twenty-five years later another sociology professor came across the earlier study. He had his students follow up on the project to see what had happened to these boys. With the exception of 20 boys who had moved away or died, the students learned that 176 of the remaining 180 had achieved more than ordinary success as lawyers, doctors and businessmen.

The professor was astounded and decided to pursue the matter further. Fortunately, all the men were in the area and he was able to ask each one, "How do you account for your success?" In each case the reply came with feeling, "There was a teacher."

The teacher was still alive, so he sought her out and asked the old but still alert lady what magic formula she

had used to pull these boys out of the slums into successful achievement.

The teacher's eyes sparkled and her lips broke into a gentle smile. "It's really very simple," she said. "I loved those boys."

Eric Butterworth

All I Remember

When my father spoke to me, he always began the conversation with "Have I told you yet today how much I adore you?" The expression of love was reciprocated and, in his later years, as his life began to visibly ebb, we grew even closer. ... if that were possible.

At 82 he was ready to die, and I was ready to let him go so that his suffering would end. We laughed and cried and held hands and told each other of our love and agreed that it was time. I said, "Dad, after you've gone I want a sign from you that you're fine." He laughed at the absurdity of that; Dad didn't believe in reincarnation. I wasn't positive I did either, but I had had many experiences that convinced me I could get some signal "from the other side."

My father and I were so deeply connected I felt his heart attack in my chest at the moment he died. Later I mourned that the hospital, in their sterile wisdom, had not let me hold his hand as he had slipped away.

Day after day I prayed to hear from him, but nothing happened. Night after night I asked for a dream before I fell asleep. And yet four long months passed and I heard and felt nothing but grief at his loss. Mother had died five years before of Alzheimer's, and, though I had grown daughters of my own, I felt like a lost child.

One day, while I was lying on a massage table in a dark quiet room waiting for my appointment, a wave of longing for my father swept over me. I began to wonder if I had been too demanding in asking for a sign from him. I noticed that my mind was in a hyper-acute state. I experienced an unfamiliar clarity in which I could have added long columns

of figures in my head. I checked to make sure I was awake and not dreaming, and I saw that I was as far removed from a dreamy state as one could possibly be. Each thought I had was like a drop of water disturbing a still pond, and I marveled at the peacefulness of each passing moment. Then I thought, "I've been trying to control the messages from the other side; I will stop that now."

Suddenly my mother's face appeared—my mother, as she had been before Alzheimer's disease had stripped her of her mind, her humanity and 50 pounds. Her magnificent silver hair crowned her sweet face. She was so real and so close I felt I could reach out and touch her. She looked as she had a dozen years ago, before the wasting away had begun. I even smelled the fragrance of Joy, her favorite perfume. She seemed to be waiting and did not speak. I wondered how it could happen that I was thinking of my father and my mother appeared, and I felt a little guilty that I had not asked for her as well.

I said, "Oh, Mother, I'm so sorry that you had to suffer with that horrible disease."

She tipped her head slightly to one side, as though to acknowledge what I had said about her suffering. Then she smiled—a beautiful smile—and said very distinctly, "But all I remember is love." And she disappeared.

I began to shiver in a room suddenly gone cold, and I knew in my bones that the love we give and receive is all that matters and all that is remembered. Suffering disappears; love remains.

Her words are the most important I have ever heard, and that moment is forever engraved on my heart.

I have not yet seen or heard from my father, but I have no doubts that someday, when I least expect it, he will appear and say, "Have I told you yet today that I love you?"

Bobbie Probst

Heart Song

Once upon a time there was a great man who married the woman of his dreams. With their love, they created a little girl. She was a bright and cheerful little girl and the great man loved her very much.

When she was very little, he would pick her up, hum a tune and dance with her around the room, and he would tell her, "I love you, little girl."

When the little girl was growing up, the great man would hug her and tell her, "I love you, little girl." The little girl would pout and say, "I'm not a little girl anymore." Then the man would laugh and say, "But to me, you'll always be my little girl."

The little girl who-was-not-little-anymore left her home and went into the world. As she learned more about herself, she learned more about the man. She saw that he truly was great and strong, for now she recognized his strengths. One of his strengths was his ability to express his love to his family. It didn't matter where she went in the world, the man would call her and say, "I love you, little girl."

The day came when the little girl who-was-not-little-anymore received a phone call. The great man was damaged. He had had a stroke. He was aphasic, they explained to the girl. He couldn't talk anymore and they weren't sure that he could understand the words spoken to him. He could no longer smile, laugh, walk, hug, dance or tell the little girl who-was-not-little-anymore that he loved her.

And so she went to the side of the great man. When she walked into the room and saw him, he looked small and not

strong at all. He looked at her and tried to speak, but he could not.

The little girl did the only thing she could do. She climbed up on the bed next to the great man. Tears ran from both of their eyes and she drew her arms around the useless shoulders of her father.

Her head on his chest, she thought of many things. She remembered the wonderful times together and how she had always felt protected and cherished by the great man. She felt grief for the loss she was to endure, the words of love that had comforted her.

And then she heard from within the man, the beat of his heart. The heart where the music and the words had always lived. The heart beat on, steadily unconcerned about the damage to the rest of the body. And while she rested there, the magic happened. She heard what she needed to hear.

His heart beat out the words that his mouth could no longer say. . . .

I love you
I love you
I love you
Little girl
Little girl
Little girl

And she was comforted.

Patty Hansen

True Love

Moses Mendelssohn, the grandfather of the well-known German composer, was far from being handsome. Along with a rather short stature, he had a grotesque hunchback.

One day he visited a merchant in Hamburg who had a lovely daughter named Frumtje. Moses fell hopelessly in love with her. But Frumtje was repulsed by his misshapen appearance.

When it came time for him to leave, Moses gathered his courage and climbed the stairs to her room to take one last opportunity to speak with her. She was a vision of heavenly beauty, but caused him deep sadness by her refusal to look at him. After several attempts at conversation, Moses shyly asked, "Do you believe marriages are made in heaven?"

"Yes," she answered, still looking at the floor. "And do you?"

"Yes I do," he replied. "You see, in heaven at the birth of each boy, the Lord announces which girl he will marry. When I was born, my future bride was pointed out to me. Then the Lord added, 'But your wife will be humpbacked.'

"Right then and there I called out, 'Oh Lord, a humpbacked woman would be a tragedy. Please, Lord, give me the hump and let her be beautiful.'"

Then Frumtje looked up into his eyes and was stirred by some deep memory. She reached out and gave Mendelssohn her hand and later became his devoted wife.

Barry and Joyce Vissell

The Hugging Judge

Don't bug me! Hug me!

Bumper Sticker

Lee Shapiro is a retired judge. He is also one of the most genuinely loving people we know. At one point in his career, Lee realized that love is the greatest power there is. As a result, Lee became a hugger. He began offering everybody a hug. His colleagues dubbed him “the hugging judge” (as opposed to the hanging judge, we suppose). The bumper sticker on his car reads, “Don't bug me! Hug me!”

About six years ago Lee created what he calls his Hugger Kit. On the outside it reads “A heart for a hug.” The inside contains thirty little red embroidered hearts with stickums on the back. Lee will take out his Hugger Kit, go around to people and offer them a little red heart in exchange for a hug.

Lee has become so well known for this that he is often invited to keynote conferences and conventions, where he shares his message of unconditional love. At a conference in San Francisco, the local news media challenged him by saying, “It is easy to give out hugs here in the conference to people who self-selected to be here. But this would never work in the real world.”

They challenged Lee to give away some hugs on the streets of San Francisco. Followed by a television crew from the local news station, Lee went out onto the street. First he approached a woman walking by. “Hi, I'm Lee

Shapiro, the hugging judge. I'm giving out these hearts in exchange for a hug." "Sure," she replied. "Too easy," challenged the local commentator. Lee looked around. He saw a meter maid who was being given a hard time by the owner of a BMW to whom she was giving a ticket. He marched up to her, camera crew in tow, and said, "You look like you could use a hug. I'm the hugging judge and I'm offering you one." She accepted.

The television commentator threw down one final challenge. "Look, here comes a bus. San Francisco bus drivers are the toughest, crabbiest, meanest people in the whole town. Let's see you get him to hug you." Lee took the challenge.

As the bus pulled up to the curb, Lee said, "Hi, I'm Lee Shapiro, the hugging judge. This has got to be one of the most stressful jobs in the whole world. I'm offering hugs to people today to lighten the load a little. Would you like one?" The six-foot-two, 230-pound bus driver got out of his seat, stepped down and said, "Why not?"

Lee hugged him, gave him a heart and waved good-bye as the bus pulled out. The TV crew was speechless. Finally, the commentator said, "I have to admit, I'm very impressed."

One day Lee's friend Nancy Johnston showed up on his doorstep. Nancy is a professional clown and she was wearing her clown costume, makeup and all. "Lee, grab a bunch of your Hugger Kits and let's go out to the home for the disabled."

When they arrived at the home, they started giving out balloon hats, hearts and hugs to the patients. Lee was uncomfortable. He had never before hugged people who were terminally ill, severely retarded or quadriplegic. It was definitely a stretch. But after a while it became easier, with Nancy and Lee acquiring an entourage of doctors, nurses and orderlies who followed them from ward to ward.

After several hours they entered the last ward. These were 34 of the worst cases Lee had seen in his life. The feeling was so grim it took his heart away. But out of their commitment to share their love and to make a difference, Nancy and Lee started working their way around the room followed by the entourage of medical staff, all of whom by now had hearts on their collars and balloon hats on their heads.

Finally, Lee came to the last person, Leonard. Leonard was wearing a big white bib which he was drooling on. Lee looked at Leonard dribbling onto his bib and said, "Let's go, Nancy. There's no way we can get through to this person." Nancy replied, "C'mon, Lee. He's a fellow human being, too, isn't he?" Then she placed a funny balloon hat on his head. Lee took one of his little red hearts and placed it on Leonard's bib. He took a deep breath, leaned down and gave Leonard a hug.

All of a sudden Leonard began to squeal, "Eeeeehh! Eeeeehh!" Some of the other patients in the room began to clang things together. Lee turned to the staff for some sort of explanation only to find that every doctor, nurse and orderly was crying. Lee asked the head nurse, "What's going on?"

Lee will never forget what she said: "This is the first time in 23 years we've ever seen Leonard smile."

How simple it is to make a difference in the lives of others.

Jack Canfield and Mark V. Hansen



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It Can't Happen Here?

We need 4 hugs a day for survival. We need 8 hugs a day for maintenance. We need 12 hugs a day for growth.

Virginia Satir

We always teach people to hug each other in our workshops and seminars. Most people respond by saying, "You could never hug people where I work." Are you sure?

Here is a letter from a graduate of one of our seminars.

Dear Jack,

I started out this day in rather a bleak mood. My friend Rosalind stopped over and asked me if I was giving hugs today. I just grumbled something but then I began to think about hugs and everything during the week. I would look at the sheet you gave us on How to Keep the Seminar Alive and I would cringe when I got to the part about giving and getting hugs because I couldn't imagine giving hugs to the people at work.

Well I decided to make it "hugs day" and I started giving hugs to the customers who came to my counter. It was great to see how people just brightened up. An MBA student jumped up on top of the counter and did a dance. Some people actually came back and asked for more. These two Xerox repair guys, who were kind of just walking

along not really talking to each other, were so surprised, they just woke up and suddenly were talking and laughing down the hall.

It feels like I hugged everybody in the Wharton Business School, plus whatever was wrong with me this morning, which included some physical pain, is all gone. I'm sorry that this letter is so long but I'm just really excited. The neatest thing was, at one point there were about 10 people all hugging each other out in front of my counter. I couldn't believe this was happening.

*Love,
Pamela Rogers*

P.S.: On the way home I hugged a policeman on 37th Street. He said, "Wow! Policemen never get hugs. Are you sure you don't want to throw something at me?"

Another seminar graduate sent us the following piece on hugging:

Hugging Is

Hugging is healthy. It helps the immune system, cures depression, reduces stress and induces sleep. It's invigorating, rejuvenating and has no unpleasant side effects. Hugging is nothing less than a miracle drug.

Hugging is all natural. It is organic, naturally sweet, no artificial ingredients, nonpolluting, environmentally friendly and 100 percent wholesome.

Hugging is the ideal gift. Great for any occasion, fun to give and receive, shows you care, comes with its own wrapping and, of course, fully returnable.

Hugging is practically perfect. No batteries to wear out, inflation-proof, nonfattening, no monthly payments, theft-proof and nontaxable.

Hugging is an underutilized resource with magical powers. When we open our hearts and arms, we encourage others to do the same.

Think of the people in your life. Are there any words you'd like to say? Are there any hugs you want to share? Are you waiting and hoping someone else will ask first? Please don't wait! Initiate!

Charles Faraone

Jack Canfield