

Leadership 101: Inspirational Quotes and Insights for Leaders

John Maxwell. Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2002. 109 pages

By Ben Miles

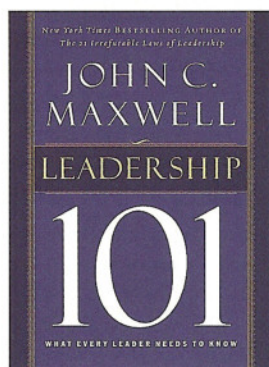
John C. Maxwell is smart as well as practical. But don't just take this reviewer's word for it—certainly not when you can quickly and easily gather this in Maxwell's own words. Dr. Maxwell, founder of the Injoy leadership group, is author of the REAL Leadership Series: four hardcover booklets, each around 100 pages long. This rather portable collection's title is, of course, an acronym: Realistic, Equipping, Attitude, Leadership.

Maxwell's credentials and reputation are built upon his expertise in leadership. We begin with the theme book of the series, *Leadership 101*, which is also the first published of the four topics. The good news is that Maxwell's rundown on leadership is concise, simple, accessible, and immediately applicable. For example, Maxwell informs us early on that at a minimum, each of us influences ten other people in a lifetime. The author suggests that "it's not whether you influence someone, but how you will use your influence." Inspirational? Yes, indeed. Axiomatic? Perhaps. Maxwell regularly utters such proclamations, but offers no bibliography and few scholarly references. Nevertheless, we can be grateful for the short-list of endnotes that he has made available. After all, how many hundred-page readers offer direction to further resources?

Maxwell's approach may often seem trite, clichéd and, at times, like corporate propaganda, but there is often truth within his examples. The hoary and dubious account of Ray Kroc's buyout of the McDonald brothers' Central California hamburger stand that made him the golden child—or perhaps the Golden Arches child—of fast food comes to mind. The author's grasp of leadership technique and models of human potential are more than one might bargain for in what amounts to an old-fashioned essay.

Full of stories and examples that embody his notions of leadership—the anecdote on Teddy Roosevelt raising himself from sickly little boy to uberoutdoorsman and then on to the American presidency is memorably mythological and super-patriotic in tone—Maxwell's theological (he's also a Christian minister) and USA-centric biases radiate throughout the tiny tome like light through a porous napkin. Yet, there's no question as to Maxwell's purpose and message: we all influence others; leadership is nothing more than the ability to influence; leadership skills can be learned, improved, and continually increased. Each chapter begins with an opening statement. Chapter 7 (out of ten) begins as follows: "The true measure of leadership is influence—nothing more, nothing less."

For readers interested in a brief read and a sturdy lesson on leadership, Maxwell gives a taut tutorial on the perplexing subject that requires a minimum investment of time. That's a smart and practical approach to the topic. ■



Not Just Playing Doctor: Me4kids

By Cassandra Brooks | Photos courtesy of me4kids

"Two feet, four feet...they all need fixin'." That's one motto of the family-run Phoenix-based me4kids (Medical Emergencies for Kids) organization. Inspired by their sons Cody and Luke and driven by faith and compassion for others, Richelle and Pete Nassos launched the medibag4kidz in May 2006. This bright-red medical-emergency kit, shaped like a doctor's medical bag, is designed especially for children and features 117 items, including ointments, gauze, eyewash, sting pads, colored crayon bandages—right down to the smiley-faced stickers. The medibag4kidz provides a colorful and simple way for children at home to help mend their boo-boos and get back to playtime.



Recently, the Nassoses introduced two new products: the medibag4petz and the medibuddy. According to the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association, more U.S. households have pets than children, and for many people, pets *are* the children! Packed with fifty pet-aid products to patch up your pooch or tend to tabby, the bright-yellow kit is a handy helpmate to keep around the house. The medibuddy is simply a travel-sized version of the original medibag4kidz—small enough for the stroller or the glove box, but big enough to carry forty first-aid items to all your errands, outings, and adventures!

Bent on quality, me4kids kits come in organized, durable cases filled with only kid-friendly, hypoallergenic materials. All three kits are doctor or veterinarian recommended, with the original medibag4kidz having garnered seven awards in just one year. In an effort to support jobs in the United States, the products are exclusively U.S. manufactured and are assembled by disabled persons at the Gompers Center in Phoenix. A portion of the proceeds goes toward educational fund-raisers and various children's organizations.

Already appearing in nine countries and nearly 1,500 stores, the me4kids products continue to grow in popularity, inspiring kids and parents alike to take a fun and easy approach to addressing the everyday medical maladies of the family. Even more importantly, the success of these kits allows the Nassos family of five (we mustn't forget Coda, the miniature schnauzer) to give back to those less fortunate than themselves. ■

For ordering, pricing, or other information, visit me4kids.com or call (480) 444-2332.