

**THE FIRST PICTORIAL SELF-HELP BOOK
FOR MEN WHO DON'T READ**

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FOR MEN WHO DON'T READ**

TOM PRINZ
ILLUSTRATED BY CHRIS MARTINEZ



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I would like to thank my friend Chris Greenslate for all of the editing she did for me.
I would also like to thank Athena Holtz and her team at Redemption Press.



A DEDICATION TO CHRIS MARTINEZ, THE ILLUSTRATOR

I have known Chris for about twenty years. He did the illustrations for three of my books: *Dragon Slaying for Couples*, *The Lost Aspect of Love* and *Winning at a Losing Game*. He also illustrated a book I am seeking to publish titled *It's Okay to Change Him...and the Sooner the Better!*

It has been a pleasure and an honor to work with such a great artist, one to whom I can suggest an idea, and presto! He has created the point in an illustration.

Artist Chris Martinez was a character and a drawer of caricatures. Chris had been one of Ventura County's most successful artists: well known, popular, and widely enjoyed through the many ways he put his drawing skills to work. Chris has been called the county's champion quick draw artist. His work is widespread, displayed on countless menus, programs, and the walls of schools, police departments, and county agencies. He has done illustrations and cartoons for newspapers, posters, books and magazines. His murals are all over the county. His work decorates everything from shop windows to fundraising T-shirts. His fine art hangs in many homes, and he taught art classes both privately and at the college level.

Chris's skill was recognized early by his family and his teachers. He credited them for encouraging his artistic talent and desire. His Hispanic heritage influenced his use of bright colors, joyful attitudes and noble and proud positive images. Chris's talent was developed in college where he studied illustration. His expertise was further honed when he was employed with Disney Enterprises. While there, he worked to master the complexities of the quick sketch technique in watercolor and pastel portraits. Also, his extraordinary knack for caricature art was launched there. He worked in the field of animation for a short time, and then returned to Disneyland and Disney World to train new artists and to continue to draw.

Chris saw art as an expression of the diversity of the human condition—sometimes serious and sometimes comical. He felt that art did not always need a deep meaning. It can be fun. He enjoyed bringing out the uniqueness of people in art. Chris delighted in art's unexpected bonus—the joy it brings to people.

Sadly, Chris passed away in May 2013. I still miss him a great deal.



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INTRODUCTION

All adults would have healthier, more positive relationships and personal lives if they lived by the quote:

“Don’t go through life, grow through life!”

In counseling with men and women for over 35 years, it has become very clear to me that, while women will read self-help books to try to grow through life, men will openly brag that they have never read a self-help book. Many men I have counseled scored themselves very low on being sympathetic to others. When I suggest they read my book on sympathy, *The Lost Aspect of Love* very few read it.

For years, I have thought men should read self-help books but will not. This thinking kept me from doing something to address the issue. This book is an attempt to do just that. I accept that many men will not read self-help books to help better themselves or their relationships. Acceptance, to me, does not mean surrender. It means accepting the facts of the situation and deciding what to do about it. The above quote uses the word grow. Perhaps, this word is less threatening than the word change, but all adults do need to grow and change throughout life.

The purpose of this book is to get readers thinking about changing behaviors in order to enhance their relationships. In Dr. James Prochaska's book *Changing for Good*, he outlines five stages people must move through to accomplish major change, to have the mental preparedness and willingness to take new actions. People do not change in just one step. Each stage of change presents distinct issues. There is pre-contemplation, before someone even acknowledges there's a problem. Then there is contemplation, when someone recognizes a problem but isn't sure they want to deal with it. Hopefully the illustrations in this book will cause the reader to contemplate making some changes in his life.

The third step of change is preparation, in which an individual gets ready to change their behavior. If an illustration gets you thinking about making a change, then look at the page to the right (the next page) for a description of the illustration and the point it's trying to make. When you read this page, you have begun to prepare to change. I usually list other resources for you to look at to help with this step of preparation.

The fourth stage is action, the actual process of change.

In a daily devotional by Earnie Larsen and Carol Larsen Hegarty, *Days of Healing, Days of Joy* (a book for adult children of alcoholics) they say; “It’s quite possible to confuse getting ready to recover with actually doing the work that results in recovery. All the reading we do, the meetings we attend, and the sharing with others can still be just ‘getting ready.’ Recovery

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(change) comes when we actually stand up, dig down, and face off the old destructive patterns (and behaviors) that hold us captive.”

In the fifth step of change, the new behavior has become more of a habit and the effort to utilize the new behavior is much less. This stage is referred to as maintenance.

In order to fully benefit from this book, look at the pictures on each page and read the short description of the picture. In some cases, you are presented with a challenge. Additional references are sometimes listed, as well, to help prepare you to make changes.

Another helpful concept of the process of change is that change can be seen as taking place through four specific steps.

In the first step, a person is:

Unconscious and Unskilled

He has no idea of the need to change and therefore is obviously unskilled because he is not working on changing.

In the second step :

Conscious and Unskilled

A person understands and has accepted the need to change but he hasn't attempted to change and is therefore unskilled.

In the third step:

Conscious and Skilled

A person has begun making changes and has become more skilled in the change that he is making.

In the fourth step:

Unconscious and Skilled

A person is skilled at the new change and he doesn't have to think a lot about doing the new behavior. The new behavior has become more automatic and requires less effort.

This book is divided into three separate sections, although principles and suggestions can apply to many areas. The first section of the book deals with personal issues; the second section with marriage relationships, and the third section with principles for positive parenting. I would encourage the reader to look through the book and when an illustration interests you, turn the page over and read the additional information that will help to underscore the point of the illustration. A person will never be successful at improving their marriage relationship or parenting skills until they adequately deal with existing personal issues.

The goal of this book is to get you, the reader, to contemplate making changes and to give you a little information so you can begin to prepare to make changes. Change is difficult, so I

INTRODUCTION

encourage you to seek help putting the changes you want to make into action. Help can come from a qualified counselor, psychiatrist, or healthy support group.

I am dedicating this message to Chris Martinez who did the illustrations in this book. Special thanks also go to Rick Rojo, a tennis buddy of mine, who suggested that I do a pictorial book for men because he agreed with me that few men read self-help books and may only do so, if it has pictures in it.

It is my hope that the following quotes will encourage you to read on:

A man who views the world the same at 50 as he did at 20 has wasted 30 years of life.
Muhammad Ali

*Habit 1: Be proactive, meant simply: Take responsibility for your life.
Quit blaming your spouse, your boss or the kids, and take action.*
*Stephen Covey in his highly acclaimed book;
The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

*I now hold my life tenderly and with open hands.
I no longer think of all changes as negative.*
Earnie Larsen and Carol Larsen Hegarty

Additional Resources

My first book was *Dragon Slaying for Parents*. I wrote that book because, over some years as a counselor, I realized that many parents could not apply the parenting tools effectively and consistently. I identified what I called ‘dragons’ that kept parents from applying the parenting tools with any degree of consistency.

My second book *Dragon Slaying for Couples* discussed the dragons that kept adults from using marriage tools properly. Dragons also cause adults to either over react or underreact when dealing with situations.

I wrote *The Lost Aspect of Love* to address the issue of sympathy and how it is often missing in relationships. I am currently pursuing having this book made available with a new title that will include the word sympathy it.

Winning at a Losing Game was written to encourage all adults to address significant issues in their lives before they experience a crisis.

I have also written *It’s Okay to Change Him...and the Sooner the Better!* and I am seeking to have it published as well.

All of these books provide good resources for you to follow up on the topics you identify as being important in your relationships.



FOREWORD

I grew up in Los Angeles and was one of six children born to my dad, Genaro, and mother, Mary. My dad was a professional athlete, and my mom was a professional mother. Together, they raised us with love, care, and wisdom. I received my undergraduate degree from the University of California at Santa Barbara and then went to Indiana University in Bloomington and received my doctorate as an eye care professional. Over the years, I have noticed an ever-increasing trend of males who simply want a shortcut when it comes to reading and learning. They desire and thirst for the knowledge, but they are reluctant to take the time to read up and study what is necessary.

Sometimes, the phrase “A picture is worth a thousand words,” is a true statement. It is especially true when it comes to the thinking and behavior patterns in men. I have seen many examples of this concept illustrated in our daily lives from instructions on how to assemble furniture to teaching people how to operate technical devices. It is always the pictures that teach a lasting lesson and produce clarity. The pictures are what is remembered and they create a lasting image in the brain. I know that this book can help those guys who want to focus, learn, understand and begin to modify their behavior in an easy to relate to format that will make a lasting impression.

Pictures have been used to tell the story of life since the beginning of time and before words were used. They have continued as the master painters and photographers have used them to convey their messages. This book will leave a lasting image on the reader by using images and artwork that are easily understood and enjoyed. The discussion that follows each illustration will help the reader to make changes that could enhance their personal lives, the lives of their children and enrich their marriage.

—**Rick Rojo**, Optometrist

SECTION ONE

PERSONAL ISSUES



PERSONAL ISSUES

In this section, I'll cover topics such as the need to change certain behaviors, the difficulty in changing, and the importance of looking at your childhood experiences in order to make the desired changes more meaningful and permanent.

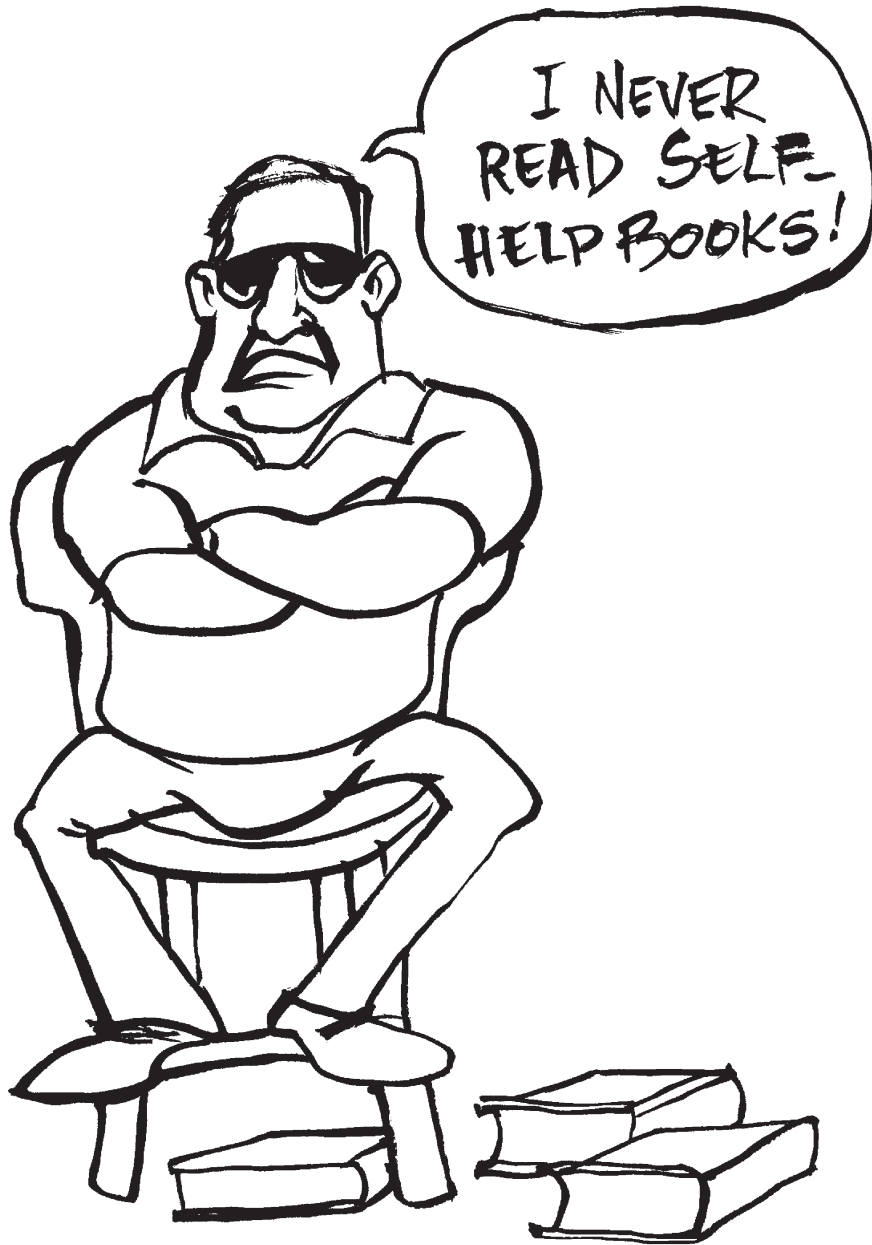
The reader can jump around in the book and zone in on an illustration that might catch their interest and attention. However, for the best results, it is important to address personal issues before attempting to deal with marriage or parenting issues. In fact, marriage counseling often fails because each person does not do the family of origin work necessary to truly understand why they do what they do and cannot do what they want to do. Each person also needs to fully understand their spouse and why their spouse behaves or reacts the way they do.

I will also discuss the impact of an adult continuing to use childish strategies and their impact of unresolved resentments on relationships. I will introduce the impact of low self-esteem and how unhealthy beliefs can lead to anger and depression. I will discuss the issue of change and how it can often be instigated by someone who loves you.

The “tool” of sympathy will be highlighted. In my private practice, I have counseled with many adults who did not know how to give sympathy. Those same adults can also make it hard for others to be sympathetic to them and they may experience difficulties in being sympathetic to themselves.

I will also introduce concepts and information about various addictions. Addictions must be dealt with before other areas of one's life can be addressed. Additionally, addictions will require the help of other professionals and twelve step programs.

Some topics in this book will be depicted by several different drawings. Not everyone will speak to every person. My goal is to provide multiple illustrations on each topic in hopes that you can relate to at least one and that it will motivate you to seek to make changes.





A MAN STATING THAT HE DOES NOT READ SELF-HELP BOOKS

Unfortunately, many men proudly state that they do not read self-help books related to personal, marriage or parenting issues. That is one of the reasons I put this book together. I want to make it easier for a man to identify areas where he could make changes that would help him and improve his relationships. Most men do not make changes because they have read about a different way of behaving or reacting. They usually do so because their wife has encouraged them to make those changes.

My goal with this book is to get men to contemplate or consider making some changes in their life. Hopefully, an illustration or two will spark your interest in a better way of behaving, and you will invest the time and energy to make the changes. It is hard work to make changes, even after one knows that the change would be beneficial to themselves and others.

One reason it is hard to change is that we do not know what we don't know. I'll say that again for emphasis, we do not know what we don't know. For many years, when I played tennis, I thought that most players were wimps because they tried to hit every ball with their forehand and not their backhand. They would always try to get in position to use their forehand, not their backhand. I am embarrassed to say how old I was (and I started playing tennis in high school) when I finally learned that the correct way to play was to try to hit everything with your forehand. I have spent several years now trying to add that tool to my tennis "tool kit" by getting lessons from a great coach. It has been difficult to change, but this experience has helped me to realize how difficult it is for adults to make any change in their lives.

A Challenge to You:

1. Remember that you do not know what you don't know! I encourage you to read this book with an open mind and pick at least one or two things to begin to do differently. You will be a better person for that, and you will be a much better spouse and parent.





MAN REACHING FOR THE CHANGE SIGN

What does this illustration show?

- a. It is hard to make changes because even those who love you may not be able to encourage your changes.
- b. You can never change.
- c. You can pull others along with you to change.

The correct answer is “a.” It can be very difficult to make changes because those around you may not encourage you. Sometimes, when you make a change for the good, like praising your spouse more, the other person may not notice, or they may not thank you. They may want to see if the behavior will last before calling attention to it.

A favorite quote that I like is “People change, and they forget to tell each other!” If you are making some changes, be sure to tell those around you that you are trying to change. Otherwise, they may never notice the change and not encourage you enough.

Frequently, when I counsel with men, they realize that they have not been sympathetic to their spouse. When I give them some ideas to try, their spouse may later reply to me that they did not appear to be sincere. One of the steps of change is “conscious and unskilled.” A person is aware of the need to change, but initially he will not be very skilled at it. With persistence and encouragement from others, the person can become “unconscious and skilled.” The term unconscious means that the person does not have to think so hard about the change; it has become more automatic. The change has become ingrained into their way of behaving. When a man tries a new behavior, he will not be very good at it at first. So, women need to be understanding of this. Additionally, men need to realize that they may not get encouraged when making positive changes, but they should continue with the new behavior, whether they are recognized or not. Recognition may take some time to appear.

A Challenge to You:

1. Identify some behaviors that you need to change by reading this book. Work hard to make those changes and do not get discouraged if you do not get encouragement right away.
2. Let your spouse know you are trying to make a change and ask for some encouragement as you work on making that change.

