

An Overview to

Me to We: Turning Self Help on Its Head



In *Me to We: Turning Self-Help on Its Head*, the authors of the best-selling *Take Action!* series invite you to transform your own life and the lives of the people around you. Craig and Marc Kielburger have written an innovative book that outlines a philosophy of living that challenges the way we look at the world. It requires energy, ideas and maybe even courage, but the payoff is huge: a longer and healthier life, personal growth, gratification, and happiness.

In *Me to We* you will discover stories about people whose passion is infectious and whose life lessons are profound. You will learn that the self-help culture that has shaped so much of modern life has led us up the wrong path with its focus on "me" and not "we". As the many people who have contributed to this book can attest to, the road to happiness and fulfillment is a much different road.

Best of all, *Me to We* is relevant to all readers including parents, young people, seniors and business leaders, and provides practical ways on how to incorporate this philosophy into your life. Be inspired and share the feeling with your neighbours, friends, and family. Your life will never be the same!

Looking for a good cause? *Leaders Today* has compiled a list of 10 great ways to make a difference! What ideas can you add to the list?

1. **School Building Campaign or Hire a Teacher Campaign:** Fundraise with your class to build a school or hire a teacher for less fortunate children in the developing world.
2. **The Hunger Site:** Have your homeroom computer set to the Internet home page 'The Hunger Site' and simply click to donate to alleviate world hunger, fight breast cancer and save the rainforest, for free!
3. **AIDS Awareness Day:** Have students wear red ribbons and distribute information to educate people about AIDS prevention, research and realities.
4. **Halloween for Hunger:** Inspire your class to 'Trick-or-Treat' for cans instead of candy and support a local food bank or shelter.
5. **Alternative Incomes Program:** Allow child labourers to go to school by offering families an alternate source of income. Organize fundraisers with your class to raise money to purchase a cow or a sewing machine.
6. **Buy Back the Rainforest:** Gather change and buy back acres of the rainforest.
7. **Stop the Death Penalty:** Have students run an education campaign and write letters to help put a moratorium on the death penalty.
8. **War is Not a Game:** Have young people turn in war toys for change and run an awareness campaign about the plight of child soldiers.
9. **Collect Cans for Cancer:** Collect empty bottles and cans and return them to recycling for change to contribute to cancer research. Help the environment too!
10. **Basic Needs Health and School Kits:** Have students assemble Health and School Kits for underprivileged children in developing countries.

Questions for

Me to We: Turning Self Help on Its Head



Chapter 1 – Two Worlds

1. What words would you use to describe the world that you live in – the North American culture?
2. What is the underlying factor that makes people so interested in helping themselves?
3. Summarize the *Me to We* philosophy in your own words.
4. Kim Phuc experienced incredible tragedy. What ultimately enabled her to heal? (*P.S. Kim now lives right here in Durham Region!*)

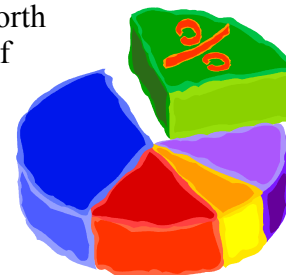


Chapter 2 – Our Self-Help Culture: Fool's Gold

5. What are your most basic goals in life?
6. What are the “costs” (not financial) of being on the *endless conveyor belt*?
7. What things in life make you really happy?
8. Keith Taylor came up with a unique, low cost way to help others. In what ways might you be able to help others in the future (right now, next year, or 10 years from now....)?

Chapter 3 – Out Self-Help Culture: Happiness in a Bubble

9. There are some pretty shocking statistics on page 36 regarding how North Americans spend much of their time. Think back on the past couple of days or keep track for the next couple of days and make a rough calculation of what percentage of your time you spend:
1) working/studying/chores; **2)** watching TV/ surfing the net/playing games; and **3)** talking/listening/visiting with others.
10. What things keep people from helping others?
11. What things might motivate people to help others?

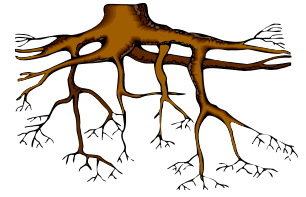


Chapter 4 – Me to We (from Us)

12. Marc and Craig Kielburger are pretty remarkable young individuals. Research and identify one or two other people who have made significant contributions to the world at a really young age. What did they do?
13. *Me to We* suggests that by helping others, we help ourselves. What examples in your own lives might illustrate this happy feeling we get when we do things for others?
14. Revisit your list of things that make you happy from Question 7. Having read Chapter 4, what else in life makes you happy?

Chapter 5 – The Roots of Self-Help

15. Many people in the world turn to their own religion for advice on how to live their lives. The book illustrates that the *Golden Rule* exists in one form or another in many religions. What is another common characteristic of different societies all over the world?
16. The book illustrates several real-life examples of how helping others can help yourself. What other real-life situations can you think of where you might be helping yourself by helping others?



Chapter 6 – The *Minga* and Community

17. What is *minga* called in other cultures?
18. The more important a concept, the more words we have for it! What other things in life (other than snow, rice, and money) have many different words for it?
19. Which “communities” do you feel that you belong to in your own life?
20. Brainstorm ideas of how to get our communities to become active in improving everyone’s lives.

Chapter 7 – Searching for Meaning, Happiness, and Success

21. There have been many horrible world events in the last century, but each with individuals who did simple acts that had extraordinary effects on others’ lives. Summarize the stories described in the movies *Schindler’s List* and *Hotel Rwanda*.
22. Who are some famous people who you would consider as “successful”?
23. What are different ways that someone can tell if they are being successful?

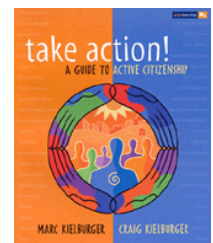


Chapter 8 – Within “We” Is “Me”

24. Who do you trust? Why do you trust them?
25. Some people are resistant to receiving *help* but may be very excited in forming a *partnership*. What are some ways that you might propose a partnership with someone so that everyone wins?
26. What are your most basic priorities in life?
27. We have many demands on our time.... balancing “me” and “we” is often hard. Describe to what extent you currently work with others AND have time for yourself still.
28. Talk about getting hit by a truck! Hopefully less drastic means will enable you to get to know yourself. Describe yourself using just ten words.

Chapter 9 – Helping Others is Good for You

29. What’s going on in the world? (Describe your knowledge of world events).
30. Research and summarize the purpose of an organization called *Canada Corps*.
31. Revisit your answers from Question 16. Jot down a few points on how helping others will help you in the following specific circumstances:
a) your relationships, **b)** networking, and **c)** personal health.
32. What are some of the ways that helping others is particular good for teens?

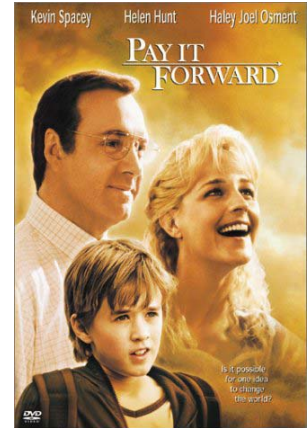


Chapter 10 – Help Yourself to a Better World: Join the Movement

33. What is “social inertia”?
34. *Me to We* is a movement. What are some of the other famous movements in times gone by?
35. Every long journey begins with one small step.... what things might you be able to do regarding a cause that is important to you?
36. What is the key to any successful movement?

Chapter 11 – Be the Change You Want to See

37. What is the power of one? (Summarize the movement that is started in the movie *Pay it Forward*.)
38. What are some of the steps you can take to make a difference....
 - a. at home?
 - b. at work?
 - c. in the community?
 - d. in your faith group?
39. How can we go beyond “band-aid” solutions to fix and find the root causes of societal problems?



Chapter 12 – Writing Your Own Story

40. Most of us are considerably privileged, given the circumstances some people live in all around the world. What are things that we *need*? What are some of the extras that we *have* or *want* that go beyond our basic needs?
41. You have means to help others! What is your favourite issue or cause? (i.e. what difference would you like to make in the world?)
42. Summarize your thoughts or feelings about *Me to We* in general. Ask questions, make comments, or suggest ideas that contribute to the ideas presented throughout the book.

