

Grit by Angela Duckworth

5 stars

The secret to outstanding achievement is not talent but a special blend of passion and perseverance.

Angela Duckworth, a professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania and a 2013 MacArthur Fellow, presents a new formula for grit, showing that outstanding achievement does not rely on talent but on grit and grit is something that can be cultivated and learned throughout our lives. Grit is what makes you persevere when life knocks you down; what makes you get up again and again and again if necessary. It's not luck or talent that makes a difference, it's grit and grit relies on enduring passion. Everyone has potential, but what we individually do with our potential is what separates the grittier people from the others.

It seems many of us are distracted by talent. Charles Darwin was not. His opinion was that zeal and hard work are ultimately more important than intellectual ability as the determinants of achievement. The author also believes that a preoccupation with talent can be harmful. By shining the spotlight on talent, we risk leaving everything else in the shadows and we inadvertently send the message that other factors, such as grit, don't matter as much as they really do. And she has research examples to substantiate this view. She argues that as much as talent counts, effort counts twice. She believes that Greatness is doable by anyone! Greatness is many, many individual feats and each one of them is doable – excellence is in fact an accumulation of mundane acts.

I think that EVERYONE should read this book, we all have something to learn from it. I loved the way the author uses personal accounts and presents her research in a way that is meaningful to everyone from all walks of life, whether you are an athlete, a CEO or a student. She presents two simple equations that explain how you get from talent to achievement:

talent x effort = skill

skill x effort = achievement

So, effort does count twice and nothing can be achieved without effort. With effort, talent becomes skill and, at the very same time, effort makes skill productive. Grit grows and can be cultivated! Read the book and find out how.

Saphira

Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of the book to review.