



The Best Advice So Far

Thoughts
on living like
it matters . . .

because
it *does*.

ERIK TYLER

THE BEST ADVICE SO FAR

by

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2nd Edition

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT
The Best Advice So Far

“Congratulations on a very practical, thoughtful and useful book. Great advice ... and compelling. I opened it to skim, but I kept on reading. Nice work. Thank you for what you are doing to change people's lives.”

— **Karen May**
Vice President, People Development
Google

“*Terrific*. Just the right amount of humor, not at all ‘preachy,’ and shows a real understanding of how others might be able to apply the advice.”

— **Bob Halloran**
New York Times **Best-Selling Author**
Irish Thunder and Breakdown

Reviews from other readers across the country:

“You saved my life. Those four words ‘You have a choice’ ... I will never be able to truly express how thankful I am.”

— **Dezi M., State College, PA**

“The Best Advice So Far pulls you in with its relatability. It’s not one author telling you how to live; it’s a journey of shared experiences and insights delivered in a funny, real way that forces you to reflect on your own life in a positive and uplifting manner.”

— **Sullivan C., Denver, CO**

“Filled with insightful and engaging anecdotes, this book certainly lives up to its title. This is an incredible book that you will return to time and time again.”

— **Ryan G., Boston, MA**

“Reading a chapter from The Best Advice So Far is a similar experience to having lunch with a wise and kind best friend. I finish each section simultaneously encouraged and enlightened, but never with the feeling that I’m being lectured to.”

— **Paul H., Dallas, TX**

EXCERPT

CHAPTER 39

Lemonade

WHEN I SEE A KID running a lemonade stand, I get excited. I remember the thrill of *being* that kid. Coloring the sign to announce your wares, sure that your graphic artistry and marketing were going to practically pull the people in, almost against their will. Hearing the satisfying “pah!” as you peeled back the plastic lid on the tub of powdered drink mix and were greeted with *that* smell. Choosing a pitcher that would make the lemonade look most appealing (always glass for me; never plastic). Cracking the ice from the trays into the finished product (having forgotten to do this first, and thus making quite a mess with the splashing). And sometimes, mom would suggest adding lemon wheels she’d cut for you, in order to make it look more authentic and to up the ante.

The card table and folding chairs would be set up close to the road. The sign was affixed with masking tape:

ICE COLD LEMONADE

10¢

It was imperative that the sign say “ICE COLD,” because that was part of the sure-fire marketing strategy. The pitcher of lemonade was placed front and center, with two upside-down stacks of plastic cups waiting beside.

The tin can would occupy the corner of the table closest to yourself, so that you could look into it often. The *money* can. I remember the feeling of anticipation in setting it all up while watching the cars go by on the nearby road. Every one that passed before we were open for business was a missed opportunity to start filling that can.

And you imagined that can *full*. The night before, and that morning as you prepared, you’d do and re-do the figures. “If *this* many cars stop, then I’ll make *this* much, and if *THIS* many cars stop, I could make *THIS* much,” and so on. Then, of course, you’d begin to break it all down by the hour.

You felt confident. Important. Grown up somehow.

Show time! *OK, world, let’s see those dimes!* But then...

Much to your confusion, the cars would *not* stop. There would *not* be a waiting line that was impossible to keep up with. The can would *not* be getting full. And then your aunt would stop by. Or your grandmother. Or a neighbor. And your mom would suggest that you make the sign bigger with darker letters. Or that maybe if you smiled and waved and didn’t look quite so dejected, that might do the trick.

You'd inevitably give in and drink some of the profits away as the afternoon wore on. *How are all these people not as hot as I am? How are they able to resist my lemonade?* you'd think, never quite aware that the ice had all melted by now, and that the lemonade was diluted and warm.

But then — once in a while — someone would stop. A stranger. A *real live* customer. And you'd get your game face on, and sit up a little straighter, and say "Hello!" instead of "Hi." And you'd pour him a brimming, shaking cup of your warm, iceless lemonade. And instead of a dime, he'd produce a whole *dollar!* And you'd thank him and offer him more lemonade, which he'd refuse and tell you that you'd need it for other customers, and that he was sure this was the time of day when most people really got the hankering for lemonade. And you'd wave after him as he drove away. Then you'd grin at your dollar, wide eyed. And you'd refill that pitcher and add some more ice and wipe your brow. By gum, you were back in it!

**THE BEST ADVICE SO FAR:
Never pass a lemonade stand
without stopping.**

I've made it my goal to be *that guy*. The guy who always stops, whether he is thirsty or not. The guy who saves the day. Who gives the whole dollar (and sometimes a five) with a wink and tells them how terribly

thirsty he was, and that he really didn't know what he would have done had they not had that lemonade stand.

The ability to take someone else's perspective goes beyond literature and lemonade stands. It's a conscious choice to really *see* the others around us. To value them. To empathize. And to engage.

A me-centered life is a lonely and strangely unsatisfying one. Self is never satisfied. The more we feed it, the hungrier it gets.

On the other hand, choosing to adopt more others-centered attitudes and actions connects us, bringing with it a sense of joy, belonging and purpose.

It's Memorial Day weekend. Summer is here. Be on the lookout for the lemonade stands near you.

And stop.

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APPENDIX

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

Chapter 39: Lemonade

1. What adjectives come to mind when you consider the thought of (or actually see) kids running a lemonade stand?
2. Simple question: do you stop? If you do not tend to stop, what sort of mental dialog goes on as you pass by, if any?
3. This chapter is about more than deciding to stop at lemonade stands. What do you think the bigger ideas of this chapter are meant to be?