

Feel Good English

Nice Guys
Finish First
"Give and
Take" by Adam
Grant

Episode #93

Full Transcript

Hello there Kevin here with another episode of the feel good English podcast.

The only podcast out there, as far as I know anyway, that's helping you become a more fluent English speaker, by listening to lessons based on the best nonfiction books.

Books on business, success, relationships, feeling good, feeling great.

Today I'm going to give you a few ideas on a book called "Give and Take. Why helping others drives our success." This book is by Adam Grant, who is a professor at a very prestigious business school.

And in this book, the author argues that success depends on how we approach our interactions with others. So how we approach others, how we deal with other people is very, very important.

Going to talk about a few ideas from this book. If you want a transcript to this episode, go to feelgoodenglish.com where you will find out how to get transcripts to this and all the other episodes from the podcast.

So after the episode I will see you are feelgoodEnglish.com, but first let's get into the lessons on "Give and Take" by Adam Grant.

So let's first talk about, a taker, what kind of person is a taker? Well according to the book, takers are **self-centred**. They only focus on what benefits they can get from others, **what's in it for them**. People that basically only care about themselves. These people are takers. Everywhere they go, everything they do is about what benefits can they get out of the situation. Often when they talk, they promote themselves

talking about I, me, my, as opposed to we, ours. So do you know people that are always just talking about what's theirs, what they are doing, versus somebody who talks about what the group is doing or what is ours.

They might also **flatter** people to get ahead, to flatter is to talk good about somebody else, to make somebody else feel good, so they can eventually get ahead of this person. Somebody who is very good at making another person feel good earns that trust and then they smoothly and cleverly go past that person.

So why are these people so selfish? Why do they act like this? Well according to the author, they view the world as a competitive place. They think life is a ruthless game, where you need to get everything you want only helping others if it's going to benefit you. So thinking about it I'm sure you can think of somebody in your life who is a taker. Often we look up to these people. We think they're valuable because they might have a lot of money or they have a good position, a good job, and again I'm just talking about the book, not really judging right or wrong. Most people would probably say selfish people are wrong but sometimes it does take this competitiveness to move ahead, even though a lot of takers are bad we also have takers that are not evil, not corrupt. Think of athletes that do really well, often they are focused on their own game because they are so good, they're the ones that make the points, that score the shots. You give them the ball, they'll take it all the way down the field and shoot the goal, because often they make it. To be as successful as they have been, they do need to be selfish sometimes, but in general a taker is somebody who thinks there is a limited amount available of whatever that may be to everyone, so they have to work really really hard to get the most out of every situation.

Next idea, a giver, what's a giver? Well givers are driven by the desire to help others and to create success for the group. Isn't it great when somebody goes out of their way to help you? They don't really have anything in it for them. They're not expecting a benefit but they still **go out of their way** to give you something, to help you, to make you feel better, to help move you ahead. Well these are givers.

A basic trait of a giver is somebody who gives more than they get. It's pretty obvious. They're generous with their time, with their resources, with their money. They remain focused to provide value for other people. They get rewards by helping others because it makes them feel good. So can you think of a giver in your life, are you a giver? Somebody who constantly goes out of their way to help you.

There's also something called a **matcher**. Now a matcher is in-between, in the middle and this is a fair exchange basically. I'll do something for you if you do something for me. They make sure they keep a balance of how much they've given and how much they've received. "**Tit for tat**" is an expression here. You ever heard the expression tit for tat. A tit for a tat just means, this for that, this for that. I'll give you this if you give me that.

Matchers in general try to be fair with everybody. They don't judge as much. I would definitely consider myself a matcher. I like to help but I also don't want to feel that I'm always giving everything away. I like to feel that there's a balance within relationships. I also feel uncomfortable if I feel that I'm giving too much and not getting enough back or vice versa. I probably feel even more uncomfortable when I feel somebody is helping me too much. They're giving me a lot of help, doing a lot for me and I'm not able or not willing to give as much back, then I wouldn't say this is necessarily a good thing. I think it's important to be able to receive and to get help, and also to let other people help you sometimes. People feel good about helping and if you don't let them help you, well they won't feel good. That's not good, this is the most logical way between the three. Not give too much, not take too much, we match humans as being safe, logical, rational. This is where most of us would fall and this is the most common in business as well right. You have a product or a service, you give an equal amount of payment for that service. So there's a match there.

So now a few reasons why givers move so far ahead, kind of changing

our mentality of, do we need to always be equal in everything we do or can we give more than we take? According to the book givers often achieve top positions in society because they focus on the greater good. The greater good meaning the overall good, the good for everybody. Many people think that taking is more effective than giving in achieving professional success. Competitive at work, **cutthroat** is a word here, something, if you have a cut throat precision. If you have a cutthroat profession that means everybody is trying to cut each other's throat to get ahead. That's not fun, but a smart giver, often succeeds even more in a situation.

Thinking of this maybe you know somebody at work or at school or just in your life that was always very generous with people, always helping. Now they had goals, they had things they wanted to accomplish but they weren't selfish with these goals. They were very helpful and they always supported the team, other people and behind that was hard work of course. And eventually they got ahead. They got to the top. I think what this creates is a network of people that really support this person. If somebody is nice to everybody, they'll have a lot of people behind them supporting them. Most people aren't this way. Most of us want a giver around. We feel good with these people.

Some givers **are taken advantage of**, of course. They give too much but the ones that are focused on a goal, they have their target in mind, yet are able to support other people on the path to this target, often **end up being** very successful.

Something you can do to implement this is always think of who can do something better than you can. If people are looking for a service or job, maybe you know somebody who can do it better than you. So you recommend this person and this person gets some work, some help. They'll remember you of course. And so in the future this could be **reciprocal**, reciprocal meaning they will help you out in the future too. People remember these good deeds.

We often worry that we're never going to succeed if we include other people in our plans. However I believe it and according to the book,

successful givers cultivate and use their networks to benefit others as well as themselves.

Last idea I'm going to talk about here is about *power less communication*. Powerless communication puts givers at a powerful advantage, a lot of power going on here. Recent studies in the book have shown that instead of being very aggressive and assertive with your language we can succeed by communicating in a powerless way. Powerless just means focusing on the other person, asking questions, seeking advice from the other person, as opposed to only giving advice yourself. Being **domineering**, talking about yourself, only giving advice can **evoke** resistance in the other person. They are a little intimidated by you or they don't feel really good around you and if they don't feel good around you they probably won't want to be around you very much, correct? So being powerless, giving the attention to the other person helps them feel better. This is very cool. I've talked about this in other podcast episodes, but focus on the other person when you're talking about them. Let them feel important when they're around you and they will help you become important in the future. Bam that was a **slick** phrase there, huh?

And one thing behind this is if you bring others in, if you show them care about their ideas and their needs. They will trust you more, they'll come to you more often. So instead of forcing your demands on others, it creates a more receptiveness in the people that you have in your network. And it persuades others to be more open to you, which helps you do what you want more in the future, correct?

So some of the basic ideas from this book, a taker somebody who takes. They think there's only so much of any resource that they need to get as much as they can. Very common in today's society, people want more more more more, greed. Do you know what greed is, greed? **Greed** is one of the seven deadly sins and I think it will be the downfall of the human

race, or what makes us fail if that happens, wanting more more more.

Personally I've seen the highest up positions, the people at the top of the company are usually very generous, very giving and the ones under them, not as much. Interesting thing I've noticed. Givers, givers want to help others, they see fulfilment in making sure others get their chance too, when they do this intelligently they get very far.

Most of us however are matchers, we like a fair balance, "tit for tat."

So what do we do? Action step for the day, focus on powerless communication focus, on giving the power in a conversation to the other person, that's how you can give today, give this week. Give them the attention, give them the stage, give them the **soapbox**, meaning they can stand on a soapbox and talk, so they'll feel better around you, so they'll trust you, so they'll reciprocate these feelings to you in the future.

That will do it for today's episode. Thank you so much for listening. All those givers and takers and matchers out there.

If you're a taker, thanks for taking the time to listen to the episode.

If you're a giver, thanks for giving me your time today.

And if you're a matcher, well I don't really know how to answer that one. Maybe, yeah I don't know, any way until the next episode stay happy.

Give a little bit, give a little bit of your love to me.

Bye bye!