

Monday Morning Choices: Powerful Ways to Go from Everyday to Extraordinary

DAVID COTTRELL. Collins, \$19.95
(188p) ISBN 978-0-06-145191-1

Leadership consultant Cottrell's latest best packs a positive punch in surprisingly few pages. Though Cottrell (*Monday Morning Mentoring*), president and CEO of CornerStone Leadership Institute, focuses on states of mind that most people should ideally be aiming to attain, each chapter feels like a life lesson learned anew. On reading that one should not remain in a victim mindset, it becomes clear how easy it is to descend into that "why me?" state of mind and readers are motivated to start thinking differently. This first choice sets the stage for a string of positive choices that Cottrell divides into character choices, action choices and investment choices, which include commitment to your goals and taking action instead of saying something. Presented in short sections with lots of bullet points, Cottrell's advice sometimes reads like a gallery of motivational posters: "Choose commitment! don't beat yourself up for falling short!", sensible if not original. According to Cottrell, the way one experiences life can easily be controlled by mind and power alone. Hopefully, the reader won't be inclined to put off following his advice. (Jan.)

Freeing Yourself from the Narcissist in Your Life

ANDREA MARTINEZ-LEWIS. Tarcher, \$13.95 (256p) ISBN 978-1-58542-624-9

This book's title makes a promise it doesn't keep. Martinez-Lewis, a marriage and family therapist, devotes more space to describing what she calls the "classic high-level narcissist": charming, manipulative, needing to maintain a facade of perfection and power. But one can't always free oneself from narcissists (work, for instance) except emotionally, which is the focus of her advice, when she gets to it. For the first 160-odd pages, the reader is treated to a melodramatic, vitriolic and metaphor-heavy ("we have been through the forests and thickets of the inner and outer world of the narcissistic personality") outpouring of loathing for these "impossible" people. The juiciest parts

of the book describe historical figures such as Ayn Rand, Pablo Picasso and Frank Lloyd Wright as prisoners of their own narcissistic personalities. As for her plan to free oneself from narcissists, she makes it sound more like a battle plan than self-help, involving guerrilla, spy-counterspy and cat-and-mouse strategies. In the end, it amounts to being true to yourself and practicing meditation to stay grounded. (Jan.)

Comeback: Conservatism That Can Win Again

DAVID FRUM. Doubleday, \$26 (272p)
ISBN 978-0-385-51533-7

In his new book, Frum (*The Right Man*), former speechwriter to President Bush, offers a conservative blueprint for accommodating challenges central to the next half-century of American life. Drawing on his expert knowledge of domestic politics and foreign policy, Frum argues that Republicans need to evolve with the times in order to win American hearts, minds and elections. After staking out viably conservative positions on the country's most salient political battles such as health care, education, the economy, foreign policy, embryonic stem cell research, taxation and the like, Frum proposes a grand taxation strategy. In lieu of taxes that stifle investment and free enterprise, Frum's platform relies on consumption taxation. His approach aims to accommodate domestic spending obligations such as social security while remaining pro-growth. By aiming taxes at upper-class consumers, Frum takes a provocative, politically challenging stance. The book rebukes the president Frum once called the right man and sets a challenging new course of action for the GOP. (Dec. 31)

It's Not About the Coffee: Leadership Principles from a Life at Starbucks

HOWARD BEHAR WITH JANET
GOLDSTEIN. Portfolio, \$19.95 (173p)
ISBN 978-1-59184-192-0

After a working life spent building Starbucks from a chain of 28 stores to an international coffee business through positions such as executive vice president of sales, founding president of

Starbucks International and president of Starbucks North America, Howard Behar tells of the strategies he used to establish the business into the success it is today. Behar shares the soft skills that helped to construct the company from a regional outlet to a corporation with international reach. While the book occasionally brings in examples from other companies, sharing anecdotes from Starbucks itself is Behar's strong suit. The most interesting sections involve stories behind products readers may know from their own visits to the coffee retailer. Thoughts behind the bottled Frappuccino product's launch or the "have it the way you like it" approach to beverage making are revealed. While revolutionary ideas are outnumbered by more standard good business practices, the voice of experience and in-house examples from a popular company make for a decent read for those wanting to develop or refresh basic business leadership skills. (Dec. 27)

CORRECTION

A Q&A with Bob Delaney (Oct. 29) identified the coauthor of *Covert* as Bill Walton. The book's coauthor is Dave Scheiber; Walton wrote the foreword.

RELIGION

Abraham's Curse: Child Sacrifice in the Legacies of the West

BRUCE CHILTON. Doubleday, \$24.95
(263p) ISBN 978-0-385-52027-0

In this thought-provoking study, Bard College professor Chilton (*Rabbi Jesus*) asks how the Abrahamic faiths have understood Genesis 22, the story of the binding of Isaac. All three religions include a strand of interpretation that reads the binding of Isaac as valorizing the sacrifice of human life. Some rabbinic texts, for example, suggest that Abraham did in fact nick Isaac's neck, shedding the boy's blood, and that Isaac offers a model for "the necessary readiness for martyrdom." Christianity has seen Isaac as prefiguring Jesus' crucifixion, and Christians, too, find in both these sacrificial stories an approval of martyrdom. In Islam, Chilton finds a range of interpretations, some of which

gradually move from aggressive, only preventing violence through means to underwrite finds within sacred texts that God demands sacrifice over violent funerals, overlook the cues from reality to favor humanity yet another historical account.

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