

FOREWORD BY PATRICK LENCIONI AND MATTHEW KELLY

GREATER *Than* YOURSELF

The Ultimate Lesson
of *True Leadership*



STEVE FARBER

BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *The Radical Leap*

PART I

by Patrick Lencioni

Author of *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*

The most memorable sports event of my youth occurred when I was in fifth grade during the one-mile run at the regional Junior Olympics. I'll never forget the exhilaration I felt at winning against the odds, and the joy that our entire family experienced that day.

I went on to have lots of athletic successes—scoring runs, making baskets, winning races. I even went on to run track competitively in college. But there was something about those Junior Olympics that stands out in my mind. It has to do with the fact that it wasn't me running the race that day, but my big brother, Vince.

There is something about watching someone you admire and love succeed that surpasses the feelings of satisfaction that come from your own success. This is at the heart of the practice that Steve Farber calls Greater Than Yourself, and as I've grown older, I've come to understand it more and more.

That is not to say that I'm unappreciative of my own accomplishments. I am thankful to God and feel truly blessed

that I have been able to experience some success as an author, speaker, and consultant, and to have an impact on people in ways that I could not have imagined earlier in my career. But it wasn't until I met a young man named Matthew that I realized the power of lifting someone else above me, someone, I believed, whose mission and potential exceeded my own.

Years ago I was working with an executive team in Minnesota, and after the two-day session one of the team members asked me if I had heard of a young Australian author named Matthew Kelly. When I admitted that I hadn't, he recommended that I check him out.

Now, I get many recommendations from clients and friends, but because of my hectic work and home schedule, and the fact that I spend a lot of time writing books of my own, I don't often follow up. But for some reason, this recommendation seemed different.

So I ordered one of Matthew Kelly's books, read it a few weeks after it arrived, and had my world turned upside down. For the next nine months I thought about calling Matthew personally to tell him how much his book meant to me, and to see what kind of guy he was. It took nine months for me to make that call because I secretly feared that he might not be the person I imagined him to be—how could he be? Nonetheless, I finally made the call and learned that Matthew was familiar with my books, and had read one of them and used it with his team. He had even called his agent at the time and said that he wanted to write a book with me someday! That blew me away.

Next, I decided to hear Matthew speak, so I arranged to travel to another city to attend one of his talks. Until that

point in my life I had never done anything like that—not for a concert or a football game, and certainly not to hear someone give a lecture. I mean, that’s what *I* do for a living. And with three kids at home and another on the way, how could I justify such a trip?

But I went, with my wife’s blessing, and found myself overcome with enthusiasm for Matthew and his message. This made little sense to me at the time. After all, Matthew was younger than me by almost eight years. And he was speaking to a relatively small, unsophisticated audience, in a smaller, less sophisticated venue than I was used to working in. And yet, what he was saying and the way he was saying it made it clear to me that I had to help him in whatever way I could. So when his talk was over, I threw on one of those vendor’s aprons and joined his staff selling his books to attendees at the event. And it was wonderful!

I remember telling my wife when I went home the next day that I think that one of God’s purposes for me in my life was to help people get to know Matthew Kelly and his work. Then she read his books and understood why.

Well, then came my next big Matthew Kelly experience. I decided to bring Matthew Kelly to my town to speak. And so, for the next three or four months, I went around the area talking to people and handing out flyers and networking with anyone who would listen about Matthew and the power of his message. I worked harder at that event than I did at my own job, and worried about it more, too.

When Matthew came, he addressed a truly packed house, caused a traffic jam on the freeway leading to the venue, and changed more than a thousand people’s lives with his talk. As

that talk ended and he went to sign books (which is what I'm usually doing in situations like that), I felt a sense of purpose and accomplishment and joy that I had never experienced before in my own lectures and speeches.

Next, I introduced Matthew to the organizers of a conference where I speak. Based on my enthusiasm for him and his message, they reviewed his tape and decided to include him in their next conference. What an amazing experience for me, to be speaking at the same event with my friend Matthew.

Well, Matthew and I both gave our regular talks at the conference. And during the break as we walked out into the lobby, people streamed right past me to tell Matthew what a wonderful job he did. And you know how that made me feel? Strangely enough, exhilarated.

How could this be? How could I feel such a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction helping someone who was younger than I was, and in many ways lesser known, achieve more recognition and attention than I did? How could I want someone else to be greater than myself? As much as we like to believe that we are capable of such actions, I have to admit that I was surprised by it all.

But as I look back at my life, at the people I've rooted for harder than myself, I recognize what it is that makes this all possible. First, I have to love the person; I loved my brother. Part of loving other people has to do with admiring them, seeing qualities and skills and talents in them that, objectively speaking, surpass my own. My brother was a better runner than me. And then I have to believe that what they are doing is more important than what I am doing. My brother was representing our family in a world where we were novices.

He was the only runner on the track that day at the Junior Olympics without spikes; we were unknown to most of the people there.

Matthew Kelly is speaking and writing about topics that are eternally more important than my own. He has an ability to see and describe those topics in ways that I cannot. And through the last few years, I have come to love Matthew as a friend.

This book is going to challenge you to find your own Greater Than Yourself relationships—to invest in another person in a way that raises him or her above yourself. At first it may seem counterintuitive, maybe even unnatural, but I encourage you to set aside your preconceived notions of success and accomplishments and throw yourself wholeheartedly into the GTY endeavor, as I've done with Matthew. Soon you'll find yourself asking very different questions about the relationships in your life, at work and at home.

For me, I've come to realize that the question I ask myself shouldn't be "How can I want someone else to be greater than myself, and how can I be more enthusiastic about someone else's work and career than about my own?" The question should be "How can I not?"

PART II

by Matthew Kelly

*Author of *The Dream Manager**

By the time Pat Lencioni came into my life, I had been speaking and writing successfully for more than a decade; sadly, I had become used to people wanting things from me. Pat's

genuine lack of self-interest, combined with his overwhelming desire to help me pursue and fulfill my destiny in this life, were incredibly refreshing and disarming from the very beginning. It is the kind of relationship that restores your faith in humanity, and the future that might be possible for our children and grandchildren.

Just reading what Pat has written in this foreword is humbling. But actually experiencing the relationship he has described has been one of the great lessons of my life.

The question I would like to ponder with you is this. What makes someone capable of a Greater Than Yourself relationship? The answer we find alive and well in the life and person of Pat Lencioni.

To be capable of a Greater Than Yourself relationship, you need two things: (1) humility, and (2) a firm and evolving sense of who you are and what you are here for. Pat has both, although I doubt you'll ever hear him describe himself that way.

The truth, though, is that many people don't have the foggiest idea about their sense of self. Too many of us spend too much of our lives pretending to be someone we are not, or trying to be someone we think others want us to be. And humility, well, that is about the rarest thing on earth today, and yet it is the single thing that is most effective at tearing down the prejudices and biases that separate us. Humility is the key to all personal and interpersonal unity.

The paradox, and it seems there always is one, is that you can best acquire these abilities by dedicating yourself to a GTY relationship. The most effective way to learn and grow is to go out and actually do the very things we are trying to learn.

There is one more powerful insight that my relationship with Pat has taught me. My initial reaction to Pat's enthusiastic support, and his selfless contribution to my life and work, was to want to do something for him. I wanted to repay him. I wanted to give to him in the measure he had given to me. Over time I realized that I was acting from the wrong relationship paradigm. Today I am looking for the person that I am called to have a Greater Than Myself relationship with, someone I can devote myself to in the way Pat has done with me. That, I've come to realize, is the very best way I can "repay" him.

Most relationships in life and in business are based upon a mutual give and take. But a GTY relationship goes way beyond this social norm. And in doing so, it promises to raise every person, situation, and organization to a new level.

So read this book, and then live this book. I think both Steve and Pat would agree with me that too many books are written, too many books are read, and too few books are lived. Please don't make that mistake with *Greater Than Yourself*.

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