



Making Change: Tips From an Underage Overachiever.

Bilaal Rajan.
Victoria, BC: Orca, 2008.
153 pp., pbk., \$12.95.
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Subject Heading:
Fund raising-Juvenile literature.

Grades 5 and up / Ages 10 and up.

Review by Lizanne Eastwood.

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excerpt:

No matter what kind of fundraising you are doing, many people will say no to you. This can be very disheartening. The very first thing you need to understand is that it is not directed at your personally. If you take people's negative responses to heart, you will want to give up after the first couple of times it happens. When people say no, they are saying no to the opportunity to donate. They are not saying no to you. Fundraising is much like sales. In the sales world, it is commonly known that it takes ten NO'S to get a YES. When you look at it this way, it can help to think of every NO as being one NO closer to your next YES.

Although *Making Change* is classified Juvenile, there is so much information here that would be relevant for adults looking for inspiration for their fundraising projects. Bilaal Rajan, a young student from Ontario, started his fundraising efforts at the age of four and has achieved more in his young life than many adults who have made a career out of being a professional fundraiser. His story is so interesting. His early passions and concerns for the plight of the world's children became an opportunity for change. He started by selling clementines to help children affected by an earthquake in India. He raised \$350.00. With each subsequent fundraising effort, he connected with more people, raised more dollars for a variety of causes and is now Canada's Child Representative for UNICEF. Bilaal is an inspiration to anyone who cares about making the world a better place.

The book is divided into two parts, with the first being Fundraising Tips for Activist Kids. The chapters in Part 1 cover topics such as: You Can Do Amazing Things, Get Creative, Think Big, Strength in Numbers, Don't Take No for an Answer, Media Makes the Difference, Public Speaking, Other Ways to Give and Seeing is Believing. Bilaal tells about the different causes he undertook, the different organizations that became involved in his projects and the skills involved in raising people's awareness and opening their pocketbooks. He is humble, smart, hardworking, respectful and an example both to adults and children alike. As I said earlier, although the book focuses on

guiding youth in their fundraising efforts, adults could also learn much.

The second half of the book reads more like a Self-help book. It is called Eight Principals to Maximize your Potential and includes the following Principals: Know your Destination, Think Before You Act, Listen Hard, Don't Hardly Listen, IOU - Importance Over Urgency, Strength in Numbers, Practice A No Lose Policy, Give Yourself a Tune Up and Visualize Success. None of the information in this section is new, but it will be inspiring to kids who like to organize their lives and plan for their futures. I quite liked the charts and journal pages included which ask readers to think about their goals, their relationships, what is working in their life, how they can fix what isn't working, and, most importantly, consider what they are grateful for. I have always felt that gratitude journals are an easy and effective way to bolster self-esteem and become a happier person. Our potential is unlimited, and Bilaal helps to show us the way.

The book is full of photos of Bilaal involved in fundraising efforts around the world. He has met with world leaders, attended workshops with Deepak Chopra, Tony Robinson and Craig and Mark Keilberger and has played soccer with kids in Malawi. His association with author Canadian author Eric Walters helped to make this book a reality. Bilaal's Reading List at the end of the book offers an inspiring array of books that helped this amazing young man on his journey to make the world a more caring and compassionate place.

Highly Recommended.

Lizanne Eastwood is a Community Literacy Coordinator with the Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy, a library employee and a home schooling parent of two active teenagers in Grand Forks, BC.