



# Humility: The Quiet Virtue

*Everett L. Worthington*

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Humility is a virtue that can be difficult to describe because of its paradoxical nature: claiming authority about humility and claiming that one is humble both suggest a lack of humility. In *Humility*, Everett L. Worthington Jr. seeks a way around this paradox by looking to people who are considered by others to be humble. He suggests people as examples: Jesus, Siddhartha, Gandhi, Mother Teresa, and Martin Luther King Jr. He looks, too, at people whom he admires. He examines the characteristics of humility they share, and, in doing so, formulates a working understanding of humility.

Science has made few attempts to measure humility, Worthington points out, but those few studies do give a different, but complementary, perspective on humility than the wisdom of the ages. Humility may not be a skill we can learn, but people can be inspired to be humble. "Great people—and ordinary people acting nobly—can inspire us," Worthington writes. "When we catch the spirit, we can transfer that spirit from ourselves to others." Quotations interspersed throughout the book reinforce the message that the unassuming virtue of humility transforms lives.

"Of some thoughts one stands perplexed—especially at the sign of men's sin—and wonders whether one should use force or humble love. Always decide to use humble love. If you resolve on that, once and for all, you may subdue the whole world. Loving humility is marvelously strong, and strongest of all things, and there is nothing else like it."—**Fyodor Dostoyevsky**

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