

Book review



Pay It Forward

A novel

Category: Book Reviews / Fiction

Author: Catherine Ryan Hyde

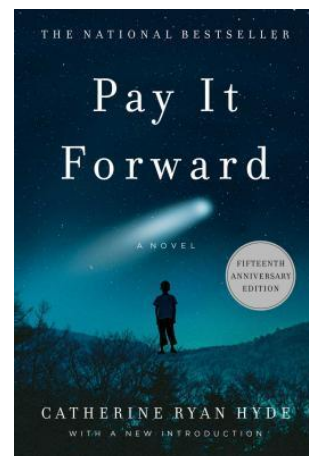
Year: 2014

Publisher: Simon & Schuster, US

ISBN: 9781476796383

Audience: For Community

Summary: Outlining the philosophy of effective altruism



Twelve-year-old Trevor didn't know how easy it was to change the world. One night, Trevor is driving through a rough neighbourhood. It's the middle of the night and he worries if he will survive the night. The car catches fire and he jumps out of the burning car. Two men sprint towards him and he is frightened – the men bravely put the fire out and then they disappear. That experience makes Trevor realise the best way to give back to those men who helped him was to do the same to others in need.

A new teacher arrives at Trevor's school and that teacher changes everything, including Trevor. His teacher asks if he would like to do an assignment on changing the world. Trevor's idea of paying it forward spreads from California and becomes internationally famous.

Trevor's idea is simple: do a good deed for three people, and instead of asking them to return the favour, ask them to pay it forward to three others who need help. Trevor passed out a small message which became huge and changed the world. Small things can make a huge difference.

His amazing idea means he meets the US president. Trevor is determined to see the light and good inside everyone, even though the world may not always seem too kind.

Reviewed by 11-year-old Kiwa Tipene-Weneti, Chisnallwood Intermediate School, Christchurch

The Mental Health Foundation's Resource and Information Service brings you book reviews fortnightly. To view more go to www.mentalhealth.org.nz/books