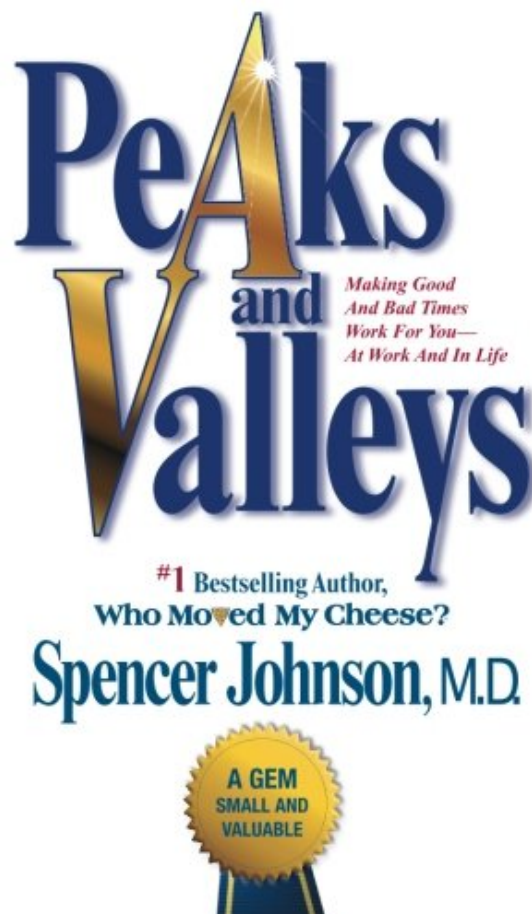


**PEAKS AND VALLEYS: MAKING GOOD AND  
BAD TIMES WORK FOR YOU--AT WORK  
AND IN LIFE BY SPENCER JOHNSON M.D.**



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# Peaks and Valleys

*Making Good  
And Bad Times  
Work For You—  
At Work And In Life*

**#1** Bestselling Author,  
Who Moved My Cheese?

**Spencer Johnson, M.D.**



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**Peaks And Valleys: Making Good And Bad Times Work For You--At Work And In Life By Spencer Johnson M.D.** Let's review! We will frequently locate out this sentence everywhere. When still being a youngster, mommy utilized to order us to constantly read, so did the instructor. Some books Peaks And Valleys: Making Good And Bad Times Work For You--At Work And In Life By Spencer Johnson M.D. are fully read in a week and also we require the responsibility to assist reading Peaks And Valleys: Making Good And Bad Times Work For You--At Work And In Life By Spencer Johnson M.D. Exactly what around now? Do you still like reading? Is checking out just for you that have commitment? Definitely not! We here offer you a new publication entitled Peaks And Valleys: Making Good And Bad Times Work For You--At Work And In Life By Spencer Johnson M.D. to review.

From Publishers Weekly

John Dossett's crisp and polished delivery is a natural fit for Johnson's no-nonsense style of motivational storytelling. Dossett chooses to understate the pathos, projecting a tone of wistful contemplation instead of heavy drama. Both the story and the narrative within the story surround dialogue between a weary day-to-day corporate warrior and a seasoned sage who offers a broader perspective on our familiar notions of success, achievement and happiness. In light of the current economic climate, listeners will find the messages timely, even if the paradigm shifts may not seem especially original. As an added bonus, the audio book includes an interview with the author sharing how he strives to keep the public focused on his message instead of elevating him into a celebrity business guru. A Simon and Schuster hardcover. (Mar.)

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About the Author

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Before The Story

Early one rainy evening in New York, Michael Brown hurried to meet someone a friend had said might help him deal with a difficult time he was having. As he entered the small café, he had no way of knowing how valuable the next few hours would be.

When he saw Ann Carr, he was surprised. He had heard she had been through some tough times herself and expected it to show on her. But she seemed upbeat and full of energy.

After some preliminary conversation, he said, "You look like you're in a good place, despite the bad times I understand you've been through."

She said, "I am in a good place, both in my work and in my life. But it's not in spite of the bad times. It's because of them -- and how I learned to take advantage of them."

Michael was puzzled. "How so?" he asked.

"Well, for example, at work I thought our department was doing fine, but in reality we weren't. We'd been successful, but we'd become complacent. By the time we realized it, other companies were doing much better than we were. My boss became very unhappy with me.

"That's when I started feeling low, and the pressure to improve things in a hurry began. Each day became more stressful."

Michael asked, "So, what happened?"

She answered, "I heard a story last year from someone at work I respected. It changed how I looked at good and bad times, and what I do now is very different. The story helped me to be calmer and more successful, whether things are going well or not, even in my personal life. I'll never forget it!"

"What was the story?" he asked.

Ann was quiet for a moment, and then said, "Would it be all right if I asked why you would like to know about it?"

Michael reluctantly admitted that he was not feeling very secure in his job, and things were not going so well for him at home.

He didn't need to say any more. She felt his embarrassment, and said, "You sound like you need to hear the story as much as I did."

Ann said she would tell Michael the story with the understanding that if he found it valuable, he would share it with others. He agreed, and Ann prepared Michael for what he was about to hear.

She said, "I found that if you want to use the story to deal with the ups and downs that come at you, it helps if you listen with your heart and head, and fill in the story with your own experience to see what is true for you.

"The insights in the story are often repeated, although in slightly different ways."

Michael asked "Why the repetition?"

She answered, "Well, for me, it made it easier to remember them. And when I remembered the insights, I used them more."

She admitted, "I'm reluctant to change. So, I need to hear something new often enough that, at some point, it gets past my critical, distrusting mind, becomes more familiar, and touches my heart. Then it becomes a part of me.

"That's what happened after I thought a lot about the story. But you can discover that for yourself, if you like."

"Do you really think a story can make that big a difference?" Michael asked. "I'm in a pretty tough spot right now."

Ann replied, "In that case, what do you have to lose? All I can tell you is that when I applied what I got out of the story, it had a big impact."

"Some people," she cautioned, "get very little from the story, while others get a great deal!"

"It's not the story; it's what you take away from it that is so powerful. That's up to you, of course."

Michael nodded. "Okay. I think I would really like to hear it."

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She began: Copyright © 2009 by Spencer Johnson, M.D.

## 1

### Feeling Low In A Valley

Once there was a bright young man who lived unhappily in a valley, until he went to see an old man who lived on a peak. When he was younger, he had been happy in his valley. He played in its meadows and swam in its river.

The valley was all he had ever known, and he thought he would spend his whole life there.

Some days in his valley were cloudy and some were sunny, but there was a sameness to his daily routine that he found comforting.

However, as he grew older, he began to see what was wrong more often than he noticed what was right. He wondered why he had not noticed before how many things were wrong in the valley.

As time went on, the young man became increasingly unhappy, although he wasn't sure why.

He tried working at different jobs in the valley, but none turned out to be what he had hoped for.

In one job, his boss always seemed to criticize him for what he did wrong and never noticed all the things he did right.

In another, he was one of so many employees that it didn't seem to matter to anyone whether he worked hard or hardly worked at all. His contribution seemed invisible, even to himself.

Once, he thought he had finally found what he wanted. He felt appreciated and challenged, he worked with capable colleagues, and he was proud of the company's product. He worked his way up and became manager of a small department.

Unfortunately, he felt his job was not secure.

His personal life was no better. One disappointment seemed to follow another.

He thought his friends didn't understand, and his family told him he was "just going through a phase."

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For a while, he felt better.

But the more he compared the peak to his valley, the worse he felt.

He spoke to his parents and friends about going to the peak. But they talked only about how difficult it was to reach the peak, and how comfortable it was to stay in the valley.

They all discouraged him from going where they themselves had never been.

The young man loved his parents and knew there was some truth to what they said. But he also knew that he was a different person from his father and mother.

Sometimes he felt there might be a different way of life outside the valley, and he wanted to discover it for himself. Maybe on the peak he could gain a better view of the world.

But then doubt and fear crept in again, and he thought he would stay where he was.

For a long time the young man could not bring himself to leave his valley.

Then one day, he recalled his early youth and realized how much had changed since then. He was no longer at peace with himself.

He wasn't sure why he changed his mind, but he suddenly decided he had to go visit that mountaintop.

He put his fear aside and got ready to leave as quickly as he could. Then, he set out for the nearby peak.

It was not an easy journey. It took him much longer than he thought it would to make it less than halfway up the peak.

But as the young man went higher, the cool breeze and fresh air revitalized him. From higher up, his valley looked smaller.

When he had been down in the valley, the air seemed clean enough. But when he viewed the valley from above, he saw the pale brown stagnant air that was trapped there.

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From the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Who Moved My Cheese?*, a brilliant new parable that shows readers how to stay calm and successful, even in the most challenging of environments.

A young man lives unhappily in a valley. One day he meets an old man who lives on a mountain peak. At first the young man doesn't realize that he is talking to one of the most peaceful and successful people in the world. But in the course of further encounters and conversations, the young man comes to understand that he can apply the old man's remarkable principles and practical tools to his own life to change it for the better. Spencer Johnson knows how to tell a deceptively simple story that teaches deep lessons. The *One Minute Manager* (co-written with Ken Blanchard) sold 15 million copies and stayed on the New York Times bestseller list for more than twenty years. Since it was published a decade ago, *Who Moved My Cheese?* has sold more than 25 million copies. In fact there are more than 46 million copies of Spencer Johnson's books in print, in forty-seven languages—and with today's economic uncertainty, his new book could not be more relevant. Pithy, wise, and empowering, *Peaks and Valleys* is clearly destined to become another Spencer Johnson classic.

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"Well, for example, at work I thought our department was doing fine, but in reality we weren't. We'd been successful, but we'd become complacent. By the time we realized it, other companies were doing much better than we were. My boss became very unhappy with me.

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Most helpful customer reviews

26 of 27 people found the following review helpful.

Great Story Which Leads the Reader to Some Important Truths About Life

By scsq

The first Spencer Johnson book I read was *Who Moved My Cheese*. This book follows the same formula. The reader is told a story. At points in the story the author stops and explains a self-help message, learned by one or more characters, which is relevant to the reader. A series of self-help messages (which are relevant individually or as a group) lead to a conclusion about how to make life better.

This story focuses on a man who is troubled by life. A friend tells him a story about a man, also troubled by life, who lives in a valley and makes a trek up a peak to see a wise man. The man also makes other treks up and down other peaks and valleys.

In this story the man learns that peaks and valleys are part of life. The key to living a richer life is how you perceive and address the peaks and valleys and what you learn while you are traversing the peaks and valleys.

I have found the information in Spencer Johnson's books often times to be intuitive. For instance one message in this book is "You can have fewer bad times when you appreciate and manage your good times wisely."

Yet Spencer Johnson also addresses truths that I often want to forget. One message is "The pain in a valley can wake you up to a truth you have been ignoring."

Finally Spencer Johnson always manages to come up with a couple of things I had not really thought about. For instance one message is "The path out of a valley appears when you choose to see things differently."

As mentioned these messages correspond to events in the story. Spencer Johnson is most effective when the events in the story lead the reader to the message. In fact, when he is at this best the author does not even need to state the message because the reader will get the message without having to read it.

If you liked Spencer Johnson's works before you will be pleased with Peaks and Valleys. If you have never read anything by him and you are looking for a story which leads you to key truths about life, without a bunch of analysis, then you will enjoy this work.

23 of 28 people found the following review helpful.

#### LITTLE BOOK, BIG HEART

By Roy Clark

This little, in every sense, book is 99 pages long. That's with large type, lines spaced well-apart. Reading in a rather studious manner, it was a 45 minutes read.

Read Page 90 and you'll get the whole message, only with less sentiment, sunrises, sunsets, or moist-eye mentions, in a quick 1-2-3 outline style.

A whole page? 23 words would do: If you're in a valley (a bad place), apply that experience while you envision the peak (a good place) you want to be.

PEAKS AND VALLEYS' format laces together a parable format (think sensei and grasshopper-acolyte) for passing on wisdom with loads of sentimentality ('His eyes moistened' kept repeating) and renderings of too-many too-well-worn platitudes over and over again. Far more fluff than facts.

Its platitudes are recognizable as common sense today. Or trite. Most are found in many self-help books already. There are, by Amazonian count, 30,548 such books on the racks waiting to point the way to wherever.

Say, here's a tip: Writing Successful Self-Help and How-To Books (Wiley Books for Writers Series) Written by Jean Marie Stine. I've read her very well-done book - New Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain Workbook: Guided Practice in the Five Basic Skills of Drawing There's a workbook book too. Maybe you can write a book and next for V&P will be a map.

(Oh, if you write that book and it doesn't sell, well, there's How to Heal a Broken Heart in 30 Days: A Day-by-Day Guide to Saying Good-bye and Getting On With Your Life (I actually read it. It kept its promise. Gave it 5-Stars!)

The only thing I found remarkable in P&V is that, as proclaimed on the back inside flap, Dr. Johnson's formula has sold over 46-million copies of his find happiness/ success/whatever books in 47 languages.

If you're past a ninth-grade reading level (where this book seems aimed in style and grammar), you might like a better though more challenging, sophisticated read: Just type in 'self help' in the book search window at Amazon; they have a wide variety of such books, enough to fit most-every specific need. When you search, note that many reviewers complain of the old same-old same-old repetition of advice. Sorta like P&V struck me.

I truly hate writing a negative review. So I followed a thread in the book which solicited comments and suggestions: An email address. After reading about Dr. Johnson's impressive Harvard credentials and 46,000,000 books sold in 47 languages, I asked if I missed something. Even included a copy of my review (this one is a bit revised). Alas, no reply.

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful.

Life...As A Metaphor (And So Much More!)

By Jimmy Moore from Livin' La Vida Low-Carb

If you are looking for a self-help book to get you out of your rut in your career, your relationships, and in the day-to-day of living your life, then PEAKS AND VALLEYS may just do the trick. This book gives you simple, common sense tools for surviving the low times (valleys) in your life when things may seem to be the worst while giving you the proper perspective for the good times (peaks) so you don't get too caught up in the moment. This balance and stability will serve you well in EVERY area of your life and we owe a great debt of gratitude to Dr. Spencer Johnson for imparting his life-coaching skills in such an easy-to-read, but highly profound book.

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After some preliminary conversation, he said, "You look like you're in a good place, despite the bad times I



understand you've been through."

She said, "I am in a good place, both in my work and in my life. But it's not in spite of the bad times. It's because of them -- and how I learned to take advantage of them."

Michael was puzzled. "How so?" he asked.

"Well, for example, at work I thought our department was doing fine, but in reality we weren't. We'd been successful, but we'd become complacent. By the time we realized it, other companies were doing much better than we were. My boss became very unhappy with me.

"That's when I started feeling low, and the pressure to improve things in a hurry began. Each day became more stressful."

Michael asked, "So, what happened?"

She answered, "I heard a story last year from someone at work I respected. It changed how I looked at good and bad times, and what I do now is very different. The story helped me to be calmer and more successful, whether things are going well or not, even in my personal life. I'll never forget it!"

"What was the story?" he asked.

Ann was quiet for a moment, and then said, "Would it be all right if I asked why you would like to know about it?"

Michael reluctantly admitted that he was not feeling very secure in his job, and things were not going so well for him at home.

He didn't need to say any more. She felt his embarrassment, and said, "You sound like you need to hear the story as much as I did."

Ann said she would tell Michael the story with the understanding that if he found it valuable, he would share it with others. He agreed, and Ann prepared Michael for what he was about to hear.

She said, "I found that if you want to use the story to deal with the ups and downs that come at you, it helps if you listen with your heart and head, and fill in the story with your own experience to see what is true for you.

"The insights in the story are often repeated, although in slightly different ways."

Michael asked "Why the repetition?"

She answered, "Well, for me, it made it easier to remember them. And when I remembered the insights, I used them more."

She admitted, "I'm reluctant to change. So, I need to hear something new often enough that, at some point, it gets past my critical, distrusting mind, becomes more familiar, and touches my heart. Then it becomes a part of me.

"That's what happened after I thought a lot about the story. But you can discover that for yourself, if you like."

"Do you really think a story can make that big a difference?" Michael asked. "I'm in a pretty tough spot right now."

Ann replied, "In that case, what do you have to lose? All I can tell you is that when I applied what I got out of the story, it had a big impact.

"Some people," she cautioned, "get very little from the story, while others get a great deal!

"It's not the story; it's what you take away from it that is so powerful. That's up to you, of course."

Michael nodded. "Okay. I think I would really like to hear it."

So Ann started to tell the tale over dinner, and then continued through dessert and coffee.

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## 1

### Feeling Low In A Valley

Once there was a bright young man who lived unhappily in a valley, until he went to see an old man who lived on a peak. When he was younger, he had been happy in his valley. He played in its meadows and swam in its river.

The valley was all he had ever known, and he thought he would spend his whole life there.

Some days in his valley were cloudy and some were sunny, but there was a sameness to his daily routine that he found comforting.

However, as he grew older, he began to see what was wrong more often than he noticed what was right. He wondered why he had not noticed before how many things were wrong in the valley.

As time went on, the young man became increasingly unhappy, although he wasn't sure why.

He tried working at different jobs in the valley, but none turned out to be what he had hoped for.

In one job, his boss always seemed to criticize him for what he did wrong and never noticed all the things he did right.

In another, he was one of so many employees that it didn't seem to matter to anyone whether he worked hard or hardly worked at all. His contribution seemed invisible, even to himself.

Once, he thought he had finally found what he wanted. He felt appreciated and challenged, he worked with capable colleagues, and he was proud of the company's product. He worked his way up and became manager of a small department.

Unfortunately, he felt his job was not secure.

His personal life was no better. One disappointment seemed to follow another.

He thought his friends didn't understand, and his family told him he was "just going through a phase."

The young man wondered if he would be better off someplace else.

Sometimes the young man would stand in the meadow and look up at the range of majestic peaks that rose high above his valley.

He would imagine himself standing on the nearby peak.

For a while, he felt better.

But the more he compared the peak to his valley, the worse he felt.

He spoke to his parents and friends about going to the peak. But they talked only about how difficult it was to reach the peak, and how comfortable it was to stay in the valley.

They all discouraged him from going where they themselves had never been.

The young man loved his parents and knew there was some truth to what they said. But he also knew that he was a different person from his father and mother.

Sometimes he felt there might be a different way of life outside the valley, and he wanted to discover it for himself. Maybe on the peak he could gain a better view of the world.

But then doubt and fear crept in again, and he thought he would stay where he was.

For a long time the young man could not bring himself to leave his valley.

Then one day, he recalled his early youth and realized how much had changed since then. He was no longer at peace with himself.

He wasn't sure why he changed his mind, but he suddenly decided he had to go visit that mountaintop.

He put his fear aside and got ready to leave as quickly as he could. Then, he set out for the nearby peak.

It was not an easy journey. It took him much longer than he thought it would to make it less than halfway up the peak.

But as the young man went higher, the cool breeze and fresh air revitalized him. From higher up, his valley looked smaller.

When he had been down in the valley, the air seemed clean enough. But when he viewed the valley from above, he saw the pale brown stagnant air that was trapped there.

Then he turned and continued upward. The higher he climbed, the more he could see.

Suddenly, the trail he was following ended.

With no trail to follow, he became lost among the thick trees that blocked out the light. He feared he would not find his way out.

So, he decided to cross a dangerously narrow ridge. As he did, he fell. Bruised and bleeding, he picked himself up and continued on.

Eventually, he found a new path.

The warnings of the people in the valley crossed his mind. But then he gathered his courage and kept

climbing.

The higher he went, the happier he became, knowing that he was leaving the valley and putting aside his fears.

He was on his way to someplace new.

As he rose above the clouds, he realized it was a beautiful day and imagined how the sunset would look from the summit. He could hardly wait to see it from up there. Copyright © 2009 by Spencer Johnson, M.D.

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