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**New Gallup Book
Brings Strengths Psychology to the Next Generation**

HOW FULL IS YOUR BUCKET? FOR KIDS
By Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer
Illustrated by Maurie J. Manning

New York Times bestselling author Tom Rath and early childhood expert Mary Reckmeyer bring the power of strengths psychology to the next generation in their new book **HOW FULL IS YOUR BUCKET? FOR KIDS**. The book, which will be published by Gallup Press in April, is an adaptation of Rath's #1 *New York Times* bestseller *How Full Is Your Bucket?*, which was published five years ago and has more than half a million copies in print.

The new book tells the story of young Felix, who learns that everyone has an invisible bucket. People's buckets are emptied when their feelings are hurt or when someone says mean things to them — and their buckets are filled when they give or receive praise.

With charming illustrations and a simple tale, **HOW FULL IS YOUR BUCKET? FOR KIDS** delivers the message of the power of positive words and actions to a younger audience, teaching kids that every moment matters and how each interaction they have affects their own sense of well-being and that of others.

The story begins with Felix building a tower of blocks. He is just about to complete the tower when his younger sister Anna wants to help. Of course, Felix thinks Anna is too young, and he tells her to go away and play with her baby toys. So Anna gets upset and knocks over his tower. Felix and Anna's grandfather tells Felix that he just dipped from Anna's bucket. He explains to Felix that each of us has an invisible bucket, and when it is full, we feel great; when it is empty, we feel bad. The next morning, Felix awakens to realize that he has an invisible bucket floating over his head. As Felix makes his way through the day, he begins to understand that his bucket is either emptied or replenished depending on his interactions with others. Felix notices that everyone has a bucket, and for every drop he puts in someone else's bucket, one drops in his.

The Bucket books combine more than 50 years of research into the effects of strengths psychology with a long-told story at Gallup — the Theory of the Dipper and the Bucket. This simple metaphor suggests that each person has an invisible bucket of emotions, along with a dipper, which he or she can use to either add to other people's buckets or to dip from them. In the end, research shows that filling someone else's bucket benefits both parties — the person who gave the praise and the person who received it.

At the core of the book is decades of Gallup research started by the late Donald O. Clifton, dubbed the Father of Strengths Psychology by the American Psychological Association. It was Clifton's life work to promote a positive culture in workplaces, schools, and homes, and this new book is the latest effort to achieve that goal.

HOW FULL IS YOUR BUCKET? FOR KIDS provides a great teaching tool through its practical, real-life examples of the importance of words and actions in our everyday lives.

Tom Rath is the author of the #1 *New York Times* bestseller *How Full Is Your Bucket?*, the #1 *Wall Street Journal* bestseller *StrengthsFinder 2.0*, and the *New York Times* bestseller *Strengths Based Leadership*. Rath lives with his wife and daughter in Washington, D.C., where he leads Gallup's workplace research and consulting worldwide. **Mary Reckmeyer, Ph.D.**, is a former preschool and elementary school teacher who holds degrees in educational psychology and education. She is Executive Director of the Donald O. Clifton Child Development Center, which has received national acclaim for excellence in early childhood education. Reckmeyer lives in Lincoln, Nebraska, with her husband and four children. **Maurie J. Manning** is an author/illustrator whose work was most recently seen in *Kitchen Dance* (Clarion, October 2008).

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An interview with Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer
Authors of
HOW FULL IS YOUR BUCKET? FOR KIDS

Q: Donald Clifton had a goal for children in mind when he began his strengths psychology research more than 50 years ago. Can you tell us about that?

A: Don recognized that children enter this world as individuals. We each have our own set of personality constellations, and people grow in response to others. Too often, the focus with children is on weaknesses or what's wrong. We try to fix kids by "rounding them out" so that they are okay at everything. Don's approach was to give them happiness, well-being, self-confidence, and resilience. The ability to deal with life's hard knocks comes by knowing what your strengths are. Similarly, a full bucket gives you a different lens for the world and for how you treat others.

Q: What was your inspiration to adapt this particular book — *How Full Is Your Bucket?*— into a version for children?

A: When we released the original edition of *How Full Is Your Bucket?*, what was most striking to me was how rapidly this basic concept was adopted in classrooms across the United States. There were literally thousands of teachers, parents — and in many cases, entire schools and districts — who dedicated their entire year to some type of "bucket filling" theme based the adult version of the book. Because of the overwhelming response we received from parents and teachers who were asking for a "kids' version," we decided to move forward on this edition of the story.

Q: Were there any particular challenges in adapting the *Dipper and Bucket* story for children?

A: Interestingly, the basic story actually lends itself to an adaptation for children even more than for adults. I have noticed that in some cases, kids seem to intuitively grasp the concept a bit quicker than adults.

Bringing this to life in a story, set within the context of what Felix was able to learn in a single day, was a much larger challenge. We spent a great deal of time working through the details of each scene in the story. Getting each illustration right was a major challenge, but we were fortunate to work with a brilliant illustrator (Maurie Manning) who was willing to be collaborative in this process. She also helped us to develop the narrative to fit the illustrations and characters.

The biggest challenge was bringing the story down in size — to a length that meets children's attention spans. There are so many verbal illustrations in the original story that would resonate with kids, and yet we needed to make it come alive and share the message in 30 pages.

Q: What was the most fun part of this project?

A: The most fun was seeing this all come to life through the illustrations. We were able to bring it to life in a way that is not possible with plain text. It was fun attempting to make the story so much more compelling than we could using a purely instructional or educational approach. By showing a single day in Felix's life and how he goes through his day learning about full and empty buckets, we hoped that this would be a story that people want to tell and re-tell.

Q: At its core, the book seems to be about teaching kids the importance of their words and actions. Is that what you intended to achieve?

A: Yes. At their very core, kids intuitively know that sticks and stones break your bones, but they also know that words can build you up or break you too. Children feel the effect of interactions and words spoken to them every day, but they don't always realize the actual impact. For example, Felix didn't realize that calling his sister a baby was the catalyst for her to kick over his tower of blocks. It's important for children to know how they contribute every single day to how others feel and to what they do. They also need to know that we all, regardless of age, make a difference one by one. Individuals matter, and we are important. By illustrating to children how others feel when you fill their bucket or dip from it, we give them real-life examples that help them connect the concept of the accumulation of "drops" and "buckets." When these examples make sense to them, they are able to translate it into their own lives and consider what effect their words and actions will have on others.

Q: Mary, you were a teacher for many years. Can you tell us what makes the message in **HOW FULL IS YOUR BUCKET? FOR KIDS** so important for today's children?

A: There are so many messages out there for children today — good, bad, and otherwise. Right now, as always, kids need to know that they make a difference, that they are heard. I think the lesson in **HOW FULL IS YOUR BUCKET? FOR KIDS** is that you — as a 3 year old or 10 year old — have influence over your behavior and how your behavior affects others. It's empowering for a child to know that he or she can change the environment. Buckets and drops give kids a vivid picture of how they can do that in a way that is very real to them. They live and breathe these interactions and relationships each day. The book gives them an avenue to talk about feelings and how emotions play a role in the way they act. Kids, teachers, and parents all need this message. We all need to be aware of the importance of affirmation.

Q: The book is geared for kids ages 3-8. Have you had any feedback from young readers about what they think of the story?

A: Yes. Children are very observant. They notice each bucket and how full it is or isn't. They are quick to point out drops going in. When we were initially "testing" the book with kindergarten children, they immediately noticed illustrations where a person didn't have a bucket over his or her head, and that bothered them because they quickly figured

out that everybody has a bucket. The expressions on the kids' faces also told us a lot, and they often mirrored the feelings of the characters. There were smiles and frowns. And the kids chuckled when Felix read about the Giganotosaurus or when he drew a dog that looked like a cow. They had fun with the topic of the book, and it really resonates with them.

Q: If your young readers could take one thing away from the book, what would you hope that would be?

A: We hope that after reading this story, kids will want to go out and fill buckets and say to their friends, "Hey, I think we need to fill someone's bucket." We hope it gives them pause to think about what they have to offer others and to understand that full buckets are important to everyone's well-being.