



Just a Minute: In the Heart of a Child, One Moment ... Can Last Forever

Wess Stafford , Dean Merrill

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How long does it take to make a difference in the life of a child?

For good or for ill, individual moments in a young person's life can make all the difference in their future. It may be something said or done by an adult who hardly thinks about it: a hug, a compliment, an intriguing question, a sincere applause. But in that moment, the child discovers who they are, what is important to them, why they matter, and sometimes even what their destiny will be. Most of us want to help encourage and build into this next generation, most of us see the need all around, but we just have no idea where to begin.

Now, with this book, you know where to begin and you know that it only takes *Just a Minute*. Follow along as Dr. Wess Stafford, president of *Compassion International*, shares stories and experiences to introduce you to the difference you can actually make anywhere on the spectrum of child development. From helping meet physical needs to breaking down emotional barriers and from discovering latent talents to equipping with spiritual insights, these stories are a catalyst for action.

You don't have to be a teacher, a parent, a pastor, or a doctor to make a difference in the life of a child. You only have to be willing!

Just a Minute: In the Heart of a Child, One Moment ... Can Last Forever Details

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From Reader Review Just a Minute: In the Heart of a Child, One Moment ... Can Last Forever for online ebook

Cathy Mortell-miller says

This book inspired me to pay attention to the minutes I spend with people, especially children. It gave me practical ways to encourage people in ways that might change their lives.

Cheryl says

While I don't have children of my own, I have several nieces and nephews that I get to see and spend time with. This is why I wanted to read this book. I enjoy playing with them and know that a child is important.

Mr. Stafford did a wonderful job of writing and sharing all the stories of children and the situations that he viewed and experienced. One of my favorite stories was of a little girl that Mr. Stafford encountered in Manado, Indonesia. Her name was Jessica. Mr. Stafford was visiting about 100 children there and wanted to show the children how much they mattered with Compassion. Mr. Stafford focused on a little girl named Jessica. He picked her up in his lab and asked the children if they knew what the little girl's name was. They answered Jessica. Then Mr. Stafford proceeded to say that Jesus also knows Jessica's name and every thing about her as he loved her. After Mr. Stafford was finished with his lesson, he put Jessica down. Although, it was kind of hard as she was hanging onto him. Later, Mr. Stafford was informed that about a month earlier, Jessica had been sexually violated and was untrusting. In that moment of Compassion, Jessica trusted Mr. Stafford.

This book teaches us other important lessons as well that anyone could use not just children. Although, it is very important to remember these lessons and instill them in our children as our actions teach them a lot. This book would make a good Bible study lesson guide.

Carla Corinne says

I cried about every 5 pages of this book. So rich with such great stories you only can read a little at a time and then you have to pause, reflect, and blow your nose. Awesome book to read as a teacher.

Beth Peninger says

Wess Stafford is one of the most genuine, compassionate, Spirit filled men I have ever "known." He is humble and unassuming and has the heart of God for the children of this world. I admire him greatly. His book, Too Small to Ignore, was moving and inspiring. This book creates the same inspiration, the same move of heart.

In this book Stafford recounts the mere minutes it takes to build up or tear down a child's future. He shares true accounts of people who were influenced for good or for bad by the minutes adults used to speak to them. It's a challenging book in that it challenges the popular excuse/idea that in order to influence a child we need

days and weeks of time spent with them. Wess proves, through the real life stories he shares, that in reality it may only take a single minute to influence a child. And then he exhorts us to go out there and spend a minute or two speaking value into the life of the children that come across our path.

A great read because it reminds us that we have the ability and the power to speak life, not death, over the children of this world that will grow up into the next generation to lead in this world.

Rod Innis says

A wonderful book. Every teacher and every parent should read this book.

In fact, everyone who has any contact with children and young people should read this book.

In fact, everyone who has any contact with other people should read this book.

Chad says

Wess is a fantastic story teller. That knack for telling stories and helping others tell their own stories shines in this book of 68 individual stories of people from all walks of life. Be ready when you read this book. It will stir you to act on behalf of children. If you are the type of person that would read this book, then you are the type of person that will act on behalf of children. If that is the case, be ready to laugh and cry your way through these stories and then be ready to act on your new found or renewed passion for helping children.

Claire says

It was my pleasure to receive this book as a goodreads Frist Reads giveaway.

I'm sure that each of us can recall a time from our childhood when something was said to us, or demonstrated to us, that had a lasting impact on how we viewed ourselves or the world around us. For some, it was a positive, loving statement that made us feel like a superhero. For others, it might have been embarrassing or painful, so much so that we stopped whatever we were doing at the time, and never tried it again. Either way, we each carry with us into our adult lives the effect of that moment, consciously or subconsciously acting in ways that reflect our demonstrate its impact.

In *Just a Minute*, author Wess Stafford shows how the words and actions of adults can impact a child's life. By presenting first-person and anecdotal accounts of moments from the childhood of a wide variety of people from all around the world, Stafford demonstrates clearly the power of words to alter a child's future. Whether from a parent or other trusted caregiver, a teacher, or even a complete stranger, the right words at the right time can have an uplifting effect on anyone; when spoken to an impressionable child, it can alter their entire life's work.

While this all sounds very dramatic, the examples Stafford gives are proof of these ideas. Much like the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books, the wisdom in this book is uplifting, and often moved me to tears.

I would recommend this book to anyone who interacts regularly with children: parents, teachers, spiritual advisors, and pediatric medical professionals, but it is certainly a valuable read for everyone, since we all, at one time or another, encounter children as we go about our lives, and even those children we only encounter in passing can be influenced by a minute of positive interaction with us.

Bea Charmed says

Why I Read It:

I teach young children, one year to three-and-a-half years old. My co-workers and I often talk about “teachable moments” and being role models. This book sounded like one that could supplement those concepts. I had qualms about the religious aspect of the book but decided to try it.

Review:

“You don’t have to be a teacher, a parent, a pastor, or a doctor to make a difference in the life of a child. You only have to be willing!” – This is so true, and so important. Any contact, however casual, that an adult has with a child can make a huge difference. Which is basically what the book is about. It’s a cliché, but children, especially young ones, are sponges. They observe, notice, reflect and adapt to what they hear, see, and feel. A word or an action can, and does, have huge impact.

Dr. Stafford and I agree that every child is valuable. As adults we should do everything possible to help a child grow physically, cognitively, and emotionally. You don’t have to like children or have your own to help them. Nor does your interaction need to be a life changing one, it’s enough to help a child (or even an adult) through a moment of frustration, despair, or sadness. Simply take a moment to stop and be there for a child.

If a child is around, we should be on high alert, not just to not harm them, but to rescue them when needed and to advance them lovingly in any way we can.

It is the duty of all of us who make up society to protect, nurture, and bless the children entrusted to us.

We all encounter children at some point during our day or week; offer a smile, an encouraging word. It just takes a few seconds and has a huge impact. Stafford and Merrill recite numerous anecdotes from people they’ve encountered and letters they have received over the years, as well as some from published memoirs and public speeches by celebrities, such as Oprah Winfrey. There are too many in fact, they quickly began to feel repetitious. It’s clear that Stafford is passionate about this idea; many of his examples come from his global travels, during which he gives presentations on his “just a minute” concept.

While I wasn’t interested in the religious aspects of this book, it is written from a Christian perspective and Stafford and Merrill do an excellent job of finding examples in the Bible to support their approach and to support their belief that children are valuable. I did have a moment or two of “Are you effing kidding me?!?” when they dragged Satan into the discussion. Still, with or without the religious perspective, the basic message is valuable, and simple. Well, simple in concept; sometimes difficult to execute in our day to day lives. The book is overly long, many of the anecdotes could have easily been edited out, and I had trouble at times with the religious aspect of it, but it’s clearly written, with a sense of humor that helps make it easy to read. The message is important and clearly presented; for those reasons alone it is worth reading.

This review first appeared at BookTrib - <http://beaconnors.booktrib.com/review...>

Sheila says

Wess Stafford is President and CEO of Compassion International, and obviously has a heart for children all over the world. His premise in Just a Minute is quickly revealed as he tells the stories of young people influenced to change or even saved from certain death by somebody else's just-a-minute action. Each time we interact with a child, we have the potential to create or destroy something within that child. And every minute counts.

The stories are short and nicely collected into sections focusing on children's self-worth, faith, health, dreams for the future and more. Voices from distant parts of the world add their tales, and each short piece is an inspiration to read. I probably don't agree with all the implications suggested by the author, but I certainly agree that these uplifting tales should encourage readers and remind them, those tiny interactions and small lives count.

Cruel and kind responses to an accidental spill send the infamous Tito one way and another young man blazing a trail into religious broadcasting. Hitler was influenced by his father's cruel mockery. And, like it or not, each of us influences every child we meet. At times I found myself wondering about those occasions when I've said the wrong thing, reacted the wrong way, and caused accidental hurt to my children. This, I suppose, is the place where Just a Minute disturbs me. I remember my mother taking me aside when I was a new and terrified mum. "You don't have to be perfect," she told me. "Just be good enough. Do your best, accept your mistakes, and trust God for the rest." In all those just-a-minutes I've spent with my kids, I know and regret many mistakes. I did my best. I wasn't perfect. But my kids are great and I praise God for them.

Each minute counts. Each child matters. And these stories are truly inspiring. But the greatest parent is the one who makes no mistakes. I'm trusting Him to fix the outcomes of my broken minutes, even as I go forward doing my best.

Disclosure: A friend at church loaned me this book.

K. L. says

I highly recommend this book. It stirred my soul, but also gave me clear steps of small but significant actions I can take to simply love others.

Life can change in an instant. Some folks say that while waiting for the other shoe to drop, or in response to unforeseen circumstances. But this book challenges readers to be intentional about creating those moments, where you can with a word, touch or deed, change someone else's life for the better.

In this inspiring book, Compassion International President and CEO Wess Stafford strings together poignant stories like beads. Perhaps the most beautiful and heart-wrenching of the tales he tells is his own—sufferings that might have made another man bitter have made Stafford compassionate, yet a warrior for justice, especially when it comes to children.

He asks the searching question: "Who believed in you before you believed in yourself?" Remembering moments when someone encouraged us or believed in us, Stafford writes, should inspire us to do the same for someone else—especially a child.

There are no chance encounters, Stafford writes, noting that "if God stands a child before you, for even just a minute, it is a divine appointment." A small word or deed of encouragement to a child might change the trajectory of their life, he argues, telling "key childhood moments" stories of famous people from John

Wesley to Albert Einstein. He also shares some beautiful moments where he found himself at a “divine appointment.” (He shares one of the best stories from the book in a YouTube video –here’s the link, as it is definitely worth “just a minute” of your time: <http://dld.bz/aBKj8>)

Stafford’s message is simple: it only takes a moment to show love and compassion to a child, and that moment might be a significant one—perhaps changing a child’s destiny. He encourages readers to look for opportunities to change a life in “just a minute” of their time.

Linda says

This is an encouraging book that will remind you how easy it is to make a difference in someone's life, especially that of a child. Moments such as the ones detailed in the book make a lasting impression on a child. And sadly, as a few of the experiences in the book illustrate, there are also moments that remain etched in a child's mind when negative messages were received that can impact the path that child takes in life. More than just a "feel-good" book, *Just a Minute* is divided into sections that identify specific aspects of a child's mental and spiritual growth; within each section stories and anecdotes from a variety of sources are shared, showing how someone made a difference in that area of development for them and demonstrating how each of us can be intentional about positively impacting a child's life. Perhaps your word of encouragement will be *A Moment to Form Character* (Section 3). Or you might take *Just a Minute* and your interaction might be *A Moment to Realize One's Calling* (Section 7). It might even be, to a child in desperate circumstances, *A Moment of Rescue* (Section 1). And while the book focuses on children, the principles certainly extend to encouraging those of any age with whom we cross paths. [As a side note, one thing I was happy to see was that this book is NOT a sales pitch for Compassion International. While that is an incredible organization, I admit that I wondered if the underlying message would simply be a strong appeal to sponsor a child, and I appreciated that the bulk of the stories were drawn from everyday situations rather than those involving sponsorships.] I am happy to recommend this book to you.

Lenore Webb says

You know I am a sucker for a good story. More so when it shares the heart and lives of children. What joy comes from kiddos. My own Grandbabes will be here this weekend. I am so excited. And in having them visit, I am reminded of my own childhood with my grand parents. Of the things we did that was so simple yet meant so much to me. I hope to have that lasting impression on my own Grandbabes as we enjoy the simple pleasures of life.

Wess Stafford understands the heart of a child too. He has dedicated his life to the goal of ending suffering for children all over this world. As President and CEO of Compassion International and author of "*Just A Minute*", Wess shares the stories of how in a minute we can make a difference in a child's life. A difference that can mean the world. You know what I mean. Think about it for just a minute. Who did that lil something for you that helped you to get through a tough time. Or understand an problem you had been puzzled over. And better yet, shared your heart through laughter or tears.

For me as for many others it was a teacher, Mrs. Rogers. She reached out to me when she felt that things in my life were just too much for me to bear. And she was right in her assumption. As a survivor of incest growing up, I cling to the love and help I received due to this woman's love and caring. Just having her listen to me, non-judgemental and then getting me the help I so desperately needed was a God send. I know that a

couple years after that we visited and I thanked her for that love. She hugged me, kissed my forehead and told me that her heart would always be there for me. I will never forget her. And have strive to be just the kind of person she was to me for others.

Carol Fairman says

I'm a flurry of emotions! This book will touch your soul so deeply. I've laughed, cried and everything in between.

So thankful Anne Pearson put this book in my hands as a tool for me as I stepped into an Executive Director position for a crisis pregnancy ministry. Those that know me, know that I have long used the phrased 'you can do anything for a minute'. This opens it up to an entirely deeper level.

Thank you Wes, for compiling these inspirational stories that will forever have me looking for opportunities to 'be the difference' in every passing moment.

Our moments are numbered by He who gives life. I intend to use each and every one I have left with His purpose in mind.

Grab a box of kleenex and dig in. You won't regret it.

Spacek Kim says

The author does a wonderful job describing how impactful interactions between adults and children can be. It is the difference between a positive direction in life and worthwhile contributor to society. As an educator, we must always think about this as we interact with students. The author does a great job illustrating examples of positive interactions through stories about various people in life.

Katie Axelson says

It's a book of stories, stories of "just a minute" moments from people like you and me, from former sponsored children, and from well-known names. Stories that enforce the idea that a child is like wet cement, it only takes a moment to make an imprint but once it hardens it takes a chisel to change it. This can be good or bad, used for good or used for harm. Every moment matters.

The only criticism I would have was that the book almost seemed to be too many stories. I would have preferred for the concepts to be more developed in between stories rather than brief transition paragraphs.

Luckily, I don't think I was the first person to have these feelings because the conclusion goes more in depth and asks you to not put the book down and be the same person you. Instead, you're invited to notice those little moments, take the time to affirm and encourage a child, and to realize that it only takes a minute to make an impact that can last a lifetime.

Just a Minute changed the way I look at life, both my own history and the little moments in the people

around me. Not only at the breakfast table but anywhere where I cross paths with children (and really anyone since we all need to be encouraged). It brought to mind this story Andy told me about how he compared badges with a little boy in the mall.

“I have become convinced that if God stands a child before you, for even just a minute, it is a divine appointment. You have the chance to launch a life, if you will. You never know when you are making a memory.” – Wess Stafford (page 14)

(My copy of Just a Minute was complements of Compassion. However, all opinions are entirely my own).
