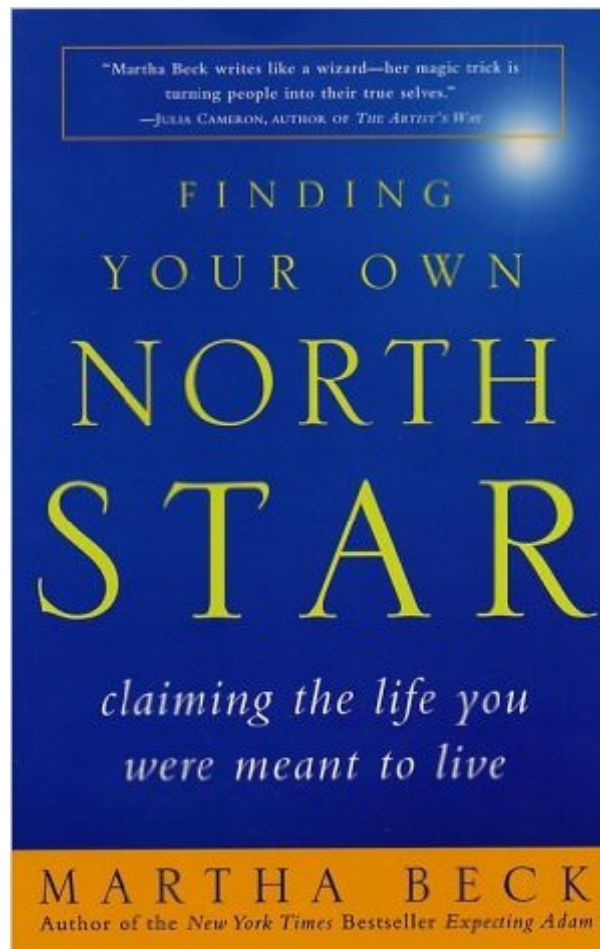


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Finding Your Own North Star: Claiming The Life You Were Meant To Live



Synopsis

Explorers depend on the North Star when there are no other landmarks in sight. The same relationship exists between you and your right life, the ultimate realization of your potential for happiness. I believe that a knowledge of that perfect life sits inside you just as the North Star sits in its unaltering spot. •Martha Beck has helped hundreds of clients find their own North Star, fulfill their potential, and live more joyfully. Now, she shares her step-by-step program that will help you take the exhilarating and frightening journey to your own ideal life. Finding Your Own North Star will teach you how to read your internal compasses, articulate your core desires, identify and repair the unconscious beliefs that may be blocking your progress, nurture your intuition, and cultivate your dreams from the first magical flicker of an idea through the planning and implementation of a more satisfying life. Martha Beck offers thoroughly tested case studies, questionnaires, exercises, and her own trademark wit and wisdom to guide you every step of the way.

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Customer Reviews

There are shelves and shelves of books on "making your dreams come true," but remarkably few that deal with identifying WHAT your dream is. My own background is similar to Beck's: I bought into my parents' dream that I would have an academic career, went all the way through a Ph.D., found a teaching job -- and discovered that I felt like a fish out of water. I was lucky enough to turn my skills into another career, but it's never engaged my heart, and if I could afford to abandon it I'd do so tomorrow without a single pang of regret. What to do with the rest of my life? I've been grappling with that question for several years now, and, after working through Beck's exercises, I feel for the

first time that I'm approaching an answer. The second part of the book deals with the change process and making your newly found dream into reality. Other writers have dealt with this (notably Barbara Sher), but I found Beck's approach more compelling for two reasons: (1) She doesn't gloss over the difficulties of creating a new life for yourself -- while she points out (as do many other authors) that the mere act of goal-setting can be very powerful, she also emphasizes that achieving those goals will be a long, difficult job. (2) She sees life changes as cyclic. Some books seem to imply that, once you've created a new life for yourself, you'll be settled for the rest of your days. That's just not true, and I felt that she did a good job of preparing readers for the inevitable NEXT series of changes in their lives. (Recommended supplementary reading: William Bridges' books on transitions.) All in all, I feel this is the best book of its type that I've read, and I recommend it highly to anyone who's grappling with these same issues in their own life.

As a career/life coach who works with clients in midlife transition, I recommend this book to just about every client. This is the ONE book to buy -- and I mean buy, not borrow! -- if you are undergoing a life transition. Actually, despite the title, Martha Beck is a career counselor and the book focuses on career change. However, as Beck points out, relationships and personal questions can influence career change. Wisely she encourages readers to seek help from qualified therapists if personal issues cloud their careers -- but she is not afraid to tackle the tough emotional questions. And her analysis of emotions would do credit to any personality or social psychologist. Fear, for instance, may not be fear at all. Perhaps the best parts of the book are the chapter on intuition (a gem) and the five chapters that address the four stages of career change. Beck's view of intuition is sensible -- not New Age woo-woo but a way to gain deeper insight into our own motives. And describing the stages of transition, Beck gives us realistic indicators (those in phase 2 typically change their appearance!) as well as warnings about what to expect. It's easy to miss the message between the lines, but Beck does hint that the path of change will not be an easy one. Unlike many authors, she dispenses with false cheer and hints of pain and sacrifice along the way. Change isn't magical. It can happen -- but you have to be realistic about yourself and your objectives. That's a message I try to share with all my clients -- and I've sold so many copies of this book by word of mouth, I've been tempted to claim a share of the royalties. Don't miss it.

Okay, maybe I've gone a bit overboard. But only a very little. I had previously read "Expecting Adam," which I thought was good although it brought my own grad-student days in Boston way too close too home :(This book, however, is more than "self-help." It's a blueprint for learning how to

make your own choices, accept responsibility for making things better, and a PhD course in the "life lessons" that are so obvious, we've forgotten them. As in "If it brings you joy, do it. No, seriously, if it brings you joy, do it." Martha (I can't call her Mrs. Beck, because after my husband and I formed a "study group" to work through the exercises in this book together, she's become the fairy godmother I never had!) might have gotten a PhD in sociology, but thank God her North Star steered her towards writing. This book is better than years of powerful Freudian therapy (which heaven knows I've had, as well as Adlerian.) It's difficult to speak in specifics, since the book covers issues from psychosomatic illness, decision-making, visualization, and so forth, but the plan she lays out is simple: Figure out what you love. Do it--and she'll tell what land mines you may encounter along the way, the various false starts, opposition from within/without, and offers concrete strategies (and I mean REALLY concrete--this is definitely an interactive book, so get ready to start writing, thinking, and loving your life.) Martha, please keep writing! Here's a big electronic hug

This is the best book I have found on helping one discover what kind of work/career will truly bring them fulfillment. I've been looking for something like this for over 20 years, starting with "What Color is Your Parachute?", and followed by many more. The book is great in that it not only provides a solid foundation and methods for helping this discovery, it also goes into the psychology that may hinder one's ability to do this, and offers real suggestions on what to do. So many times I read what another reviewer calls "feel good books". I hate them too. They are a waste of time. This is the only book I've found that really offers something useful. I read Po Bronson's "What Should I Do With My Life?", and loved it, because I saw how so many others also struggle with this issue, but was very disappointed that it didn't provide any thoughts or guidance to answer that question. Until I read this book, I was coming to the conclusion that all of these self-help books are so much BS; now I have the atlas for my journey. Thank you Martha Beck!

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