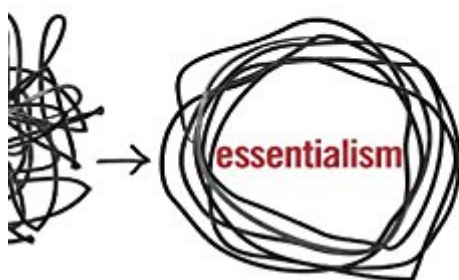


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Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit Of Less



The Disciplined Pursuit of Less

GREG MCKEOWN

Read by the Author

An Unabridged Production



Synopsis

Have you ever found yourself stretched too thin? Do you simultaneously feel overworked and underutilized? Are you often busy but not productive? Do you feel like your time is constantly being hijacked by other people's agendas? If you answered yes to any of these, the way out is the Way of the Essentialist. The Way of the Essentialist isn't about getting more done in less time. It's about getting only the right things done. It is not a time management strategy, or a productivity technique. It is a systematic discipline for discerning what is absolutely essential, then eliminating everything that is not, so we can make the highest possible contribution towards the things that really matter. By forcing us to apply a more selective criteria for what is Essential, the disciplined pursuit of less empowers us to reclaim control of our own choices about where to spend our precious time and energy - instead of giving others the implicit permission to choose for us. Essentialism is not one more thing - it's a whole new way of doing everything. It's about doing less, but better, in every area of our lives. Essentialism is a movement whose time has come.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

While i like the idea of "helping myself", self-help books have always turned me off. Books i've read seem self indulgent, with the author telling you how awesome they are, all these amazing people they've helped, and how once they share their secret with you everything is going to change, blah blah blah.maybe it just happened to find me at the right time in my own journey, but i loved this book. It talks in a very clear and straightforward manner about how to simplify your life, your

thinking, and your purpose to cut out all the extraneous "stuff" that continually distracts us and focus in on what's really important. People and things (like email!) continual to swirl around us, competing for our attention. When we let them have our attention without being thoughtful, they fill up your life instead of YOU filling up your life and deciding for yourself what your priorities are. It also makes the very commonsense point that when we have 15 different priorities, we have no priorities! Read this book. I felt like it was a great use of time, it had a lot of important things to say, and it was concise in how it said it.

The theme of this book is to simplify your life. Books or self improvement lectures along this theme are hardly new or rare. The slight twist here is that rather than the material, the author ignores possessions and instead concentrates on tasks. Initially the author goes on about how busy people often don't get that much done because they are distracted by unimportant tasks impeding their work on vital tasks by being distractions. This harks back to advice to separate your work into urgent, non-urgent, important and non-important - advice many have heard before. The book, as these often are, is anecdotal. In most books, anecdotal tales consist of anonymous and probably apocryphal, such as, "Lisa S came into my office carrying her saxophone. She denied to me she had her sax with her which confirmed my diagnosis that she was musically delusional" and so forth. Here, the tales are almost always attributed to not only an identifiable person, but one who is at least slightly a public figure - usually a player in the tech industry. The author clearly thinks we'll be impressed not only that he knows these folks but that their having simplified their lives will impress us to follow suit. At several points, the author shows how employees, in an effort to become an 'essentialist' (the goal here) tells their boss something like, "No, I won't do as you say because I want to finish what I'm working on". This defiance, the author tells us, earned the respect of that boss with no adversity or blow back. I think that rather optimistic outside of the high tech Bentley / BMW / Audi / Benz circles this author seems to orbit about within. The gist of the book is about 20 pages. Then we go on for another 80 or so repeating the same advice along with some more celebrity anecdotes. Finally, in the last maybe 30% of the book, the author branches off a bit into what an 'essentialist' is versus a 'non-essentialist' the latter is one who is still clogged up with unimportant tasks. The contrasts have nothing to do with keeping your life simplified. They are just the author's sundry dewdrops of advice on how to conduct your life. Most make plenty of sense but they are clearly in the book only to make it long enough to not look silly. Overall if the message is new to you, then the book is very worthwhile reading, but for most of us, we know this stuff and we're either doing it or finding some roadblock to being able to do it. Conditionally recommended.

Great book. The author really touched on a problem that made me come to realize that I need to prioritize my life.

This book was a fast read for me. The good thing is that it made me feel less anxious and less stressed. It reminded me that I have the power to choose what I want to do with my time and my life. And that I don't need to let others dictate/influence my schedule and my to-do list. It taught me that the most important question to ask is: "What is really essential to me?". The rest can simply be thrown away. Also, the author emphasized the importance of keeping a journal. It helps us put things in perspective and after a while we can revisit the entries to figure out the bigger picture and understand worries and figure out the essential purpose of our lives. And to make it a habit, it doesn't need to be long or complicated, you just have to write down whatever and how much you feel like in the moment. Overall it was a good read that matched my personal psychological needs at the moment (Personally, I was going through some troubled week in my life). I was reminded of the importance of saying "No" to almost everything that pops up in our lives, and there's nothing to feel guilty about. It was inspiring and made me think over my current approach to life. I definitely want to start walking towards an essentialist path.

It seems everyone has too much to do. The statement of "I am so busy" is a badge of honor. But have you ever thought doing less would lead to doing more? This is the foundational mindset of this book. This book was a quick read, and a needed book for all people. We are always connected, always in touch, and perhaps always distracted from that which counts. Too often, we allow the little to overtake the important. This book provides motivation and tools to refine your life to one that is dedicated to the major shifts of your priorities. "If you do not prioritize your life, someone else will." There are four major phrases to being an essentialist. The author walks you through those phrases, and provides help in accomplishing them. Because we are in a societal shift. "For the first time—literally—substantial and rapidly growing numbers of people have choices. For the first time, they will have to manage themselves. And society is totally unprepared for it." Here is another interesting insight. "The word priority came into the English language in the 1400s. It was singular. It meant the very first or prior thing. It stayed singular for the next five hundred years. Only in the 1900s did we pluralize the term and start talking about priorities." Because of these factors, people need to be intentional about time and focus. This book does a great job of helping in this skill. This is a book that I highly recommend because it is highly needed.

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