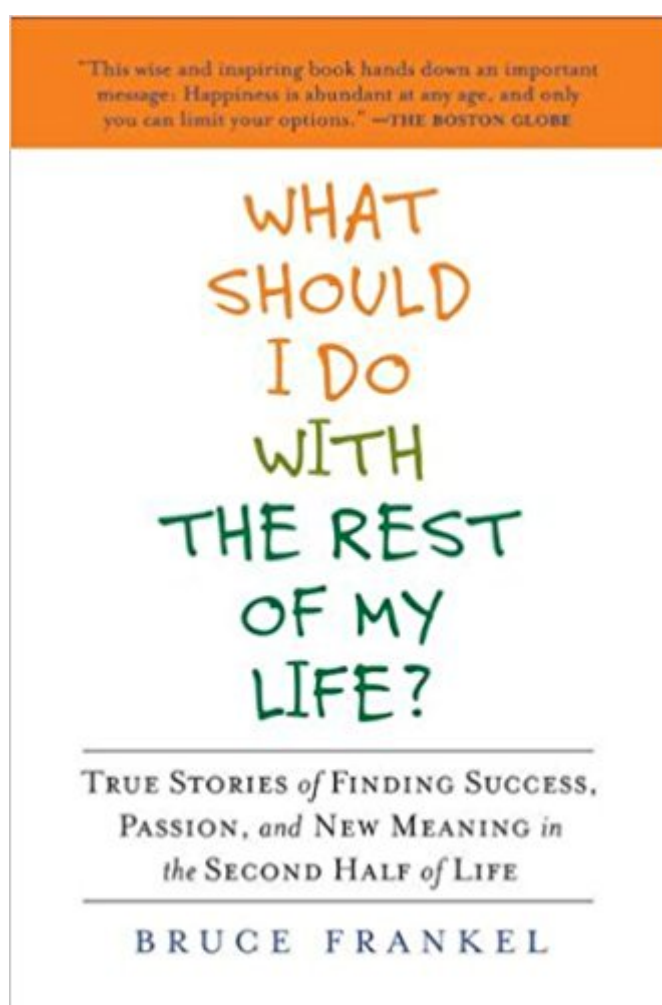


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# What Should I Do With The Rest Of My Life?: True Stories Of Finding Success, Passion, And New Meaning In The Second Half Of Life



## Synopsis

Read Bruce Frankel's posts on the Penguin Blog "This wise and inspiring book hands down an important message: Happiness is abundant at any age, and only you can limit your options." -The Boston Globe In today's world, the question "What should I do with my life?" only scratches the surface. Now, more and more people-from baby boomers retiring from their "first act" to people in their forties and fifties reconsidering their careers in a recovering economy-are finding themselves wondering how to find new stimulation and meaningful work over a lifetime. Bringing together a diverse array of stories, veteran journalist Bruce Frankel brings to life a mesmerizing series of profiles of men and women who discovered a new calling, success, or purpose later in life. Brimming with inspiration and humanity, *What Should I Do with the Rest of My Life?* celebrates activists, artists, entrepreneurs, filmmakers, and others who found extraordinary ways to experience true fulfillment in the second half of life. On these pages, readers will meet a civil servant, laid off at age fifty-two, who enrolled in graduate school, earning a Ph.D. in psychology; a former consultant who began a microfinance program in Africa; a longtime contact-lens grinder who has chiseled twelve hundred stone heads on a property now known as the "Easter Island of the Hudson"; and many others who proved that age is a spark-not a barrier. Full of spirit and plenty of chutzpah, this book shows that anything is possible in any stage of life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Bruce Frankel's upbeat, inspiring, timely book shows how taking a risk and fighting to find a passionate career-at any age-can reinvigorate your life. This should be required reading for anyone

starting out, laid off, downsized, or just ready for reinvention." -Susan Shapiro, author of *Speed Shrinking* and *Only as Good as Your Word*

Bruce Frankel is a writer, reporter, and poet. At the age of fifty-three, he completed an MFA program at Sarah Lawrence College and began publishing in literary journals. He coauthored the bestseller *Life: World War II â Historyâs Great Conflict in Pictures* and has held positions at *People*, *USA Today*, and *Gannett Westchester Newspapers*, where he was a prizewinning columnist and investigative reporter. He lives in New York City.

It makes it sound like a more helpful item than it is - and what it is, is a collection of stories celebrating 13 people who've achieved something substantial after the age of sixty. There's an eight page intro, then it's just the stories, quite long and detailed. Instead, or as well as stories about others, I thought it would be aimed at helping readers sort out this interesting question for themselves, something like Barbara Sher's books (*Wishcraft*; *I could do anything if I only knew what it was*; *It's only too late if you don't start now*, etc) which are brilliant. Those books have loads of true story-snippets about people finding their true course in life, but also lots of clever ways to peel back the layers of time and conditioning to uncover your forgotten self. Not that I didn't like the stories in this book: it's great to see older people breaking down the stereotype. I actually bought this book for my brother, (I thought I'd have a little read myself first) who at 52 is really searching for the next thing to put his energies into now that he's left his successful but unfulfilling first career behind. What he needs is a way of discovering his vocation, the thing that would delight and fulfil him. I bought this as an alternative to the Sher books thinking they wouldn't be his cup of tea, but I don't think I'll give this book to him after all. I think I'll give him *Wishcraft*.

"*What Should I Do with the Rest of My Life? True Stories of Finding Success, Passion and New Meaning in the Second Half of Life*," is a charming, inspiring look at the lives of 13 individuals who decided in the latter half of their lives to embrace opportunities, as author Bruce Frankel says in his introduction, "that can scarcely be imagined or foretold." Among the memorable characters in "*What Should I Do with the Rest of My Life*" is Thomas Dwyer, a former government employee who took up modern dance in his fifties, Alidra Solday, who decided at age 58 (and after recovering from breast cancer) to become a documentary filmmaker, and Loretta Thayer, who was so moved by the events of Sept. 11, 2001, that she decided to fulfill a long-time dream of re-opening a local diner and establishing it once again as a gathering place for folks in her hometown. Frankel weaves

perspective, history and details in and around each of his subjects, including the traumatic events -- illness, death, divorce and more - that shaped these 13 individuals and likely contributed to their pursuit of lifelong learning and growth. This is the book that could get you off the couch and on the path to whatever dream has eluded you. Pull out your bucket list and get to work.

I'm on the leading edge of the "baby boom" which is now going to create a "retirement boom" in the coming years as time marches on. There's going to be a lot of talent and energy in this coming wave. Is it all going to be expended on the golf course and at the bingo parlor? I hope not. Thus it is interesting to read the short biographies in this book of thirteen men and women who later in life discovered a new calling, success or purpose. It was inspirational to see how these people's lives certainly didn't end with retirement. They provide a demonstration of how the skills of the "retired" can be repurposed to become positive contributors to the world in which we live. The subtitle of this book is more descriptive of the book's contents than the main title that makes it sound like a "self-help" book. If this book functions as a self help book it will be because of what the reader brings to the stories. The book is made up of thirteen short stories of people who didn't conclude that the game was over when they neared retirement age. Instead they started the second half of their lives doing exceptional things. Perhaps not everybody can be blessed with the health and energy needed to achieve great things. Nevertheless, there's plenty of room for all of us to consider our options and seek options that are opened up by the new circumstances of retirement. The value in reading these stories is in the general spirit shown by those whose stories are being told. The reader shouldn't expect to find examples of activities to use as patterns for ones self. The stories tend to be unique to the circumstances and talents of these individuals. At least for me I found the stories interesting, but not recipes that I want to follow. I found the writing of good quality and the manner in which the stories are revealed to the reader well done. But it wasn't the sort of book with which I can closely identify.

Many people beginning the so called "third age," wonder the same thing as Bruce Frankel's title: "What Should I Do With the Rest of My Life?" In the true stories in this book the reader will find an answer, but it may not be the one anticipated. Instead, each story, unique in experience, celebrates ordinary people who became extraordinary through diligence and perseverance to a personal goal late in life, regardless of whether others supported, understood, or even approved of the goal. In describing their stories, the book celebrates the difference each of us can and does make in surprising ways. The book will make an indelible impression on the reader, and may change how

the reader views success.

Bruce Frankel's engaging, honest new book "What Should I do With the rest of My Life?" is so helpful and uplifting I've already given it to many older friends who've lost their jobs to inspire their second acts. As someone who is already on act four, five and six I can totally relate and appreciate all the hard-won wisdom shared by the author -his mother - and the other people he interviews. A must read for anybody laid off, down-sized or considering going back to school or switching careers.

kind of boring.. wish it had more suggestions for how to do it .

I thought I was buying a book about opportunities and ideas about how to navigate the retirement years. What I got was biographies. There is a slight difference here. I don't feel that the author stuck to his title.

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