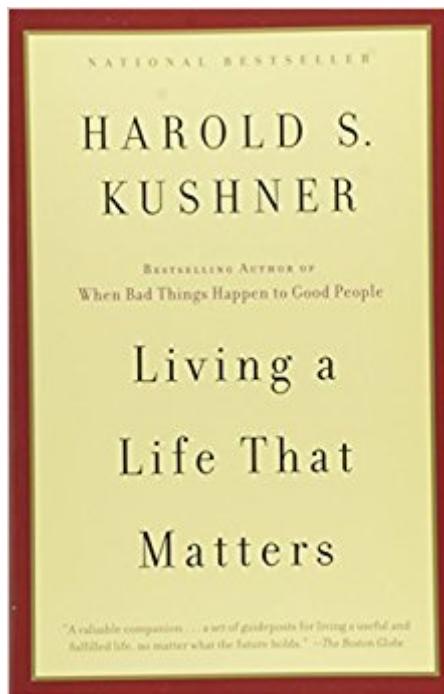


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# Living A Life That Matters



## **Synopsis**

In this bestselling work of spiritual advice, the beloved author shows how even our smallest daily actions can become stepping steps toward integrity. Drawing on the stories of his own congregants, on literature, current events and, above all, on the Biblical story of Jacob (the worldly trickster who evolves into a man of God), Rabbi Harold S. Kushnerâ "author of When Bad Things Happen to Good Peopleâ "addresses some of the most persistent dilemmas of the human condition: Why do decent people so often violate their moral standards? How can we pursue justice without giving in to the lure of revenge? How can we turn our relationships with family and friends into genuine sources of meaning? Persuasive and sympathetic, filled with humanity and warmth,â Living a Life That Mattersâ is a deeply rewarding book.

## **Book Information**

Paperback: 176 pages

Publisher: Anchor; Reprint edition (August 20, 2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0385720947

ISBN-13: 978-0385720946

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.4 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 97 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #79,281 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #138 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Religious Studies > Philosophy #420 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Worship & Devotion > Inspirational #490 in Books > Self-Help > Spiritual

## **Customer Reviews**

A person's longing for significance--which can lead to excessive ambition, moral compromise, and preoccupation with status--often stands in conflict with a longing to be good. In Living a Life That Matters, Harold S. Kushner (the Massachusetts rabbi whose bestselling books include When Bad Things Happen to Good People) suggests that the most successful lives are the ones that most effectively manage and resolve that conflict. For example, Kushner retells the biblical story of Jacob, in a chapter whose lesson is named by its title, "How to Win By Losing." Hamlet, Dirty Harry, and Exodus are a few of the dozens of examples he cites while elaborating on the essential lesson of this book: that success and significance converge in every act of love, generosity, and self-sacrifice that we make for our families, friends, and communities. --Michael Joseph Gross --This text refers to

an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Rabbi Kushner (When Bad Things Happen to Good People, etc.) outlines a common human struggle between the need to feel successful and the need to think of oneself as a good person. Indeed, he relates, the biblical Jacob wrestled with the impulse to succeed through cleverness and fraud, and "to become someone exemplary." While the subtitle might be challenged can't success be more a matter of dedication than ruthlessness? Kushner's wide-ranging, occasionally meandering book fortunately focuses more on the basic question of a meaningful life. Citing examples from both contemporary life and the Bible, he observes that revenge and retribution cannot heal victims, whereas the new trend toward restorative justice (which works "toward the... restoration of the victim" and holds "the offender accountable") might do so. Kushner sees Isaac Bashevis Singer's character Gimpel the Fool as achieving the utmost integrity because he is "the same person all the time." Love and friendship, Kushner writes, not only signify bonds between people, but help bring God into a selfish world. To avoid feeling insignificant, he urges readers to help someone needy and to think not of themselves but of the next generation. He concludes with words that are more comforting than challenging: simply "[b]y being good people" doing honest work, helping a neighbor, delighting a child "we have an impact on the world." (Sept. 15) Forecast: With a 250,000-copy first printing; a Today Show appearance; selection by BOMC, Literary Guild, Traditions and QPB; first serial rights bought by Family Circle and Parade; and simultaneous audio and large-print editions, this will be another Kushner juggernaut. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Harold provided for me the most sensical overview of the foundational matters in life that I have pondered over in my 57 years. I have spent the majority of my life in the Christian realm in both Catholicism and Evangelicalism and neither were able to provide me the simplicity and clarity that I have found in Harold's writings. Harold does not paint a picture of our humanness being in opposition to spiritual idealism expressed in many religions but rather that religious beliefs can be an expression of who we are as human beings and be a path to wholeness. As the Scripture says, when God looked upon what he had created he declared it was good. It is truly amazing to realize we can embrace our humanness and be in harmony with God too.

I ordered nine of these books for our discussion group. I have used other Kushner titles similarly over the years with excellent results. It is a "down to earth" kind of book that meets the reader where

he/she is. Kushner's observation is that the thing people worry most about, as they contemplate their death, is that their lives will not have made a difference--that the world will be no better for their having lived. Christian readers have no need to worry that the suggestions for living a life that matters will not be compatible with their beliefs. Kushner touches on how we can know when God is speaking to us. He discusses why good people sometimes do bad things and asks the reader what kind of person he/she really wants to be. The fact that there are no discussion questions is not a major drawback. A thoughtful discussion leader can find plenty of grist for the mill in this book

Ernest G. Barr

Simple and profound concepts.

Really enjoy reading this book.

We get caught up in life - competition, selfishness, financial achievement, status, STRESS! This reminds us that life is based on MOST people doing the right thing, e.g. we believe liars because most people tell the truth. So even when it feels like everyone else is doing the "wrong" thing, we have to remember to do the "right" thing - for ourselves and society as a whole. It's kind of selfish and fulfilling at the same time. When we vote "good" with our actions, it benefits us all. Kushner presents this in such a logical and compelling way, with humour, clarity and relevance. A life that matters is one which leaves the world a better place, and small actions can make a big difference. Everyone should read this book regularly!

I have been fortunate enough to read 3 of Harold Kushner's books. Each book is so well written and has a lot of knowledge that makes me feel like a stronger and wiser person after reading this. Being that my profession is one that allows me to touch a lot lives in a year, I know that I am now doing and living a life that matters.

I enjoyed many of the insights provided by the author along with the folksy tales and positive outlook. I think his impact loses a little something as he struggles to define evil and appears to come by his acceptance of others through lack of discernment. I don't believe he lacks discernment but he prefers Gimpels simplicity of mind over standing on truth while maintaining respect. It is possible and I think more sturdy to stand on this platform than the one he provides which I think leads to loving those that love you only. Maybe I missed his point or perhaps we just disagree, but in the end

I didn't feel I had wasted my time.

We all have made many mistakes along our way and struggle with the outcomes. Although we meet people who accept us as we are, the most difficult part in our life is to let go of the past, that constantly torture us, and learn to forgive ourselves and others. Is it really worth it to live with the guilt that insists on keeping us company? Mr. Kushner did an excellent job at showing us how wrong we are at staying on a path that will keep us from experiencing the happiness we always seek. I would recommend this book to all of my family and friends... just because I love them!!

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