



How Will You Measure Your Life?

Clayton M. Christensen , James Allworth , Karen Dillon

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How do you lead a fulfilling life? That profound question animates this book of inspiration and insight from world-class business strategist and bestselling author of *The Innovator's Dilemma*, Clayton Christensen.

After beating a heart attack, advanced-stage cancer and a stroke in three successive years, the world-renowned innovation expert and author of one of the best selling and most influential business books of all time – *The Innovator's Dilemma* – Clayton M. Christensen delivered a short but powerful speech to the Harvard Business School graduating class. He presented a set of personal guidelines that have helped him find meaning and happiness in his life – a challenge even the brightest and most motivated of students find daunting.

Akin to *The Last Lecture* in its revelatory perspective following life-altering events, that speech subsequently became a hugely popular article in the *Harvard Business Review* and is now a groundbreaking book, putting forth a series of questions and models for success that have long been applied in the world of business, but also can be used to find cogent answers to pressing life questions: How can I be sure that I'll find satisfaction in my career? How can I be sure that my relationships with my spouse, my family and my close friends become enduring sources of happiness? How can I avoid compromising my integrity (and stay out of jail)?

How Will You Measure Your Life? is a highly original, surprising book from a singular business figure. It's a book sure to inspire and educate readers – companies and individuals, students of business, mid-career professionals, and even parents – the world over.

How Will You Measure Your Life? Details

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From Reader Review How Will You Measure Your Life? for online ebook

Brian says

(3.5)

1. Find your passion
 2. Follow a path but be open to opportunity
 3. Make sure your actions match your priorities, plans, goals, strategy
 4. Don't neglect family friends when all is well. They won't be there when you need them or want to enjoy those relationships
 5. Don't be cats in the cradle. Spend time with your family when you're young, when you can
 6. Figure out what 'job' your spouse and family need you to play to be happy and do that. Make sure you're right. (Analogy is a product fitting a 'job': chocolate milkshake is morning commute activity that happens to last a while and prevent AM hunger...learning this helped make the milkshake thicker, don't worry about making it healthy)
 7. Don't outsource what you need to be successful, core competencies. Don't outsource your child's development and don't rob them of life lessons, failures, getting caught doing something wrong.
 8. Let your kids make decisions, fail, succeed on their own
 9. Family culture is there whether you plan or not. Decide what your family values and stands for and be consistent. Don't let just this once happen, be consistent. You can shape culture to some degree that way
 10. Don't compromise on your values, ethics. No just this once I'll let myself do do something I believe to be wrong. Slippery slope, easier to commit 100% and be consistent than to stay at 98%..you'll end up making more compromises because each decision is small but on whole can be big. Barings bank for example
 11. I didn't know Christensen was LDS.
 11. Have and define and revisit your purpose. Likeness: who do you want to be, how to behave, what influence on others....commitment...metrics: how to measure how you're doing
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Mallie says

Greatly enjoyed this piece about not only finding meaning, but making meaning. I loved that Christensen talked about management as a service profession, because of the ways in which good management can help improve lives. So true:

Favorite quotations:

"the most powerful motivator isn't money; it's the opportunity to learn, grow in responsibilities, contribute, and be recognized. That's why management, if practiced well, can be the noblest of occupations; no others offer as many ways to help people find those opportunities."

"If you're not guided by a clear sense of purpose, you're likely to fritter away your time and energy on obtaining the most tangible, short-term signs of achievement, not what's really important to you."

"Management is the most noble of professions if it's practiced well. No other occupation offers as many ways to help others learn and grow, take responsibility and be recognized for achievement, and contribute to

the success of a team."

"I promise my students that if they take the time to figure out their life purpose, they'll look back on it as the most important thing they discovered at HBS. If they don't figure it out, they will just sail off without a rudder and get buffeted in the very rough seas of life."

"The choice and successful pursuit of a profession is but one tool for achieving your purpose. But without a purpose, life can become hollow."

"Don't worry about the level of individual prominence you have achieved; worry about the individuals you have helped become better people. This is my final recommendation: Think about the metric by which your life will be judged, and make a resolution to live every day so that in the end, your life will be judged a success."

Kristin Eberhard says

The rare non-fiction book that isn't actually an essay parading as a book. This was a quick read in simple, clear language with good analogies and no unnecessary repetition. A summary of the career-focused bits:

Find Your Purpose

Likeness - who you want to become

Commitment - to becoming that at every step. Actually spending your time and energy in ways that get you closer to your likeness.

Metrics - to measure your progress towards becoming the likeness

Clayton's Likeness

A man who is dedicated to helping improve the lives of other people

A kind, honest, forgiving, and selfless husband, father, and friend

A man who doesn't just believe in God but who believes God

Don't confuse hygiene with motivation

Motivation:

The things that make you love going to work. Feeling that you are doing work that is meaningful to you and making a meaningful contribution; Challenging work, recognition, responsibility, and personal growth.

Hygiene Factors:

Status, compensation, job security, work conditions, company policies, and supervisory practices. Bad hygiene causes dissatisfaction. But good hygiene factors just mean you are not dissatisfied with your job, not that you love your job.

Strategy

Deliberative - a focused plan

Emergent - unexpected opportunities that arise

Ask what has to prove true

Ask yourself "What are the assumptions that have to prove true in order for me to be happy with this choice?" List them. Test their validity: how do you know the company really has a team culture? How do you know they will be growing this group? etc. Are they within your control?

Ricky Bache says

I was lucky enough to read 'The Innovators Dilemma' at a formative point in my Pharma R&D career. Like many others, I was captivated by the ability of Christensen's 'big idea' (disruptive innovation) to explain the perplexing phenomenon whereby small startups were able to upend established players in industry segments where the latter should have held all the aces. I have read a number of other books he has put out over the years. These have invariably given me much to reflect on as a business leader and someone plying their trade in the innovation space.

This latest book (<http://www.measureyourlife.com/>) represents a definite change of direction for the big man and his co-authors - down the 'Road Less Travelled' as it were - and they are definitely going for the big one. To quote : "The paramount assertion of this book is that the theories that describe how management works also explain a lot about what causes success and happiness in families, marriages, and within ourselves—and what causes the opposite as well."

The big questions I had going into this new book were these : would it stack up against his previous business classics and would the management-theoretic approach yield useful insight into the knotty problems of personal relationships, child-rearing and life purpose?

The answer to these is a qualified yes.

Once again it is a stimulating read from Christensen that has got my grey cells whirring pondering some real life-lesson nuggets:

- * Aligning your resource allocation with your strategy (your strategy is not what you say it is) - be on guard as one invariably subordinates the immediate accomplishment (invariably work related) to the supposed strategic (partner / family / friends)
- * Dusting off Hertzberg and thinking about your motivational factors separate from hygiene factors
- * Situations in life where you should be thinking about a deliberate strategy and those when you should be employing an emergent approach
- * Thinking about your assumptions (what has to prove true) for your life strategy to work and listing these ranked by importance and uncertainty with those most important and least certain at the top.

On the other hand, some aspects of the book were uncomfortable / unhelpful.

I didn't like the smug way in which the authors dissed much of the self-help literature out there ("the difference between what to think and how to think").

I also had an adverse reaction to the religious certainty that permeates much of the book and for me ultimately detracted. To be honest, Clay bless him is just too darned nice and perfect - and as the chapters went on I couldn't help feeling more and more inadequate in terms of how my life conduct contrasted. It's just good that I've recently read Brene Brown's The Gifts of Imperfection (<http://www.brenebrown.com/books/>) or I might have been off to the bathroom to slit my wrists on about

page 160!

Overall, hats off to Clay, James and Karen for having the mojo to put this personally risky business/self-help mashup out there.

Time will tell whether this book will have the intended effect of nailing the big personal questions knawing away at the psyche of today's thrusting business professional in an evidence-based way they will better be able to relate to. For me, newly retired from big Pharma and turning my mind to other endeavours I have long been postponing, it's conceptual framework is a timely gift.

Pankaj Sahai says

Great book, really felt fulfilled after reading it.

I finished the book in one sitting on a Saturday, the day after I had long discussions (often energetic, forceful and agitated but always sincere, well-intentioned & for good cause) with some of my very close friends till 1:30 am on various aspects of living a "good life" (ethics, morality, life goals, life purpose etc). This book, coincidentally, deals with most of what we we discussed the night before, providing insights , options and solutions to life dilemmas, in a format that CEOs/ entrepreneurs/management professionals can easily relate to. Every chapter provides an insight and a working-theory of "applied life" which is preceded by,and based on ,a management principle / case study with which business and management professionals can easily identify. Very easy read but for getting the most out of the book do read it with an introspective frame of mind.

The book also talks about an event in the author's life which I (and 3 other close friends) have been through with equal equanimity, with a "no-big-deal" kind of mindset. The author was a Rhodes scholar at Oxford when he received the news that his dad was not well back home in the US. Next day, he reached home, leaving his Rhodes scholarship, to be with his Dad and to look after him. One day he was at Oxford and the next day (metaphorically) he was working at a grocery shop, without a second thought about what he had left behind. The reason ? Awareness and pursuit of what really matters in your life, a higher purpose that only your heart understands, although your selfish mind might oppose vigourously for false, transient and short term gratification.

Limbikani says

Amazing book in how it gives you perspective on business and personal development at the same time, enriching your immensely in how you approach entrepreneurship, management and life. Highly recommended to anyone looking to understand success better. in business or in life.

Abrar Yasser says

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Batzul Gerelsaikhan says

One of the best books I have read in my life for sure. Case studies of "personal life failures" (colleagues jailed for inside trading, a friend who failed in marriages 3 times, parents failing to raise their children properly, etc) and the "company failures" were most interesting to me. Another best message of the book was to never give up to the "Just this once" thoughts and "Live with Integrity". When you die, what will you leave behind? What is your legacy? What will your family and friends remember you by? A busy mom that was never home? A cheating father? A fake friend that was absent when needed the most? Every action and choice leads you to "Who You Are". Live a life with integrity and leave a legacy of respect, positive impact and happy family and friends.

Kori says

This book made me think about how I "manage" my family and my own life and has made me actually define my purposes. My favorite excerpt is :

"The challenges your children face serve an important purpose: they will help them hone and develop the capabilities necessary to succeed throughout their lives. Coping with a difficult teacher, failing at a sport, learning to navigate the complex social structure of cliques in school--all those things become "courses" in the school of experience. We know that people who fail in their jobs often do so not because they are inherently incapable of succeeding, but because their experiences have not prepared them for the challenges of that job--in other words, they've taken the wrong "courses."

The natural tendency of many parents is to focus entirely on building your child's resume: good grades, sports successes, and so on. It would be a mistake, however, to neglect the courses your children need to equip them for the future. Once you have that figured out, work backward: find the right experiences to help them build the skills they'll need to succeed. It's one of the greatest gifts you can give them."

Marks54 says

This book is an effort by a well known Harvard Business School prof, notable for his work on the dangers of marginal thinking in innovative industries (The Innovator's Dilemma) that attempts to apply theories of motivation, management, and strategy to the task of self management. Apparently the author's experiences with illness, aging, and other aspects of his life combined to convince him that such an effort would be worthwhile. It is a short book and reads fairly quickly.

I am giving the book three stars because I believe it to be an honest effort that was written in good faith and with the best of intentions. I doubt that I could have been anywhere near as open and the book is not without insights.

Overall, I was disappointed with the book. The difficult task for a project like this is to provide an insight beyond what most of us can get from thinking carefully and honestly about our own experiences. I noted few if any of these and was left wondering what I had missed. For example, people are motivated by both monetary and non-monetary factors, not just incentives (Herzberg versus Jensen/Meckling)-- not exactly news. Then, we find out that things in life sometimes develop unexpectedly rather than according to plan -- another surprise! All of the points raised are reasonable and defensible but there is little that has not already appeared somewhere in the Harvard Business Review.

When the advice goes to marriage and the running of the family, there is more of the same that may prove useful to new parents but will seem like old hat to more experienced ones -- don't be a helicopter parent, don't do everything for your child, provide your child the opportunity to deal with difficult situations. Again, all this is fine, but hardly novel. (Perhaps I have just had a greater opportunity to learn from my own mistakes.) I wasn't expecting "August Osage County" type issues but was hoping for a bit more. The concluding discussion on integrity was fairly good, although the issue of getting up after a fall is more relevant to most of us than avoiding falls.

I do appreciate the author's efforts in producing this book. It is very unusual among business book authors (whether professors or consultants) and I wish others would follow this lead.

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Todd says

I had read articles that mentioned Clayton Christensen, and he was always described as a brilliant business consultant and professor at Harvard Business School, who is also LDS. Recently, he came and spoke at our quarterly department meeting, and I came to understand why people spoke so highly of him. While he was only scheduled to speak for an hour, I listened to him speak for 2 hours, and found myself wanting more. He told fascinating anecdotes from his days as a consultant, and applied the lessons he learned to some of the issues we are facing at our company and in our industry.

When I saw he had recently published a new book, I was interested to read it. In a similar fashion to our meeting, he applies the theories and lessons learned from a career in business to how we make the decisions

in our lives. Too often, we seem to wander through phases of our lives without too much of a plan, or the wrong approaches to achieving our goals. Clayton states that just as successful businesses follow certain practices and principles, many of those same approaches can also help us to be successful in our personal lives.

As an MBA graduate, I found the business stories very interesting. As a person who has worked for many different companies over my career, I found that he "gets it" -- these aren't just abstract theories, but I've seen similar examples in the companies I've worked for.

When it comes to applying those same theories to personal life, it also rings true. I've seen in my own life, and in the lives of others, how simple choices, or the lack of a plan, can leave to unwanted results and tragedies. Likewise, having an idea of what you want to make of your life, and following through, can result in great rewards.

I agree with others who have read the book that it made me feel inadequate in many areas, but also gave me many things to think about as I fill my role in my career, as a father, and as a person.

Gavin says

Phenomenal little read replete with intense nuggets of vocational and personal advice. Intense nuggets.

As the owner of a popular YouTube startup and poised at the brink of starting up a family with my wife, this book came at a great time. The central premise is that we need to pay attention to the *process* of decision-making in our business and personal spheres, not just our nominal end goals or whatever seems to be the most immediately rewarding way to invest our time and resources in the short-term. Learning how to replicate successful processes happens by "watching movies" (analyzing how implemented values and healthy processes led to a company's or individual's success at each separate decision along the way) rather than by "viewing snapshots" (looking at the current state of a successful company or individual and assuming that the same steps they took will result in similar success).

Christensen, a Harvard business professor who also happens to be a devout Mormon, has clearly thought about and rarefied his theories over and over again, refining his ideas like tumbled rocks and figuring out the optimally eloquent way to express them.

A smattering of my favorite nuggets:

– I want you to be able to experience that feeling – to wake up every morning thinking how lucky you are to be doing what you're doing.

– You can talk all you want about having a strategy for your life, understanding motivation, and balancing aspirations with unanticipated opportunities. But ultimately, this means nothing if you do not align those with where you actually expend your time, money, and energy.

– This means, almost paradoxically, that the time when it is most important to invest in building strong families and close friendships is when it appears, at the surface, as if it's not necessary.

– Capital that seeks growth before profits is bad capital.

– *Self-esteem – the sense that "I'm not afraid to confront this problem and I think I can solve it" – doesn't come from abundant resources. Rather, self-esteem comes from achieving something important when it's hard to do.*

– *As Henry Ford once put it, "If you need a machine and don't buy it, then you will ultimately find that you have paid for it and don't have it." Thinking on a marginal basis can be very, very dangerous.*

– *Decide what you stand for. And then stand for it all the time.*

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Ken Aw says

Many in a time we get asked (or ask ourselves) what are our life goals? what do we want to be remembered for before we say goodbye to this world? How do we live a life of purpose and fulfillment? This book offers a way to deeply think about these questions, and perhaps chart some possible answers and directions that we need to take to achieve them.

One interesting issue that Clay talks about revolves around parenting. As parents, we would want our children to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to succeed in their lives. Hence most parents try to expose their children to as many opportunities as possible (such as learning a musical instrument, sport, tuition classes, etc), in hope that they will be in a more advantageous position to succeed in life than their peers. I used to hold the same viewpoint too.

Clay contends, however, that these are merely Resources. The problem comes when exposing children to an endless array of activities is when they are not truly engaged and when these activities don't challenge them to do hard things and learn the correct values and responsibilities out of it. What children need to learn are Processes, i.e. the skills needed to learn a skill, the knowledge needed to acquire new knowledge, the experience to learn from experiences.

This got me to understand that rather than by giving children Resources, it is more important for them to learn about Processes. These often cannot be taught by outsourcing what we need to teach our children to the "activities" themselves. But rather, we need to be a role model for our children and make the correct decisions so as to impart the correct values when we interact with them on a daily basis. With the right Processes and Priorities they will then be able to learn better from the Resources they have and this, if anything will make them better individuals.

Joshua Guest says

I read a lot of non-fiction. I am always looking for books that I feel could really help others change their lives, or at least make for good parlor conversation. I think that of all the books I have ever wanted other people to read, Clayton Christensen's "How Will You Measure Your Life?" ranks up there with The Book of Mormon, Stephen King's "On Writing", Henry J. Eyring's "Major Decisions", ...and that's about it. I immediately wanted to buy two dozen copies and give them out to friends and family as gifts. I don't make my wife read a lot of the books that I read because reading serves different purposes for both of us. But I will make her read this one. And I'm not just saying that because I'm a big Clayton Christensen fan. Innovator's Dilemma is boring, and I don't really think he had that much to do with Innovator's DNA. But this is both readable and brilliant. In some ways, it reminds me of Malcolm Gladwell or David Brooks' "The Social Animal." As Gladwell and Brooks took sociological, anthropological, and historical literature and made it relevant to the layperson, Christensen takes from his vast knowledge of business management theory and repurposes it for practical application in his own personal life.

I hope you read it.

Oksana says

היה לי הרבה מאוד קריאה לא-נובל. אני תמיד מחפש ספרים שאני מרגיש שהם יעזרו אחרים לשנות את חייהם, או לפחות יהיו שיחה טובה לפרלור. אני חושב שכל הספרים שאני רוצה שאחרים יקראו, ספרו של קלייטון כריסטנסן "איך תמדיד את חייך?" עומד שם עם ספר מורמון, ספרו של סטיבן קינג "על כתיבה", ספרו של הנרי ג'יי. אירינג "החלטות חשובות", ...ועוד. אני רציתי לקנות עשרות עותקים ולהעבירם לחברים ולמשפחה כמתנות. אני לא מציע לאישה שלי לקרוא הרבה מהספרים שאני קורא כי קריאה שerves different purposes for both of us. אבל אני אדאג שהיא תקרא את זה. ואני לא אומר את זה רק בגלל שאני מאהב של קלייטון כריסטנסן. ספרו "אדיממה של הממציא" משעמם, ואני לא חושב שהוא היה הרבה להצליח עם ה-DNA של הממציא. אבל זה הוא גם קריא וגם מבריק. באופן מסוים, זה מזכיר לי את מאלקולם גלדוולל או דייוויד ברוקס' "החיה החברתית". כמו של גלדוולל וברוקס לקחו ספרות סוציולוגית, אנתרופולוגית, והיסטורית והפכו אותה רלוונטית לציבור הרגיל, כריסטנסן לוקח את הידע העצום שלו בניהול עסקים ומועצ'ת אותו לתארוך שימוש פרקטי במחיי היומיום שלו.

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Eva says

I don't know how many stars to give--3 or 4--but it was a good, quick read that makes you think about what's important and how you make your life manifest that. Kindle highlights:

two different types of factors: hygiene factors and motivation factors. On one side of the equation, there are the elements of work that, if not done right, will cause us to be dissatisfied. These are called hygiene factors. Hygiene factors are things like status, compensation, job security, work conditions, company policies, and supervisory practices. It matters, for example, that you don't have a manager who manipulates you for his own purposes—or who doesn't hold you accountable for things over which you don't have responsibility. Bad hygiene causes dissatisfaction. You have to address and fix bad hygiene to ensure that you are not dissatisfied in your work. Interestingly, Herzberg asserts that compensation is a hygiene factor, not a motivator. As Owen Robbins, a successful CFO and the board member who chaired our compensation committee at CPS Technologies, once counseled me, "Compensation is a death trap. The most you can hope for (as CEO) is to be able to post a list of every employee's name and salary on the bulletin board, and hear every employee say, 'I sure wish I were paid more, but darn it, this list is fair.' Clayton, you might feel like it is easy to manage this company by giving incentives or rewards to people. But if anyone believes that he is working harder but is being paid less than another person, it would be like transplanting cancer into this company." Compensation is a hygiene factor. You need to get it right. But all you can aspire to is that employees will not be mad at each other and the company because of compensation. This is an important insight from Herzberg's research: if you instantly improve the hygiene factors of your job, you're not going to suddenly love it. At best, you just won't hate it anymore. The opposite of job dissatisfaction isn't job satisfaction, but rather an absence of job dissatisfaction. They're not the same thing at all. It is important to address hygiene factors such as a safe and comfortable working environment, relationship with managers and colleagues, enough money to look after your family—if you don't have these things, you'll experience dissatisfaction with your work. But these alone won't do anything to make you love your job—they will just stop you from hating it. - location 402

Motivation factors include challenging work, recognition, responsibility, and personal growth. Feelings that you are making a meaningful contribution to work arise from intrinsic conditions of the work itself. - location 423

Gloria Steinem framed strategy for her world as Andy Grove did for his: "We can tell our values by looking at our checkbook stubs." - location 875

Though they may believe that their family is deeply important to them, they actually allocate fewer and fewer resources to the things they would say matter most. - location 913

As such, there is no one-size-fits-all approach that anyone can offer you. The hot water that softens a carrot will harden an egg. - location 978

Few companies have launched their product with more fanfare than the Iridium Satellite Network—mobile phones that would allow people to call from literally anywhere on the planet by tapping into a complex celestial network of satellites. Vice President Al Gore helped launch Iridium's product by placing its first call—to Alexander Graham Bell's grandson. - location 1003

Professor Amar Bhide showed in his *Origin and Evolution of New Business* that 93 percent of all companies that ultimately become successful had to abandon their original strategy—because the original plan proved not to be viable. In other words, successful companies don't succeed because they have the right strategy at the beginning; but rather, because they have money left over after the original strategy fails, so that they can pivot and try another approach. Most of those that fail, in contrast, spend all their money on their original strategy—which is usually wrong. - location 1029

on average, parents speak 1,500 words per hour to their infant children. "Talkative" (often college-educated)

parents spoke 2,100 words to their child, on average. By contrast, parents from less verbal (and often less-educated) backgrounds spoke only 600 per hour, on average. If you add that up over the first thirty months, the child of “talkative” parents heard an estimated 48 million words spoken, compared to the disadvantaged child, who heard only 13 million. The most important time for the children to hear the words, the research suggests, is the first year of life. - location 1130

And it didn't matter that just any words were spoken to a child—the way a parent spoke to a child had a significant effect. The researchers observed two different types of conversations between parents and infants. One type they dubbed “business language”—such as, “Time for a nap,” “Let's go for a ride,” and “Finish your milk.” Such conversations were simple and direct, not rich and complex. Risley and Hart concluded that these types of conversations had limited effect on cognitive development. In contrast, when parents engaged in face-to-face conversation with the child—speaking in fully adult, sophisticated language as if the child could be part of a chatty, grown-up conversation—the impact on cognitive development was enormous. These richer interactions they called “language dancing.” Language dancing is being chatty, thinking aloud, and commenting on what the child is doing and what the parent is doing or planning to do. “Do you want to wear the blue shirt or the red shirt today?” “Do you think it will rain today?” “Do you remember the time I put your bottle in the oven by mistake?” and so on. Language dancing involves talking to the child about “what if,” and “do you remember,” and “wouldn't it be nice if”—questions that invite the child to think deeply about what is happening around him. And it has a profound effect long before a parent might actually expect a child to understand what is being asked. - location 1137

They lovingly cart children around to soccer, lacrosse, basketball, football, hockey, and baseball teams; dance, gymnastics, music, and Chinese lessons; send them on a semester abroad to London; and to so many camps that many children don't even have the time to get a part-time job in the summer. Taken individually, each of these can be a wonderful chance for a child to develop, and an excellent substitute for all the work that used to take place around the home. Kids can learn to overcome difficult challenges, take on responsibility, become good team players. They're opportunities to develop the critical processes that kids will need to succeed later in life. Too often, however, parents foist all these experiences on their children without that in mind. Now, on one hand, exposing them to lots of activities is commendable. You want to help your kids discover something that they truly enjoy doing, and it's actually critical for them to find something that will motivate them to develop their own processes. But that's not always the impetus of parents imposing these activities on their children's lives. Parents have their own job to be done, and it can overshadow the desire to help their children develop processes. They have a job of wanting to feel like a good parent: see all the opportunities I'm providing for my child? Or parents, often with their heart in the right place, project their own hopes and dreams onto their children. When these other intentions start creeping in, and parents seem to be carting their children around to an endless array of activities in which the kids are not truly engaged, it should start to raise red flags. Are the children developing from these experiences the deep, important processes such as teamwork, entrepreneurship, and learning the value of preparation? Or are they just going along for the ride? When we so heavily focus on providing our children with resources, we need to ask ourselves a new set of questions: Has my child developed the skill to develop better skills? The knowledge to develop deeper knowledge? The experience to learn from his experiences? These are the critical differences between resources and processes in our children's minds and hearts—and, I fear, the unanticipated residual of outsourcing. - location 1595

The end result of these good intentions for our children is that too few reach adulthood having been given the opportunity to shoulder onerous responsibility and solve complicated problems for themselves and for others. Self-esteem—the sense that “I'm not afraid to confront this problem and I think I can solve it”—doesn't come from abundant resources. Rather, self-esteem comes from achieving something important when it's hard to do. - location 1622

I'm not advocating throwing kids straight into the deep end to see whether they can swim. Instead, it's a case of starting early to find simple problems for them to solve on their own, problems that can help them build their processes—and a healthy self-esteem. As I look back on my own life, I recognize that some of the greatest gifts I received from my parents stemmed not from what they did for me—but rather from what they didn't do for me. - location 1632

Although in retrospect these were very simple things, they represent a defining point in my life. They helped me to learn that I should solve my own problems whenever possible; they gave me the confidence that I could solve my own problems; and they helped me experience pride in that achievement. - location 1646

As for my mom, I have wondered what she felt when she saw me walk out the door to school wearing those patched-knee trousers. Some mothers might have been embarrassed to have their child seen in such tatters—that it evidenced how few pennies our family had to spare. But I think my mom didn't even look at my Levi's. I think she was looking at me, and probably saw in me the same thing I saw in the patch: "I did that." - location 1651

"When the kids come home for a family reunion, I like to listen to their banter back and forth about the experiences they had growing up, and which had the greatest impact on their lives. I typically have no memory of the events they recall as being important. And when I ask them about the times when Jim and I sat them down specifically to share what we thought were foundationally important values of our family, well, the kids have no memory of any of them. I guess the thing to learn from this is that children will learn when they are ready to learn, not when we're ready to teach them." - location 1663

You can probably recall similar moments from your own childhood—the times that you picked up something important from your parents that they probably weren't aware they were sharing. - location 1669

Michele says

If you are a serious business person looking for more meaning in your life, I think this book will mean a lot to you. If you are a Mom, you will have to get through a lot of Enron stories to grasp the relationship to your parenting style. I'm not saying it isn't good, or that it is not worth it, just saying that is different. It gave me pause for thought, and I enjoyed reading the book. I really like Clayton and loved how after he gave this speech at Harvard it garnered a record number of hits. I know I was one of them. He is a deep thinker and a spiritual wonder. I think we will hear lots more from him.

Haven't been able to stop thinking about this quote: pg 62

You can talk all you want about having a strategy for your life, understanding motivation, and balancing aspirations with unanticipated opportunities. But ultimately, this means nothing if you do not align those with where you actually expend your time, money, and energy.

Michael says

Outstanding advice in the smart, soothing voice of a man who walks the walk. Makes a fine gift that's sure to

"disrupt" many lives for the better; anyone from a teenager to the most accomplished executive will benefit from its blend of high-stakes business expertise and humble common sense.
