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# Finding Meaning In The Second Half Of Life: How To Finally, Really Grow Up

"Nourishing...Like a master chef, James Hollis knows that good food for the soul cannot be ordered to go."—*The Plain Dealer* (Cleveland)

# FINDING MEANING IN THE SECOND HALF OF LIFE

How to Finally,  
*Really* Grow Up



JAMES HOLLIS, PH.D.



## Synopsis

What does it really mean to be a grown up in todayâ™s world? We assume that once we âœ get it togetherâ • with the right job, marry the right person, have children, and buy a home, all is settled and well. But adulthood presents varying levels of growth, and is rarely the respite of stability we expected. Turbulent emotional shifts can take place anywhere between the age of thirty-five and seventy when we question the choices weâ™ve made, realize our limitations, and feel stuckâ™ commonly known as the âœ midlife crisis.â • Jungian psycho-analyst James Hollis believes it is only in the second half of life that we can truly come to know who we are and thus create a life that has meaning. In *Finding Meaning in the Second Half of Life*, Hollis explores the ways we can grow and evolve to fully become ourselves when the traditional roles of adulthood arenâ™t quite working for us, revealing a new way of uncovering and embracing our authentic selves. Offering wisdom to anyone facing a career that no longer seems fulfilling, a long-term relationship that has shifted, or family transitions that raise issues of aging and mortality, *Finding Meaning in the Second Half of Life* provides a reassuring message and a crucial bridge across this critical passage of adult development.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Wonderful book. Definitely not your typical self help book. Based on Jungian psychology, this book has given me much to reflect upon and goals to strive for outside of the usual "get happy" blather that's out there. If you want to understand more about yourself, your partner and others with whom you have close relationships this is a great book to read. Here are a couple quotes to help you decide if this book might be up your alley:P 117: "...the best thing we can do for ourselves and for the other is to assume more of the developmental agenda for ourselves. In other words, to have a grown-up relationship, we have to grow up!...When we are sincerely able to ask the question "What am I asking of my beloved that I need to do for myself?" we have not only begun growing up, but may then be expressing a loving attitude toward that other after all."P118: "Growing up means that we take spiritual responsibility for ourselves..until we accept this responsibility for ourselves, we are asking others to be a shelter for our homeless soul..remember that others will then be asking the same of us as well."

My oldest child moved out last summer. That same week my father-in-law and beloved dog passed away. My middle child will be moving out this summer and my youngest will be off to college. Needless to say, my soul has been in pain. But thanks to this book, I have a few new tools in my tool box.

Amalng eye opening read. The author spoke to me and brough clarity and light to the confused state I was in as a result of my midlife crisis and depression. Recommended to all of those who feel empty and whose old paradigms and reference points have become meanigless. To those who seek to do away with the superficial and trivial and seek to truly reconnect with the essence of themselves. It will show you the way back home. I liked the concise writing. I chose this rating because it was a suprve book that hit the spot.

As with his previous books, James Hollis offers no easy answers, no magic formula for happiness, no 10 or 12 or 20 simple steps -- which explains the disappointment of some previous reviewers, I guess, who obviously wanted the hard work done for them. But isn't that one of the most pernicious illusions we have to shed, if we truly want to find personal meaning? We have to accept that \*we've\* got to do the digging, the discovering, the accepting. Even if we have helpful guides along the way,

in the end it's up to us, since an adult is ultimately responsible for his/her life. So Hollis presents us with the tough questions, the ones we need to ask ourselves without flinching or making excuses for our hesitancy & failures. The poetry, the excerpts from literature & myth, are potent models & examples for us -- not to follow blindly, but to mull over & use as illumination for our own lives. Striving for wholeness & authenticity isn't easy, which is why so many step away from it more than once, unwilling to go forward. But it's the only worthwhile goal for life, especially the second half of life. Once we realize that our time is limited, that we must find or make our own meaning, rather than depending on others to provide it -- well, once you feel that in your gut, in the marrow of your bones, then you know there's simply no time to waste on self-imposed obstacles or distractions. Every day is precious, and should be put to good use. Whatever has wounded us in the past, whatever has hampered us, can no longer be used as an excuse: once we see & know what restrains us, then we're responsible for dealing with it. The choice is ours ... and perhaps that's what's so terrifying for some people. So here is a book to read, contemplate, and then read again. It doesn't promise instant happiness, only the prospect of hard but rewarding work. The quest for personal meaning awaits, and sooner or later we've all got to embark upon it. Most highly recommended!

This book resonates on so many levels that I sometimes suspect Hollis wrote it for me personally. At 46 I find every chapter thought-provoking, and have read the book three times, once just reading it, then compelled to reread it while underlining a few passages and, finally, reading it while taking notes and journaling. Granted, he draws heavily from Jung, but the concepts are presented with a 21st Century relevance. I find that I actually take solace in its pages; with reassurances that, while this path is challenging, I am not alone in sorting out what carries meaning here in the second half. If you are younger than, say, 40, or you are a big fan of bullet points vs. elegant prose, then this book is probably not for you. But if 50 has too suddenly appeared on the horizon (or just blown past) and a little reevaluation might be in order, I think you'll find some gold in these pages.

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