

Clarion Review ★★★★

SELF-HELP

Heart Value: Feel Appreciated in Ways That Matter and Discover Your True Stride

Mary Tess Rooney

True Stride (Nov 11, 2021) Softcover \$24.95 (308pp) 978-1-73686-097-7

Heart Value is a self-help book that makes joyful living seem like an adventure: exciting, exhilarating, and worth the hard work of getting there.

Mary Tess Rooney's Heart Value is a self-help book that empowers people to live with joy.

Built on the premise that too many people are trapped in work and life, feeling drained and undervalued, the book asserts that life doesn't have to be that way. Instead, it lays a path to personal fulfillment and success that breeds joy and fosters appreciation from others. This work begins with the heart—knowing your value and what brings you joy. The results transform all of life—one's work, relationships, and sense of self.

Rooney's approach upturns common beliefs, including the idea that driven and successful people don't follow their emotions. It also reframes that idea that rejection is just part of life, showing that, through heart-centered living, rejection is not nearly as inevitable as people are told. Joy is a key idea throughout: through intentional and habitual choices and practices, Rooney says, joy can become a regular, central part of one's life, not a bonus that comes along by happenstance.

Listening to your heart may sound fluffy or too good to be true, but Rooney's explanations and real-life examples highlight both the grit that is needed, and the transformations that are possible, on this path. Running and racing analogies and examples show the kind of emotional athleticism that's needed to follow one's heart. Repeated processes and acronyms make her information accessible; they stand to spur the audience to action. For example, each chapter ends with a Feel-Choose-Act Table, designed to help the audience connect their heads with their hearts and bring about change; and here, an EPIC adventure involves envisioning, planning, implementing, and cherishing. The book uses creative phrasing to emphasize its central ideas, too, as of one's heart value, or "energetic and emotional connection to the value you offer that lights you up," and joy frequency, "the level at which your vibration radiates harmony and blissful energy, inward and outward."

Positive and warm in voice and tone, the book backs up each of its assertions and affirmations with practical tools and real-life examples. Each chapter includes motivating affirmations like "I will direct my path according to my inner compass and joy"; they are recommended for reprogramming negative thinking and setting positive intentions. Meanwhile, "Get Your Stride On" action steps, like brainstorming ways to have fun in daily activities, are used to build forward momentum, chapter after chapter. And the book's end is packed with "bonus adventures" to help audiences personalize and apply its lessons, with tables, flowcharts, and reflection questions to bring the information to life.

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MELISSA WUSKE (November 2, 2021)

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