ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

SELF-HELP

Steering Your Way Through Life: A Guide to Being Happy, Purposeful, and Fulfilled
Thomas A. Beardshall
Holistic Wellness
978-0-9791216-1-6
Three Stars (out of Five)

"Many religions can be valid paths to spirituality Christianity just happens to be the one that I have gotten to know the best have chosen as my personal path and feel most qualified to discuss" Thomas Beardshall informs readers in *Steering Your Way Through Life*. Rejecting tradition and Church authority he is trying to think for himself and encourages others to follow his example by finding an eclectic path to spirituality. Accordingly the book is a hodgepodge of maxims authoritarian pronouncements ideas principles and practical methods.

Beardshall is the author of *What Shall I Do With Jesus* a reinterpretation of Christianity based on new information. His new book's intent is to guide each individual in the process of developing his own eclectic philosophy and spiritual methodology. It provides some teaching and philosophy to get the individual started drawing on Christianity the Essenes Edgar Cayce Quantum Physics Positive Thinking memories and experiences under Hypnosis and the Association for Research and Enlightenment to present readers with a general New Thought / New Age approach to spirituality. In the end Beardshall seems to approve of the Association for Research and Enlightenment as a source of knowledge even providing contact information for readers.

Beyond spiritual ideas Beardshall guides us in methods for our own spiritual awareness and development. He encourages goal setting forgiveness affirmations prayer communion meditation and journaling. The last eighty pages of the book are a guided meditation with pages for journaling.

When citing life's basic truths and maxims to live by Beardshall points readers to some relevant thoughts such as "Make releasing the past a focus of your prayers and meditations. If you carry your past through life you are encumbered with too much baggage" and "If you care about a relationship stay focused on what you like about the other person and the things that you share." At times he is even a bit witty: "Put off croaking as long as possible but… recognize that human life is a sexually transmitted condition which is incurable and always (eventually) fatal."

When it comes to religion however he will offend some and please others with his New Age approach. He believes that "If you can overlook the surface differences most religions teach the same underlying ideas." Fortunately he doesn't actually claim to be a Christian because he goes on to deny all the distinctive doctrines of Christianity and adopts reincarnation as a basic tool for understanding what life is all about.

There is nothing new or particularly insightful in encouraging readers to develop their own philosophy of life and path to spirituality. These ideas have been put forth more forcefully by others but people in need of a simple practical tool to help them develop their own ideas may find it useful.