

The Next Happy: Let Go of the Life You Planned and Find a New Way Forward

Tracey Cleantis

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Cleantis aids people mourning an unfulfilled dream in this practical and uplifting guide to moving on.

In *The Next Happy*, Tracey Cleantis turns conventional thinking on its ear and challenges the “never give up” philosophy often embraced in the human condition. This fresh perspective provides the perfect template for letting go of an unfulfilled life dream.

From acknowledging that it is time to give up on a life dream to moving on with new opportunities, *The Next Happy* outlines a process for successfully moving through the stages of this often difficult experience. A clever mix of personal experience, client stories, and professional expertise underpins the basis for this straightforward approach to moving on.

Perhaps one of the book’s most compelling attributes is its universal applicability, across cultures, experiences, and every step in the process of letting go. In addition to being culturally sensitive, with some insight into mourning practices in various countries, the advice offered is helpful regardless of the nature of the unfulfilled dream and the current stage in the process.

Particularly useful are the self-help exercises found at the end of every chapter. Designed to provoke thought and facilitate movement through the process, the questions and suggestions posed here are thorough, insightful, and elucidating. In an early chapter, multiple questions aimed at seeing “where the dream may have already died” is one such example.

The “Movie Rx” sections, found in every chapter, are a clever feature that is effective at bringing some of the constructs in the book to life in a readily understandable way. *Amadeus* and *Ordinary People* are two applicable movies cited that are used to illustrate concepts in the book and to serve as learning tools.

The Next Happy promises to lend a hand to anyone in need of guidance in adapting to a new life devoid of the imagined future that never came to be. Reading about others who have faced this challenge and learning about the many suggested techniques for getting to “the next happy” is as comforting as it is practical.

LAURA MAHON (Spring 2015)

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