

## Book Review

### **Legacies of the Heart: Living a Life That Matters**

Meg Newhouse; EBook Bakery Books, 2016.

Life coach Meg Newhouse challenges us to face a key question of the second half of life: How do we live so that we shape our legacies consciously, so that the best of who we are and what we value lives on, at least in our family, for at least three generations?

Newhouse begins by highlighting that we inherit legacy from our parents and blood family as well as from the society within which they and we grow up. Through life review, we can identify the positive and negative aspects of that legacy. She underlines the importance of recognizing the negative legacies so that we can make new choices rather than fall into generational or societal patterns. The table of contents makes it very clear that to leave a valuable legacy we must live a life that matters and that thinking backwards from our future legacy can help us clarify our life purpose at each stage of our journey.

The hourglass image helps us to conceptualize the multitude of intentional and unintentional legacies (physical, mental, social) we inherit. Newhouse suggests we filter them by choosing from the heart and then consciously pass on legacies from narrow and specific to broad and far-reaching.

Throughout the text, Newhouse offers reflection questions for the individual reader or for legacy circles to consider. Here are some examples:

*What positive legacies have you received? In what ways have they affected your life? (p. 46);*

*How do you know when you are living 'on purpose' and when you are not? (p. 64)*

*Who were your most important teachers – formal and informal? What important legacies did you receive from them? What have you done with them? (p. 105).*

*What legacies have you left as a formal and informal teacher? (p. 105)*

*What examples of public legacies of the heart that derived from loss have you personally witnessed or benefited from? (p. 131)*

*Which stories – your own and your family's – have changed over time? Why and how? (p. 138)*

In this wise and detailed guide, filled with heart-filled stories, Newhouse shows the impact of legacy living, which includes consciously passing on legacy, and also urges us to go beyond the narrow and specific to consideration of the far-reaching in time and geography.