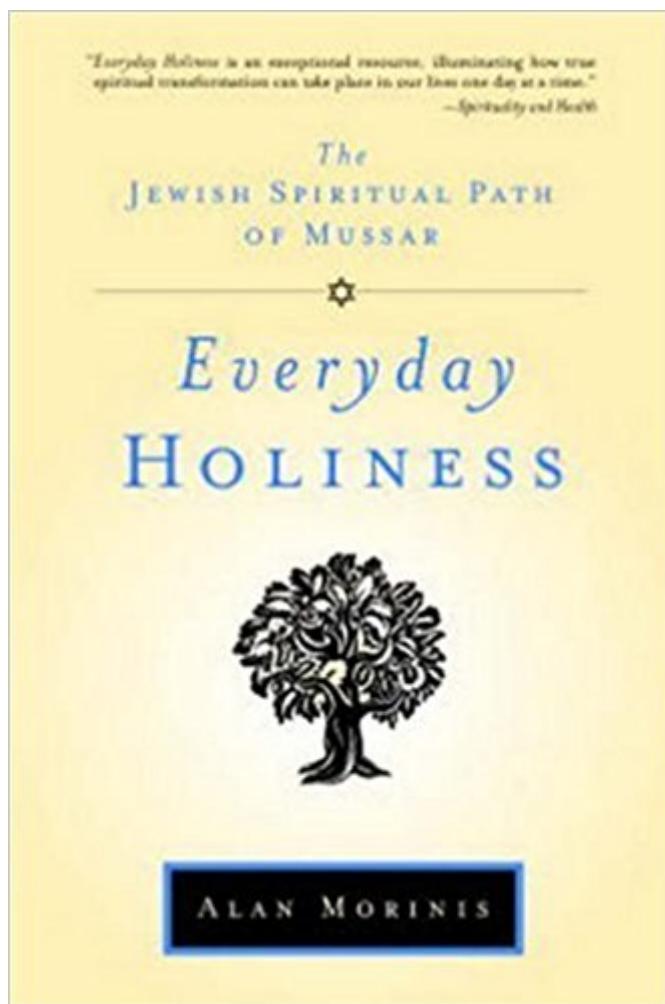


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Everyday Holiness: The Jewish Spiritual Path Of Mussar



Synopsis

Mussar is an illuminating, approachable, and highly practical set of teachings for cultivating personal growth and spiritual realization in the midst of day-to-day life. Here is an accessible and inspiring introduction to this Jewish spiritual path, which until lately has been best known in the world of Orthodox Judaism. The core teaching of Mussar is that our deepest essence is inherently pure and holy, but this inner radiance is obscured by extremes of emotion, desire, and bad habits. Our work in life is to uncover the brilliant light of the soul. The Mussar masters developed transformative teachings and practices—some of which are contemplative, some of which focus on how we relate to others in daily life—to help us to heal and refine ourselves.

Book Information

Paperback: 352 pages

Publisher: Trumpeter; 2nd Printing edition (December 2, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1590306090

ISBN-13: 978-1590306093

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.9 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 82 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #50,269 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #4 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > Movements > Orthodox #12 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > Theology #14 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > Jewish Life

Customer Reviews

Morinis, director and founder of the Mussar Institute, summarizes the practice of Mussar "in the phrase *tikkun ha'middot ha'nafesh*—improving or remedying the traits of the soul"—while emphasizing that it is not self-help. Rather, "it means working on yourself, but not for the sake of yourself... but... to bring the soul to wholeness and holiness." Each of us is born with an inner soul that is irrevocably pure, but the outer layers constantly engage in the age-old struggle between good and evil. By determining our soul curriculum, or "issues that repeatedly challenge [us]," we can strengthen our souls and therefore every aspect of our lives. Specifically, he addresses 18 soul traits: humility, patience, gratitude, compassion, order, equanimity, honor, simplicity, enthusiasm, silence, generosity, truth, moderation, loving-kindness, responsibility, trust, faith and *yirah* (a combination of fear and awe, without a true English counterpart). In most cases

the explanations are clear and delightfully illustrated with colorful Talmudic tales, though occasionally some traits, like moderation and generosity, seem at odds with each other. Early on, Morinis explains that a Mussar book should be read "slowly, in little segments, so the material can be thoroughly absorbed and digested." So, too, should readers of any religion take their time with this engaging tome of wisdom, lore and suggested practice. (May) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"You don't have to be Jewish to appreciate this way of refining and elevating your inner life and outward actions. Everyday Holiness is an exceptional resource, illuminating how true spiritual transformation can take place in our lives one day at a time." •Spirituality and Health
"Clear and delightfully illustrated. Readers of any religion should take their time with this engaging tome of wisdom, lore, and suggested practice." •Publishers Weekly
"A readable, engaging, friendly book. . . . [Morinis] writes as one besotted with the Jewish path, but not so intoxicated as to forget the conventions of the secular. He's an accessible guide, and a sober one." •Jewish Daily Forward

So glad I found this book! It's exactly what everyone could use in their life--learning how to be compassionate, a better human being. Excellent for self-study for all spiritual beliefs and religions.

I had never heard of Mussar until recently. I am a Jew and have been practicing Buddhism for the last 25 years. Mussar ties Jewish thought, Talmudic and Biblical in origin, with concepts like generosity, loving-kindness and other principles that are common to Buddhism. This book is outlined in a way that offers daily readings and you could just keep starting over each time you finish. I read from it after I finish my morning meditation session. This book has provided me with a spiritual part of Judaism that had been difficult to connect with prior to reading it. I can't say that it has changed my life, but it has added to it something essential and beneficial for me and ultimately for all sentient beings. Thanks to Alan Morinis for writing it. peace

An inspiring book that can be used as a guide for personal growth and empowerment. You can read select sections, or focus on the entire book.

This superb book outlines Mussar quite clearly, and is marvelous for Jews and non-Jews alike (I am

an Episcopalian). Mussar is not a way of doing self-help; it is a program -- developed over centuries -- for deploying attributes (midot) in one's life to become closer to God and to fellow humans. It gives a truly eye-opening new way of seeing our issues, others' issues, society's issues. The audio is also wonderful; I toggle back and forth between it and the book.

I bought this book because it's the text for a course the author offers at the Mussar Institute by the same name, which I'm now taking. The point of studying the material is to become a good person. Not necessarily a happier person, or a better-liked person, or a richer person, a better person in the ways that God measures that. I'd watched my husband study Mussar for three years and seen him become less anxious, kinder, a more attentive father who could listen more and judge less. He seldom talked to me about what he was studying or how it was effecting all those changes, but the evidence that Mussar brings dramatic changes was impressive. So I signed up. The process is so gentle and moderate, I didn't expect any results quickly. Yet they have come. I'm about 6 weeks in and my outlook on life has changed dramatically. I normally struggle with depression and cynicism and despair, and that has lifted in ways I find amazing. I am so glad to have started studying Mussar.

A wonderful template for learning how to be a good person. Morinis has breathed life into a traditional Jewish practice and infused relevance for our times. Grateful to find a form of mindfulness that bears the essence of Jewish values - values that are timeless for all.

The book will change your life. It is not like the modern day self-help genre.

I rarely buy books, which seems to me a correct spiritual practice. I took this one out of the library, and five pages into it decided that I wanted to have it. Both focused and expansive, this is a teaching-book that one can read over and over again through the years and keep learning from.

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