

# Books of Life

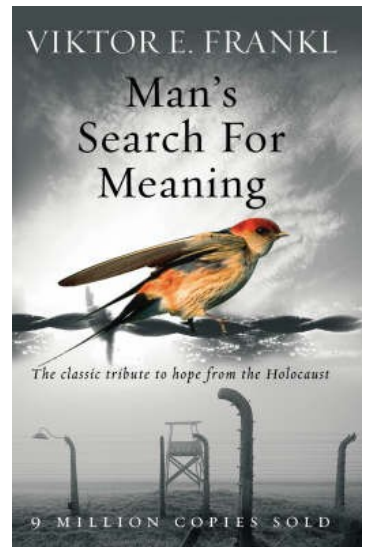
January 2021

## VIKTOR E. FRANKL : “Man’s Search For Meaning.”

Happened across this book one Summer holiday about 20 years in the Lake District. Ambleside bookshop and my bee line to the philosophy, self help, spirituality sections and I saw a shelf feature made of this beautiful book. An eye catching cover for sure...

An engaging literary style, uplifting, profound, memorable and will leave you a different person after you have read it.

Do not be put off by the subject matter- a man’s experience of the Holocaust. A defining moment for Humanity it provides a backdrop for a rich stream of enlightenment. How we work our way through such horror and find we can survive with hope. What do we each hope for? What moral compass do we each have inside? The frailties of the human spirit are all here to be seen and forgiven. I have recently read this book again during the lockdowns and it gives me fortitude and peace..



On his reflections as working as a doctor in the camp hospital.....

*“This young woman knew she was going to die in the next few days. But when I talked to her she was cheerful in spite of this knowledge. “I am grateful that fate has hit me so hard.” she told me. “In my former life I was spoiled and did not take spiritual accomplishments seriously.” Pointing through the window of the hut, she said “This tree here is the only friend I have in my loneliness.” Through that window she could see just one branch of a chestnut tree, and on that branch were two blossoms. “I often talk to this tree”, she said to me. I was startled and didn’t quite know how to take her words. Was she delirious? Did she have occasional hallucinations? Anxiously I asked her if the tree replied. “Yes.” What did it say to her? She answered, “It said to me, “I am here – I am here – I am life, eternal life.””*

February 2021

## STEPHEN GROSZ : “The Examined Life : How we Lose and Find Ourselves.”

One of those Amazon mooching around type discoveries for me. Whilst I was training I enjoyed reading about other professionals in the field and their experiences with clients. Although Stephen is a psychoanalyst this is written as an observation on life for us all to enjoy. It is profoundly insightful and very engaging. Funny and carries great resonance for anyone who seeks deeper understanding of the human mind.

The reflections are divided up into chapters entitled;

- Beginnings
- Telling Lies
- Loving
- Changing
- Leaving

A rich source of advise and helps get you back in touch with the Humanity of us all. Easily forgotten at the moment....

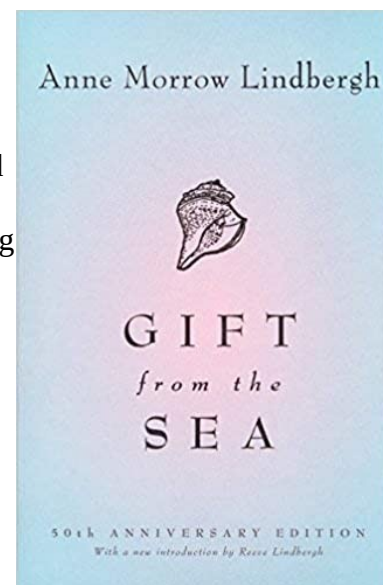


March 2021

## ANNE MORROW LINDBERGH : “Gifts from the Sea.”

What a lovely whimsical walk on the “beach of life” this book is....each chapter is a reflection on what the sea has left on the beach and Anne uses them to trigger reflection on life. I read this in my early twenties and it helped me see how nature can be used to smooth away anxiety and how life can have a different flow and rhythm to it. A great book to give as a gift for those struggling with the call to seek....written in the 1950s and yes, this is the wife of the famous chap who flew across the Atlantic....

*“Only when one is connected to one’s own soul is one connected to others, I am beginning to discover. And, for me, the core, the inner spring, can best be re-found through solitude.”*



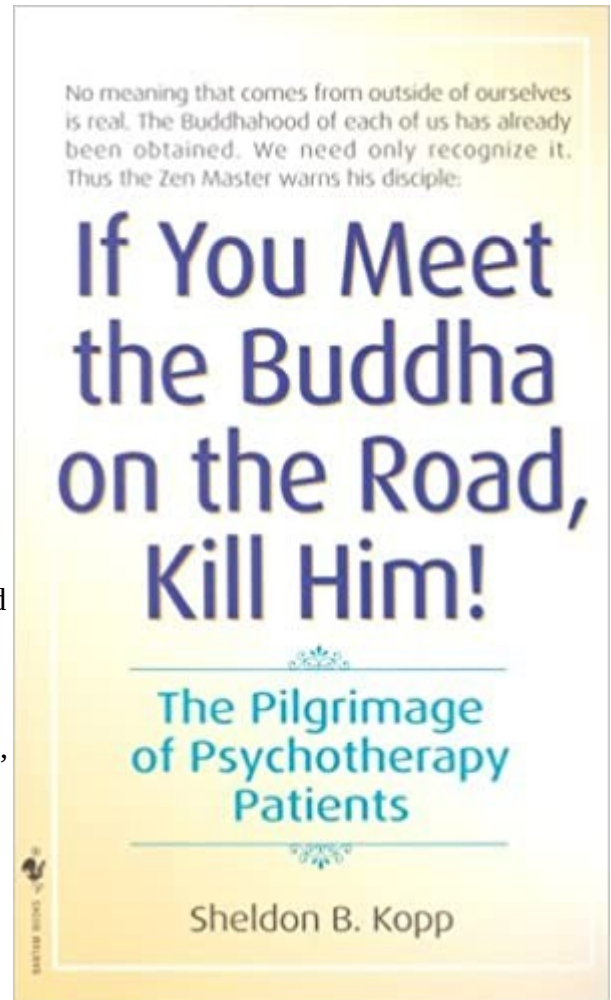
April 2021

**SHELDON B. KOPP :**  
**“If You Meet the Buddha on  
the Road, Kill Him!”**

*“No meaning that comes from outside of ourselves is real. The Buddhahood of each of us has already been obtained. We need only recognize it. Thus the Zen Master warns the disciple to do this...”*

A classic from the 1970s, I read this to understand my own grief and disappointment in life (!) but discovered the joyous kinship with the Everyman as we journey through life together. Literally turned my life around.

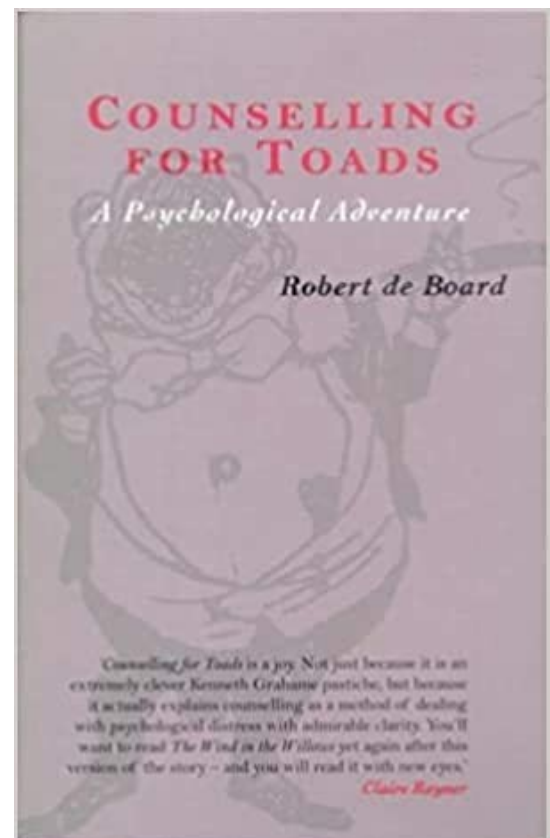
The most memorable part of this glorious book for me, is regarding particular types of prisoners who were eventually helped when someone just asked them the right questions about their lives.....



May 2021

**ROBERT DE BOARD:**  
**“Counselling for Toads”**

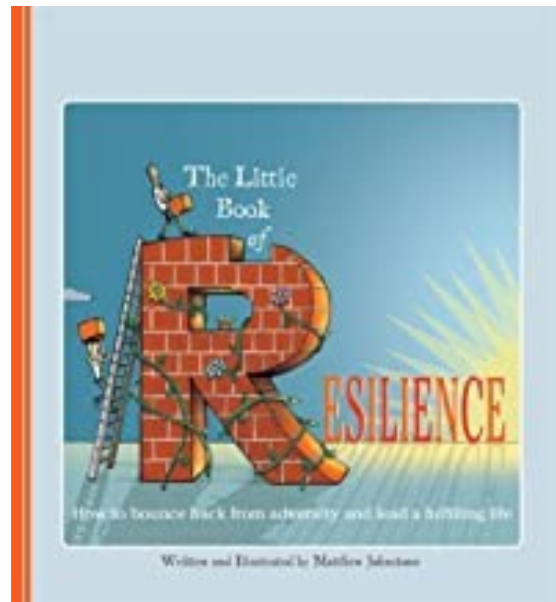
Written in the style of Kenneth Grahame of Wind in the Willows it follows further adventures of the riverbank creatures. Toad is depressed and has withdrawn from the world. One of his friends suggests counselling so off he goes to Heron for the talking cure. The author cleverly describes the counselling sessions so that you learn about transactional analysis without being preachy. Toad works through his issues and comes to greater self understanding. As one reviewer put it, if Kenneth Grahame had written a sequel it would have been something like this...



June 2021

## MATTHEW JOHNSTONE: “The Little Book of Resilience”

I discovered this little book when I was on one of my training placements and it is part of a series of wonderfully illustrated, profound and funny introductions to learning about your wellbeing. I think this would make an excellent gift for friends or family members who need some inspiration. The reassurance of having something to dip in and out of for some humour and love.

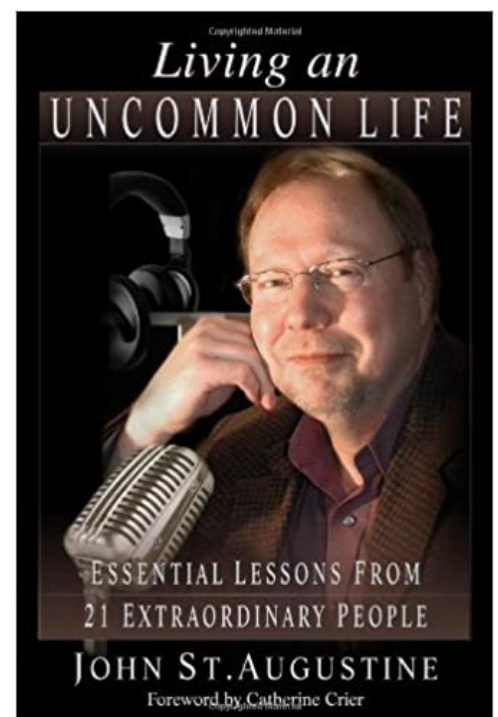


July 2021

## JOHN ST.AUGUSTINE: “Living an Uncommon Life: Essential Lessons from 21 Extraordinary People”

I saw this gentleman being interviewed a few years ago and was astounded with his life story of struggle, honesty and wonder. He has compiled this lovely collection of interviews he has had with people who have journeyed through life with an integrity of spirit and the serene acceptance as he has done.

The chapter on John Denver I found particularly moving...as was Johns own encounter with the Native American community....I think this book is now out of print in the UK but there are plenty of second hand copies about. Highly recommend to dip in and out of..



August 2021

## BRENDAN GILL: “Late Bloomers”

I came across this in a second hand bookstore and found the stories of people who kept their zest for life going into the twilight years, very life affirming. If you ever feel that your age is getting to be too much of a definition of what you should be, read these wonderful portraits and be in good company....

*“This title looks at 75 individuals whose greatest achievements occurred or were recognized later in life. The people profiled come from different countries and diverse social backgrounds. Their varied areas of achievement include the fields of science, philosophy, business, art, music, popular entertainment and humanitarian pursuits. Some, such as Harry Truman and Raymond Kroc (the founder of McDonalds), changed careers late in life. Others such as botanist George Washington Carver, worked for years in a chosen profession, finding recognition only later.”*

