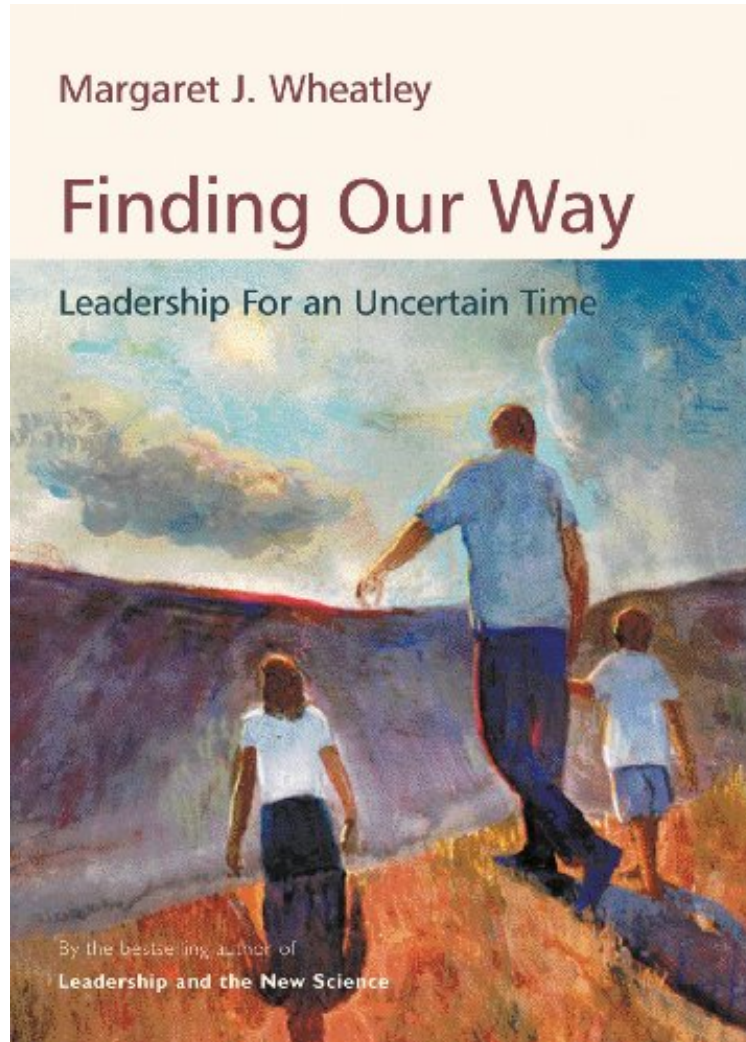


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Finding Our Way: Leadership for an Uncertain Time

Margaret J. Wheatley

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Margaret J. Wheatley : Finding Our Way: Leadership for an Uncertain Time before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Finding Our Way: Leadership for an Uncertain Time:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. More depressing than enlightening By J. Rice I will always be grateful to Ms. Wheatley for her first book Leadership and the New Science. I was through this book that I entered the world of complexity, living systems, and self emergent organizations. However, this book on Leadership is simply a iteration of former enlightenments, and has little new to tell me. I found the second part of the book to be depressing and self grandizing. I believe that there is more hope in America and our youth than described by Ms. Wheatley. I see signs all around me of people seeing and understanding the complexity nature of our world and leading organizations to assure learning and change can and does occur. I'm sorry that Ms. Wheatley has become so inured to the chaotic world she visions. 113 of 115 people found the following review helpful. Poetic Humanist Counterpart to Her

"Serious" BookBy Robert David STEELE VivasI am a little concerned by some of the negative commentary on this book being too "touchy feely." That is generally a sign that it has touched a nerve among "macho shit" types who think that elegance of thought and open affection for humanity is for gays and children. "Humanness" is for all of us, and if cannot cry, you cannot be human. Feelings must, as E. O. Wilson and others have documented so well, be fully factored into the whole of the human experience.This is the poetic humanist counterpart book, a series of essays from the past from before the author was recognized as one of the most brilliant leadership gurus in the English-language. I certainly do recommend that her "serious" book, "Leadership and the New Science," be read first, and then this one.The author has done a superb job of taking older essays and organizing them, putting them in context, to tell a new story. This book of essays is a new book for having been re-created in the aftermath of the success of "Leadership and the New Science," and I am choosing to give this book out to the audience of a gala leadership dinner in Washington, D.C., rather than the first book.The author stresses that the old story of organization is the "machine" model, where people control and domination are the management paradigm, and resistance to change is seen as obstinance rather than coherent humanist understanding of the badness of the imposed conditions. The new story, by contrast, sees that everything is connected--as the author brilliantly puts it in her preface, "Independence is a political concept, not a biological concept."She focuses on two fundamentals: the need for all mankind to be free to experiment, and in experimenting, create unlimited diversity; and the need to enhance and expand relationships with others as part of that diversity and sustainable mutually beneficial wealth creation.Translating that into meaning for organizational leaders, she stresses self-organization, listening, embracing all inputs, and striving to create self-identity, information-sharing, and relationships that in turn generate discovery, sharing, and fulfillment.This is not touchy-feely, this is common sense restored to the conversation of mankind.The other important theme in this book is the paradox of community, which sets the stage for her rather bleak conclusions about America facing an abyss. She spends a lot of time examining how the web and nations are separating clusters of individuals, isolating groups, rather than nurturing a broadening of the communal ethos, what Paul Goodman understood so well in the 1980's as the need for "communitas" from neighborhood to globe.The author is one hundred per cent on the money when she says, in a notional conversation with America's teen-agers, "We haven't taught you well about honor, sustainability, community, or compassion. We failed to show you how to be wise stewards of the earth, how to care for one another, how to resolve conflicts peacefully, how to enjoy others creativity as well as your own. Yet miraculously, you are learning these things."She concludes by lamenting America's litigious society, where everyone knows their rights, but few know how to be in a community (or fulfil their civic duties to include loyalty to the Nation and engagement in the democratic process).She tries to end the book on an uplifting note, speaking of the urgency of creating a web of hope, and of honoring those "few people who are not afraid to be insecure." She attributes most fear to the inherent tendency of organizations and nations to fight natural resistance to change with artificial fears of the unknown. Instead of fearing the unknown, she suggests, we should embrace the new and find new paths, new hopes, new solutions by using our collective intelligence and our new-found global community.This is one of six books that I regard as a life-affirming, "must-read" collection for any person who aspires to contributing to a sustainable future for America, for any other nation, for any tribe, for any community, for any neighborhood. If we fail to listen to Margaret Wheatley and embrace her human values--as E. O. Wilson does in "Consilience" where he explains in detail why science must have the humanities--then we are destined to lose to the bacteria that are winning the inter-species war. We are our own worst enemy. This author, and her two books, are a very powerful intellectual, moral, and spritual antidote to all that ails us.Five other books I recommend:Robert Buckman, "Building a Knowledge-Driven Organization"Clayton Christensen Michael Raynor, "The Innovator's Solution"Steve Denning's "The Springboard: How Storytelling Ignites Action in Knowledge-Era Organizations"Don Maruska, How Great Decisions Get Made"Margaret Wheatley, "Leadership and the New Science"0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I really hate this bookBy C. PonderI had to buy this book for a leadership course, but it's awful. The essays are nearly unreadable. The spirituality parts are especially hackneyed. I really hate this book.