

# Finding Your Own North Star: Claiming the Life You Were Meant to Live

By Martha Beck




**Finding Your Own North Star: Claiming the Life You Were Meant to Live**  
By Martha Beck


**New York Times bestselling author and Life Designs, Inc. creator Martha Beck shares her step-by-step program that will guide you to fulfill your own potential and create a joyful life.**

In this book, you'll start by learning how to read the internal compasses already built into your brain and body--and why you may have spent your life ignoring their signals. As you become reacquainted with your own deepest desires, you'll identify and repair any unconscious beliefs or unhealed emotional wounds that may be blocking your progress. This will change your life, but don't worry--although every life is unique, major transformations have common elements, and Beck provides a map that will guide you through your own life changes. You'll learn how to navigate every stage, from the first flickering appearance of a new dream to the planning and implementation of your own ideal life.

Based on Dr. Beck's work as a Harvard-trained sociologist, research associate at Harvard Business School, instructor at Thunderbird Business School, and especially on her experiences with her clients over the last six years, *Finding Your Own North Star* offers thoroughly tested case studies, questionnaires, and exercises to help you articulate your core desires and act on them to build a more satisfying life.

“Explorers depend on the North Star when there are no other landmarks in sight. The same relationship exists between you and your right life, the ultimate realization of your potential for happiness. I believe that a knowledge of that perfect life sits inside you just as the North Star sits in its unaltering spot.” -- Martha Beck

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

Put the telescope away; the North Star mentioned here is a human body, not a heavenly one. And like Polaris, which has guided sailors for centuries, the human body's gut feelings and emotions can help guide a wayward soul back to his or her "essential self." In this absorbing combination of detailed self-awareness exercises and true stories from her own counseling experience (equal parts sobering and hysterically entertaining), Harvard-trained sociologist Martha Beck invites readers to explore their heart's desires and the vast social webs that keep such desires in check. The goal is not to forsake the "social self" and indulge every emotional impulse of the "essential self." Rather, Beck gives readers the tools and the encouragement to achieve maximum happiness by harmonizing these typically divergent voices.

Beck (author of *Expecting Adam*) admits that repairing a damaged emotional compass and setting out on such a vital journey--which often involves painful realizations and changes--"has all the combined attractions of suicide and childbirth." But the payoff, she concludes, is a love affair with real life. To that end, she walks readers through a lengthy exercise to evaluate their current lifestyle's pleasures and pains, teaches the process of listening to the body for directional cues, describes how to extract "soul shrapnel" (healing all those nasty, self-defeating emotional wounds), and provides an intriguing "Map of Change" to achieve an authentic life. Beck's impressive knowledge, her engaging (if somewhat irreverent) voice, and her ability to parse this scary process into achievable steps make her a new champion in the self-help arena. --*Liane Thomas*

#### From Publishers Weekly

A fixed point in the sky that helps mariners stay on course, the North Star emerges as a symbol for realizing one's true potential in this cheerful and perceptive but too-long book. Though her navigational metaphors lose force with repetition, Beck's voice is light, down-to-earth and refreshing. Having found her way on her own journey from academia (she was a professor and researcher at Harvard Business School) to becoming an author (of *Expecting Adam*, a warmly received memoir about the birth of her Down's syndrome baby), Beck currently consults with clients on redirecting their lives. She teaches that each individual has a core personality that encompasses one's desires, emotions and preferences, which is sometimes blocked by a social self that responds to external influences and cultivates survival skills. By far the most fascinating material is on how to read warnings from the essential self: low energy, lapses into illness, forgetfulness, addictions, Freudian slips and mood swings. She advises steering toward the correct path by eliminating negative influences and practicing elaborate self-esteem exercises. A section on navigating change weighs the book down while suggestions for dealing with serious emotions like grief and anger are somewhat breezy. In the end, however, the numerous self-quizzes, exercises and chances to laugh will allow many readers to overlook these weaknesses. (Mar.) Forecast: Given the success of *Expecting Adam* and Beck's freelance contributions to *Mademoiselle*, *Real Simple* and *Redbook*, the author is likely to shine in a constellation of media venues and has a solid shot at capturing the imaginations of self-help seekers.

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#### From Library Journal

Beck owns her own consulting firm, Life Design, Inc., where she redirects "lost" souls to their true paths in life. This, her third work after *Breaking the Cycle of Compulsive Behavior* and *Expecting Adam*, puts her company's philosophy into print. By combining thought-provoking exercises with play activities such as

visualization, affirmations, and intuition, Beck here explores readers' inner thoughts on true happiness. She recommends that they set wildly improbable goals (WIGs) in order to find their personal North Star. This title differs from other self-help books by specifically defining a four-stage change cycle that happens to all humans many times during a lifetime. Stage 1, death and rebirth, defines a life-changing event; dreaming and scheming, the hero's saga, and the promised land follow. Other authors with similar messages are Judith Orloff, Anna Quindlen, Cheryl Richardson, and Bill O'Hanlon. Beck's humor, experience, and highly readable style make this a worthwhile purchase for public libraries. Lisa Wise, Broome Cty. P.L., Binghamton, NY  
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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Anthony Laflamme:**

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