Most of us need to feel that we matter in some way; perhaps this explains the high value placed on titles, corner offices, and even fleeting celebrity. But most of us also need to feel that we are good people. In this luminous yet practical book of spiritual advice, Harold Kushner bridges the gap between these seemingly irreconcilable needs, showing us how even our smallest daily actions can become stepping stones toward integrity.

Drawing on the stories of his own congregants, on literature, current events and, above all, on the Biblical story of Jacob, the worldly trickster who evolves into a man of God --Kushner addresses some of the most persistent dilemmas of the human condition: Why do decent people so often violate their moral standards? How can we pursue justice without giving in to the lure of revenge? How can we turn our relationships with family and friends into genuine sources of meaning? Persuasive and sympathetic, filled with humanity and warmth, Living a Life That Matters is a deeply rewarding book.

Features:
* Click here to view our Condition Guide and Shipping Prices

Rabbi Kushner offers an interesting book full of spiritual advice mixed with social commentary, stories of his own congregants, musings on literature, examinations of Biblical stories, and the ways in which we may relate them to modern day life.

He notes, (p.5), I have tended to many people in the last moments of their lives. Most of them were not afraid of dying...the people who had the most trouble with death were those who felt that they had never done anything worthwhile in their lives...it was not death that frightened them; it was insignificance, the fear that they would die and leave no mark on the world.
Kushner (p.10) tells of one of his congregants whose father had died. When the rabbi came to visit with the grieving man shortly after the funeral, he found himself saying, It sounds like your father was a man who kept his emotions to himself.

With that, the floodgates opened. The congregant broke down and cried. He never said anything good about me. All my life, I wanted to hear him say he was proud of me for who I was and what I was doing, and all I ever got from him was this sense that he showed his love by putting up with me.

Rabbi Kushner responded by telling him that the problem was his father's. He explained that his father was part of an older generation of men who had trouble knowing what they were feeling, and putting it into words.

He reminded the son that men who grew up in the Depression, often had to grow a hard outer shell, because caring, sensitive people were often left behind in those years. How many millions can relate to that story today? This is but one example of the touching truths that are relayed here.

On marriage, (p.115) Kushner writes, We cannot live without the knowledge that someone cares about us, and marriage provides the most accessible, though not the only, way of having that need met.

He notes recent efforts to create alternatives to marriage-communes with interchangeable partners, couples living together without ceremony, and with both partners having the freedom to leave whenever they feel their needs are not being met-has never managed to be as nourishing to the soul as the thousands of years-old institution of marriage.

Kushner tackles many deep subjects. He states that over the years he has counseled many rape and incest victims, as well as Holocaust survivors. He was puzzled by the fact that victims feel ashamed. Shouldn't the rapist or torturer be the one to feel ashamed?

He found that what the survivors remembered most vividly was not the cruelty of their tormentors, but their own sense of helplessness.

He writes, (p.75) I learned a great truth from them. When we thirst for revenge, it isn't really revenge we are after. We are looking to reclaim the sense of power and dignity that was stolen from us.

There is great wisdom revealed here, from many respected teachers of truth. The theme of the book can be summed up in the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson. To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; to know that even one life has breathed easier because you lived- that is to have succeeded.

A lovely, thought-provoking book, highly recommended!
For More 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price:
Living a Life that Matters by Harold S. Kushner - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!