



A Journey Down The Road Less Traveled

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The Road Less Traveled, published in 1978, is Peck's best-known work, and the one that made his reputation. It is, in short, a description of the attributes that make for a fulfilled human being, based largely on his experiences as a psychiatrist and a person.

In the first section of the work Peck talks about discipline, which he considers essential for emotional, spiritual and psychological health, and which he describes as "the means of spiritual evolution". The elements of discipline that make for such health include the ability to delay gratification, accepting responsibility for oneself and one's actions, a dedication to truth, and balancing.

In the second section, Peck addresses the nature of love, which he considers the driving force behind spiritual growth. The section mainly attacks a number of misconceptions about love: that romantic love exists (he considers it a very destructive myth when it is solely relying on "feeling in love"), that it is about dependency, and that true love is NOT the feeling of "falling in love". Instead, Peck argues that "true" love is an action to take with one's willingness to extend one's ego boundaries by including others or humanity, and is therefore the spiritual nurturing of oneself as well as the person's beloved.

The final section concerns "grace", the powerful force originating outside human consciousness that nurtures spiritual growth in human beings. In order to focus in on the topic, he describes the miracles of health, the unconscious, and serendipity—phenomena which Peck says:

- nurture human life and spiritual growth
- are incompletely understood by scientific thinking
- are commonplace among humanity
- originate outside conscious human will

He concludes that "the miracles described indicate that our growth as human beings is being assisted by a force other than our conscious will".

-- Wikipedia



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