



Book Recommendation

The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life by David Brooks

David Brooks of *The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life*, is a No 1 International bestselling columnist for the New York Times. I am sure he needs no introduction to many of you, but I am discovering such amazing writers as Brooks as I am now paying attention to those whose wisdom guides me in this third chapter of my life.

As Justin has previously written, blog #176, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, he has begun a book club with his son, Jack. I am the beneficiary of this recommendation from my son, Dan. I'd like to think that this recommendation comes because I have shown by the life choices that I am making that I would benefit from this book and the messages would resonate deeply within me.

I cannot recommend this book highly enough! In reviewing my cards upon which I have taken notes as I was reading (a practice recommended by Justin to me: a type of commonplace book in which I write down the insightful quotes that I want to remember on index cards, and file them alphabetically for easy access) the quotes I have chosen to draw out today are all from the first pages of *The Second Mountain*! (I have filled 46 index cards in all on it!) I found so much already in the opening pages, to comment upon.

Brooks alludes to the import of his title: "The Second mountain is not the opposite of the first mountain. It's the journey after it. It's the more generous and satisfying phase of life." This description matches my experience of my life beyond my career arc as I live the life I have laid down in my personal manifesto.

He further elucidates:

"People on the second mountain have made strong commitments to one or all of these four things:

- A vocation
- A spouse and family
- A philosophy or faith
- A community.

With the shock of recognition, I own all four commitments! My vocation— life long and still applicable – is as an educator. It is just that I lived it explicitly as a teacher in Secondary schools over a 46 year period, but now it is through giving back, passing on, what I have acquired along the way, to assist and walk home (Quoted by Maria Sirois in *Happiness after Loss* quote from Rumi: "We are all just walking each other home") any of you whom I encounter who might benefit.



My commitment to my spouse and family drives me. My story, touched on in *My Manifesto*, is a testimony to love, hard-won and therefore unrelenting, which I endeavour to manifest every day as I live my intentional life.

When I abandoned the faith I was raised with, I spent many years seeking to rebuild my centre, my moral compass. Through the books I have read such as *The Second Mountain* and the practices I choose daily in my life and wellbeing work, I have found my philosophy: service. Brooks knows and writes of the joy that this awareness and practice brings — ‘moral joy’. Brooks states, “Permanent moral joy seems to emerge when desire is turned outward to others.”

The community that I serve is the community that I live within, literally as in my neighbourhood, but metaphorically too, as in the community of like-minded people that I have found in my life on the ‘second mountain’.

I invite you to read this powerful book and apply its wisdom to your life.

The joy is open to all.