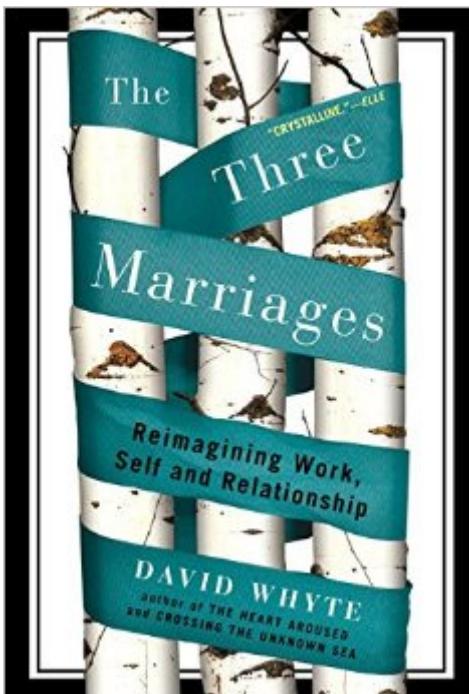


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The Three Marriages: Reimagining Work, Self And Relationship



Synopsis

A radical, "crystalline" (Elle) approach to integrating our work, relationships, and inner selves from the bestselling author, poet, and speaker. The author of *Crossing the Unknown Sea* and *The Heart Aroused* encourages readers to reimagine how they inhabit the worlds of love, work, and self-understanding. Whyte suggests that separating these "marriages" in order to balance them is to destroy the fabric of happiness itself. Drawing from his own struggles and the lives of some of the world's great writers and artists—from Dante to Jane Austen to Robert Louis Stevenson—Whyte explores the ways these core commitments are connected. Only by understanding the journey involved in each of the three marriages and the stages of their maturation, he says, can we understand how to bring them together in one fulfilled life.

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Customer Reviews

In 'The Three Marriages', author and poet, David Whyte says, "Most marriages are dynamic, moving frontiers, hardly recognizable to the participants themselves, moving frontiers that occupy edges of happiness and unhappiness all at the same time." (pg. 241). This is the kind of intelligent and useful insight one finds throughout Whyte's most recent book. What is unique about this statement, and many of the ideas developed in this work, is that you could apply this idea to any of the three marriages, the marriage to another, the marriage to one's work, and the marriage to oneself. I believe this is a unique and very helpful way to imagine the relationships in our lives. It is not a question of balance or choosing, but a question of seeing each of our 'marriages' as love

affairs in their own right, with all the ups and downs one experiences in a love affair with another person. The way that he illustrates his ideas is not only through his own life experiences, but through the lives of great writers, spiritual teachers and ordinary brave people, such as Jane Austen, Dante, Emily Dickinson, Robert Louis Stevenson, Pema Chodron and JK Rowling to name a few. This makes for a lively, interesting and adventurous read. In the final chapter, "Not a Question of Balance: A Marriage of Marriages", he gives us some new ideas about how we can bring it all together. I won't spoil any secrets, but leave it to your own enjoyable read.

David Whyte weaves the stories of Dante and Beatrice, Robert Louis Stevenson, Jane Austen and others to illustrate the interconnections of relationship with self, work and marriage. I used to think these worlds were separately spinning spheres but each is informed by the other with the relationship with self providing the clarity for the others. Whyte takes the idea of work life balance and turns it on its head to get us to someplace where we understand connection. It can be dense to read at times but he has done a great job of breaking the book up into chapters, sections and reviews at the end of chapters to capture the salient points. I highly recommend the book to gain insight into personal relationships (I was wondering why I was stuck in a lousy job and a lousy relationship), to discuss as a work group or to discover with a loved one. It would also be a great book group discussion. Also discover (or rediscover) how poetry can put into words these complexities, particularly David Whyte's poetry which can be found in other of his books.

David posits that we have three very important marriages in our lives: marriage to a partner, our marriage to our work, and that ultimate marriage we should be having with ourselves. He says these things are so closely tied to who we are, that we must look at all three. (probably OFTEN.) He also says we can't expect a perfect balance, and explains why that just doesn't work in the real world. (what a relief!) I downloaded the audio version and listened to it twice. He addressed so many important areas, using wonderful stories and poems, that finally, after listening to it twice, I ordered a copy of the book so I could highlight all the good stuff I wanted to remember. I'm a happy camper.

David Whyte takes you on an in-depth journey to what you are really about and establishes the words to define how committed we can be to our work. I find I am a sponge just soaking up what he is laying out before the reader. Examine it, see what fits for you, how you define yourself for all 3 levels. I never thought of a marriage to "self", but that is part of our journey throughout our lives. The exploration and acceptance of ourselves does take a commitment - a marriage of sorts. Then there

is the "self" that is defined by work, our careers, the companies we work for and colleagues we spend so much time with during the work day. We are always asked "what is it that you do"? at parties, the hairdresser, at a church meeting - every where! I feel I have made my marriage to work my own path. Yes, I followed the rules, but added in what I like to do to make things better, with my colleagues and being true to myself along the way. After 30 years of working, I find this book bring me to a new horizon. How can I re-commit myself to all three and how do I shape the years ahead for me and those I mentor? Enjoy the journey for we are always growing up!

This is a review of the CD audiobook version and has nothing to do with the content. Each of the CD's has something like a hundred tracks; each approximately 40 seconds long; some only 20 seconds. And the tracks aren't even divided in logical places; some end/begin mid-sentence! Whomever produced this audiobook did the worst job I've ever experienced and I have hundreds of audiobooks. Most CD audiobooks are like music CD's - each track is in the five minute range and it's easy to find specific sections of the book by hitting the chapter forward/reverse buttons. It's even better on a computer where I can title each track to reflect the content of the track. I can't do that with this audiobook. There's way too many tracks and they're too short. I chose (and paid extra), for the CD version over the MP3 CD and the Audible versions so I could listen in my car without the hassle of making my own CD's. I'd definitely recommend purchasing one of the other formats.

Whyte, a poet, applies his poetic insights to the whole of life, seeing it as three marriages: to a special person, to one's work, to oneself. Rather than talking about balancing these parts of one's life, he sees each "marriage" as "a core conversation with life that seems necessary for almost all human beings," even if the conversation is carried on unconsciously. He uses the life examples of writers like Jane Austen, Robert Louis Stevenson, Charles Dickens, J.K. Rowling, and spiritual teacher Pema Chodron to illustrate his points. Here is a nugget for each of the three marriages: The marriage to another person is a place to discuss one another's three marriages. The marriage to work involves deciding what we want to bring about in the world. And silence of one kind or another is necessary to come to terms with the marriage to self. This book has some stunning stories and good resources for deepening your life.

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