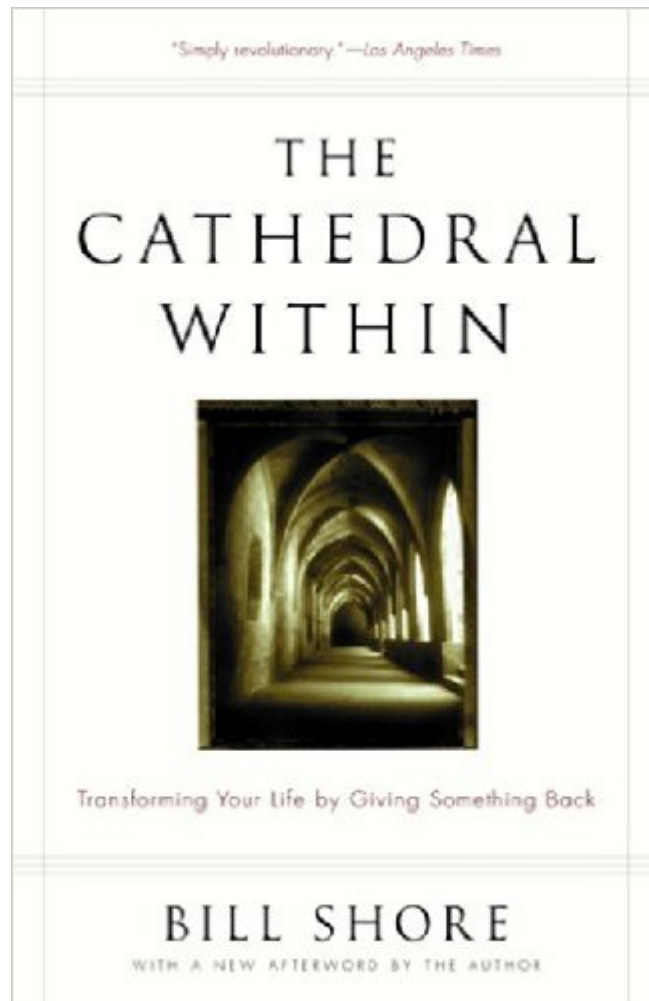


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The Cathedral Within: Transforming Your Life By Giving Something Back



Synopsis

In this wise and inspiring book, social entrepreneur Bill Shore shows us how to make the most of life and do something that counts. Like the cathedral builders of an earlier time, the visionaries described in this memoir share a single desire: to create something that endures. The extraordinary people Shore has met on his travels represent a new movement of citizens who are tapping into the vast resources of the private sector to improve public life. Among them are:-- Gary Mulhair, who has created unprecedented jobs and wealth at the largest self-supporting human-service organization of its kind, Pioneer Human Services of Seattle.-- Nancy Carstedt of the Chicago Children's Choir, which provides thousands of children their first introduction to music.-- Geoffrey Canada, who has made a safe haven for more than four thousand inner-city children in New York City, from Hell's Kitchen to Harlem. These leaders, and many others described in these pages, have built important new cathedrals within their communities, and by doing so they have transformed lives, including their own.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Billy Shore doesn't just have a message; he is a great storyteller with a message. The result is a book that you won't want to stop reading until you get to the very last page. Then you will want to go out and do something to make yourself and the world a little bit better place. It has been a long time since I read a book that made me think so much, or reflect so deeply on the world in which we live; or the one that we will leave to the next generations. Shore guides us to the realization that there is

much that we can be doing to leave our children the basic freedoms of safety, education and the ability to earn a decent livelihood; things that many of us took for granted. This book has genuine heroes and heroines, great parenting stories, humour, lots of examples of what's working, and some very pointed examples of why the clock is ticking for the children of our country. And as the title promises, just reading the book makes you begin to feel empowered to start giving more to get more out of life. A great dose of inspiration and direction for individuals and organizations.

Perhaps the most important points that this book makes are 1) If you can't build the structure, add a few bricks! and 2) Community Wealth and Social Capital are re-inventing business from the soul out! In this well-written book, Shore (Founder of Share Our Strength) uses the model of a cathedral to demonstrate that large dreams are community efforts that reach beyond personal lifetimes to accomplish, and that appear impossible until the collective brainpower of the community engages to find a solution. This metaphor addresses the "perfectionism" that sometimes stops people from making efforts towards social change. In the inspirational stories of ordinary people doing extraordinary things, readers feel the passion that rebounds off the pages. Echoing the human voice for meaning in an increasingly digital and isolated world, this book suggests practical ways for American wealth to be redefined, redistributed, and built upon foundations that include social interests. It is a blueprint for building ethics into today's business values and ventures that will create a social structure of community wealth. I read it in one sitting, underlined heavily, and have placed 39 page markers within its covers. The inspiration found between its pages has helped me redesign my own business plan towards the greater good. In short, read it.

This is a book that touches the heart of both important social issues and the reader. Written in a wonderfully open style the author writes from a perspective of sharing rather than preaching. Bill Shore's approach of tying his view of how the issues of today's society can be most effectively addressed to his personal experiences, rather than theory and conjecture, brings substantial credibility to his writings. The issues addressed are those of scaling the resources of non-profit, public service, organizations to meet the growing needs of our society in the face of shrinking government resources. The notion of making non-profit organizations self-sufficient is well outlined and easily understood. "The Cathedral Within" is a book that left me feeling encouraged to know that there is not only room for improvement in our social structure but that it is being aggressively and effectively pursued.

I attended a training and learned of this book. It is a great read for those that work in the business of serving others. I always look to for my books first, shipping is reasonable, came before schedule, just as the seller described, and was \$15 cheaper than bookstore plus they would have had to order it and got it to me quicker.

Relying on anecdotes and his own experience as a philanthropic executive, Bill Shore has mapped out a new way for nonprofits to generate revenue -- by creating it. By forming corporate partnerships that "create" wealth rather than rely on charitable contributions, which aren't necessarily guaranteed and which represent someone else's money, nonprofits can generate new revenue and thus grow the community's economy. The author offers up profiles of some of those leading the charge and he outlines a general means through which charitable contributions and/or "community wealth" enterprise participation can also grow the soul. This is an important book that will be widely read by anyone wanting to make a difference in American society.

The actual content of the book can be summarized thusly: (1) spend more time with kids if you want to affect their development, (2) don't starve young children because otherwise they won't develop properly physically and mentally, (3) run your not-for-profit enterprise just like a for-profit corporation and with just as much of a zeal for profits, except that you can put the profits into your own pocket as salary instead of paying it out to a bunch of shareholders and to the Federales as income tax. Padding these ideas out to 300 pages requires that the author tell you how famous his friends are, each and every one of them, and how much do-gooding his few non-famous friends have done. There are also long stories about the escapades of his 13-year-old son. Never does the author address the issues raised in the subtitle, e.g., how does a person balance his or her life between charity and selfishness? Shore's definition of "giving something back" is working at a multi-million dollar tax-exempt organization and paying yourself \$400,000 per year. Nice work if you can get it but what about the rest of us? For a thoughtful look at the issue of personal charity read the novelist Nick Hornby's "How to be Good".

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