



Making the Good Life Last: Four Keys to Sustainable Living

Michael Schuler

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So many of us are beset by anxiety, depression, loneliness, and spiritual malaise, tense and unhappy despite our gadgets and goodies. Michael Schuler, leader of the nation's largest Unitarian Universalist congregation, says it's because, urged on by an aggressively materialist culture, we too often opt for short-term gratification and long-term denial. In this thoughtful and deeply honest book, he helps us find a life path that leads to treasures of perennial value: a beautiful and healthy earth home, enduring relationships, strong communities, work that contributes to the common good, and play that restores our bodies and lifts our souls.

Deconstructing the assumption that consumption, stimulation, and constant motion comprise the good life, Schuler urges the wholesale embrace of sustainability as both an operational principle and a life-sustaining core value. His book presents sustainability as a coherent frame of reference that can ground us spiritually, heal us internally, and deepen our relationships. Schuler identifies four behavioral principles for living sustainably—Pay Attention, Stay Put, Exercise Patience, and Practice Prudence—and shows how to apply them in our daily lives. He uses stories from his own life to illuminate the rewards and challenges of sustainable living and shares insights from environmentalists, social commentators, writers, poets, businesspeople, and spiritual leaders.

Sustainability means more than mere survival—for individuals, just as for natural and social systems, it's the key to thriving rather than burning out. For those seeking a more profoundly satisfying way of life, Schuler's heartfelt explorations offer a counter intuitive answer: the sustainable life is the good life.

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