

2.20 The Way Of The Superior Man

A spiritual guide by David Deida to help men master the challenges of women, work, and sexual desire.

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The Way of the Superior Man by David Deida is a guide for men, encouraging them to get in touch with themselves and live in alignment with their true nature. The book is divided into many short chapters that cover various topics.

David Deida's approach can help men in a range of relationships, in finding their sense of purpose, and in leveling up their presence with women. Deida focuses particularly on the value of polarity, contending that the modern trend toward total equivalence between men and women is misguided and makes for stagnation in relationships. He argues that in most healthy relationships, one person will assume the masculine role while the other takes on a more feminine identity. Deida asserts that this polarity is positive and meets the needs of both parties. This principle applies even in relationships between two men or two women, and The Way of the Superior Man is intended for anyone who finds themselves called to the masculine role at least some of the time.

Men who are feeling stuck and having difficulty connecting with people or who are feeling drained by the expectations placed upon them may find that The Way of the Superior Man helps them understand themselves and show up in a stronger, more authentic way.

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- There are many self-help books available but few stand-out texts on how to be a man in the modern world. Even if you disagree with some of Deida's perspectives, considering them will help you figure out what you do believe.
- Discusses deep principles such as meditation and presence (see Tool 6.1: Meditation) and provides a guide to applying them in various situations in a man's life.
- The short, stand-alone chapters make it easy to dip into the book and choose one that matches your current mood and needs.

2

- Deida's worldview can be rather dogmatic and prescriptive. His opinions about the world don't leave a great deal of room for plurality.
- Some people have criticized the tone as occasionally misogynistic. With this in mind, it's worth reading the book with a critical eye.

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Simply read the book and find the chapters that appeal to you most. To give you examples of Deida's philosophy, many people have found the following chapters extremely insightful.

4

The idea behind this chapter is that in order to be truly free to be your own self, you must grow up and release yourself from your father's expectations, both positive and negative. You can love your father without living your life trying to live up to his standards. Ultimately, Deida says, you must make crucial life decisions based not on your father's expectations of you but on your own expectations of yourself.

5

According to Deida, the capacity to receive constructive criticism from friends is a measure of your masculine energy. If you can listen without becoming hurt or defensive, their feedback can help you see your true self more clearly. In this context, your friends are not there to support or constrain you but simply to help you become a better person. Your job is neither to accept nor deny their criticism but to weigh it carefully, discerning whether there is any truth in it. Then, if there's some value for you to glean, use it to improve yourself.

6

We all have dark thoughts and desires, which we might be tempted to deny. Deida, however, claims that this is counterproductive. When we refuse to acknowledge our darker impulses and pretend to be perfect, we deny a part of ourselves, which then plays out anyway through our subconscious. When we instead embrace these desires, we can integrate them into our psyche without allowing them to run our lives.

7

When a heterosexual man sees a beautiful woman, it is natural for him to feel sexual desire for her. In most situations, however, it's not possible to simply act on that desire. Deida recommends feeling it fully but resisting the urge to take refuge in fantasies. Instead, he suggests transmuting this energy, allowing it to circulate beyond the physical so that it finds a healthy creative outlet. This can be painting, writing, or another form of art—think of all the songs, art, and books men have created because they were inspired by beautiful women—or it can simply be a catalyst to find a higher purpose in one's work.

References

David Deida, *The Way of the Superior Man: A Spiritual Guide to Mastering the Challenges of Women, Work, and Sexual Desire* (Sounds True Publishing, 2017).
