

The Only Thing That Matters

by Neale Donald Walsch

Something very unusual is occurring on this planet right now. You have no doubt noticed it. It may be producing a more than normal amount of challenge and disjointedness in your life, and perhaps even some major upheavals. You are probably noticing it in the lives of others as well.

For a while you may have thought that this was all just your mind playing tricks on you; that things were not really happening any differently, and that you're just a little tired, a little overcommitted,

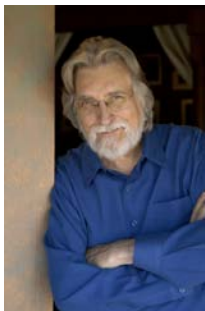
a little oversensitive.

But now, as each day presents itself with obstacles mounting and challenges increasing and more and more personal issues coming up to be faced and healed, it is apparent that all of this is not an illusion, not an exaggeration. So you may be asking, "Why is all this happening? What am I doing wrong?"

And here's the answer . . .

You're doing *nothing* wrong.

About the Author



Neale Donald Walsch is the author of 27 books on practical spirituality, including the *Conversations with God* series, which have sold millions of copies worldwide. His books have been translated into 35 languages, and seven have made the *New York Times* bestseller list.

The author's internet television program, *Talk to Neale*, allows his readers to interact with him regularly in person at www.CWG.tv. Walsch lives with his wife, the American poet Em Claire, in Ashland, Oregon. He may be contacted at: www.nealedonaldwalsch.com.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Erin Dupree
Publicist
edupree@hayhouse.com
646-484-4957

Available: October 16, 2012
Price: USA \$19.95 • CAN \$19.95 • UK £10.99
Format: 6" x 9" Hardcover
ISBN: 9781401942366





AN INTERVIEW WITH NEALE DONALD WALSCH

AUTHOR OF

The Only Thing That Matters

Why after 27 books have you chosen to write another?

Do you know, that's a very good question. I don't like to write a book just for the sake of getting something into print. If it doesn't add value in some way to the discussion that the early books have started, I'm not interested. I can't get myself excited about producing it.

This particular book was exhilarating for me because it answers the central questions that I think the *Conversations with God* books raise, which are: What's the point of all this? What is the purpose of our lives beyond simply creating and ensuring physical survival—and then, perhaps, some degree of comfort and joy—for ourselves and our loved ones? Is that all there is? And if there is more of a point to life than that, what is it? And most important of all, how can we cause our own lives to serve that larger agenda?

Those are the questions I sought to answer here.

What makes you think you have the answers?

I don't. I don't have any more answers than the average person does—which means, not very many. And the answers that I carried around with me for years—given to me by my family, my society, and my culture—were not very good ones, not very accurate or very helpful in terms of giving me the tools with which to create a better life.

Then why would we be interested in the answers in this book?

Because the answers in the book didn't come from me. I believe they were inspired by God, and that they are an extension of the messages given to us in the *Conversations with God* dialogues.

You believe these answers came directly from God?

I do. Because that is my personal experience. But this is not a “dialogue with God” book, where I ask questions and God answers. It is an “inspired” book, in which I believe the narrative to have been inspired by God.

Why should anyone else believe that?

There’s no reason at all for anyone else to believe that, and I’m not asking anyone to. I believe that the material in the book emerges from Divine inspiration, yes, but I also believe that it speaks for itself. It feels to me that its wisdom is self-evident. A fresh reader will either agree or disagree, and in both cases that is totally okay with me. Whatever one’s opinion, however, I don’t think that many people will find the book uninteresting.

So what so interesting here?

Well, the book starts off by saying that 98% of the world’s people are spending 98% of their time on things that don’t matter. I think that notion is fascinating in itself.

It’s also a pretty strong statement.

Strong statements are required to encapsulate a sad state of affairs. Of course, the “98%” figure is rhetorical, not statistical. I mean, no one did a study and came up with that number. It’s a rhetorical statement, meant to indicate that most of what most of us do has little connection with anything that really matters.

According to whom?

According to people themselves, at the end of their lives. Surveys show that, overwhelmingly, people feel at the end of their lives that too much of their life—most of it—was spent on things that simply were not important.

So is this one of those ‘I should have spent more time with my family’ or ‘I should have smelled more roses and eaten more ice cream’ books?

Actually, no. Because while spending time with family and giving oneself more of life’s treats can be very important, it is not what we have done and are doing with our time that is significant, it is the *reason* that we are doing *whatever* we are doing.

Help us out with that.

It is not the activity of our lives that makes them matter, it is the purpose for which we undertake the activity—it is a person’s innermost motivation—that causes what one is doing in

life, and one's life itself, to matter.

Let me use a simple example from everyday life to illustrate the point.

Please.

You can be doing the dishes because they are piled high in the sink and there's no more space, or perhaps you're expecting guests and you're embarrassed at how your kitchen looks...or you can do the dishes because having a clean and tidy personal space speaks richly to you of who are at your core...or because you want to save your partner—who you know has had a long day—from having to do them.

In each of the instances above the activity is the same: you are cleaning up the dishes. Yet in each of those instances the motivation is decidedly different.

In some moments in life the motivation to do what one is doing emerges from the Soul serving what I call the Divine Purpose. The book makes the point that when it does this, it matters. When it does not do this, it does not matter, in the sense that it has little or nothing to do with our reason for being here.

Which is?

As I understand it, we are here on Earth to do more than just live and die and make the best of the experience. We are here to advance a larger agenda. We are here to move forward an eternal evolutionary process in which our soul is involved. It is a process through which each individual soul experiences its true identity fully, and by which Life Itself expands its expression to reflect the wonder of its ultimate and true nature.

What is the 'true identity' of the soul?

I have been told that the soul is the individuated aspect of Divinity Itself, and that its purpose through physical life is to express and to experience Divinity at the next highest level, in a constantly escalating spiral.

Assuming this is true, why do we have to do this? It seems like such a monumental and never-ending task.

We don't 'have to' do it. Nothing is required of us in this or any other lifetime.

Wait a minute. We have more than one lifetime?

My understanding is that we have an endless number of lifetimes. Our incarnations never end, with the soul moving from one physical expression to another on its eternal journey.

Never to experience 'heaven', then?

This *is* 'heaven.' The whole expression—the experience between physical lifetimes and the experience of each lifetime—is what 'paradise' is all about. "Heaven' for the soul is the ability to know and to express Divinity in you, through you, as you...and this is exactly what Life at every level is all about.

But—getting back to the other question—you're saying we don't 'have to' do this? We don't 'have to' strive for Divinity being expressed through us?

Divinity is expressed through you no matter what you do. It is impossible for you *not* to express Divinity, since Divinity is Who You Are. It is simply a matter of how you want to *define* Divinity in This Moment, Now.

Put another way, God is what you say God is, by how you are being in any given situation or circumstance. As *Conversations with God* says, "Every act is an act of self-definition." And Life Itself, throughout the multiple universes, is God in the act of defining Itself as it wishes to know Itself through the here-and-now expression *of* Itself.

You're telling us that the way human beings are is the way God wishes to express Itself? That's hard to believe. That's stretching credibility about as far as it can go. It seems more likely that we are defying God's Will, not *doing* God's Will, and thus, we are *not* expressing God Itself, but just the opposite.

The greatest gift we have been given by God is Free Will. We can express our Selves in any way that we desire. The question is not, "How can the way human beings are be an expression of Divinity?" The question is, "Why would human beings choose for Divinity to be expressed in this way?" And, more transformationally, "What could cause us to define Who We Are, and Divinity Itself, in another way? A higher way? A grander way?"

If we are in the act of defining God, would we want to do it any differently? That is the question of the day. The answer to that question will determine the future of humanity, and so is, in both human terms and Divine terms, The Only Thing That Matters.

(*The Only Thing That Matters* is distributed by Hay House publishers, and is available from most online and onstreet booksellers.)

IT'S TIME TO REFOCUS OUR ATTENTION ON WHAT MATTERS

by Neale Donald Walsch

As I look at life on our planet presently it feels to me that 98% of the world's people are spending 98% of their time on things that don't matter.

That's a bold statement to make, I know. It's almost an indictment. But as I look back at my own activities in the past, I see that this was true during most of my life, and only in these past few years has it changed. And I see most people across the globe living pretty much as I had been living...so I'm going to stick with my observation. In fact, I used this exact statement to open my latest book.

It's an attention getter, and I admit it: I'm trying to get people's attention.

Why? Because I think the world is moving toward an important moment in time relating to the larger process of humanity's evolution, and everywhere I go I see people searching for larger answers to the larger questions that face all of us in life. Questions such as—trite as it may seem—what is this life really all about?

In my lectures these days I invite people to look at their own lives, and the day-to-day activities that fill them. Then I ask: How many of those activities have really mattered in terms of the true reason for your existence?

Most people say that this would depend on how one defines that true reason. To which I answer: "Precisely."

And that is why I wrote this latest book; that is exactly what the book explores. It also offers the observation that most people do not *know* what the true reason for their existence is—and that this is, of course, the core of the problem.

I make the point that this is not our fault. We've been told very little about the real reason for our existence—and of the little we have been told by our ancestors, by our families, by our religions and our cultures and our tribes, nearly all of it is inaccurate.

We have been told that to be happy in life we need to get the guy, get the girl, get the car, get the job, get the house, get the spouse, get the kids, get the better job, get the better house, get the promotion, get the grandkids, get the gray hair, get the office in the corner, get the retirement watch, get the illness, get the burial plot, and get the hell out.

We have been told that we need to obey God's commands, do God's will, follow God's law, spread God's word, and fear God's wrath, for when we face God's judgment we will be begging for God's mercy—and, depending on our offenses, we may not get it, but rather, may find ourselves condemned to everlasting and unbearable torture in the fires of hell.

We have been told about the Survival of the Fittest and that To the Victor Go the Spoils, that Nice Guys Finish Last and that The One with the Most Toys Wins, that It's Every Man for Himself and that The End Justifies the Means, that Money Doesn't Grow on Trees and that We're to Be Seen and Not Heard and that We Are Not to Color Outside the Lines and that We Made Our Bed and Now We Have to Lie in It.

We have been told that There Is Only One Way to Heaven and We'd Better Get It Right, that It's Us Against Them, and that We Can't Fight City Hall; that we should Never Raise Our Head Above the Crowd, that We Can't Have Our Cake and Eat It, and that We should Never Count Our Chickens Before They Hatch.

And now, as if that isn't enough, we've been told in most recent days and times that The End Is

Near, Society's Collapse Is Imminent, All Social Systems Are Falling Apart, and that soon our world will return to Cave Man Days.

Our Minds have been filled with many, many other messages that have created a day-to-day reality so far removed from our real reason for being on the Earth that it's a wonder we find any joy or excitement in life at all—much less muster the energy to change any of the things that really do need to be changed on our planet if a wonderful future for humanity is to be assured.

Yet most of the things that are “wrong” with life on Earth in the 21st Century would right themselves *by themselves* if the majority of human beings simply refocused their attention on *The Only Thing That Matters*.

And what, exactly, is that?

It is the Agenda of the Soul. It is the Sacred Journey. It is the Divine Purpose. All of these are facets of the same diamond, and in the book I explore this gem with a jeweler's eyepiece, peering deeply into not only its breathtaking beauty, but its awesome power as well.

The book makes it clear that we are on a journey here. And no, it is not the journey from birth to death. It is a journey from way before birth to long after death. Yet our here-and-now awareness of the purpose and destination of this journey can play an extraordinary effect on our day-to-day life—in some cases changing it forever, and in many ways maybe even changing the world by changing that part of the world we touch.

Lest one think that this is just another metaphysical treatise, however, with little practical application, I should note that what I strived for here is exactly the opposite. I believe that spirituality that has no practicality is bankrupt. I have no time for it. So, taking my cue from the *Conversations with God* series of books that were given to me, I looked at its core messages and sought to explain them in ways that would cause their wisdom to be immediately accessible.

Among the concepts that are rendered functional, and not merely left as points for esoteric discussion: The Body and the Mind never die. We all know that the Soul lives forever (even the world's major religions can all agree on that), but the idea that our Bodies and our Minds are eternal as well opens us to an entirely new *raison d'être* and gives us an entirely new tool for the recreation of our behaviors.

And speaking of tools, the text offers five remarkable devices that offer us immediate assistance in serving, first, the Agenda of the Soul—which approach, the text declares, automatically brings into our lives all the things that the Body and the Mind have been struggling to create: peace, health, safety, security, opportunity, creative expression, pleasure, abundance, joy, happiness, and love.

The Only Thing That Matters invites 9-to-5, day-to-day, on-the-ground application of the spiritually revolutionary messages in *Conversations with God*. I have been waiting to produce this book for 15 years. Because of its daring, radical, and exciting approach to life, I wanted to try it first before I shared it, to see if it works.

It does.

(Editor's Note: Neale Donald Walsch is the author of the 9-book *Conversations with God* series, seven of which have placed on *The New York Times* Bestsellers List. His most recent books include *When Everything Changes*, *Change Everything*, and *The Storm Before the Calm*, both distributed by Hay House, as is *The Only Thing That Matters*. Mr. Walsch lives with his wife, the American poet Em Claire, in Ashland, Oregon.)