



Listen to My Life **Maps for Recognizing and** **Responding to God in My Story**

By Sibyl Towner and Sharon Swing

★★★★★ (5 stars)

Buy this book if you:

- *Want a great tool for finding God in your life story*
- *Are coaching visual learners in life purpose discovery*
- *Want to do a fun life purpose discovery class or workshop*

This self-guided workbook fills an important void in the tools coaches use for life purpose discovery—and it is pretty cool, too. The book contains a series of eight large (11” x 17”) graphical “maps” (some more than one page) done in watercolor. The maps allow people to visualize their life stories and how the different pieces interconnect. While coaches commonly help people talk about their story or write down pieces of it, this tool lets clients *see* their journey. For visual learners or coachees who are ‘S’s on the Myers Briggs (and don’t naturally see the larger patterns), being able to look at a picture of one’s life journey is invaluable.

The maps focus on two things: paying attention to how God has been at work through the story of your life, and learning to listen more effectively to what he has to say about who you are every day. In other words, you are mapping the journey toward God’s call more than the final destination. The maps examine what your life looks like now, peak experiences, valley experiences, your life story, desires and longings, and more. You can coach others through them separately or do the entire journey. A [Facilitator’s Guide](#) is also available for leading a group experience with this material, which I think would be a fun and meaningful experience.

One of the authors is a spiritual director, and that influence is obvious in the book. Each map includes prayer and listening exercises, significant quotes to meditate on and journaling exercises. Many of the exercises are adapted from ancient Christian spiritual practices like Lectio Divina (a pattern for meditating on scripture) or the Examen (a way to find God in one’s daily life).

One thing I love about this product is that the life purpose questions are asked in a way that pushes you God-ward instead focusing on self. Unlike many other Christian life purpose books, this volume has as its primary goal that you know God. Purpose is a vehicle to that larger destination, instead of an end in itself. I get the sense that the

authors started with a solid foundation of communion with God and then brought purpose into it, instead of starting with secular purpose concepts and wallpapering over them with scripture references, without really discerning if the underlying values fit biblical Christianity at all. We need more materials with this kind of focus!

There are [pictures](#) on Coach22 of several of the maps to give you a better feel for what they look like. Since they are watercolors done largely in pastel colors, some may find them more suitable to women's



groups than men, although I think both groups would get a lot out of the material. A [video introduction](#) the authors have posted on YouTube will also give you a closer look.

Summary

This offering is a wonderful tool for life purpose discovery. I really like it for three main reasons:

- It uses a unique strategy of visualizing purpose, and there is nothing else like it out there
- It moves people God-ward instead of focusing on self-actualization
- Combine it with the Facilitator's Guide and it's a great tool for doing a workshop or class on purpose

While \$33.95 may seem expensive for a 40 page book, the 11" x 17" format means each page includes four times the content—so it is really equivalent to a standard 150-page paperback. Given that it is also printed in full color, it seems very reasonable to me.

Reviewed by:

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