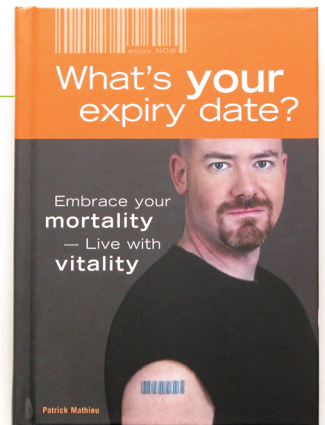


on the bookshelf

Reviewed by H el ene Meurer

What's your expiry date?

by Patrick Mathieu
Self-published, 2005
111 pages



To know the date of your death well in advance would be a rare gift. Or would it?

Just ask Patrick Mathieu. This author was born with a congenital heart defect. At the young age of 18 he was told by a renowned cardiologist that his expiry date would occur by age 30. Patrick spent years thoughtfully processing this special fact and converting the stages of his emotional journey into an exciting, inspiring life-work. For the benefit of everyone, his most powerful and practical insights are now compiled into a riveting quick-to-read book.

After learning of his impending mortality, Mathieu had the death date converted to a barcode and tattooed on his shoulder as a constant reminder. Over time, he transformed a diagnosis of terminal illness into a call to action.

He explored the five commonly recognized stages of denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance—and discovered there was yet greater strength to be found by pushing beyond these and *embracing* his mortality.

Let's face it: the subjects of death and mortality are intimidating. This is not the type of book most people are drawn to. But Mathieu's is a fascinating personal story, and as such, will appeal to all ages. His style is quick and easy; he doesn't waste words. Each short page is thought provoking. His message is as timely as it is relevant. Do you know of someone who is facing death? Have you had occasion to question the mortality of someone you love, or perhaps... your own? If so, this guidebook is just what you need.

Patrick Mathieu advocates that we should move toward accepting the certainty of death with as much diligence as we accept the possibility of retirement. "From a solid foundation of acceptance," he says, "you're ready to move from the fear-filled world of the immortals (those who deny their own mortality) to the exciting and joy-filled world of the mortals." Sound impossible? He'll show you the way.

Mathieu shares the tools and thought processes that helped him confront and then accept his own mortality. He coaches readers in how to step out of a pattern of "living by default" to instead live each day with purpose. To do so is exciting and empowering. **a**

H el ene Meurer is a writer and book reviewer.

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