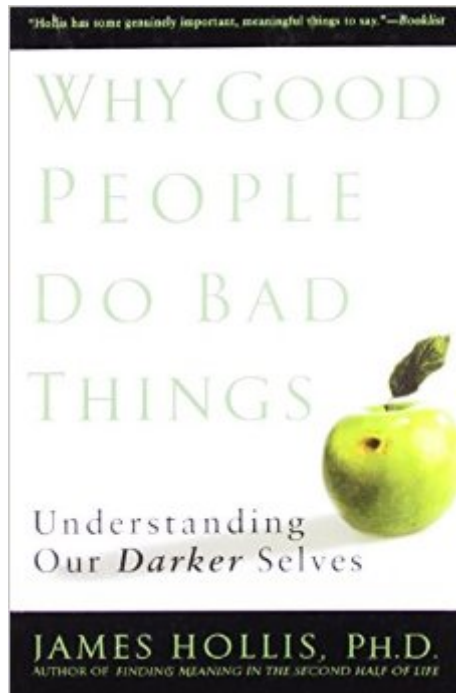


The book was found

Why Good People Do Bad Things: Understanding Our Darker Selves



Synopsis

Working with the Shadow is not working with evil, per se. It is working toward the possibility of greater wholeness. We will never experience healing until we can come to love our unlovable places, for they, too, ask love of us. How is it that good people do bad things? Why is our personal story and our societal history so bloody, so repetitive, so injurious to self and others? How do we make sense of the discrepancies between who we think we are or who we show to the outside world versus our everyday behaviors? Why are otherwise ordinary people driven to addictions and compulsions, whether alcohol, drugs, food, shopping, infidelity, or the Internet? Why are interpersonal relationships so often filled with strife? Exploring Jung's concept of the Shadow--the unconscious parts of our self that contradict the image of the self we hope to project--Why Good People Do Bad Things guides you through all the ways in which many of our seemingly unexplainable behaviors are manifestations of the Shadow. In addition to its presence in our personal lives, Hollis looks at the larger picture of the Shadow at work in our culture--from organized religion to the suffering and injustice that abounds in our modern world. Accepting and examining the Shadow as part of one's self, Hollis suggests, is the first step toward wholeness. Revealing a new way of understanding our darker selves, Hollis offers wisdom to help you to acquire a more conscious conduct of your life and bring a new level of awareness to your daily actions and choices.

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Customer Reviews

The title might lead a casual reader to dismiss this as just one more lightweight self-help book -- but

that's not the case, not in the least! As with Hollis' earlier books, it's a psychologically & philosophically rich examination of the human soul, offering no easy answers, no magic solutions, no simplistic aphorisms in place of real insight. If you truly want to understand your life & its choices, then you have to be willing to do some difficult & often painful emotional work. And that's something few of us are eager to do. Which leads us to the question: do you want to grow, to become more fully conscious, to strive towards wholeness? If so, you'll have to discard protective illusions, stop expecting someone else to solve everything for you, and apply an almost ruthless honesty to yourself. You won't like a lot of what you see in that dark mirror, and you'll try to fend it off, explain it away ... but that's our mistake. If we can acknowledge the part we unconsciously play in our own suffering, we may well learn how to alleviate some of it & live with what remains. Mind you, Hollis never promises an end to suffering, a wondrous makeover that does away with every ugly scar & thought! He has too much respect for the tragic view of human life to hold up an illusion of perfect happiness, no matter how golden & comforting. He's very clear on this: what we need isn't happiness, but meaning. And to find it, we have to be willing to grapple with the Shadow, all that we fear & despise about ourselves, all that we reject & often project onto others. I feel that this is one of Hollis' finest books, in that it possesses an extra depth & richness of insight.

This is one of the most powerful and life-altering books I have ever read. There are insights on practically every page and the depth of understanding of the human mind that Dr. Hollis brings is extraordinary. During a period of difficulty in my life which I am still working through, I stumbled upon this book. The title caught my eye but I was anticipating a Dr. Phil-ish over-simplification of human behavior full of soft answers and plenty of upbeat self-affirmations. I was stunned to find how wrong I was. Dr. Hollis examines not only the individual but how the individual creates the society that begets the evils mankind has brought upon himself over the millennia. I found myself stopping and re-reading passages constantly and because of the profundity on nearly every page, it took me quite a while to finish. Reading a chapter was an exhausting endeavor that challenged me with hours of thought-provoking reflection time just to try and wrap my head around the myriad observations that Hollis provides. In my cynicism, I kept waiting for the other shoe to drop - the point at which the author wraps up all of these conundrums with one universal solution, naturally his solution that you have to buy the book to discover. Thankfully, there was no such moment. As anyone knows who has taken the time to really look deep into the darkness within, there are no easy answers in life and no slate cleaning cure-alls that make life better and wipe away the misery. Life is hard. Knowing who you are and why you do what you do just might allow you to avoid the

mistakes we all seem determined to re-visit. Still, it remains in our hands to decide and throughout each day we are faced with choices. That is the struggle of our life.

I enjoyed this book on our psychological shadows even more than his earlier (and excellent) more specifically male shadow study *Under Saturn's Shadow: The Wounding and Healing of Men* (Studies in Jungian Psychology By Jungian Analysts). Hollis is really very good at explaining and making practically relevant the depths of Jungian Psychology. He brings the wisdom of his experience, age, maturity and wide study to his work - I especially appreciate how his earlier career as a professor of literature informs and embellishes his psychological writings. This book is both a more general and thorough study of The Shadow (the unconscious aspects of our selves that by definition will always remain hidden until they unexpectedly intrude into our conscious and carefully managed lives) than his Saturn book, and as such really feels complete and appropriate for any thinking person. Many times as I read I thought how I could use his insights, how they reinforced some of mine, how they illuminated my particular family dynamics, and how they applied to all of us. I found the last chapter "Shadow/Work - Encountering Our Darker Selves" especially practical and challenging (giving the basis for years of inner work). Hollis may not always be an easy read (he doesn't talk down to his reader, assuming we have an interest and capacity to follow his journey into Jungian Psychology), is sometimes transparently ideologically biased, and may definitely not appeal to everyone!

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