

Falling Upward

Looking at the two stages of life ...

It's not hard to imagine life having two halves. But it takes convincing to think of the second half being the better half.

Richard Rohr, in his book "Falling Upwards", suggests the first half is "about establishing an identity, a home, relationships, friends, community, security." Some people are more successful at building this platform than others. Some don't feel they get it right the first time, so they try again ... and never move beyond this stage.

Everyone runs up against their mistakes. They face "what they cannot fix, cannot control, explain, change or even understand." Can we handle the change and growth that gets us through these experiences and help us mature spiritually?

Rohr sites the examples of "Francis (of Assisi) who did a lot of partying, David and Paul (who did) a lot of killing, Magdalene who did a lot of loving", and adds "all of us do a lot of ascending and descending" before we fall upward toward the next stage of the journey.

He dares us to separate ourselves from our comfortable platform "to find our own soul or destiny", to search for meaning, to learn how to practice discernment.

In the second stage we don't need to become obsessed only with health issues and letting go of physical abilities. We have the capacity to "fall upward and onward, into a broader and deeper world where the soul finds its fullness". The mystery envelops us.

This is usually a slow process where we test the new insights and learn to work for change and forgiveness. We catch a glimpse of other "soulful people who temper our tantrums by their calm, (help us) lose our urgency because of their peace, and exhibit a world of options and alternatives."

This search for inner radiance, can be ours – to walk or to avoid. God bless us as we journey.

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