



Cherishment: A Psychology of the Heart

Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, Faith Bethelard

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"Cher-ish-ment," n. F. "cher," dear. Sweet, indulgent love, esp. of children. Emotional equivalent of nourishment; soul food. What the world needs now. Elisabeth Young-Bruehl and Faith Bethelard give a name to the kind, warm, tender, and affectionate love that babies expect before they can speak of it and that we all desire our whole lives long. As adults, they note, we all desire our whole lives long. As adults, they note, we don't often acknowledge or even understand our need for this "cherishment." Their book is a rare effort to explore that need, to create a "psychology of the heart." In "Cherishment," Young-Bruehl and Bethelard provide a wholly original way of thinking about familiar concepts such as love, attachment, and care, showing how deep-seated disappointments and fears of dependency keep so many of us from forming healthy relationships. Questioning the traditional, celebratory view of independence and self-reliance, they argue that cherishment is the emotional foundation, formed in childhood, that sustains all kinds of growth-promoting adult bonds. Blending the philosophical writing that has won Young-Bruehl international acclaim with Bethelard's imaginative sensibility, "Cherishment" is a finely balanced interplay of scholarship, dual-memoir, and intimate therapeutic tales. It draws on ancient wisdom traditions of the East and West, telling many instructive stories of men and women, young and old, who have learned to cultivate the cherishment instinct in themselves as well as in others. It helps readers attune sensitively to the ways people express their need for affection in the details of daily life and relationships. The book narrates a journey of discovery, and any reader on his or her own journey in the realm of the heart will feel cherished by it.

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