

Book Review



Road Less Traveled,(25th Edition)
 M. Scoot Peck, M.D.
 Publisher: Simon & Schuster
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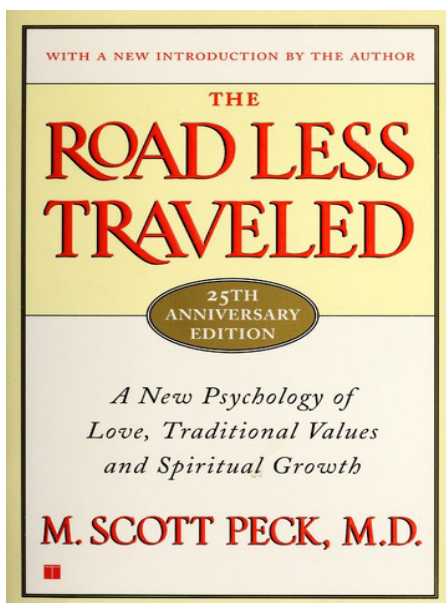
A metaphor for the choices we have experiences, the phrase “the road less traveled” refers to unconventional and uncertain choices made. But why engage with review of a book with such a title here in Clinical Engineering discipline journal?

The first part of this book starts by the author with “*Life is difficult.*” And we, the practitioners working in healthcare delivery, know that first-hand. We also understand that Engineering refers to any type of science concerned with the design, construction and use of machines, systems, and structures. Engineering practitioners come from various backgrounds, cultures, and experiences. Mostly, the field of engineering attracts individuals who are intellectually curious, analytically minded, and passionate about making a difference through

technological innovation and problem-solving. What unites them is their passion for creating, overcoming challenges, and making a positive impact on the world. However, from my experience in general, clinical engineering practitioners’ shy emotion-associated verbal expression and Dr. Peck, the author, writes in the introduction to his book “... perhaps because it was needed, despite its flaws, there is no question in my mind that as I wrote the book in the solitude of my cramped little office I had help. I really cannot explain that help, but the experience of it is hardly unique. Indeed, such help is the ultimate subject of the book itself.” As Dr. Peck continues “...once we truly understand and accept it – then life is no longer difficult.” My reason for selecting to write review about THIS book, that most readers will not expect to find in engineering periodical, is that the encouragement and guidance THIS book provides may be helpful to our readers. “When my patients lose sight of their significant and are disheartened by the effort of work we are doing, I sometimes tell them the that human race is in the midst of making an evolutionary leap. “Whether or not we success in that leap...is your personal responsibility”, and mine”

This book, *Road Less Traveled* is the best-known work of Dr. Peck, a psychiatrist and best-selling author, educated at Harvard and Case Western Reserve, who helped found the Foundation for Community Encouragement, and published *The Different Drum* and *People of the Lie* books.

The *Road Less Traveled* was first published in 1978 and has since sold over 6 million copies and has been



translated into over 20 languages. It is a description of attributes that make a fulfilled human being, based largely on his experience as psychiatrist and a person.

The book has four parts. In the first, Dr. Peck examines the notion of discipline, which considers essential for healthy emotional, spiritual, and psychological health. He writes about having balance on such notion as delayed gratification and accepting responsibility for oneself actions, dedication to the truth. About Openness to Challenge, the author advises the reader to “continuous and never-ending process of self-monitoring to assure that our communications – not only words that we say but also the way we say them the...” are especially meaningful in the era of texting and instant messaging. In the journey of life, the author advice, mandates negotiation of the curves and corners of our lives where we must continually give up parts of ourselves, but strangely as it seems “...most people choose the alternative and elect to stop by some distance...” creating significant pain. “Giving up” is the essence of balancing and is one of the major forms, according to the author, this book teaches, so the reader may achieve well-balanced patterns of behavior, personality traits and a whole better lifestyle.

In the second part he raises the questions about love, emotional dependency, and explain the term “falling in love”. The author states that “we are incapable of loving another unless we love ourselves.” And “Love is effortful.”

In the third part he writes about spirituality growth, religion and their role in therapy and maturity. “...among the members of the human race there exists an extraordinary variability in the breadth and sophistication of

our understanding of what life is about.” The author argues that “We must continuously expand our realm of knowledge and our field of vision through the thorough digestion and incorporation of new information” as “The process of expansion of knowledge has been a major theme of this book.” Similarly, clinical engineering practitioners must adopt learning as lifelong commitment.

The fourth and final part concerns grace, human spiritual growth, mental health, discussing scientific thinking, and the conscious world around us. The author suggests that “It is hardly remarkable that we sicken and die; what is truly remarkable is that we don’t usually sicken very often and we don’t die very quickly.” Perhaps avoiding giving credit to the role of advances in science and engineering in it. Continuing to explain that “There is a force, the mechanism of which we do not fully understand, that seems to operate routinely in most people to protect and encourage their physical health even under the most adverse conditions.” Towards the book’s end, under the Miracle of Evolution the author suggests that the human race is in spiritual progression. For ours and our children’s future - I hope he is correct.

After reading the book, I felt that I can examine and gain deeper self-knowledge thus attempting to eliminate my shortfalls. Similarly, I felt it may help other trained engineering professionals to better understand their challenges, and if there is path for improvement that they can prescribe to, then it was worth publishing this review of a non-technical book helping everyone to embrace qualities that according to Dr. Peck leads to better health, better relationships, and richer life experiences.

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