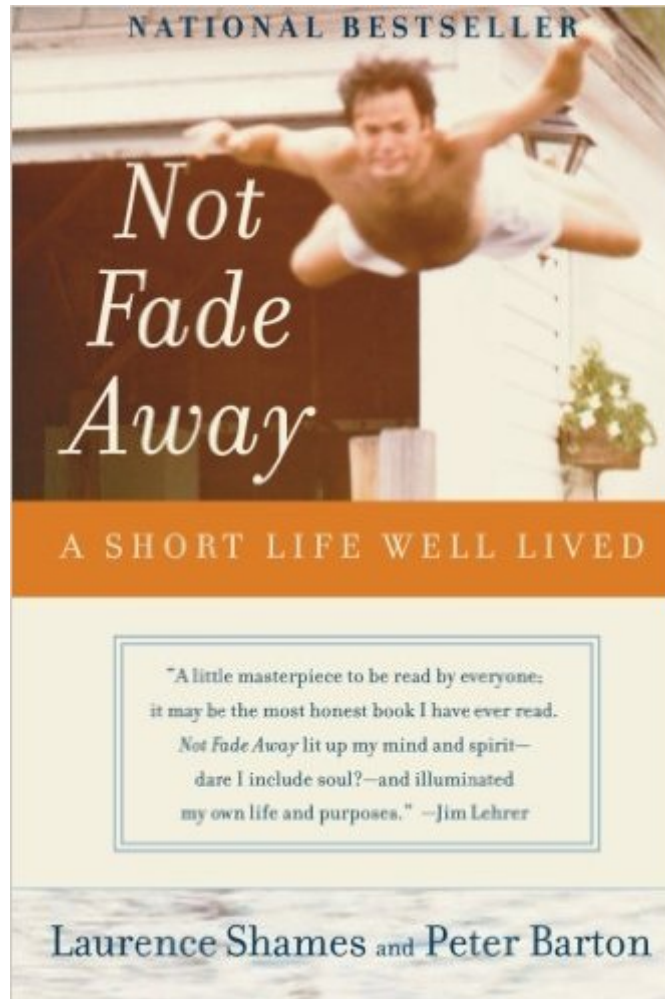


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Not Fade Away: A Short Life Well Lived



Synopsis

Some people are born to lead and destined to teach by the example of living life to the fullest, and facing death with uncommon honesty and courage. Peter Barton was that kind of person. Driven by the ideals that sparked a generation, he became an overachieving Everyman, a risk-taker who showed others what was possible. Then, in the prime of his life—hugely successful, happily married, and the father of three children—Peter faced the greatest of all challenges. Diagnosed with cancer, he began a journey that was not only frightening and appalling but also full of wonder and discovery. With unflinching candor and even surprising humor, *Not Fade Away* finds meaning and solace in Peter's confrontation with mortality. Celebrating life as it dares to stare down death, Peter's story addresses universal hopes and fears, and redefines the quietly heroic tasks of seeking clarity in the midst of pain, of breaking through to personal faith, and of achieving peace after bold and sincere questioning.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Peter Barton was my son-in-law and continually surprised me by always seeing the "big" picture while I (like most of us) wallowed in the details of life. He wrote it with Laurence Shames after learning of an impending, untimely death. He was an extraordinarily creative person, always able to see the context of every situation. Life rewarded him well financially but, most of all, with an uncanny sense of where we fit in the course of our lives. This book is filled with large-scale insights, many of which will be useful to each of us. Even knowing him, I found the book a worthwhile read. I personally grew from the "read," as I'm sure you will. It may reset your values as well as your

expectations regarding living. Laurence Shames is skillful not only with words but also with conveying ideas. His book reads very well.

This book is about the life and death of Peter Barton, a very successful entrepreneur who lived life fully, yet died early at the age of 51 from stomach cancer. This story is told in alternative chapters by Barton and Laurence Shames, a writer who befriended Barton at the end of Barton's life in order to help him express his feelings and emotions about his impending death. This small book contains very big ideas. Barton makes you understand how being wealthy doesn't automatically give you the best medical care, and it certainly doesn't protect you against death. He brings home in this very personal way how health and family are the things that are important, and that the end of life is a complicated, individual experience, full of reflection and introspection. I thought that it was "gutsy" and generous of Barton to want to share his experiences with the world, and one gets the impression from the book that that is the kind of individual he was. When you finish - you can do it easily in a few hours - you are left appreciative of the things that you normally take for granted, and can briefly try to comprehend the concept of living in the moment. I say briefly because, alas, I think we are hardwired not to be able to live our lives the way Peter Barton did at the end of his life...living in the here and now and giving up the foolish pursuits that drive us daily. I think that is why books like this are important, so that we can read them and get back to what is important, and try to live our lives thinking about these issues and thus be "ready", when we face the end of our own lives. Recommended, but I think I would have liked a little more information about Barton's illness and treatment although I understand that it was a conscious decision not to include that in the book.

I have to say, I bought this somewhat expecting to be uplifted, and to gain some insight on life, death, dying. I'm not much for self-help type stuff, but the blurbs of a "life well lived" definitely appealed to me. I've always run full-tilt towards.....whatever presented itself! Having just lost my dearest friend, and pooch, and being single in my early 30's (in LA, no less), heading home for T-day to take on aging grandparents with fading memory, crazy in-laws, etc.....strangely enough, this was perfect for the plane ride back to LA. At times, I became a bit annoyed by the bad-boy swagger of Barton, yet I realized three hours into the flight that I had dog-eared more pages for later reference, insight, or raw truthfulness, than I normally do. If you can set aside a difference in lifestyles - because he truly lived a unique life - some of the insights and hindsights are truly raw and real. This is a strange book in that it's a good, easy read, with nuggets of wisdom that are absolutely blatant and brilliant. This seems to be someone who - maybe to some of his peers - didn't

appreciate all that he had. Yet, reading this book, he clearly appreciated all the moments - good and bad, for what they were. And this book made me re-affirm my joy of leaving the airport and putting the top down on the car, cracking open a great bottle of wine, appreciating my neighbors: all things I do normally, but things I'll make sure never to take for granted. Huh, not sure this is a good review, but it's the way the book made me feel. So, there you have it. It's good reading and good advising. Not so neatly wrapped up, but, maybe it's not supposed to be.

It's hard to describe the mixture of emotions that accompany reading this masterful book by Laurence Shames and Peter Barton. It was Barton's knowledge of his impending death that was the impetus for the book. Barely fifty, with young children, a happy marriage and tons of money, Barton chose to face his mortality through leaving a memoir. Shames became Barton's collaborator, co-author, interpreter and ultimately friend. There are moments of humor, heartbreaking sadness and revelation. It would be impossible to read this book without evaluating your own feelings toward life and death, family, friends, happiness and setting the right priorities for yourself. It's a brave and beautiful book that shouldn't be missed.

One thing that attracted me to this autobiography was, the way that Peter Barton Embraced his life not only when he was healthy, but as well as when he was diagnosed with cancer. The way he describes the terrible side of cancer, and how it can easily put a person into an enormous depression. However, he chose to fight it and face up to it. He admits freely the fact that he was scared at times, but also grateful at others. Finally, his story will make you realise how wonderful life can be, even when the road gets tough. Unfortunately, Peter Barton is no longer among us, but I am sure that his story will show you, just how much he respected and loved every moment of his life. It is an honour for me to recommend this book to anyone who is looking for inspirational writing.

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