



# The Soul's Code: In Search of Character and Calling

*By James Hillman*

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Some call it "genius". Others have named it "spirit", "daimon", and even "guardian angel". But while philosophers and psychologists from Plato to Jung emphasized the fundamental essence of our individuality, our modern culture refuses to accept that a unique, formed soul is within us from birth, shaping as much as it is shaped.

Now in this extraordinary bestseller, James Hillman presents a brilliant new vision of our selves not defined by family relationships or the mentality of victimization. Drawing on the biographies of such disparate people as Ella Fitzgerald and Mohandas K. Gandhi, James Hillman argues that character is fate and shows how the soul, if given the opportunity, can assert itself even at an early age. The result is a reasoned and powerful road map to understanding our true nature and discovering an eye-opening array of choices -- from the way we raise our children to our career paths to our social and personal commitments to achieving excellence in our time.

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

James Hillman, a former director of the Jung Institute who has written more than 20 books on behavior and psychology, delves into human development in *The Soul's Code*. Hillman encourages you to "grow down" into the earth, as an acorn does when it becomes a mighty oak tree. He argues that character and calling are the result of "the particularity you feel to be you" and knocks those who blame childhood difficulties for all their problems as adults. According to Hillman, "The current American identity as a victim is the flip side of the coin whose head brightly displays the opposite identity: the heroic self-made man, carving out destiny alone and with unflagging will." Hillman's theories seem disarmingly simple, but he backs them with a careful, well-practiced intellect.

#### From Publishers Weekly

Decades ago, pioneering Jungian analyst and author Hillman (*Kinds of Power*) challenged the assumptions of Western psychology by applying the ancient concept of "soul" to the modern psyche. Rendered in simpler terms by his protege, bestselling author Thomas Moore, Hillman's work on soul has fed the public imagination with the nourishing idea that we are vastly deeper and more permeable to the influences around us than we may think. Here, Hillman discusses character and calling, introducing an "acorn theory" that claims that "each life is formed by its unique image, an image that is the essence of that life and calls it to a destiny." Borrowing the language of Plato's Myth of Ur, Hillman suggests that this imaginary sense of our lives or callings drives each of us like a personal daimon or force. Drawing on extraordinary lives from Judy Garland to Coco Chanel to Hitler, he describes the movements of the daimon, showing how it can use everything in our environment, from lucky accidents to bad movies, to allow the acorn to "grow down" and express itself in the real material of our lives. Without succumbing to oversimplification or wishful thinking, Hillman challenges the reductive "parental fallacy"—the contention that our early experience with our parents determines our selves and our futures. The daimon, he says, pulls us up out of mere conditioning to have a fate. In this brilliant, absorbing work, Hillman dares us to believe that we are each meant to be here; that we are needed by the world around us. Simultaneous Random AudioBook; author tour.

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#### From Library Journal

Hillman has written ten books, but he is best known as the inspiration for Thomas Moore's *Care of the Soul*. Now, for this book on finding one's personal calling, he's getting a big print run himself.

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##### Marlon Hood:

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**Michael Johnson:**

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**Rebecca Moreno:**

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**James Valenzuela:**

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