



The Art of Belonging

Hugh Mackay

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The eternal question 'Who am I?' must be weighed against an even deeper question: 'Who are we?' We are writing each other's stories as much as we are writing our own.

In his bestselling book, *The Good Life*, Hugh Mackay argued that kindness and respect for others are the hallmarks of a life well lived. Now in *The Art of Belonging* Mackay shows how strong communities develop our moral sense and build our emotional security. He says that as 'social creatures' we can only reach our potential when we engage with our communities - in the local neighbourhood, at work and even online. Drawing on his lifelong work as a social researcher, Mackay creates a fictional suburb, Southwood, and populates it with characters who, like most of us, struggle to reconcile their need to belong with their desire to live life on their own terms. Through a series of stories, illuminated by Mackay's social analysis, we witness the conflicts that arise when individuals assert their needs at the expense of others, but we also glimpse the satisfactions that flow from contributing to the common good.

Written with wisdom, compassion and wit, *The Art of Belonging* is for those who yearn for a society that sustains and nurtures the many, not just the fortunate few.

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