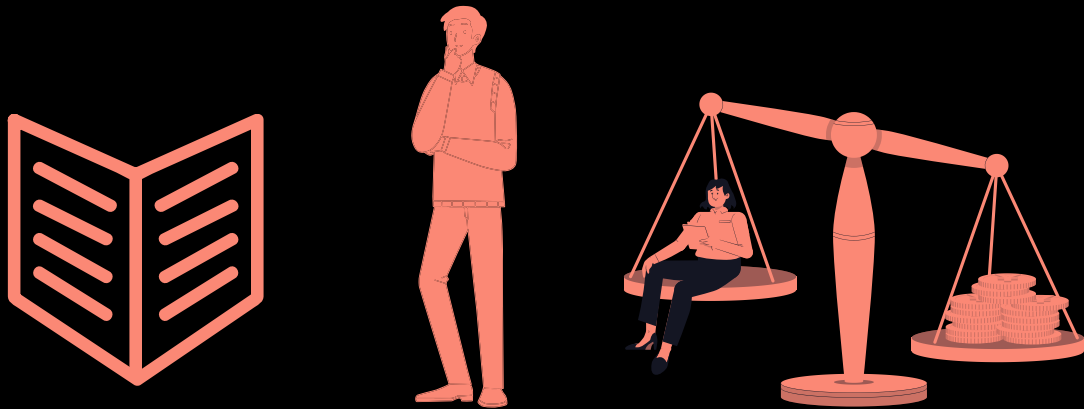




# MFK COACHING PRESENTS THE IMITATION

A 15TH CENTURY GUIDE  
TO A 21ST CENTURY  
LIFE

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At the center of all growth is the human desire “to be delivered from all blindness of heart.” So begins the spiritual treatise *The Imitation of Christ* first published in 1418 by the German-Dutch monk Thomas Hemerken of Kempen, better known as Thomas à Kempis (1380 – 25 July 1471). “*The Imitation*” is the most widely read and translated Christian text in the world after the Bible, yet it’s powerful message for a non-religious life has largely gone ignored. While it is considered a chiefly Christian spiritual guide, the simple truth is that the lessons and teachings are universal in nature and provide guidance no matter what one’s religious orientation is. In short, it may be the very first “Life Coach” instructional manual ever written.

à Kempis asks *“Who has a more fierce struggle than the person who strives to master themselves? And this must be our occupation: to strive to master ourselves, to grow stronger and advance from good to better every day.”*

What places *The Imitation* in a league of its own is its focus on the “inner life” and clarity of purpose in deepening our understanding of self. This is the chief and only goal. There is no backdrop of self-improvement for purposes of making you a millionaire. In essence, the core principle that informs our vision regarding our peace of mind is *humility and gratitude reached through rigorous honesty*.

The first three books of the *Imitation* will be the focus of this course. Taken together they present the fundamental principles to develop peace of mind in conjunction with the importance of accountability. à Kempis challenges his readers to internalize “Without the Way, you cannot go; without the Truth, you cannot know; without the Life, you cannot live.” Over a seven-week period the group will focus on specific lessons and touchstones for introspection in the assigned chapters and relate specific lessons included therein – separate and apart from the religious context of the chapter’s contents – to their lives. First and foremost, discussions will revolve around the secular (non-religious) aspects of the chapters and incorporation of these lessons into our daily lives. In order to make the course most beneficial for each participant, the weekly discussion will be group intensive and focus on topics such as disordered affections, accountability, humility, gratitude, grace, peace, clarity and to what extent each of these concepts exist in each participant’s daily life. The natural by-product of such interaction is a growing introspection which will force us to ask “why we do the things we do? and what is to be gained by our actions?” à Kempis stresses his readers to listen and understand that change can only happen through a sincere meeting of head and heart.

Each participant will be provided with a digital copy of *The Imitation*. Should anyone wish to purchase their own copy, the version that I will be using for the course is: *The Imitation of Christ*, Thomas a Kempis, The Contemporary Translation by William C. Creasy with a Spiritual Commentary by Dennis Billy, C.Ss. R. (Published 2005)

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*Blessed are they who plumb their own depths and by daily efforts prepare themselves to understand.  
The Imitation, Book 3. Chapter 1*

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