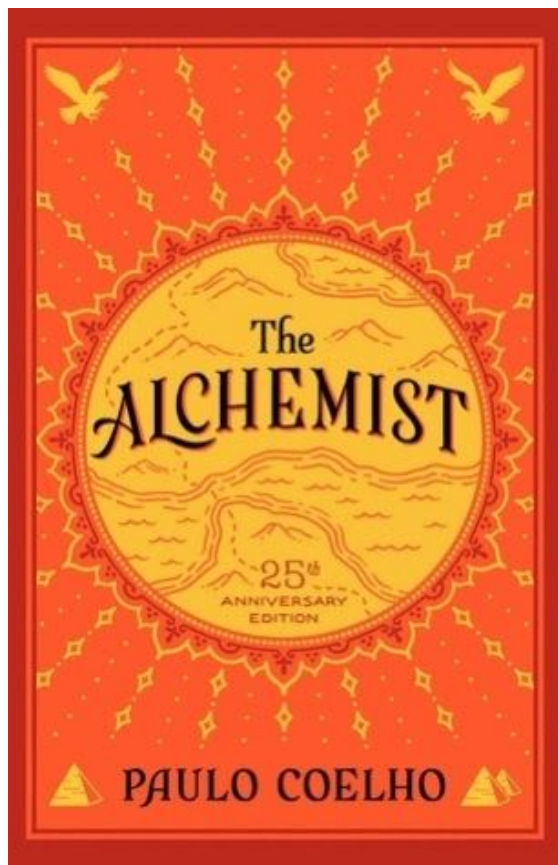


# The Alchemist

Paul Coelho



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## Book Summary

A shepherd boy in Andalusia experiences a recurring dream about a hidden treasure at the Egyptian pyramids. He meets an old gypsy woman, who tells him he must follow his dream as this is his Personal Legend, and in return, give her ten percent of the treasure. The shepherd boy is comfortable with his life, and is uncertain about taking this risk.

He meets a mysterious old man next, who tells him that it is a person's duty to fulfill his Personal Legend. The shepherd boy finally decides to sell his flock of sheep, and purchases a boat to Tangier, Africa.

After the shepherd boy arrives, he gets all his money stolen, and eventually finds work at a crystal merchant's shop. He goes on to make several improvements that greatly improve the business of the shop, resulting in significant financial rewards for himself.

Now a rich man, he considers between returning to Andalusia and buying a flock again, or pursuing his Personal Legend. He decides on the latter and joins a caravan making its way to Egypt. Throughout his journey to Egypt, he faces many obstacles that attract, scare, and dissuade him from going further. However, he overcomes them all, and eventually makes it to the pyramids.

He digs, but finds nothing buried. Thieves beat up the shepherd boy and the shepherd boy loses all his money again. Before leaving, one of the thieves tell the shepherd boy of his dream of buried treasure in

Andalusia, and laughs at the ludicrousness of it.

The shepherd boy knows exactly where the location of the treasure is in Andalusia, the place where he spent so many years in as a shepherd boy. He returns to Andalusia and finds the hidden treasure.

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## BOOK LESSONS

If I had to summarise The Alchemist into a book summary, I would focus on the following 3 lessons that I got from the book.

### 1. Never Giving Up

The shepherd boy went through so many failures and setbacks. Imagine losing all your money, not once, but multiple times. He still kept at it, and like many success stories that you hear, the shepherd boy found success after going through numerous failures.

### 2. Embrace Being Uncomfortable

Comfort by its very definition, means “a state of physical ease and freedom from pain or constraint”, and therefore cannot be a state of growth, since growth entails having unease and pain.

The shepherd boy had numerous opportunities to give up his Personal Legend and be married, rich, and comfortable. However, he knew that it wasn't what would truly make him happy in the end, and so chose to “suffer” but for a greater purpose.

### 3. Everyone Has His/her Journey

Throughout his travels, the shepherd met various people. The crystal merchant, the Englishman, and so on. These people all had their own opinions and advice for the shepherd boy.

Similarly in our own lives, we will find many people wanting to give us advice. A lot of the time, it's coming from a place of good intention as well. However, it might not be appropriate for us.

It is easy to blindly take someone's advice and adopt it for your own life, but it is your responsibility to ensure that what you're doing is in alignment with your own Personal Legend.

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