

DOCUMENT ENDORSEMENT PROGRAM

for Floyd L. Griffin Jr.'s

Life: Four Quarters plus Overtime



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I. COMPREHENSIVE SYNOPSIS

Life: Four Quarters Plus Overtime is a book written by Floyd L. Griffin to cover the specific life experiences that affect each one of us, and even those that are specific to the African American community. Griffin looks at different viewpoints and consults experts in order to provide valuable advice as to how each one of us can go through different periods of our lives with the best guidance and wisdom possible.

The book examines the periods of development associated with the human life span with brief overview of the social, emotional, congenital, perceptual, and moral development specific to each life stage.

In addition, this book includes cutting-edge commentary from experts in the field of psychology, public health, education, religion, gerontology, and the healing arts. Each chapter/quarter have African American proverbs, cultural maxims, quotes, stories, and words of wisdom from black achievers, along with biblical scripture that will strengthen our faith and belief and help us interpret and experience our lives in a vastly different way.

II. DETAILED BOOK OUTLINE

Introduction

Floyd Griffin introduces the readers to the book by telling a story of his experience as a funeral director. According to Griffin, it was when he conducted several funeral/memorial services when the notion of “overtime” became apparent to him. This is also where Griffin tells his readers about a passage in the Bible that, according to him, puts our lives into a division of four quarters plus overtime.

These quarters, he says, are from the moment of conception through early adolescence, late adolescence through early adulthood, midlife, and late adulthood. Overtime is when a person reaches the age of seventy and beyond.

Defining Human Development

In this part of the book, Griffin details his belief that our journey through life is guided by God’s wisdom, knowledge, miracles, and mysteries. He also further elaborates his gratitude for God’s blessings, not only to the present generation, but also to the previous ones. Griffin mentions African rites of passage as a life cycle ritual and ceremony celebrated to represent one's transition from a social or religious status to another.

Griffin goes on to talk about the way our contemporary concepts have evolved to consider different data and viewpoints from multiple experts. He agrees that the study of today’s human development is important in our overall understanding of change, evolution, and growth. Factors affecting human development, such as their childhood relationships and experiences, their interaction with other generations, were also eloquently cited from industry experts.

Periods of the Life Span

Griffin gives his readers a bit of an overview on a human’s life span which he divided into four quarters plus overtime.

The First Quarter begins from a person’s conception until their early adolescence (age 0-17). Griffin describes in detail how a fetus develops until they are born to the world. He also mentions that anything which happens inside a mother’s womb can have a lasting and influential impact on the aspects of our life experiences. This is also where Griffin emphasizes this particular stage in life as something crucial for human development. It is because this is the stage where they learn and master new skills that they’ll need in order to be prepared for the things ahead of them.

The Second Quarter is when a person goes through late adolescence until early adulthood (ages 18-35). Griffin introduces this part of a man’s life as a period dedicated for the establishment of one’s personal and economic independence, as well as finding new relationships and even their own identity. This is also the time when people can encounter a period of “moratorium,” a point in life when they cannot decide yet whether to commit to life amidst all its subsequent responsibilities.

The Third Quarter is one's midlife period (age 36-52). According to Griffin, this is a powerful and transformative period in one's life because this is when they might be able to finally make their dreams a reality. However, this may also be a point when they reflect on their experiences and feel frustration, resentment, or merely boredom. Griffin emphasizes, however, that this is not something to fret about. He encourages people to contemplate and point their internal compass to the rediscovery of their deeper self while envisioning the possibilities in the years still ahead of them.

The Fourth Quarter is a person's journey through late adulthood (age 53-70). This can be the pinnacle of one's life where, Griffin says, we can achieve our greatest life satisfaction with a consciousness that there are still better things in life that could happen in the years to come. Griffin adds that this can also be a point where we can happen to come across the mentor within ourselves and help guide the future generations.

Overtime is when a person reaches the age beyond 70. According to Griffin, this is where the wisdom of the earlier generations and the current truths merge together. He further expresses his appreciation for those who are already at this point in their lives, considering them as today's living angels, mothers, mentors, and father figures.

Introduction to the First Quarter: Let the Games Begin

Griffin opens the first chapter with an introduction to the perspective of a person's first few years in life. This is the point where they can be challenged mentally, physically, and spiritually. He also gives a retrospective view of what the readers may have gone through during this period in their life and stresses that despite every other factor that may affect one's personal journey, it must not be forgotten that we are still the one in control of how we want to move forward.

Griffin then adds that our focus must not be on our wins and losses because any fruit it could possibly bear will come soon. Instead, our attention, according to Griffin, must be channeled into our strength to endure and complete our own race, or our journey through life.

Griffin emphasizes the importance of going through this point in our life with everything that we have. He continues by saying that we are our own limit, which is why we must strive to go further than we can imagine. Griffin says that at this period, as we try to achieve our dreams, we must also learn to celebrate our achievements, no matter how little we perceive them to be. We must also remain open to any opportunity that may come along our way and to soldier on regardless of how difficult our journey may already be. We may come across instances that could break us, but Griffin says that we should never quit and strive to make our presence felt as we go out and join the crown.

This is the part where Griffin celebrates the experience of Black women and mothers. According to Griffin, African femininity is rich in the essence of what it is to become a woman, as well as its nature as the origin of humankind. He also puts the being of a woman in a spotlight, emphasizing that black women were considered the definition of beauty by all civilized nations. Which is why Griffin's message to the readers is for women of color to not forget their beauty as well as the huge significance of their contribution to the future of mankind.

Griffin also talks about fatherhood and its role in the development of the youth. According to him, what the father teaches to his son continues across different generations. Griffin also highlights the importance of a father's role in guiding the future. In celebration of black fathers, Griffin cites a survey indicating that they are as responsible a caregiver as others despite the society's constant rejection of their humanity.

Griffin closes this chapter by looking back into the experience of black parents. One of the things he pointed out is the importance of confronting their experiences and dealing with them head on. This is because, according to Griffin, there are studies that show the likelihood of passing over emotional experiences and trauma over to the next generations. Griffin then details the steps one parent could take in order to deal with these concerns, especially when dealing with children and their personal experiences as well.

Introduction to the Second Quarter: Unpack your Gifts

Griffin emphasizes the importance of tapping our strengths and capabilities. According to him, we should accept who we are and all our attributes. Griffin shares the experience of black communities and recognizes that their color should even be envisioned as a gift.

Griffin continues with more words of affirmation, expressing that we are all a work of art and a living expression of God's love. Despite our diversity, we are all equal and great, but what we have yet to do is to constantly recognize this fact. So in order to unpack our gifts, Griffin suggests that we should unwrap the boxes that contain our goodness and godliness. We should not forget that, in this step, it is important to trust ourselves and know God, he adds.

Once we've already unpacked our gifts and talents, what we must next do is to share it with the world. And even if there are instances when we ask ourselves if we are truly wanted, the true answer actually relies on us. This is the moment when we all have to lay claim over who we believe we are.

Onto late adolescence, Griffin talks about the value of creating an atmosphere of care and compassion. According to him, it becomes a meaningful and transformative way to fulfill God's purpose for the people. In the perspective of Africans in the US, there are certain rights of passages that they can follow in order to better guide and direct the youth for the future without compromising the preservation of their own community.

Other factors that could help one become successful at this period is equal access to college education. However, today's racial wealth gap can still pose itself as a barrier to a black person's strive to achieve higher education. There are many other factors that could come across as a hindrance to an African American's mission to achieve a good life, such as poverty, mass incarceration, racism and white supremacy. These are issues that we could look into and, as a society, consider in changing the ways we currently practice essential public services to everyone.

Griffin closes this chapter by emphasizing that our choice must be ours alone, free from the interference of beliefs that are not satisfactory of God's inextricable love for us. According to him, we must strive to overcome the philosophy that does not contribute to a life that better everyone's.

Introduction to the Third Quarter: Take Turns Taking the Lead

Griffin says that this is the point when we all juggle between different roles and responsibilities in life. And as we continue with our road towards successful adulthood, we are also looking into developing meaningful relationships with others in the future.

Griffin says that this is also the perfect time for us to revisit our interests, skills, and even our goals. The goal, however, is to ensure that we continue to work on our vision and aspirations through our inner genius. We might even find

ourselves working on our own marriages and find difficulties in maintaining these relationships. Griffin gives some advice on how people beyond the age of 50 can continue creating a good environment for love as couples and partners stay together through their life journey.

More than these, Griffin talks about what we can do in order to rekindle our other relationships and how we can reconnect with others. This is important, he says, because this is the best time for us to recoup the time we've lost for them while we have all been pursuing our time for career and kids in our previous chapters.

Then, Griffin discusses the importance of doing things conscientiously and intentionally. We must remember this as we work on ourselves, as we interact with others, and as we maintain our path towards the future we envision for ourselves. Then, Griffin goes on to talk about some physical changes that may come with age. All these are factors that we have to carefully look into and prepare for as we go through this period in life.

Introduction to the Fourth Quarter: Pitch In and Be a Catcher

According to Griffin, this is the period in our life when we must strive to help others, value cooperation, and contribute to the success of others. This is how it is to become a catcher, says Griffin. When we become selfless, we discover that not everything is about us. He also emphasizes that it is also the time when we should remind ourselves, more than ever, that getting back up each time we fall is important.

Perhaps the biggest question we might have asked ourselves at this point is if we have lived a full life. That is why Griffin also leaves us with a reminder from a monk that this is the period where we must detach from ourselves to see the bigger picture of everything.

We must maximize our remaining time and follow a life that we truly want to live. This is also the best time to introspect and discover what life truly means as we work on achieving one that gives us a sense of pride and satisfaction.

Griffin goes on to talk about the importance of serving our roles as grandparents in this period. This is when we can become a source of information, wisdom, growth, and comfort for the youth who are also going through the same struggles that we also experienced. Griffin talks about the importance of a grandparent's role in making sure that children grow and develop fully.

Introduction to the Overtime: No Holds Barred

This is the point in our life where, Griffin says, there are no more holds barred. There are no limits anymore and we must devote ourselves to the importance of truth-telling. And while Griffin encourages us to say whatever we want to say, he reminds us that we must ask ourselves if we are coming from a place of kindness and care. He adds that as we remain mindful, what must come out of our mouths are only the words we are willing to live by.

What Griffin further notes is that at this point, we can be most creative as we find the urge to perform positive work. According to him, it is rooted from the accumulated wisdom from one's age, broadened focus, and greater self-reflection.

And finally, Griffin stresses on the importance of finding the purpose in life and death. At this period, we might have to face the reality that we have to come to terms with our demise in order to better understand how deep and full the lives we've lived have become. Therefore, we must live intentionally as an act of courage and faith.

Epilogue

First Quarter (Birth to Seventeen) - Growing Up Under Good Guidance

Griffin discussed how every other facet in his life contributed to his journey towards adulthood. From the community where he lived, the people he saw during his childhood years, and the example that his parents were. All these added up to create a positive influence as to how he decided to pursue his early years. Most emphasized here is the role of the parents in inculcating positive values such as integrity, honesty, and responsibility to their children. It also wasn't just about what they actively teach their young, but it is also about what their children see from them. It even involves the manner by which their kids earn what they receive. If the youth is made to believe that they can have whatever they want without having to work for it and appreciating what they already have, it can even result in catastrophic consequences for them later in their life.

Then, he talks about the role of the youth, especially children, in making sure that these values are communicated to their peers as well. Coupled with a mentor who can help them understand their way through life, someone who already went through the same obstacles they are going through, is also indispensable in helping them move forward.

And finally, he discusses the value of education and the wisdom that the youth can earn along their way. Griffin emphasized that these are some of the tools that the youth can utilize in order to improve their future, and even help them climb up the social ladder and escape the vicious cycle of poverty.

Second Quarter (Matriculation, Marriage, and the Military)

In this part of the book, Griffin talks about the importance of the activities he engaged in as he was going into adulthood. He tackled the importance of being a part of movements that aim to make a difference. And while the young already have the energy and courage to be involved in such movements, it cannot be discounted that they also have to be well-versed in the political climate.

Then, he talks about the steps he took as he was preparing for his graduation from college. Things such as his past internships and his engagement with the Reserves Officers Training program were instrumental in preparing him for his active duty back then.

After which, Griffin went on to describe his experience with marriagehood. While there were challenges, he said that commitment is the key to making a marriage successful. Then, Griffin stressed the value of proper thinking and action in determining what later happens with their married life and their future parenthood.

As he was discussing his experience with the military, he also shares the steps he took in order to climb up the ladder in his chosen field. Here, it is always important to understand that there are several stages that one has to be able to know very well if they want to advance in their career. For Griffin, it was helping his community that contributed the most in his career advancement.

This quarter was the point in his life where he also became an adult. This is where he saw that the kids do what their parents do, and not what they say. Which is why the role of the parents as a model cannot be placed in disregard. Helping them along the way and making them understand that they also have to be independent later on helped a lot in making sure that they also learn to make decisions on their own.

Third Quarter (The End of Military Life and the Move Back Home)

At this stage, Griffin has already ended his twenty-three-year military service. But to him, it wasn't the plateau of his personal journey yet. He went on to take a new career as a funeral professional and worked on it with the same learning that helped him propel his military career.

Then he discussed his journey when he decided to run for a political position back home. There were a lot of things that he had to adapt to, such as the people around him, those he worked with, and the community he wishes to serve. What helped prepare him for his position in the senate and as a mayor was his reach to the community. It also helped a lot that his family and wife were by his side, Griffin said.

Certainly, everything that he went through earlier in life proved to be invaluable in his path forward. For Griffin, it was his military training and background that helped prepare him for how he can properly deal with the public as he was running his campaign. Careful planning and proactiveness also went a long way in making him successful despite several factors such as racism.

Fourth Quarter (Professional and Political Progression)

Before Griffin decided to run for politics, he served as the vice president in a funeral home and became a campus engineer at Georgia Military College. He also taught a management course at Georgia College and State University.

When Griffin ran for politics, he understood that it can be a difficult and winding journey as he was running against an incumbent official. However, his preparations proved to be successful and, later, he became the first African American to win in a majority white rural legislative district. Years later, he ran for mayor in Milledgeville and won. Again, he recalled that it was his military background and experience that enabled him to be successful and effective in serving his constituents.

Finally, Griffin talked about success and how he believes this should be measured. To him, if anyone can do almost the same things that he accomplished in life and still be alive to share the story, then they can consider themselves successful. Griffin also believes that the metric for success should always be personal. It should be based on one's goal and where they actually want to be in life. Then, the factor that one always has to remember in order to achieve success is collaboration and teamwork with the people around you.

Overtime - Seventy Plus (Enjoying the Golden Years and Leaving a Legacy)

Griffin emphasizes that this period is special, as the bible says. And anyone has to plan this point of their life even before it comes. Each stage in one's life must have to include a preparation for the "overtime." Griffin also reminds readers on the importance of caring for your health and preparing for retirement income, especially if one wants to spend their overtime relaxing and doing what they want to do.

Griffin also talked about the value of listening to overtimers because they bring with them a wealth of experience they've only acquired after living a life beyond seventy years. This is important especially in capturing and preserving the story of the people before them so they can learn from them as well.

And finally, Griffin says that the point of overtime is to still treat it as a continuation of life where you pursue the things you've always wanted to do. At this stage, no one should just give up and wait for the time that they eventually return to the Lord. Life isn't over yet, and you can still continue to do the things that can make you happy.

III. QUERY LETTER

Dear _____,

There are times when you just want to make a change in your life. Moments when you are lost and uncertain of what is ahead of you in the days to come.

The book *Life: Four Quarters Plus Overtime* shares ideas and experiences about the different phases of a human being in a lifetime. There are four quarters and an overtime in a human life's spans: from birth to adolescence, late adolescence to early adulthood, midlife, late adulthood, and the overtime period. This serves as a platform for an informative and detailed discussion of life's different stages. Aside from sharing his personal experiences, the book shines light to theories and ideas from the world's renowned theorists of our time like Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson, and more.

As an African American descent, I dig deeper into the previous and present plight of my brothers and sisters in America. The oppression experienced by the African Americans in the hands of White Americans in the not-so-ancient past is something that I hold firmly in my heart and mind. I believe that the oppression runs deep, it is a generational wound from more than 300 years of slavery that is never easy to heal. The wound is deep and it needs healing.

The Most High God created us all equal and no amount of melanin could ever dictate who is superior and inferior, no amount of melanin could ever decide who to oppress and who not to oppress. Regardless of your color, age, or gender, the only identity that is left behind when all else fails is your identity in Christ and that you are a child of the Most High God.

There are seasons and reasons for everything and all things happen for a purpose. *Life: Four Quarters Plus Overtime* will inspire readers to live a meaningful, productive, and fulfilling life—glorifying God all of our days, in all phases.

More details about the book and me can be found on my website www.floydgriffinbooks.com.

Thanks for your consideration.

Floyd L. Griffin Jr.



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