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Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Acknowledgments -- Preface -- 1. The Essentials of the Experience -- 2. Autobiographical Roots: Some Personal Odysseys -- 3. Religious Foundations and Their Derivatives -- 4. Secularized and Commercialized Odysseys -- 5. Some Miscellaneous, More or Less Invented Experiences -- 6. Some Coercive Odyssey Experiences -- 7. Additional Theoretical Reflections -- References -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	This bold and innovative book traces the phenomenon of the "odyssey" experience as it shapes, informs, and defines our lives. Drawing on an astonishing range of examples, Neil J. Smelser focuses on how such experiences enhance our lives and provide us with meaning and dignity. The odyssey experience, as Smelser advances it, is generic, widespread, and recurring. It is a finite period of disengagement from the routines of life and immersion into a simpler, transitory, often

collective, usually intense period of involvement that culminates in some kind of regeneration. By examining a variety of topics as part of a larger, overarching phenomenon, Smelser transforms their study from the particular to the comparative. The Odyssey Experience thus reaches beyond a simple description of where and how transformations occur in daily life to offer a profound explanation for why they are there.
