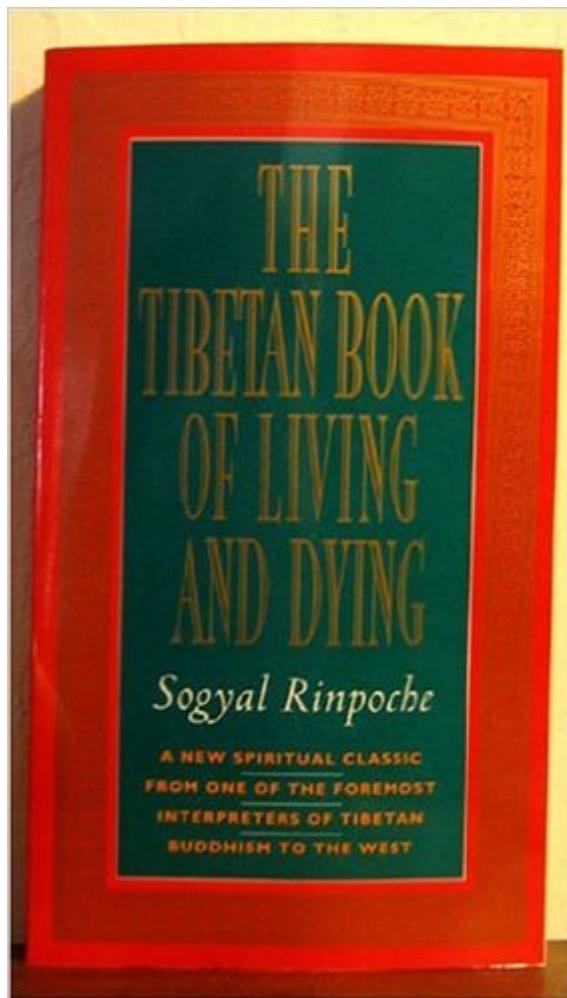


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The Tibetan Book Of Living And Dying



Synopsis

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Book Information

Paperback: 423 pages

Publisher: HarperSanFrancisco (1992)

Language: English

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Customer Reviews

My bookshelves are filled with books on many topics, including death and dying and spirituality -- this book might be the only book I really need. For years I have thought I must read the Tibetan Book of the Dead -- but whenever I tried, it was much too complicated for me to understand. Sogyal Rinpoche has written this book so that it is easily understood by anyone, even us Westerners, without compromising any of the Buddhist teachings it offers. In essence, we begin to die the moment we are born. We spend this life preparing to die well. Nothing is permanent, but we spend much of our lives filling our time with activities and pursuits that help us elude ourselves into thinking that what we see and touch is all that matters. Sogyal Rinpoche says, "To follow the path of wisdom has never been more urgent or more difficult. Our society is dedicated almost entirely to the celebration of ego, with all its sad fantasies about success and power, and it celebrates those very forces of greed and ignorance that are destroying the planet. It has never been more difficult to hear the unflattering voice of the truth, and never more difficult, once having heard it, to follow it: because there is nothing in the world around us that supports our choice, and the entire society in which we live seems to negate every idea of sacredness or eternal meaning. So at the time of our most acute danger, when our very future is in doubt, we as human beings find ourselves at our most

bewildered, and trapped in a nightmare of our own creation."He writes about the importance of realizing the interconnectedness of all living beings (including nature), of meditation (and gives instructions and advice), of finding and being devoted to a good master (something very difficult for Westerners to accept -- he acknowledges that there are fraudulent ones about), of learning to live and learning to die, of letting go of egos and becoming egolessness. Throughout the book, he tells of female masters as well as males, something female readers may greatly appreciate.Sogyal Rinpoche is from Tibet, and speaks of the cruelty of the Chinese to the Tibetan Buddhists (very similar to the persecution of the early christians, and later the Jews by the Nazis -- when will we ever learn, but then that's the point of this book!)In the last section of the book, he speaks of "The Universal Process" which is about spirituality, living and dying of all humans, regardless of race, spiritual beliefs, gender or national origin. There are in the back two mantras with explanations and he shares photographs of his beloved masters. Throughout the book are inspiring poems from such poets as Rumi and St. Francis of Assisi, as well as Buddhists. In the very back he gives suggested readings, and offers phone numbers and addresses of Rigpa National Office, where those who are interested can find referrals to courses and study groups in the US, Canada and around the world.This book is a very good place for the seeker to begin. For those curious about Buddhism, or seriously interested in becoming a Buddha or a Buddhist, or just looking for more thoughts and information on death and dying, this book is excellent, easy to understand, thought-provoking.

Whenever I read a book, I generally use highlighter and underliner to mark the sentences and words that convey the true meaning and essence of what the author wants to say. While reading The Tibetan Book of Living And Dying, I had to stop using the highlighter after a few pages only as the most of the words on each page were worthy of being highlighted. Indeed, the author has said so much precious on every page that a reader must read and re-read the book and with every reading she/he gets more and more knowing.The subject of death has been most puzzling and perplexing to humankind since the time immemorial. The Eastern way of looking at the death as only a 'transition' is explained by the author in a profoundly simple manner. The book certainly helps one to understand the true meaning of the phenomena called death. This understanding helps one to reduce the irrational fear of death. From the lives of the great men and women we know that those who 'lived' a life can only meet the 'death' with equanimity. Thus the author has first taught the art of 'living'. It is only through right type of living that we can 'live' the death also.I suggest that this book be read by all the Buddhist as well as by non buddhists also. Every one who reads it will find something for him/her.I salute Sogyal Rinpoche for giving us a wonderful gift of THE TIBETAN

BOOK OF LIVING AND DYING.

After reading other reviews, I feel it might help to say this: Yes, there is quite a substantial amount of Tibetan ritual encased in this book. But that shouldn't be a surprise, or a hindrance - it IS the "TIBETAN Book of Living and Dying", and not the "Generically Believable For Everyone, Book of Living And Dying". With that in mind, I loved reading this book. From the first page, I was drawn into a world where compassion and mindfulness reign, and it's these tools that will help us face the inevitable truth that we *are* all going to die, at some point. Rinpoche skillfully shares his own wisdom, that of many other masters, and anecdotal evidence of what may happen when we physically die, and the stages we may go through during the process. Topics discussed include the Bardo states, reincarnation, the concept of karma, and fear of the unknown. The book is very readable, and covers the material therein with sensitivity and warmth. At times, it may be difficult to the average Western mind to grasp the concepts of such things as reincarnation - but as Buddha himself did advise, the goal is to read, absorb and take what YOU find important from the lesson...not to read blindly and accept everything blindly. To anyone even vaguely interested in Buddhism, death and dying or simply becoming more aware of their own self, this book is an invaluable addition to your library. Truly a classic.

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