



Transforming the Mind: Teachings on Generating Compassion

Dalai Lama XIV , Dominique Side (Editor)

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Based on three days of teaching in London in May 1999, this text is an edited version of the Dalai Lama's discourse on one of the most profound and sacred texts in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. The Eight Verses on Generating Compassion are known in Tibetan as lojong - literally, transforming your mind. In this commentary on these teachings, the Dalai Lama shows us how to transform difficult situations into opportunities for spiritual growth. He also offers practical methods as to how to develop positive ways of thinking and compassion.

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Brian Collins says

"No matter how important an individual is, the interest of that individual is the interest of only one being, whereas the interest of others is the interest of an infinite number of beings"

"your life and the life of others are so interconnected that the idea of a self that is totally distinct and independent of others does not make any sense"

"The source of all misery in the world lies in thinking of oneself; the source of all happiness lies in thinking of others"

"if you examine the nature of pleasurable sensations you will see that there is often an extremely relative dimension to them; we usually define an experience as pleasurable by comparison to a more intense form of suffering that has just come to an end. what we call "pleasure" or "happiness" is more like the temporary absence of intense suffering and pain"

"The perceiver and the perceived are simultaneous; they share the same reality, both arise from the same source"

Cara says

These are books to read and keep. I think with anything from the Dalai Lama you need to buy and read numerous times to get the meditation to stick. There's a great deal to learn if you want to so take it slow, re-reading what you don't quite grasp. It's one in a collection of many:)

Robin Friedman says

This book is based upon a series of lectures given by H.H. the Dalai Lama in London in 1999. The theme of the book is the attainment of human happiness through self-understanding, introspection and, as the title states, "Transforming the Mind."

The theme of this book is similar to a book called "The Art of Happiness" that recounts an American psychiatrist's conversations with the Dalai Lama. The analysis in "Transforming the Mind", however, is deeper and more difficult. The Dalai Lama discusses Buddhist beliefs and doctrines as well as Tibetan texts. He presents a considerable treatment of a difficult, and fundamental Buddhist principle called "Dependent Origination." He discusses the nature of human selfhood and compares differences in various schools on this difficult topic.

The purpose of the book is humanistic and pragmatic at its core: it is to encourage the reader on a path to overcome suffering through self-understanding and reflection. He offers two broad, interlocked paths towards inner transformation: altruism, or the attempt to bring benefits and good to other people rather than thinking solely of oneself and insight into the nature of reality, to be gained by introspection.

The means by which the Dalai Lama presents his teaching are at least as significant as the substance of his message. Difficult teachings are presented with the simplicity that comes only from knowledge. The Dalai

Lama is candid and self-effacing: he reiterates many times that he has himself no personal experience of the state of emptiness that that constitutes full realization of insight meditation. Again and again he points out that religious people of whatever denomination can find their way to peace through following their own traditions. Further, those individuals with a secular outlook can also find peace by understanding themselves. One of the most interesting parts of the book is the question and answer sessions where the Dalai Lama offers succinct and insightful answers to good questions.

I enjoyed learning about the different schools of thought within Mahayana Buddhism. The Dalai Lama discusses early Buddhist thinkers of the Mahayana school, particularly Nagarjuna and Shantideva and I was pleased to learn something of what he had to say about specifically Buddhist thinkers. Also, the book includes a short Tibetan text called "Eight Verses on Transforming the Mind" and a commentary by the Dalai Lama.

Some of this book is presented in a deceptively simple manner. The Dalai Lama observes that "personal experience" (p.24) rather than mere book reading is required to understand the nature of consciousness and of awareness. He also encourages the reader to press on, not to become discouraged and to realize that the growth of wisdom takes lifetimes to develop, not minutes, hours, or months.

I found this book valuable both for its teachings on Buddhism and for its more general advice on attaining peace and happiness in one's life. There is much in the book of healing and hope, for secular people, for followers of non-Buddhist religions, and for people who are students of the Buddha.

Robin Friedman

Lukas Cypra says

Možná se dá prožít na jeden zátah, mne se to ale nepovedlo.

Rozhodně stojí za to žít pomalu a o napsaném přemýšlet.

Jedna z knih, ke kterým se budu 100% vracet, protože po každém přečtení si umím představit, že mi dá něco nového.

Fouzia says

Ce livre tente d'offrir une pause de réflexion spirituelle.

Le Dalaï-Lama nous propose de découvrir une voie nouvelle, capable de donner un sens à notre vie.

Paul says

My first introduction to Buddhism. The author goes through a series of Buddhist teachings and conveys perspectives on them from three different Buddhist schools. Seeing ourselves as separate from others and how this can lead to strife is a basic theme of the book. Deals with many philosophical issues: the nature of existence, perfection, life/death, compassion, empathy, altruism, ...

A.J. Aaron says

Written by one of the great spiritual leaders of all time, the Dalai Lama himself about how to generate compassion. Written by one with a great respect of diversity and a belief in the need for a questioning mindset

Holly Harrison says

Inspiring, life changing, wisdom-packed!

I have definitely gained a more refined understanding of nirvana, as arising from a sound understanding of emptiness.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama says "Liberation, or true cessation, is the ultimate truth. True cessation can only come about on the basis of understanding the ultimate nature of reality, that is, emptiness. ...in this view, it is insight into the ultimate nature of reality that enables us to eliminate the pollutants of the mind."

Read this book and you will feel much closer to reaching nirvana.

It's almost amazing how simple wisdom can completely transform your life.

Philip says

superb and challenging

Michael says

An inspiring book, somewhat difficult to read. The Dalai Lama is a very good thinker and a wonderfully compassionate man; I consider his views rich and fruitful. Check out his book with Paul Ekman before this one.

Karen says

Always stimulating reading, the Dalai Lama has a simplistic approach to transformation...it begins within.

Alison says

Wow, this is a fantastic read. I usually find the Dalai Lama hard to read; however, this book seemed clear to me. The Dalai Lama discusses the basic Buddhist principles and compares different Buddhist teachings. He explains the eight verses on transforming the mind in a reasonable and succinct fashion. While, I stated this

seemed clear to me, I must also state there were sections over my head and that I will need to reread, but overall it is great. I would recommend this book for anyone who is either studying Buddhism or just wants some general knowledge on how to live peaceful in this world.

Also, at the end of each chapter are questions and answers which are very enlightening.
