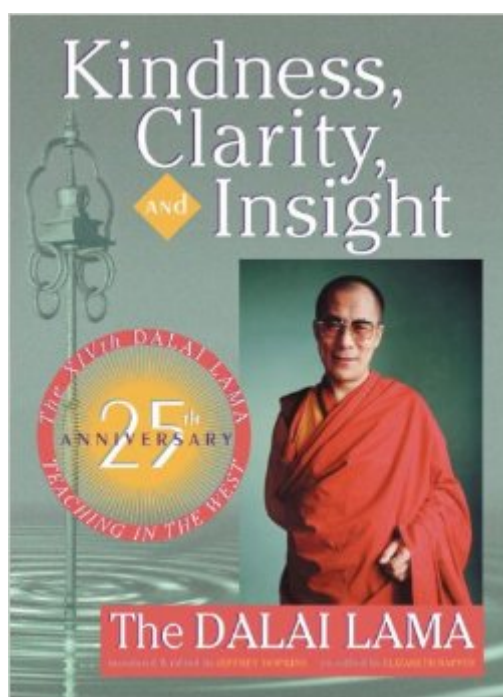


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Kindness, Clarity, And Insight



Synopsis

Kindness, Clarity, and Insight is widely considered the most readable yet substantial and wide-ranging of the Dalai Lama's works. This celebratory new edition of the very first book of teachings by the Dalai Lama in the English-speaking world coincides with the twenty-fifth anniversary of that historic first teaching series in North America. Translated into twelve languages, it is a testament to the kindness, clarity, and insight of its author. The teachings in this book comprehend and encapsulate in a crisp and concise manner all of the topics to which the Dalai Lama returns repeatedly—the core subject matter of Tibetan Buddhism. Readers of this single volume, manageable in size, will be well prepared for understanding all of the Dalai Lama's subsequent books. Broad in scope and revealing the depth of his knowledge, these teachings display the range of the Dalai Lama and his message, covering a plethora of topics, including the need for compassion, the common goals of the world's religions, karma, the four noble truths, the luminous nature of the mind, meditative concentration, selflessness, the two truths, and the fundamental innate mind of clear light that all the various schools of Tibetan Buddhism aim at manifesting. Although others in Tibet have mentioned that all orders of Tibetan Buddhism have the same basic outlook, the Dalai Lama is the first to explain in detail how this is so, his brilliant syncretic exposition being the final chapter in this book. The book's twenty chapters are deftly arranged in a developmental sequence so that readers easily understand the background needed to appreciate the more complex later topics. Taken as a whole, the teachings in this book provide an accessible map of Tibetan spiritual culture. Despite the numerous titles that have come out bearing the Dalai Lama's name since its first publication, Kindness, Clarity, and Insight is considered his heart message to the West—a foundational key to understanding his other work.

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Customer Reviews

In 1979, after substantial political effort, H.H. the Dalai Lama made his first visit to the United States. He travelled across the country and delivered a series of lectures. The Dalai Lama visited Canada in 1980 and returned to the United States in 1981 and many times thereafter. In 1981, the Dalai Lama and his editor and translator, Professor Jeffrey Hopkins, published a book of the Dalai Lama's early lectures in North America, "Kindness, Clarity, and Insight." It was the first of many books that have since been published based upon the Dalai Lama's lectures or upon meetings and discussions with him. Happily, the book was reissued in 2006 to celebrate the 25th year of its publication as well as the anniversary of Snow Lion Publications, an American publishing house devoted exclusively to books on Tibet. "Kindness, Clarity, and Insight" is among the best of the Dalai Lama's books in presenting his major themes and in showing the scope of his teachings, from the most fundamental and accessible to the difficult. The book consists of a series of 20 lectures delivered during the Dalai Lama's first three visits. The lectures are arranged in a progressing order of complexity, with the opening lectures giving an introduction to the Dalai Lama's thought that requires no special interest in Tibetan Buddhism while the latter lectures focus on complex, difficult matters that arise within the various Tibetan Buddhist schools. The book is fascinating to read as it moves forward. Throughout the book, the Dalai Lama emphasizes the importance of kindness and of developing a good heart through introspection and meditation rather than through pursuit of material gain and pleasure. He emphasizes the importance of altruism -- of showing concern for and working towards the well-being of others --- and he takes a broadly ecumenical approach towards religion. In his ecumenical approach, the Dalai Lama stresses that human beings everywhere are essentially alike, despite superficial differences in culture, religion, or race, and that everyone wishes to attain happiness and avoid suffering. He stresses that every religion -- and that secularism too for that matter -- shares these goals and that the differences in doctrine and philosophy among different creeds should not obscure recognition of their underlying unity of purpose. The Dalai Lama does not force his creed or any creed on anyone. Among the best of the earlier lectures in the book are the opening talk given at Constitution Hall, Washington, D.C. "Religious Values and Human Society", the lectures "Religious Harmony" and "Compassion in Global Politics" and "Buddhism East to West" which gives the Dalai Lama's early thoughts on the spread of Buddhism to the West. But in addition to these

broadly-based talks, the book includes a series of lectures providing great detail on the nature of Tibetan Buddhism. Many readers will find these lectures difficult both because the subject matter and terminology may be unfamiliar and also because the Dalai Lama's teachings make clear how different the philosophical teachings of Tibetan Buddhism are from both Western religions and Western secularism at many points. The reader should keep in mind in reading these essays the Dalai Lama's teachings earlier in the book that the fundamental goals of religion are similar while the philosophical and conceptual underpinnings differ. The latter essays in the book that I found important include "Eight Verses for Training the Mind" in which H.H. the Dalai Lama presents eight verses written by Kadma Geshe Langri Thangpa, a Tibetan monk of the Eleventh Century, A.D. and offers a detailed commentary upon them. The goal of the verses is to create calmness in the heart and a feeling of love and compassion towards others. The central and most difficult teaching in this book consists of a lengthy essay, "The Path to Enlightenment". This essay, based on a combination of lectures, is a discussion of a Tibetan text by Tsongkhapa (1357-1419) and includes as well discussions of other important Buddhist thinkers. The Dalai Lama presents the text and offers detailed commentary. The theme of the text is the attainment of enlightenment, and the Dalai Lama expounds upon Tsongkhapa's teachings as they pertain to 1. developing the desire to be free of cyclic existence, 2. wishing to attain enlightenment for the purpose of benefitting others, and 3. developing wisdom by understanding the nature of emptiness. Each of these three steps is highly difficult and runs counter to many Western ways of understanding and behavior. Thus, these texts will be rewarding and challenging but difficult especially to readers unfamiliar with Tibetan Buddhism. Other lectures in which the Dalai Lama discusses teachings specific to Tibetan Buddhism include "Tibetan Views and Dying" and the final lecture "Union of the Old and New Translation Schools" in which the Dalai Lama considers and tries to synthesize the views of various Tibetan Buddhist teachings on the ultimate nature of reality. Even in the lectures most concerned with the specific teachings of Tibetan Buddhism, the Dalai Lama emphasizes throughout the importance of kindness and of developing a good heart. Thus, he concludes his lecture on "The Path to Enlightenment" with these words: "It is essential to generate a good attitude, a good heart, as much as possible. From this, happiness in both the short term and the long term for both yourself and others will come." The Dalai Lama's teachings have been an inspiration to me and to many other Americans. May you find something in this book that will inspire you. Robin Friedman

I'm glad to see this deluxe 25th anniversary edition. This is a great and varied overview of The Dalai Lama's teachings (from his historic first visit to America), that I have considered a classic since it

first came out (although probably not his best or easiest book to read). I had the good fortune of attending his 1979 talk in Seattle, and his teaching on the "Four Noble Truths" was a pivotal moment in my life. I was a typically confused and searching college student who had wondered before if enlightenment was even possible, but his clear outline and explanation of the causes of suffering and path to liberation showed me, in His Holiness's clear example, that it is possible and accessible to anyone who pursues it. Jeffrey Hopkins lucid and practically simul-translation was equally impressive (I felt I was witnessing a mind-meld of the two). Perhaps most powerful was the context of this talk. The lecture hall at the U of W was packed and intimate. I had a great seat right in the middle. Only a few minutes into H.H.'s introductory talk on world peace (which he gave in English), he was interrupted by several RED BOOK waving Maoists, yelling, "Death to the Dalai Lama!" As one woman stood up in the front row and berated him, H.H. came to the edge of the stage and listened with concern. The hall was stunned into silence. I found myself crying from the shock of it, and then a fellow stood up from the seat in front of me and yelled, "Sit down and shut up, you f_ckin' Commie!", and the spell was broken and we all chuckled and relaxed. After the protesters were carried out, H.H. said something like, "This is why we need to be discussing world peace." He then finished his intro and brought out Hopkins to translate his more technical Buddhist teaching on the path to enlightenment. My mind was open and ripe for the Dharma. The kindness, clarity and insight of the moment was magical. Within a year I had become a practicing Buddhist myself...

This book offers the Dalai Lama's first lectures in the United States. The subjects he deals with here he expands upon in later books but it seems to me he conveys his continuous message clearly, with dignity and precision, well in this book. This Snow Lion hard cover edition is well made and should be durable enough to last through a lifetime of study. I recommend it highly

The newly revised and updated twenty-fifth year anniversary edition of Kindness, Clarity, Insight by The Fourteenth Dalai Lama His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso, is expertly translated and co-edited by Jeffrey Hopkins and Elizabeth Napper. Offering remarkably enduring insights into the wit and wisdom of the Dalai Lama., Kindness, Clarity, And Insight deftly covered many diverse subjects ranging from "Karma", to "Meditation", to "Eight Verses for Training the mind", to "The Path to Enlightenment", to "Tibetan Views on Dying", and so much more. An essential addition to any personal, academic, or community library Buddhist Studies reference collection and supplemental reading list, Kindness, Clarity, Insight offers a Buddhist perspective which is very strongly

recommended for all students of the teachings of the Dalai Lama.

I was hoping for a good - easy - introduction to Buddhism and some of the philosophy and teachings. This is not that book. I got through 4-5 pages and dropped it. Perhaps someone further along the path will find this useful. Maybe in a few years for me....

Wonderful book. Very exact and filled with teachings of the eight perfections. Chapters based on talks HHDL gave while touring the United States during 1979 and 1980 and Canada in 1980. Very good translation. Always grateful for the dharma as taught by the Dalai Lama.

this book is a collection of talks. It gave me facts about Buddhism and ideas about personal growth and non-traditional, non organized religious spirituality. the Dalai Lama is one guy who has it together, period.

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