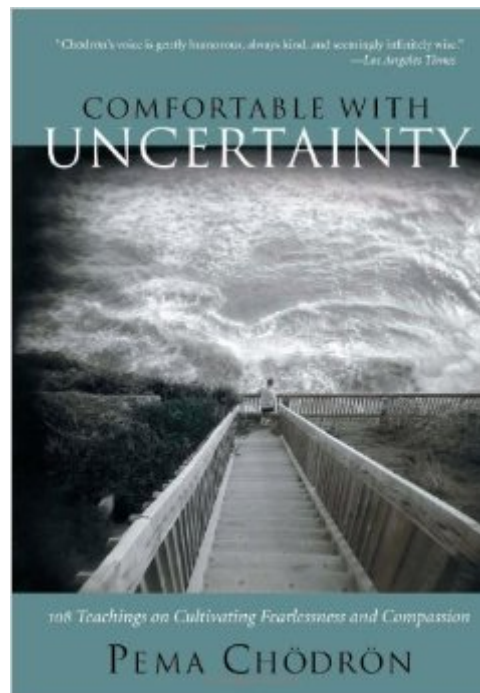


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Comfortable With Uncertainty: 108 Teachings On Cultivating Fearlessness And Compassion



Synopsis

This book offers short, stand-alone readings designed to help us cultivate compassion and awareness amid the challenges of daily living. More than a collection of thoughts for the day, *Comfortable with Uncertainty* offers a progressive program of spiritual study, leading the reader through essential concepts, themes, and practices on the Buddhist path. *Comfortable with Uncertainty* does not assume prior knowledge of Buddhist thought or practice, making it a perfect introduction to Chöndrön's teaching. It features the most essential and stirring passages from Chöndrön's previous books, exploring topics such as lovingkindness, meditation, mindfulness, "nowness," letting go, and working with fear and other painful emotions. Through the course of this book, readers will learn practical methods for heightening awareness and overcoming habitual patterns that block compassion.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

You either can read this book from beginning to end using it as a meditation guide for the warrior meditator, or you can drop into it and see what you get; also good. It is unfailingly wise and compassionate in its approach which is that meditation is not the path up the mountain but the path down into yourself and that accepting yourself as you are is what is important and difficult. This requires courage. The current ideas of changing yourself or self-improvement are yet another subtle attack on yourself. The ironic miracle, of course, is that abandoning goals of self-improvement and accepting yourself leads to change, and you become someone you like better whether you like it or

not. Underneath all our fear of ourselves, way down deep, we find our "wounded, softened hearts" and we discover that we, all of us, are compassionate loving beings. Now isn't that a hope for the world? If you think this might be a good idea, then this book is a wonderful guide. It is not an answer, but it is a gentle helping hand along The Way.

I write this review because I think the other reviews herein did not do justice to this exquisite gem of Buddhist teaching. Ms Chodron is eloquent and articulate in her delivery of helpful insights into the human condition and gentle and simple in her understanding of what may restore balance. The book can be read piecemeal or from beginning to end. The glossary offers edification on Buddhist Sanskrit meanings, which I found helpful, since I am a beginner to Buddhism and not a student of Sanskrit. This book offers a path of healing and wholeness. To see it without this meaning is to miss the point. I have recommended it to many people, beginners and scholars of Buddhism alike. Without exception the book was well received. Buy the book -- forget the audiobook. This is one book you will want to hold and leaf through the pages. I would give it much more than a five star rating were it possible.

This small book contains 108 short chapters taken from Pema's four main/prior books (The Wisdom of No Escape, Start Where You Are, The Places that Scare You, When Things Fall Apart). It includes her signature stories such as pp. 40-2: the 4 Maras-"turning arrows into flowers", pp. 61-2: the teaching of heaven & hell to a samurai, p. 103: the empty boat, p. 111: lions and the strawberry, and p. 115: the Demon of Now in the cave. It also has some fine quotes such as: p. 25: "Resisting Life causes suffering," p. 62: "Only with equanimity can we see that everything that comes into our circle [of sacred space] has come to teach us what we need to know," and p. 91: "We cannot be in the present moment and run our story lines at the same time." Perhaps best of all, it addresses not only on-the-spot Tonglen but also on-the-spot compassion and equanimity. So, reading it may provide you with on-the-spot joy!

I think this is a great book with many good strategies to use to help you live your life in a more mature and fulfilling way. The emphasis is on living fully in the moment and not letting yourself be caught up in the kind of thinking that distracts and causes anxiety. It recommends ways to stop using so many of the avoidance techniques that so many of us employ to keep from dealing with painful thoughts and situations. This book contains step-by-step instructions on how to meditate for insight and its calming and slowing effects.

Pema Chodron is a wonderful, down-to-earth Buddhist nun, who lovingly challenges us to become present and compassionate warriors. She is one of my best, most treasured teachers. I like to pop a tape or CD in and listen while I sit or drive, so I got the CD version of Pema Chodron's "Comfortable With Uncertainty." I assumed it would be Pema reading her work, but the reader is actually Tami Simon. Unfortunately, the reader has a self-consciously "soothing" vocal presentation, and she misses many opportunities to be present in the words she reads. My advice to you road warriors, is to get off the highway, and hunker down to savor Pema's written words. They're jewels. 5 stars for the book, 3 stars for the audio.

Five stars for the content, two stars for the "performance". The reader of this Sounds True audio edition is also the founder of Sounds True. She is sensitive to the material but her delivery is overly soft and gentle and so I had trouble keeping my attention on what she was saying. I've listened to other Pema Chodron tapes in her own voice. Pema is a wonderful speaker, very direct, humorous, warm but not "soft". Like the previous reviewer, I recommend buying the book over the audio edition.

Pema Chodron is one of my favorite Buddhist authors. She has a way of articulating subtle ideas that really resonates with me. I bought this book and enjoyed it, although much of the content was familiar from her previous books. I picked up the cassette version of the book to listen to while driving, and I didn't make it halfway through the first side of the first tape. The reader's overly emotive, breathy narration is grating. I thought I'd get used to it and focus more on the text, but it didn't happen. This is the same reader who did the audio version of "The Places That Scare You," which was equally unlistenable. It is a shame that the publisher, who coincidentally is also the reader, can't recognize the great gulf between her work and the author's. Can you say "ego"?

This book can be read in its entirety, or it can be read in smaller bits before meditating, practicing yoga, etc... No matter how or why you read it, it is sure to offer some wisdom. Whether you need a simple reminder of something you already know, or you want to learn something new, this book will offer you guidance and comfort from the heart. You'll be able to pick it up again and again.

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