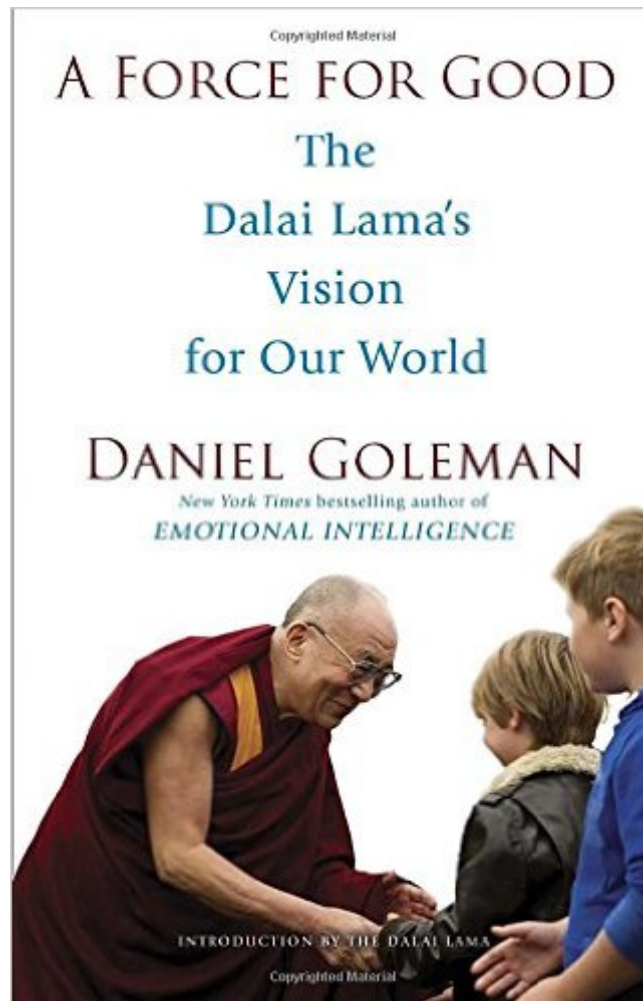


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A Force For Good: The Dalai Lama's Vision For Our World



Synopsis

For more than half a century, in such books as *The Art of Happiness* and *The Dalai Lama's Little Book of Inner Peace*, the Dalai Lama has guided us along the path to compassion and taught us how to improve our inner lives. In *A Force for Good*, with the help of his longtime friend Daniel Goleman, the New York Times bestselling author of *Emotional Intelligence*, the Dalai Lama explains how to turn our compassionate energy outward. This revelatory and inspiring work provides a singular vision for transforming the world in practical and positive ways. Much more than just the most prominent exponent of Tibetan Buddhism, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama is also a futurist who possesses a profound understanding of current events and a remarkable cannyness for modern social issues. When he takes the stage worldwide, people listen. *A Force for Good* combines the central concepts of the Dalai Lama, empirical evidence that supports them, and true stories of people who are putting his ideas into action—showing how harnessing positive energies and directing them outward has lasting and meaningful effects. Goleman details the science of compassion and how this singular guiding motivation has the power to break such destructive social forces as corruption, collusion, and bias— heal the planet by refocusing our concerns toward our impact on the systems that support all life— reverse the tendency toward systemic inequity through transparency and accountability— replace violence with dialogue— counter us-and-them thinking by recognizing human oneness— create new economic systems that work for everyone, not just the powerful and rich— design schooling that teaches empathy, self-mastery, and ethics. Millions of people have turned to the Dalai Lama for his unparalleled insight into living happier, more purposeful lives. Now, when the world needs his guidance more than ever, he shows how every compassion-driven human act—no matter how small—is integral for a more peaceful, harmonious world, building a force for a better future. Revelatory, motivating, and highly persuasive, *A Force for Good* is arguably the most important work from one of the world's most influential spiritual and political figures. Praise for *A Force for Good*— *A Force for Good* offers ideas that every individual can work with and build on, ranging from things that help the environment to things that help the less fortunate. [It's] a long-range, global plan from a brilliant futuristic thinker, so this is a book that can be of value to any human living on Earth. When you're ready for a jolt of optimism, pick up this book. "Pop Culture Nerd— Far from being a self-help book, this examines specific ideas espoused by the Dalai Lama, such as emotional hygiene, compassionate economy, and education of the heart that can make the world a better place. An optimistic and thoughtful primer with practical applications." "Booklist

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I admit I am a Goleman fan. His initial Emotional Intelligence text changed my thinking and was influential throughout my doctoral training. Time has flown and I am older and more ornery (like 20 years). So with that I was drawn to this book to see what Goleman's thoughts were like now and to gain more insight into the Dalai Lama's way of life as well as my own thinking. Here's the deal with the Dalai Lama in my opinion, his spirituality is best defined as emotional regulation "hence why Goleman is the perfect suitor to write about and for him. The "force for good" being espoused in this book, again in my opinion, is garnering control of one's "bad" emotional repertoires, habits, thoughts, etc. The net result of said regulation is inherently all "good things". It's not about suppression or drinking any kool-aid but in laymen's terms, Anger is one letter away from Danger. The Dalai Lama sees this negativity in our brains as manifesting itself in so many domains of our lives and society that I believe while still optimistic, our lives, our world is on a path of self and social destruction on an epic and irreversible scale. I was impressed by Goleman integrating many of the Dalai Lama's interactions with famed scientists, psychologists, and cognitive power brokers. For example, when Paul Ekman pioneer of the Facial Action Coding System (FACS) met the Dalai Lama, he observed that he couldn't read his facial characteristics like most. Rather, the Dalai Lama carries so much empathy; his facial expressions cover the full spectrum of emotionality. This is a good read and what kept me reading was when the "How" of achieving the force of good can realistically be obtained by all or more specifically... the less fortunate "financially, cognitively, educationally, socio-economically

depraved, etc. It's not until some 126 pages later that Goleman quotes the Dalai Lama as saying: "the downtrodden must help themselves." OK, BUT this is a given, a cornerstone to humanity as we know it and Goleman uses terms like "grit" and "growth mindset" (ala Carol Dweck) that I was a little disappointed. Mainly because I was hoping to learn something more here, more of How can you teach or convince those that the motivation to achieve can and should be applied to all areas of our lives, interactions, belief structures, etc on the positive side of spectrum. Well the golden answer is not given in this book. Nor is it the best vehicle for promoting the Dalai Lama's message (see paragraph above for how many demographics are missed). It was nice to get a refresher in being nice to people, to be an active listener, to try harder for cognitive and emotional control but I was left wanting more. Perhaps that was a goal of this book, it's not the outcome, but the start of a voyage and to spread that force for good, act by act, person to person. However, call me crazy but if the Dalai Lama had his own Youtube channel - I think his force for good would be viral.

I don't generally read self-help books or religious books or books on philosophy. But I've used some of Goleman's other work in courses I teach, and I've obviously heard of the Dalai Lama, so I thought this book might be interesting. By the second page, I was captivated. The Dalai Lama's two-fold premise is simple: People depend on each other, and we have a moral obligation to each other; improving the world requires action, not just intent. Goleman then expands on the premise and links it to the body of neuro and behavioral research. The combination is powerful. This book really got me thinking about how I live and interact with other people, and how I want to. I highly recommend it, but be prepared for some soul-searching and some change if you make the commitment to read it and think about it.

I really looked forward to reading this: I've heard Daniel Goleman speak about "Emotional Intelligence", and read his book "Social Intelligence." I've also always been impressed by the Dalai Lama's life and teachings, dating back to hearing about him from my physician father-in-law, who had extensive conversations with the Dalai Lama while treating the Dalai Lama's ill mother. His conclusion from that time was that he admired the Dalai Lama more than any other religious leader, even above Jesus. Unsurprisingly, the authors and I don't agree on everything: the Dalai Lama calls himself a Marxist, even though he acknowledges it has yet to work well anywhere. And he's very opposed to the unequal financial results of capitalism, even though he notes the poorest of the poor

are much better off as a result than ever before in history. (I don't much like obscene wealth either, but figure it is an unavoidable cost of improving life for everyone else.) That said, I very much support the Dalai Lama's idea of convincing billionaires to do more for others, both while alive and with their estates. As our pastor put it once, the only reason some of us are given great wealth is so we can do great good. I suspect the Dalai Lama would agree. And frankly, it's self-defeating for anyone to hoard up so much wealth that everyone else just wants him dead. I particularly liked the focus on science. The Dalai Lama realizes many people will just tune him out if his teachings are only religious, so he had worked long and hard to build relationships with scientists, and to keep up with their research in areas relevant to his teachings. The focus on compassion was also appreciated, particularly the practical ideas on how that can be increased everywhere, starting with young children. I agree with his ideas on happiness coming indirectly from helping others, and also with our need to get away from just seeking ever more "stuff". (One of my personal goals is to continue reducing my own energy/water/stuff footprint as I age, so that by the time I need to move into one room, everything I still care about will fit in it.) I was a bit concerned to see attention given to the urgency of halting global warming without noting the costs to the poorest of the poor of doing so with current methods, given that he is otherwise very sensitive to their needs, and steely-eyed about recognizing wide gaps between what governments and companies say they are doing about social problems and what they are actually doing about them. But overall, both he and the scientists he trusts all seem to have the right attitudes for making real progress toward a better world for all. Overall, the book reminded me of the also-excellent book *Survival of the Nicest: How Altruism Made Us Human and Why It Pays to Get Along* that I read last year. The two books go well together. Finally, the Dalai Lama remains a real peacemaker in our world, and spells out in this book what that means and what it takes, and why it may be the only real way forward in solving intractable conflicts. Definitely recommended!

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