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Anger: Wisdom For Cooling The Flames



Synopsis

"[Thich Nhat Hanh] shows us the connection between personal, inner peace and peace on earth."
--His Holiness The Dalai Lama Nominated by Martin Luther King, Jr. for a Nobel Peace Prize, Thich Nhat Hanh is one of today's leading sources of wisdom, peace, compassion and comfort. It was under the bodhi tree in India twenty-five centuries ago that Buddha achieved the insight that three states of mind were the source of all our unhappiness: wrong knowing, obsessive desire, and anger. All are difficult, but in one instant of anger "one of the most powerful emotions" lives can be ruined, and health and spiritual development can be destroyed. With exquisite simplicity, Buddhist monk and Vietnam refugee Thich Nhat Hanh gives tools and advice for transforming relationships, focusing energy, and rejuvenating those parts of ourselves that have been laid waste by anger. His extraordinary wisdom can transform your life and the lives of the people you love, and in the words of Thich Nhat Hanh, can give each reader the power "to change everything."

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Customer Reviews

This is not a well designed book addressing Anger. Rather, this is a rehash of Thich Nhat Hanh's message concerning mindful living. Hanh's message is powerful and valuable; it is not well crafted to be responsive to those seeking to resolve Anger. Like the evangelicals of the 70s who gave the answer to all of life's problems, "trust Jesus," Hanh gives a similar superficial answer to the problem of Anger, "trust mindful living." If you have not read Hanh, I highly recommend it. But if you need to deal with Anger, this really won't help. His first solution to anger is to eat only organic food, where anger is not a part of the creation of the food. As a vegetarian, I have a lot of sympathy for that

message; I just do not think it is an appropriate first message for someone struggling with Anger. Then he suggests making a peace treaty with the one with whom you have anger. Well that belies the circumstances where anger is a real struggle. There are some circumstances where anger is an issue and "peace treaties" are not possible - such as dealing with people with emotional disabilities. And then there are abuse situations where you should not make a peace treaty: just because I acknowledge that a Tiger is a tiger, and do not hate the tiger, does not mean I try to make personal friends with the tiger. There are certain contexts, that cause a lot of anger, where reconciliation with the cause of conflict is not the appropriate answer. Bottom line: I found the book superficial suggesting that all of life's ills can be cured through simple answers. Read Hanh; skip this book.

How timely - a book on Anger that arrives just after the tragedy of Sept. 11. Timely, yet timeless. To me, this book titled "Anger" is really a book about love in every possible meaning of the word. What are the things that usually make us angry, but those things that make us feel unloved - those things that make us, or those people or beliefs that we cherish, feel dishonored, disrespected, excluded and ignored. This book shows how to get into the heart of those feelings and into the heart and soul of those who treat us this way. But most important of all is the simplicity of the language and honesty of the message. I have read a lot of deeply spiritual books by many authors of many different religions and belief systems - but none are as PRACTICAL and REAL as this. This is written by a person who clearly has shared these very human feelings that we all have and yet he is a monk. How often have we NEEDED to have our spiritual teachers be perfect and yet find that perfection impossible to reach ourselves. Yet here is a monk who has clearly felt these same feelings as we have - looked deeply into them and learned how to transform them into love. These simple methods he shares in this book. There is NO judgement, NO criticism, NO shame only pure heartfelt and deep understanding of the human condition by a human being who is sharing very real ways for all of us to HEAL.

I picked up this book knowing of Thich Nhat Hanh and thinking it might be interesting to see what he had to say. As a psychotherapist I found his insight into the condition of emotional blindness stunning. I have to say that I seldom feel enthusiastic enough about a book to recommend it particularly highly and I have never written a review for before, this is a first for me. I write it out of deeply felt gratitude to TNH. This book contains insights into how Anger and other emotions take hold of us and how we can change the state we are in for the better. Notice I say change the state for we cannot 'get rid of' only transform what we have. TNH explains this with great clarity, sincerity,

simplicity and compassion. He is convincing and compelling, interesting and enjoyable to read. His meditative suggestions are also simple and expound the idea of meditation in a unique way. This way is surely 'the way' and is explained so that meditation will never, at least for me be the same again. If you suffer anger or other emotional woes read this book. I feel certain that it will give you a tremendous and new perspective into your suffering and how best to deal with it. TNH uses analogies that make it so simple you almost kick yourself for not understanding before. He shows us that you don't need endless psychology degrees or the patience of a saint to have cope with emotions. He explains why compassion heals us as well as others. If you read only one book on zen Buddhism read this one...

As a counsellor I have seen first hand how people react when tragedy and loss invade our lives. First we weep, we grieve and then that grief often gives way to anger. It is okay to feel all those emotions; it is part of human nature. What is important is that we deal with our emotions in a positive, constructive manner. Violence leads to more violence, hatred breeds more hate, revenge does not bring us true happiness. Thich Nhat Hanh has been a Buddhist monk since the age of sixteen and has written hundreds of books aimed at helping us deal with the trials and tribulations of day-to-day living. This particular book focuses on anger and quelling the raging fires within. No doubt, there are many fires burning within many citizens around the world as a result of the horrendous terrorist acts in America. Reading this particular book will not resolve the world's problems; it does, however, have the potential to help the reader deal with anger. Anger can be one of the most powerful, all-consuming, self-destructive emotions known to mankind if not dealt with in a constructive manner. It has destroyed relationships and divided countries. Left untethered, it eats away little by little at the soul and very core of our being. Thich Nhat Hanh is a learned, compassionate man who has the ability to make people see the positive light in virtually every situation. This book is no exception. He reminds us that anger begins and ends with ourselves. Nhat Hanh has the ability to take a complex situation, wrap it up with a bow and deliver it to us as a saving grace. His words of wisdom will help soothe the ravaged soul. Also recommended reading by this author are "Peace is Every Step", "The Heart of Buddha" and "Teachings on Love"; all are five-star books, highly recommended and well worth reading.

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