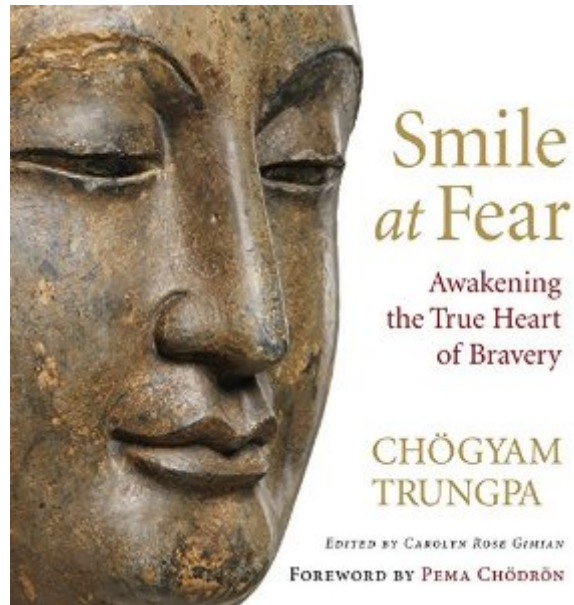


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Smile At Fear: Awakening The True Heart Of Bravery



Synopsis

Many of us, without even realizing it, are dominated by fear. We might be aware of some of our fears - perhaps we are afraid of public speaking, of financial hardship, or of losing a loved one. Chgyam Trungpa shows us that most of us suffer from a far more pervasive fearfulness: fear of ourselves. We feel ashamed and embarrassed to look at our feelings or acknowledge our styles of thinking and acting; we don't want to face the reality of our moment-to-moment experience. It is this fear that keeps us trapped in cycles of suffering, despair, and distress. Chgyam Trungpa offers us a vision of moving beyond fear to discover the innate bravery, trust, and delight in life that lies at the core of our being. Drawing on the Shambhala Buddhist teachings, he explains how we can each become a spiritual warrior: a person who faces each moment of life with openness and fearlessness. "The ultimate definition of bravery is not being afraid of who you are," writes Chgyam Trungpa. In this audiobook, he offers the insights and strategies to claim victory over fear.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is really the third in a series of what I would consider essential teachings from one of the most important Buddhist teachers of our time. It follows "Shambhala, Sacred Path of the Warrior" and "Great Eastern Sun." I love reading this before I sit for meditation in the morning. I salute Carolyn Rose Gimian for a loving and elegant job editing these talks. In case you have any doubts, this is no little book of "left-overs" that are being put out long after Trungpa's death. This is the "real deal." I

find these teachings--arranged in bite sized chapters--to be profound and literally enlightening. The material not only covers diving into your fears or being present with them rather than recoiling; but more importantly to me, it explains how to shine with the unconditional fearless, doubtless awareness that fuels the confidence and joy of Windhorse energy. This pithy little book is surprisingly powerful--at least it is to me. I recommend it very highly, especially to anyone who has found resonance with the teachings of Chogyam Trungpa, Pema Chodron or Sakyong Mipham. Very rich and rewarding indeed!

We live in an age of easy access to information about virtually anything; that's a double edged sword. Sometimes, what we don't know won't scare us; when we find out about every little thing that could pose a threat to our well being, we have a tendency to worry; and when we worry, we're not living life to its fullest potential. The late Chogyam Trungpa (1940-1987) understood how fear can hold us back, and his writings from over two decades ago are particularly helpful for guiding us through the scary world of 21st century realities. His simple strategy relied on looking objectively at ourselves and meeting every possible challenge to our sense of safety and security head on; instead of running away from our fears, we assertively address them, and they become minimalized. By mastering this ability, we discover the "way of the warrior"; our true heart of bravery is awakened, and suddenly that big presentation you were dreading in front of all those people doesn't seem like such a big deal, after all. Trungpa's sage advice is particularly valuable in dealing with today's modern problems---from a struggling economy, to unstable world affairs, to trying to avoid the swine flu. Personally, the latter never crosses my mind, until I see another story about it as a trending topic on Twitter. Still, I think I'll manage to avoid its devastation, perhaps forever. We'll see. In the meantime, for readers of this book, you'll come away with a better understanding that life's not so challenging after all; especially if we keep smiling (or even laughing) in the face of fear.

The essential teaching of mindfulness: to turn towards our fears and suffering and surround them with the compassionate space of pure awareness. We spend so much of our lives reacting against our fear and anxiety, which is a path to suffering; to open to experience fully what is real is the path to awakening and freedom. I also recommend 'The Path of Mindfulness Meditation', available through .

I was skittish about buying this book knowing the good, the bad and the ugly about Trungpa Rinpoche and his legacy. Trungpa founded Naropa Institute, was Pema Chodren's primary teacher,

and began a number of meditation centers. His personal life was a disaster and embodied the worst of what can happen when Tibetans encounter the West with its perversions and their self-restraint fails. He died at a young age from the ravages of alcoholism. Now that that is out of the way, this book is amazing. Although it is a compilation of Trungpa's talks on this subject, it flows as if these talks were meant to be sewn together. It is written with the characteristic openness and bluntness of many Tibetan masters which I find refreshing in this time of political correctness and self-soothing. The first chapter is titled Face Yourself-in which he elaborates unblemished self-examination, The second chapter gives specifics of meditation, the book proceeds on about how to develop fearless which is actually the process of finding one's own true nature, basic goodness and developing one's windhorse which arises out of mindfulness and is characterized by natural gallantry and fearlessness. This book has many gems including the need to embrace the paradox that constitutes one's true nature...happiness but always with a touch of sadness. To get all this book has to offer requires more than one reading. Perhaps that is what we are called upon to do with Trungpa himself...see the paradox of this brilliant man...the dark and light. By Trungpa's own words that doesn't mean condoning his actions.

As a beginning meditator, I find a lot of texts obscure, but this one is not at all. Here, Carolyn Rose Gimian has taken published and unpublished teachings about becoming a warrior given by Tibetan-born Chogyam Trungpa, who died in 1987, and interpreted them in contemporary American English. It's very direct. For example: "Warriorship is based on overcoming cowardice and our sense of being wounded....Fear is nervousness; fear is anxiety; fear is a sense of inadequacy, a feeling that we may not be able to deal with the challenges of everyday life at all." Since I wasn't familiar with the works of Chogyam Trungpa, who founded Naropa University in Colorado, I was at first startled by the language, but I learned he was one of the first Buddhists to teach consistently in English. I found the teachings very accessible and applicable. I'm reading the book for a second time, and I sent a copy to a friend who loved it.

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