

Everyday Buddhism: Book Suggestions

[Becoming your own Therapist](#) – Lama Thubten Yeshe (Free download from LYWA)

First published in 1998, this booklet contains three public talks by Lama Yeshe on the general topic of Buddhism. Each lecture is followed by a question and answer session. Lama and his audiences always enjoyed the give and take of these lively exchanges, and pretty much anything went. Although these talks were called lectures, Lama would have each of us use them as a mirror for our minds and look beyond the words, find ourselves, and become our own psychologist.

[How to Meditate, a practical guide](#) - Kathleen McDonald (Wisdom Publications)

A refreshingly readable, highly popular introduction to meditation, written by a Western Buddhist nun in the Tibetan tradition.

What is meditation? Why practice it? Which technique is best for me? How do I do it? The answers to these often asked questions are contained in this down-to-earth book by Kathleen McDonald (Sangye Khadro) ordained as a nun in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition in 1974 and with solid experience in both the practice and teaching of meditation. How to Meditate contains a wealth of practical advice on a variety of authentic and proven techniques. The contents include: advice for beginners, posture, common problems when meditating, breathing meditation, analytical meditation, meditation on the mind, meditation on emptiness, death awareness and impermanence, meditation on love, dealing with negative energy, visualization techniques, devotional practices, and purification.

[The Art of Meditation](#) – Matthieu Ricard (Atlantic Books)

Wherever he goes, renowned Buddhist monk Matthieu Ricard is asked to explain what meditation is, how it is done and what it can achieve. In this elegant, authoritative and entirely accessible book, he sets out to answer these questions.

Although meditation is a life-long process even for the wisest, The Art of Meditation demonstrates that by practising it on a daily basis we can change our understanding of ourselves and the world around us. In this brilliant short book, Matthieu Ricard talks us through the theory, spirituality and practical aspects of meditation. He illustrates each stage of his teaching with examples, leading the reader deeper into their own practice.

Through his experience as a monk, his close reading of sacred texts and his deep knowledge of some exceptional Buddhist masters, Matthieu Ricard shows the significant benefits that meditation, based on selfless love and compassion, can bring to each of us.

[Loving Kindness, the revolutionary art of happiness](#) – Sharon Salzberg (Shambala Classics)

Drawing on basic Buddhist teachings, wisdom stories from different spiritual traditions and her own personal experience from 25 years of Buddhist practice, Sharon Salzberg has written an inspirational book on how to cultivate true happiness in ourselves and generate real compassion for others.

[When Things Fall Apart, heart advice for difficult times](#) – Pema Chödrön (Element Books)

Down-to-earth and practical, this book reveals how to root through hard times to find the secret of happiness. Life is full of difficulties and instead of avoiding them, if we embrace pain we may find wisdom, change and transformation. Drawn from traditional Buddhist wisdom, best-selling Tibetan Buddhist Kagyu nun Pema Chodron's radical and compassionate advice for what to do when things fall apart in our lives goes against the grain of our usual habits and expectations. There is only one approach to suffering that is of lasting benefit and that approach involves moving toward painful situations with friendliness and curiosity, relaxing into the essential groundlessness of our entire situation. It is there, in the midst of chaos, that we discover the truth and love that are indestructible.

[Open Heart, Clear Mind](#) – Thubten Chodron (Snow Lion)

A refreshing introduction to the Buddhist world-view written by a western nun. It focuses on the practical application of Buddhist psychology to modern life in a straightforward, conversational style with warmth and humour.

[The Four Noble Truths](#) – Geshe Tashi Tsering (Wisdom Publications)

This volume presents the Buddha's renowned first teaching, the Four Noble Truths, which summarizes the fundamentals of the Buddhist worldview. Indeed, they provide an essential framework within which to understand all of the other teachings within Buddhism. The truths diagnose the human existential crisis - suffering and its origin – and prescribe a solution - cessation and the path.

www.jamyangbath.org.uk

[Buddhist Psychology](#) – Geshe Tashi Tsering (Wisdom Publications)

The Foundation of Buddhist Thought series is the curriculum of a popular course developed by the Tibetan Gelugpa Lama Geshe Tashi Tsering especially for his Western students. Geshe Tashi is the resident Lama at Jamyang Buddhist Centre in London. This volume, the third of six, is based on the curriculum and presents a stand alone and systematic but accessible entry into how Buddhism understands the mind. Geshe Tashi has rendered Tibetan Buddhism's traditional exposition of mind, its states, and the process of perception and cognition in the clearest of terms. Much more than philosophy, Buddhist Psychology is "a manual for living, relevant to everyday life".

[Approaching the Buddhist Path](#) – Dalai Lama and Thubten Chodron (Wisdom Publications)

The Buddha wanted his students to investigate, to see for themselves whether what he said were true. As a student of the Buddha, the Dalai Lama promotes the same spirit of investigation, and as the rich tradition of the Buddha makes its way into new lands and cultures, His Holiness has recognized that new approaches are needed to allow seekers in the West to experience the relevance of the liberating message in their own lives. Such an approach cannot assume listeners are free from doubt and already have faith in Buddhism's basic tenets. The Library of Wisdom and Compassion series, therefore, starts from the universal human wish for happiness and presents the dynamic nature of the mind. This first volume also provides a wealth of reflections on Buddhist history and fundamentals, contemporary issues, and the Dalai Lama's own personal experiences. It stands alone as an introduction to Buddhism, but it also provides a foundation for the systematic illumination of the path in the volumes to come.

[Transforming Problems into Happiness](#) – Lama Zopa Rinpoche (Wisdom Publications)

A commentary based on the text "Using Suffering and Happiness in the Path to Enlightenment" by the Nyingma lama Dodrupchen Rinpoche, Jigme Tenpai Nyima. This is a short but extremely rich compilation of advice from the traditional Kadampa thought transformation teachings. Here in this book, Lama Zopa explains one aspect of these Lojong teachings - how to transform your problems into happiness.

[Mindfulness in Plain English](#) – Bhante Henepola Gunaratana (Wisdom Publications)

A practical, step-by-step guide to insight meditation written in simple English with a minimum of technical terms. Venerable Gunaratana's conversational style and use of everyday examples imbue the basic teachings of Vipassana meditation with unsurpassable clarity and wit. His deeply spiritual yet nondenominational approach invites readers of all backgrounds to experience the fruits of meditative awareness.

[The Miracle of Mindfulness](#) - Thich Nhat Hanh (Rider)

A personal and direct guide to awareness and meditation in everyday life.

"As a book on the Buddhist path, the Miracle of Mindfulness is special because its clear and simple emphasis on basic practice enables any reader to begin a practice of his or her own immediately. Interest in the book, however, is not limited to Buddhists. It has found a home with people of many religious traditions. One's breath, after all, is hardly attached to any particular creed." Moby Ho, translator.

[A Beginners Guide to Reality](#) – Jim Baggott (Pegasus Books)

A Beginner's Guide to Reality is an introduction to philosophy for people who don't read philosophy. Jim Baggott's sources range from Aristotle to The Matrix. He examines the major developments in Western philosophical thought on the nature of reality, at each of three levels social, perceptual and physical. (Do money, colour, or photons exist?) The book systematically investigates these levels, peeling away the assumptions we make about those parts of reality that we take for granted.

[Animals in Translation](#) – Temple Grandin and Catherine Johnson (Bloomsbury Publishing)

Animals in Translation is the culmination of Temple Grandin's extraordinary life's work, drawing upon the latest research, her distinguished career as an animal scientist and her own experience of being autistic. With co-author Catherine Johnson, Grandin argues that while 'normal people' convert experience into words and abstractions, animals and autistics process the world as sensory information - specific pictures, sights and sounds. This difference is the key to understanding how animals see, think and feel. As much a revelation about life with autism as it is about life with animals, 'Animals in Translation' explores pain, fear, aggression, love, friendship, communication and learning in a startling book that will change the way you think about animals.