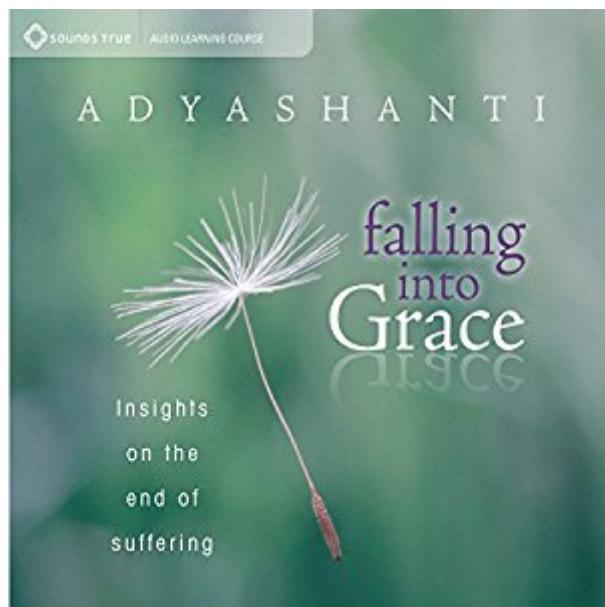


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Falling Into Grace: Insights On The End Of Suffering



Synopsis

Adyashanti asks us to let go of our struggles with life and open to the full promise of spiritual awakening: the end of delusion and the discovery and expression of our essential being. After 15 years as a spiritual teacher, Adyashanti has found that the simpler the teaching, the greater its power to initiate this awakening. On Falling into Grace, he shares what he considers fundamental insights to "open ourselves to that mysterious element that enters in the hidden and quiet moments and sparks a revolution in the way that we perceive life." Wherever you may be on your own spiritual path, you will find in these sessions down-to-earth guidance on breaking the trance of ego, experiencing the raw energy of emotion, cultivating inner stability, transcending the world of opposites, and more. In the same way that we fall into the arms of a loved one or drop our heads on the pillow at night, we can surrender into the beauty and truth of who and what we really are. Falling into Grace is a program that gets to the core of why we suffer, and allows us to explore Adyashanti's invitation "to be taken by a moment of grace and fall into a sense of life when it is not separate from you, when life is actually an expression of something indefinable, mysterious, and immense."

Highlights: The human dilemma - the concept of a separate self and the choice to stop believing the thoughts that perpetuate suffering
"Taking the backward step" into the pure potential of the present moment
Why spiritual awakening can be a disturbing process
Intimacy and availability - feeling absolute union with every part of our experience
True autonomy - the unique expression of our own sense of freedom

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

By returning to basic and fundamental themes and exploring them in depth, Adyashanti has written his most helpful book to date. This book is accessible to beginners but offers a relatively complete guide for seasoned practitioners. Adyashanti is not for everyone, but if you appreciate his insights into stillness and silence, opposition and suffering, intimacy and peace, and waking up and liberation, you will likely find this book well worth a careful and reflective read. I have practiced in the Buddhist and non-dualist traditions for 25 years, and have read countless books in the process; this is one of the most penetrating and useful of those books. What should be kept in mind, however, is that Adyashanti makes only passing reference to a spiritual discipline (such as meditation), which may be necessary to practice what he teaches.

The book's title is a perfect fit! I'm about a third of the way into it and I'm awestruck, heart melted by the warmth and clarity of Adya's narrative. I enjoy a variety of nondual approaches available thru , but Adya's humanity is very special. As I read, the sweep of his narrative takes my mind to unknowing, and my heart to silence. I've had a difficult year - full of pain and grief and loss, and my nervous system has felt stressed to the max. Adya is helping me to surrender, to surrender this 'me' to Presence, reminding me I can't know the answers - this pained heart can just stop, stop REACHING and seeking, and notice the Stillness which is always here....I feel deeply grateful to be able to read this....and on Kindle!!!

Adya's clarity as he attempts to explain the unexplainable never disappoints. His aversion to "guru-speak", refusal to speculate upon anything that isn't abundantly obvious via his own direct perceptual evidence/experience, and jaw-dropping honesty gives him a credibility, accessibility, and effectiveness at "waking you up out of the dream state of egoic identification" that few (if any) other spiritual teachers can match. I have painstakingly analyzed almost every word this person has made public in my own futile attempt to understand if this enlightenment thing is worth attempting, and I would describe this book as several decades of Adya's wisdom condensed into an elegant sequence of ideas designed for the single purpose of maximizing the likelihood that the reader awakens. It is exquisite, relentless, and beautiful. Thank you Adya. I wish there was a way to let you know how your actions have affected me.

Adya explores relationships and emotions in this book (harder than awakening!) and as such, it is a bit of a departure from his more rigorous spiritual writing. There are some revealing personal notes, a section on how the ego puts Consciousness into a "trance," "generational suffering," and one on

"autonomy" after awakening, which we often associate with "little me," or a function of the ego, but is not, as he explains. This is an immediate "must buy" for those who have followed this spiritual teacher and/or have an interest in nonduality/Advaita/Zen. It is a remarkable synthesis of some very basic, clear pointers with several new perspectives.

In "Falling into Grace: Insights on the End of Suffering" Adyashanti shares fundamental wisdom to "spark a revolution in the way we perceive life." He says all our world religions are unique methods to address human suffering. All of the great spiritual teachings direct us to look within, to 'know thyself.' He says unless we know ourselves, we can never find our way beyond suffering. In truth most of us are addicted to suffering. Adyashanti says when we come from "egoic consciousness" we see ourselves as separate, something other than everything around us. In actuality, the ego is a fiction. It's nothing more than a story in the mind. The mind has a powerful ability to put our awareness into a trance. Because egos are addicted to pain they tend to bond through pain not happiness. Adyashanti says we limit who we are when we put a label on ourselves and think we are nothing more than a thought. We suffer when we believe and identify with everything we think. We become lost in our own beliefs, projections, opinions and illusions of control. The irony is the more we try to control life and others, the more out of control we feel. "Egoic consciousness" demands things be different and argues with reality. Adyashanti recommends we speak to our negative emotions. He told a woman at a retreat, "I don't want to talk to you. I want to talk to your rage." He asked how her rage views life and what it thinks of others. When she allowed her suffering to speak her judgment, blaming and condemning came out. After she had spoken for awhile a softer voice of deep hurt and sorrow began to emerge. It was more intimate, less guarded and judgmental. He asked, "Is the story of what happened really true? What happens when you tell this story and believe it?" He then asked, "Can you remember the event and not tell a story about it?" To her surprise the memory of the event without the story made her feel better. She said, "You know, it's just a memory now. It's just an event that happened, but it's not triggering any feelings in me." Adyashanti says when we learn to separate the experience from the conclusions drawn, we begin to taste real freedom. This is also true of chronic pain. People who deal with pain the best do not resist it or believe their thoughts about the future, indulge in fear and judgment or argue with what should or shouldn't be. When we purge the stories that contain suffering we find inner stability and freedom. When we let go to the way we think things should be, then life starts to reveal its magical qualities. Adyashanti tells of an elderly woman who confided on her death bed that she was afraid to die because she did not know who she was. He told her, "We'd better get at it, then...Can you drop

your entire past?...and enter this moment fully?" She said, "I don't know." Adyashanti says when he saw her again a couple of weeks later she was smiling and had a fiery, blissful glow in her eye. He did not have to ask, he knew she has finally let go. Grace comes when we become open-hearted and open-minded and realize we may not know what we think we know. Sometimes it comes during beautiful moments and at other times with a fierce face. Difficult times often open our hearts and minds. Adyashanti recommends we look underneath the veil of our thoughts and quietly ask, "What am I, really? He says we'll find a spaciousness, a quiet point of awareness or consciousness beyond the mind. When we stand in our own authority we experience the ultimate mystery, transparency and no-thingness of ourselves and stop identifying with our images, memories and thoughts. When we quiet our mind we see beyond it. Instead of trying to change, all we need is the willingness to question our mind's conclusions, the willingness to relax and let each moment be as it is. When we open to a state of no conclusions we open to a dimension of consciousness of peace, stillness and well-being. This whole new state of consciousness already exists, there isn't anywhere to go, anything to search for and nothing to learn. Awakening is actually a process of unlearning. The harder we try to get out, the deeper we dig ourselves in. Awakening is to take a step backwards, to turn around, reverse the process. Instead of looking for satisfaction on the outside look within, look precisely at the place where you are standing. To let go of our egoic struggle we need to ask ourselves, "What do we know with absolute certainty? Everything in our mind is a story. There is no such thing as a true thought. The heart of reality is the vast expanse we live in. None of our stories are ever as real as what is. Happiness, peace, love and freedom do not come from our minds. Revelation and insight comes from some other space - a place called "silence." When we see that our mind is just a story teller we begin to listen. The inner space of unknowing is our only doorway. Instead of telling God what you want, begin to listen to what God has to say. Embracing the unknowing makes us wonderfully and beautifully humble. True humility is a very open state. An "aware spirit" is awake and empty. What we are in reality is alive, awake and conscious, existing as pure potential. When we are quiet and still we are in a state of meditation. Meditation practice cultivates inner stability where suffering naturally comes to an end. When we are clear, we respond and act from a place of love, peace, compassion and understanding. Real autonomy is allowing spirit to inhabit our humanness and a fearless willingness to allow this freedom to happen. When spirit comes in form it is everything and nothing. We can make our prison comfortable or we can break out of it. To be in the world but not of it. To take tomorrow and yesterday out of the picture. To be nothing and everything simultaneously. Grace is the ability to see the face of the divine in each and every moment of our lives. Adyashanti's concise spiritual insights offer many "ah-ha moments."

FALLING INTO GRACE has the usual clarity of Adyashanti's writings but, in this case, he is not only clear, he is poetic. This books is beautifully written. I don't think it really matters whether the thread is "Advaita Vedanta" or "Zen" when you speak from the other side of the gateless gate. I also agree with the other reviewer that there is material for both beginners and veterans of the contemplative traditions. His description of the death of his companion dog nearly brought ME to tears. My wife and I lost two good friends in 2009 and I understand how he must have felt. I can't think of a better place for anyone to more fully understand the ravages of the egoic consciousness and how and why we fall under this spell!

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