



The Wonder of Presence: And the Way of Meditative Inquiry

Toni Packer

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In this compelling collection of talks, interviews, and letters, Toni Packer provides a comprehensive overview of the path of meditative inquiry—a nondenominational approach to spiritual growth that emphasizes the direct experience of the present moment. "The immense challenge for each one of us," Packer writes, "is can we live our lives, at least for moments at a time, in the wonder of presence that is the creative source of everything?" She shows how we can transform fear, anger, guilt, and attachment to our self-image through simple, direct awareness. Having recently lost her husband of fifty years, Packer also speaks with candor and tenderness about the convulsions of a grieving heart and the peace that undivided awareness can bring.

Toni Packer began studying Zen in 1967 with Roshi Philip Kapleau (author of *The Three Pillars of Zen*) at the Rochester Zen Center and was eventually named his successor. Seeing the potentially destructive effects of relying too much on tradition, however, she did not accept the position. Packer is strongly influenced by the teachings of Krishnamurti and has turned away from the traditional forms and hierarchies that are prevalent in many Buddhist schools. Her approach is appealing to many Westerners who find institutionalized practices such as chanting, bowing, and burning incense to be alien and unnecessary.

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