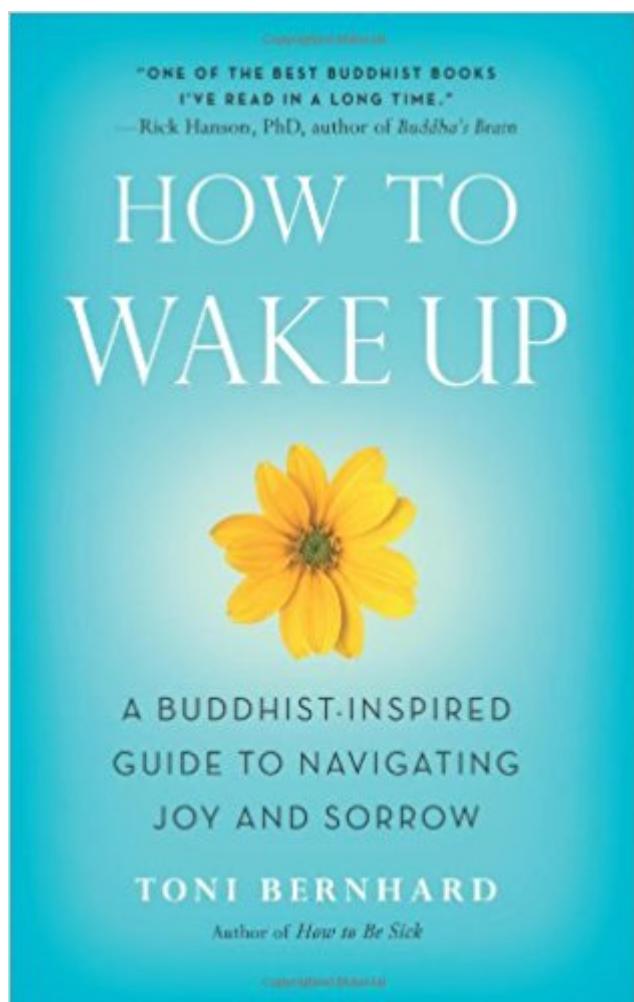


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# How To Wake Up: A Buddhist-Inspired Guide To Navigating Joy And Sorrow



## **Synopsis**

Intimately and without jargon, *How to Wake Up: A Buddhist-Inspired Guide to Navigating Joy and Sorrow* describes the path to peace amid all of life's ups and downs. Using step by step instructions, the author illustrates how to be fully present in the moment without clinging to joy or resisting sorrow. This opens the door to a kind of wellness that goes beyond circumstances. Actively engaging life as it is in this fashion holds the potential for awakening to a peace and well-being that are not dependent on whether a particular experience is joyful or sorrowful. This is a practical book, containing dozens of exercises and practices, all of which are illustrated with easy-to-relate to personal stories from the author's experience.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

What I really love about this book is how accessible it is. Toni Bernhard's previous book, "How to Be Sick" was a wonderful manual on how to skillfully navigate the vicissitudes of chronic illness with wisdom, humor and wise counsel. "How to Wake Up" goes even further and offers the Buddhist teachings on living truthfully with joy as well as sorrow. So many of us believe that sickness, turmoil... not getting what wants or having it taken away, are somehow personal punishments. This book clearly explains that by its very definition, this is what life is. Nothing to get upset over! With kind and thoughtful wisdom, we can accept gracefully all that takes place. Thanks Toni for another gem.

As a Cognitive Behavioral therapist I've often found that clients have an insatiable curiosity about

how mindfulness and Buddhist principles might help them alleviate their anxiety, depression, and other suffering. There are some very well respected books on these topics but they're generally complex and long to the point of being unreadable, or they're not written in a style that the average non-Buddhist reader can relate to. This book fills a very important gap and does a fantastic job of explaining how Buddhist principles and practices can help the average person. Whenever I read Toni's writing I feel good. It's infused with warmth, caring, and calm. She explains the underlying principles, gives options for easy to implement practices, and achieves a rare balance of not dumbing down the material but wrapping it in an enjoyable and easy to read package.

I want to call this book "Buddhism for Dummies," but that would do it a disservice because it is so much more. My only previous exposure to the teachings of the Buddha was Toni Bernhard's previous book, "How to be Sick." This new book discusses in such clear terminology the simple principles of Buddhism one can apply to achieve peace within ourselves. Using examples from her own life that everyone will find familiar (breaking her ankle, the death of a friend), Bernhard shows how she deals with her own life and in so doing gives us a road map for how to deal with our own joys and sorrows. This is not a book that you will read quickly. It is a book to savor and to think about, but it is a book that will change you in profound ways -- if you let it.

After reading *How to Wake Up* by award winning author and teacher, Toni Bernhard, I felt as if I had just returned from a very special mindfulness retreat, where I was nourished by Toni's words of wisdom and the ancient writings and teachings of the Buddha. I especially appreciated the way in which Toni presented the Buddhist concepts with such clarity and warmth, followed by a personal story of how she applied the teachings to her own life, as well as her gentle encouragement for readers to try the exercises and practices, which she presented so well. *How to Wake Up* supported me to look deeply into my own life and to more fully embrace daily living with its many joys, along with its deep sorrows and losses. It was also extremely helpful to learn the process of how to be more awake and aware of my mental states and stresses: by recognizing them, labeling them, investigating them, and allowing them to be just as they are, without judgment or aversion. *How to Wake Up* gave me the feeling of being held in the arms of a true Bodhisattva. As I read Toni's teachings on compassion, lovingkindness, joyful acceptance and equanimity, I was deeply touched by her ability to embody and convey these sublime states throughout her entire book. As Toni skillfully taught and wove the Buddhist concepts into each chapter, she also gave me a felt sense and clearer understanding of the teachings, which in turn guided me on the path of finding a greater

sense of inner peace and well-being. In closing, I want to express my deep gratitude to Toni Bernhard for writing *How to Wake Up*. This book is a true gift to humanity and is a very compassionate resource about impermanence and change. If you are open to looking at new ways to alleviate all types of suffering and finding more joy and contentment in your life, regardless of your circumstances, you will certainly want to buy *How to Wake Up* and read it over and over again.

Toni's second book *How To Wake Up* is a beautifully written guide on how to be kinder and gentler to ourselves. She makes us aware of how we often use our everyday thoughts as weapons against ourselves, and how we can take simple steps to awaken ourselves to a more peaceful way of living. Filled with personal insights and stories, Toni shows us how she has applied many of the techniques she outlines in the book toward her own struggles. She takes the theme of impermanence and suffering from her first book and delicately shows us how we can apply many of the lessons she has learned from her years of Buddhist practice to obstacles we face in our own lives.

When I read this book, I was in a state of deep distress and it was a page-turner. Each chapter is written with such clarity, with such apt illustrations from the author's own experience, that it is easy to apply the teachings to my own life. Although many of the practices were not new to me, reading her graceful presentation of them was a comforting reminder. I especially like the practicality of her practices--what we can do in the course of our ordinary daily lives, going about our ordinary activities, to ease ourselves through the difficult times. And I appreciate her openness about her own shortcomings and the ways in which the practices she present have helped her deal with them. This book is a precious addition to the Buddhist literature.

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