

BOOK OF JOY

Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu (and Douglas Abrams)

Summary

The Book Of Joy is the result of a 5-day meeting between the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu, two of the world's most influential spiritual leaders, during which they discussed one of life's most important questions: how do we find joy despite suffering?

What is the purpose of The Book of Joy?

Envisioned as a gift to the world to celebrate the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday, The Book of Joy is structured as a symbolic three-layer cake that aims to provide a practical foundation for cultivating and sustaining joy.

The Archbishop has never claimed sainthood, and the Dalai Lama considers himself a simple monk. In this unique collaboration, they offer us the reflection of real lives filled with pain and turmoil in the midst of which they have been able to discover a level of peace, of courage, and of joy to which we can all aspire in our own lives.

Author

Douglas Abrams – Author/Collaborator

Howard Cutler – Another Author/Colaborator/Psychologist

According to author Douglas Abrams, the Dali Lama and Archbishop Tutu “seemed to be as much a comedy duo as two venerable spiritual leaders”.

BIO | His Holiness Dalai Lama

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso describes himself as a simple Buddhist monk spiritual leader of Tibet

He was born on 6 July 1935, to a farming family, in a small hamlet located in Taktser, Amdo, northeastern Tibet.

At the age of two, the child, then named Lhamo Dhondup, was recognized as the reincarnation of the previous 13th Dalai Lama, Thubten Gyatso.

Speaks Chinese And Lhasa Tibetan (Also: Hindi, English)

His Holiness began his monastic education at the age of six. The curriculum, derived from the Nalanda tradition, consisted of five major and five minor subjects. The major subjects included logic, fine arts, Sanskrit grammar, and medicine, but the greatest emphasis was given to Buddhist philosophy

1950 - China's invasion of Tibet, His Holiness was called upon to assume full political power. In 1954 - went to Beijing and met with Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Chou Enlai

1959 - brutal suppression of Tibetan national uprising in Lhasa by Chinese troops, DL was forced to escape into exile. Since then he has been living in Dharamsala, northern India.

1988 - address to members of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France. Five-Point Peace Plan. Sought peace talk betw Tibet and china

1989 - awarded Nobel Peace Prize for his non-violent struggle for the liberation of Tibet. He has consistently advocated policies of non-violence, even in the face of extreme aggression.

Travelled to more than 67 countries spanning 6 continents. He has received over 150 awards, honorary doctorates, prizes, etc., in recognition of his message of peace, non-violence, inter-religious understanding, universal responsibility and compassion. He has also authored or co-authored more than 110 books.

BIO | Archbishop Desmond Tutu

born in 1931 in Klerksdorp, Transvaal, South Africa.

Tutu was born of mixed Xhosa and Motswana heritage to a poor family.

Speaks: Xhosa language (Also English, Zulu, Sotho, Tswana)

Anglican bishop and theologian, known for his work as an anti-apartheid and human rights activist.

He was popular among South Africa's black majority and was internationally praised for his work involving anti-apartheid activism, for which he won the Nobel Peace Prize and other international awards. He also compiled several books of his speeches and sermons.

1954 - graduated from the University of South Africa. After three years as a high school teacher he began to study theology

1960 - Ordained Anglican priest.

1962-66 - moved to the United Kingdom to study theology at King's College London. leading up to a Master of Theology.

1966 - returned to southern Africa, teaching at the Federal Theological Seminary and then the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland

1967 to 1972 - taught theology in South Africa before returning to England for three years as the assistant director of a theological institute in London.

1975 - appointed Dean of St. Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg, the first black to hold that position.

1976 to 1978 - Bishop of Lesotho

1978 - became first black General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches.

He emerged as one of the most prominent opponents of South Africa's apartheid system of racial segregation and white minority rule. Although warning the National Party government that anger at apartheid would lead to racial violence, as an activist he stressed non-violent protest and foreign economic pressure to bring about universal suffrage.

1985 to 1986 - Bishop of Johannesburg (1st black)

1986 to 1996 - Archbishop of Cape Town (1st black)

Theologically, he sought to fuse ideas from black theology with African theology

2021 - Died

The Book: Two spiritual giants. Five days. One timeless question.

Nobel Peace Prize Laureates His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu have survived more than fifty years of soul-crushing violence and oppression. Despite their hardships—or, as they would say, because of them—they are two of the most joyful people on the planet.

In April 2015, Archbishop Tutu traveled to the Dalai Lama's home in Dharamsala, India, to celebrate His Holiness's 80th birthday and to create what they hoped would be a gift for others. They looked back on their long lives to answer a single burning question: How do we find joy in the face of life's inevitable suffering?

They traded intimate stories, teased each other continually, and shared their spiritual practices. By the end of a week filled with laughter and punctuated with tears, these two global heroes had stared into the abyss and despair of our time and revealed how to live a life brimming with joy.

explore the Nature of True Joy and confront each of the Obstacles of Joy—from fear, stress, and anger to grief, illness, and death. They then offer us the Eight Pillars of Joy, which provide the foundation for lasting happiness. Throughout, they include stories, wisdom, and science. Finally, they share their daily Joy Practices that anchor their own emotional and spiritual lives.

8 pillars of joy

1) Perspective - For every event in life, there are many different angles

2) Humility - Whenever I see someone, may I never feel superior.

3) Humour - Both men have the special ability to laugh, not only at life's troubles, but at themselves and their very human foibles. They don't take themselves so seriously. Humor brings us closer together, and can diffuse tense situations. Humor shows us our shared ridiculousness—we then get to see our common humanity in many ways. humor helps us coexist peacefully with others.

4) Acceptance - Why be unhappy about something if it can be remedied?"

Ability to accept pain, imperfection, and beauty, according to Abrams. pass through the storm. It is facing suffering and asking the question, "How can we use this as something positive?"

5) Forgiveness – Not holding on to grievances and negative emotions,

6) Gratitude – Being grateful. Embracing realities, counting blessings rather than burdens

7) Compassion - Sense of concern when we see others suffer, and wish to see that suffering relieved. It is the bridge between empathy and kindness. realizing our shared humanity.

8) Generosity - generous spirit. acknowledging that you are merely a steward of your wealth, possessions, and power

8 pillars of Buddhism

The steps of the Noble Eightfold Path are Right Understanding, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration.

Questions

Do Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu share any similarities in their personal histories?

How do the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu define joy?

What do they see as its true nature?

How do you define joy?

The Book of Joy contains some remarkable insight....

Which observations or passages in particular made you stop and ponder struck you as profound in some way?

Did this book give you any new perspectives?

Did it make you think?

Helpful? Beneficial?

Does their perspective, advice, wisdom seem naïve to you?

Is their perspective real, authentic, genuine? Practical?

One of the shortest answers to attaining joy in a world of suffering is not thinking too much about yourself.

What does that mean?

How is it possible to step outside of one's consciousness?

How is it possible NOT to think of the self?

RE: Dalai Lama exile from his homeland...

wherever you have friends, that's your country, and wherever you receive love, that's your home.

Do you agree?

RE: Bishop Tutu says:

even a person who struggles with hardship is a "masterpiece in the making"

Do you agree?