

“After the Ecstasy, the Laundry”

How the Heart Grows Wise
on the Spiritual Path
by Jack Kornfield

Enlightenment does exist – Internationally renowned author and meditation master Jack Kornfield assures us. 'Unbounded freedom and joy, oneness with the divine ... these experiences are more common than you know, and not far away.' But even after achieving such realization – after the ecstasy – we are faced with the day-to-day task of translating that freedom into our imperfect lives. We are faced with the laundry. Drawing on the experiences and insights of leaders and practitioners within the Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, and Sufi traditions, this book offers a uniquely intimate and honest understanding of how the modern spiritual journey unfolds and how we can prepare our hearts for awakening. Through moving personal stories and traditional tales, we learn how the enlightened heart navigates the real world of family relationships, emotional pain, earning a living, sickness, loss, and death. Filled with the laughter of the wise, alive with compassion, *After the Ecstasy, the Laundry* is a gift to anyone who is seeking peace, wholeness, and inner happiness. It is sure to take its place next to *A Path with Heart* as a spiritual classic for our time.

Memorable Quotes:

“A man's life is nothing but an extended trek through the detours of art to recapture those one or two moments when his heart first opened.” Albert Camus

Renewal comes by dying. When we have faced death and aloneness, we are unafraid to live, and life flows under our feet. Everywhere we go becomes holy ground.

“Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature, nor do the children of humans as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.” Helen Keller

“Gaining enlightenment is an accident. Spiritual practice simply makes us accident-prone.” Suzuki Roshi

“You talk to yourself too much. You're not unique in that. Everyone of us does. We maintain our world with our inner dialogue. A man or woman of knowledge is aware that the world will change completely as soon as they stop talking to themselves.” Don Juan

“When the dog is chasing after you, whistle for him.” Emerson

Out of emptiness god has made the world. It exists in the heart of god alone. To know our place we must again become as nothing, and then what is holy will move through us and illuminate all we do.

If we wish to love god we must also learn to love each of his creations – including ourselves. in all our complexity and imperfections.

“...we survive because there are natural periods of coolness, of wholeness, and ease. In fact, they last longer than the fires of our grasping and fear. It is this that sustains us. We have periods of rest making us refreshed, alive, well. Why don't we feel thankful for this everyday nirvana?” Ajahn Buddhadharm

“The important thing is not to think much. But to love much.”
St Theresa of Avila

“As a lover of life, how can I stay out of any area of life?”
Vimala Thakar

“Those who enter the gates of heaven are not beings who have no passions or who have curbed their passions, but those who have cultivated an understanding of them.” William Blake

You can search the universe and not find a single being more worthy of lovingkindness than yourself.

“This human body is more precious than the rarest gem. Cherish your body, it is yours for this one time only, a thing of beauty that passes away.” Tsong Khapa

To look with freshness of eyes that see today's light anew – this is the beginners mind.

“I help them be with what is true. The healing comes from that.”
Robert Hall

“All beings by nature are Buddha, as ice is by nature is water. How sad that people ignore the near and search for truth afar like someone in the minds of water crying out for thirst. Truly, is anything missing now? Nirvana is right here, before our eyes. This very place is the Pure Lotus Land, this body, the Buddha.” Hakiun Zenje

“I imagine one of the reasons people cling to their hates so stubbornly is because they sense once the hate is gone, they will be forced to deal with their own pain.” James Baldwin

“My life has been filled with terrible misfortunes... most of which never happened.” Mark Twain

It is this open and tender heart that has the capacity to transform the world.

To be nobody but yourself in the world which is doing its best to make you everybody else, means to fight the hardest human battle ever and to never stop fighting.” E.E. Cummings

“Don't ever let them pull you down so low as to hate them.”
Booker T Washington

“The only devils in the world are the ones running around in our own hearts.” Mahatma Ghandi

“Every morning I awaken torn between the desire to save the world and the inclination to savor it.” E.B. White

But even in failure, we can follow our steadfast commitment to compassion.

If you don't take care of your body, where will you live?

“To appreciate beauty and find the best in others, to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, a redeemed social condition, to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived, this is to have succeeded.” Ralph Waldo Emerson

“To allow oneself to be carried away by a multitude of conflicting concerns, to surrender to too many demands, to commit to too many projects, to want to help everyone in everything is itself to succumb to the violence of our times.” Thomas Merton

“Far better it is to dare mighty things... even though checkered by failure, than to take rank with those poor spirits who live in the grey twilight that knows not victory or defeat.” Teddy Roosevelt

“Everyone is a moon, and has a dark side which he never shows to anybody.” Mark Twain