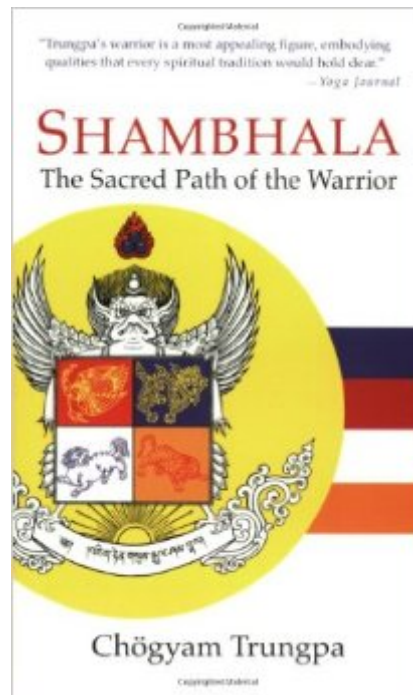


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Shambhala: The Sacred Path Of The Warrior



Synopsis

There is a basic human wisdom that can help solve the world's problems. It doesn't belong to any one culture or region or religious tradition although it can be found in many of them throughout history. It's what Chogyam Trungpa called the sacred path of the warrior. The sacred warrior conquers the world not through violence or aggression, but through gentleness, courage, and self-knowledge. The warrior discovers the basic goodness of human life and radiates that goodness out into the world for the peace and sanity of others. That's what the Shambhala teachings are all about, and this is the book that has been presenting them to a wide and appreciative audience for more than twenty years.

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Customer Reviews

Chogyam Trungpa was, if nothing else, a Character. As famous as his ideas were his Shenanigans: promiscuity, affairs with students, and heavy drinking that on the face of it seem out of step with the Buddha's teachings, but which many of his followers justified as "Crazy Wisdom" in a long Tibetan tradition. (His misbehaviour is said to have begun after an accident: he crashed his car - I place my hand over my heart as I tell you this - into a joke-shop.) I've always felt uncomfortable with books like "Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism" and "The Myth of Freedom". He shows nothing short of genius in adapting Tibetan world-pictures and spiritual methods for Western readers: unlike many icons of Asian spirituality in the West, he really, thoroughly (and indeed scarily) understood the people he found himself among. But he adapted by psychologising.

For Tibetans, the Six Realms of Existence are actual and concrete; they are as real as Ecuador or Niagara Falls. Trungpa Rinpoche turns them into Mental Tendencies that we can observe in our own minds at any moment. The result is fascinating, much-praised and helpful to many, but leaves me feeling... confused, dubious. No such reservations about this more modest book. The legendary city of Shambhala, the Way of the Warrior, may be peripheral aspects of Tibetan tradition, but they're especially accessible. This is, in a word, Wisdom, that anybody could practice anywhere, at any time. I am awed by his subtlety, poetry and delicacy of touch. His choice of the "Child's Garden of Verses", for instance, to illustrate the Buddhist concept of seeing the Universe in its smallest details, is wildly inspired. I rack my brains to think of another Asian spiritual teacher who could have used that illustration. Wisdom is often advertised, much more seldom found, but it's certainly here, along with a fragrance of ancient heroic tales and indelible childhood stories. Even the faintly Asian English (you keep waiting to be called "Grasshopper") only adds to the appeal.

Enlightening ! Full of Wisdom ! Buy It ! Make a Difference ... for your self ... and for society ! This book was first given to me by a Tibetan Master, Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche, in 1985 when I asked him about Shambala (the enlightened society). Jamgon Kongtrul was a living example of compassion and wisdom. Even though he did not know me as I was just one among one a crowd, he immediately gave me this enlightening book. Since then, I have been buying it and giving it to many people. It is his legacy. (Trunpa and Jamgon comes from the same Tibetan Buddhist lineage.) This book is not about following a religious dogma or path. It is about how to live a dignified and meaningful human existence. The sacred warrior is not only brave and honorable but gentle and kind at the same time. The sacred warrior do not live in a world of deceit and superficiality. She or he is a genuine human being who is always considerate to others and her/his environment. Trungpa says that the bravest warrior is the one who can open her/his heart to others and wears no masks nor armor to hide her/his weakness. We all have the inherent potential to be sacred warriors. And by doing so, we will help contribute to make the world a better place to live in. Trunpa says that instead of trying very hard to change other people, our society, our families, and situations, we should first change ourselves and our negative attitudes first. It is only when we change our innermost selves and our myopic views of life that we can make a difference and genuinely help transform our society to a better place to live in. When we choose to be sacred warriors, that will be our lifelong existentialist quest. Be prepared for a new way of living human existence.

Shambhala: The Sacred path of the Warrior is a book I read on whimsy. I read this book originally

because of the relationship Trungpa had with Allen Ginsberg. I was curious so I picked up a copy of this book. It was enlightening because this is the real deal unlike a lot of the half baked Zen Buddhism invoked by many beatnik types. One need not drop acid to gain wisdom here. If you want the hokey, trippie hippie Buddhism, forget this book. Trungpa is writing of an ancient code of warriorship. It is an inward, spiritual journey drawn from the Tibetan warrior culture. One who reads this and learns the lessons it teaches will be assisted in overcoming self doubt and negativity. This is not a book of violence. It is really a guide towards overcoming violence. It is about learning mastery over oneself. I was inspired to be better after reading this book. It made me believe in the possibility of transcendence. That is saying something, too. It is a very motivational book.

When I saw the title of the book, I thought it was going to be pretty hokie. First, I picked it up in the library, and after one cursory reading, I had found some simple stuff that affected me tons. It affected me because it was so simple to implement right here and now. No funky sanskrit here. Highly practical. Although I had been meditating for many years and also had some experience practicing the way of mindfulness, the techniques in this book opened me right up!

Many people have already reviewed this book; I only want to share this: Out of all the dozens of self-improvement texts I have read, this one stands high above all the rest in my opinion. Basically, instead of telling you how wonderful and successful your life will be if you do everything the author tells you (as is the usual theme in this kind of books); you are told that 1) you are wonderful as you are; and 2) in order to experience this wonderfulness, you must renounce selfishness and become completely open to the suffering of the world. This is a very un-Western viewpoint, and very very fresh to me - like a gust of salty cool wind into a stale smokey room. If you are ready for some fresh air, buy this book!

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