



Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond: A Meditator's Handbook

By Brahm

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Meditation: it's not just a way to relax, or to deal with life's problems. Done correctly, it can be a way to radically encounter bliss and to begin - and sustain - real transformation in ourselves.

In *Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond*, self-described meditation junkie Ajahn Brahm shares his knowledge and experience of the jhanas - a core part of the Buddha's original meditation teaching. Never before has this material been approached in such an empowering way, by a teacher of such authority and popularity.

Full of surprises, delightfully goofy humor, and entertaining stories that inspire, instruct, and illuminate, *Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond* will encourage those new to meditation, and give a shot in the arm to more experienced practitioners as well.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Most Buddhist writers are not often lighthearted or zesty, but the British-born monk Ajahn Brahm is a delightful exception. Even though meditators are taught to not expect anything, since that represents an attachment, meditation should bring you joy and bliss, according to Brahm. The bliss states of meditation (jhanas) are little-taught, so this book is an addition with value in a crowded niche. Trained in the Thai forest tradition by the Buddhist master Ajahn Chah, Brahm is a clear communicator of the ineffable. He is able to write about a variety of mental states and visualizations with precision and discrimination, drawing on his own experience. He is step-by-step systematic, which helps demystify what happens in meditation. Also useful is the specificity with which he describes the kinds of problems meditators encounter and what to do to resolve them. Meditation is difficult to teach on the page, but Brahm, who began life as an academic at Cambridge, fulfills his calling as teacher. He projects both energetic conviction and calm equanimity. The promise of bliss he describes in this excellent manual is elusive, but remains a compelling goal. (*Sept.*) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Review

"This book is the kind of work that comes around once in a lifetime. I cannot recommend it more highly than that, and encourage anyone with a serious interest in the meditative disciplines taught by the Buddha to buy this book - now!" (*BuddhaSpace*)

"This clear and accessible book describes meditative absorption states (*jhana*) and how to attain them. An excellent road map to the the development of *jhana*, which, as the title suggests, is beyond bliss." (*Inquiring Mind*)

"Most Buddhist writers are not often lighthearted or zesty, but the British-born Ajahn Brahm is a delightful exception. Brahm is a clear communicator of the ineffable and projects both energetic conviction and calm equanimity. The promise of bliss he describes in this excellent manual is elusive, but remains a compelling goal." (*Publishers Weekly*)

"Like a broom through cobwebs, Ajahn Brahm here sweeps away the mysteries surrounding the jhanas. *Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond* is salted with the illustrative, often witty life stories that Brahm is well known for, and he uses readily understandable language to explain what some teachers shy from. Finding this book is like finding an operator's manual for one's practice. Raising the bar for those serious about their practice, he scolds those who would 'dumb-down' nibbana and challenges us to reach for the ultimate happiness. *Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond* is a bold book, sure to be controversial." (John Roberts, Buddhist Council of the Northwest)

"From the first word (meditation) to the last (Parinibbana), *Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond* is riveting, rollicking, and uncompromisingly "real". Ajahn Brahm's voice is utterly fresh. But watch out! In the greatest tradition of our beloved roshis and bhikkhus, it is also compelling and commanding. Readers seeking a sure guide to 'the bliss better than sex' will find it in this wonderful book." (Glenn Wallis, translator of *The Dhammapada: Verses on the Way*)

"Ajahn Brahm is the Seinfeld of Buddhism." (Sumi Loundon, editor of *Blue Jean Buddha*)

"Ajahn Brahm is originally from London, and his working-class humor and cockney turns of phrase can be

charming. Readers will see why so many people are drawn to hear him." (*Shambhala Sun*)

"Ajahn Brahm has not only provided great leadership for the Buddhist community, but has dedicated much of his time to helping the wider community with a strong sense of compassion, understanding and humour." (Vice-Chancellor Professor Lance Twomey, Curtin University)

"One can never be bored by Ajahn Brahm. Newcomers to Buddhism are always fascinated by how he easily he is able to explain difficult concepts in ordinary language the mind can grasp." (*Eastern Horizon*)

About the Author

Jack Kornfield, PhD, is one of the best known, most respected meditation teachers in the world. A psychologist and founder of two of the largest Buddhist Centers and communities in America, he is one of the key teachers who introduced mindfulness to the West. His books are classics, selling well over a million copies, translated into twenty one languages. Jack has taught at major universities and medical schools including Harvard, Stanford, UCLA, and Berkeley, teaches weekly classes to 400 at Spirit Rock, and to large crowds nationwide at retreats, conferences, and events. To learn more, please visit: JackKornfield.com or SpiritRock.org.

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Gregory Sowers:

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