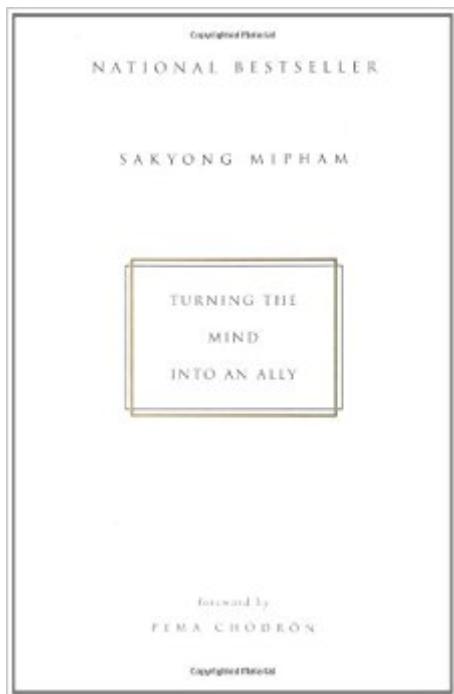


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# Turning The Mind Into An Ally



## Synopsis

Strengthening, calming, and stabilizing the mind is the essential first step in accomplishing nearly any goal. Growing up American with a Tibetan twist, Sakyong Mipham talks to Westerners as no one can: in idiomatic English with stories and wisdom from American culture and the great Buddhist teachers. Turning the Mind Into an Ally makes it possible for anyone to achieve peace and clarity in their lives.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Is the mind our enemy? It can be, suggests Shambhala International's director Mipham in his first book. The key to peaceful and sane living, says Mipham, is training our minds. Without that training, people live "at the mercy of our moods." Meditation is the tool that can help spiritual seekers master, rather than be mastered by, their own minds. This book blends a philosophically savvy explanation of why meditation is necessary with an artful and accessible introduction to the basics of meditation. Mipham moves elegantly from the prosaic (how to sit with a straight spine) to the profound (why one should bravely contemplate illness, aging and death). Indeed, those practicing spiritual disciplines from any tradition-Christian, Wiccan, and so forth-could benefit from Mipham's commonsense approach to meditation. He acknowledges, for example, that the tyro might get bored, distracted or even hungry for a cookie. New meditators are likely to find a million and one excuses for not meditating. But, says Mipham gently, "at some point you just have to sit down and do it." Mipham's guide is distinguished by its intelligible prose; unlike many fellow travelers, he does not drown his

reader in jargon. He defines Buddhist basics, like "samsara" and "karma," clearly. Three useful appendices, outlining meditation postures and giving simple instructions for contemplation, round out the book, and a foreword by Pema Chodron is an added treat. This easy read is one of the best of the Buddhism-for-Westerners genre. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Mipham is director of Shambhala International, an umbrella organization representing over 100 meditation and study centers that was founded by his father, the renowned spiritual leader Chogyam Trungpa. His first book offers basic guidelines to meditation or peaceful abiding for those interested in learning more about Buddhist meditation. His instruction and discussion of the virtues of peaceful abiding are followed by suggestions for thematic contemplative meditations on topics such as birth, old age, and death. Having grown up in the United States but with traditional Tibetan training, Mipham is able to connect the traditional practice with the Western mind-set. He also brings a youthful spirit to his writing, with frequent use of outdoor sports (e.g., horseback riding, archery, golf, and hiking) to embellish his teachings metaphorically. Unfortunately, this work lacks the passion and depth so notable in his father's writings, and the text breaks little new ground. Those new to Tibetan Buddhism will find more inspirational reading in books by the Dalai Lama, and there is more in-depth instruction on Tibetan meditation practices in works such as Geshe Kelsang Gyatso's *A Meditation Handbook*. Recommended for libraries with large Buddhist collections. --Annette Haines, Univ. of Michigan Lib., Ann Arbor Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I have had this book for a few months and I am on my second read. I suspect I will read this over and over again over time. The value is to help understand what you'll be experiencing as you meditate, which gives you a sense of calm in the face of your various experiences, and also helps prevent any sense of discouragement or jittery anticipation for what may come next. I would say that this book, which was recommended by a local Shambhala center, will be central to my contemplation library.

Purchased *Turning the Mind into an Ally* per a recommendation from a friend. This book teaches you how to create an alliance with your mind instead of having your mind use you. The book is easy reading and easy to understand. Has valid points, would recommend to anyone.

Sakyong is a very eloquent, compassionate writer. I am a long time meditator and have read 100's of books on Buddhism and mindfulness. I absolutely love this book and would highly recommend it to beginner or seasoned meditators. A deep bow of gratitude sent to Sakjong for writing this wonderful book!!

I purchased this book my second year of college when I found myself buried in stress. After reading it completely changed my outlook on things. I think of this book as one that greatly impacted my life and plan to return to it again. Can't recommend it enough.

In **TURNING THE MIND INTO AN ALLY**, Sakyong Mipham explains meditation as a process of "peaceful abiding," one that provides a means of achieving lasting rather than transitory internal peace and happiness. The process consists of two phases: (1) clearing the mind via meditation of the thoughts, fantasies, emotions, and distractions that impair one's focus and clarity, and (2) contemplating and acting upon the wisdom of turning away from selfish pursuits (except, of course, for the obtaining food, shelter, and other necessities) in favor of selfless pursuits (including acts of kindness and generosity and help to relieve the misery of others via hands-on care, education, and financial support). Written for people with little or no knowledge of, or experience in, the art and science of meditation, the book is simply the best how to and to what end book of its kind in the market. Sakyong Mipham writes with uncommon clarity for western as well as eastern consumption, and his illustrative examples bring the basic principles and procedures of "peaceful abiding" to life--out of the world of theory and into that of practical application. (This review is also published on [frankzahn \(dot\) com](http://frankzahn.com).

This book was a pleasure to read. The message was awesome and the metaphorical teachings are a work of art! This author transcends Buddhism. He is not trying to sell Buddhism as a religion. He teaches the readers how to calm the mind chatter to reach a level of abiding peace and to become leaders, helping others to reach a stage of enlightenment. The goal of all of this is happiness and it deals with changing ones focus from self-centeredness and seeking bliss from external things to serving others and learning what is real and what truly brings lasting joy. The author uses a clever horse analogy throughout the book and brings it all together with an extraordinary and delightfully skilled culmination. I had to stop and take a deep breath and contemplate on how much thought went into weaving this teaching and metaphor summarizing the lesson with a beautiful mind picture in less than two paragraphs. I have read and reviewed many great books on Mindfulness meditation.

This book takes that meditation to another level of Shamatha and Contemplative meditations for "Turning the Mind Into an Ally," discovering truth, appreciating life and becoming an example for others to emulate. It is by far worth much more than a 5-star review! Buy it now. You will be glad you did!

Practical yet inspiring, this is my favorite book of my favorite living Buddhist. Mipham is completely real world (talks about changing diapers, running, social media) but brings a timeless and gentle quality to his explanation of the Buddhist practice and how to begin meditation. Highly recommend it!

I'm not gonna compare this book to *ruling your world* because they serve separate purposes and thus by definition are different. I suggest reading that one first and then some of the things in this will make more sense to you. The author is a fabulous writer and his clarity and directness counterpoint the hazy corridors and residual mysticism in the English language from the past. Again I suggest buying *ruling your world* first but you'll can't go wrong with this and if they're running out get it.

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