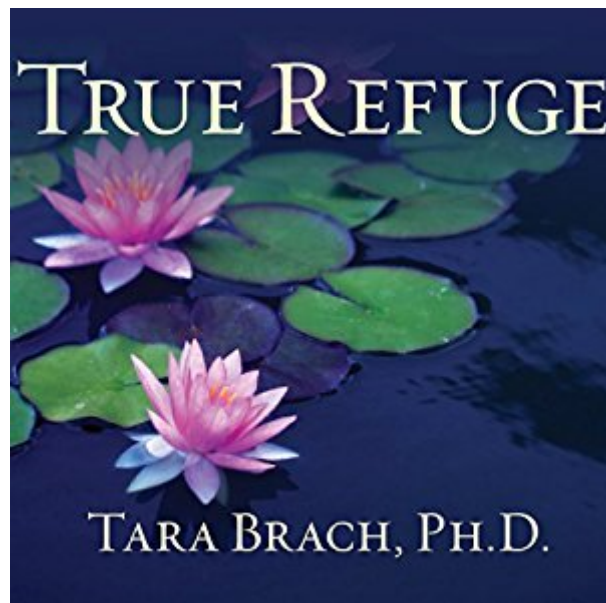




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# True Refuge: Finding Peace And Freedom In Your Own Awakened Heart



## Synopsis

How do you cope when facing life-threatening illness, family conflict, faltering relationships, old trauma, obsessive thinking, overwhelming emotion, or inevitable loss? If you're like most people, chances are you react with fear and confusion, falling back on timeworn strategies: anger, self-judgment, and addictive behaviors. Though these old, conditioned attempts to control our life may offer fleeting relief, ultimately they leave us feeling isolated and mired in pain. There is another way. Beneath the turbulence of our thoughts and emotions exists a profound stillness, a silent awareness capable of limitless love. Tara Brach, author of the award-winning *Radical Acceptance*, calls this awareness our true refuge, because it is available to every one of us, at any moment, no exceptions. In this book, Brach offers a practical guide to finding our inner sanctuary of peace and wisdom in the midst of difficulty. Based on a fresh interpretation of the three classic Buddhist gateways to freedom - truth, love, and awareness - *True Refuge* shows us the way not just to heal our suffering, but also to cultivate our capacity for genuine happiness. Through spiritual teachings, guided meditations, and inspirational stories of people who discovered loving presence during times of great struggle, Brach invites us to connect more deeply with our own inner life, one another, and the world around us. *True Refuge* is essential listening for anyone encountering hardship or crisis; anyone dedicated to a path of spiritual awakening. The book reminds us of our own innate intelligence and goodness, making possible an enduring trust in ourselves and our lives. We realize that what we seek is within us, and regardless of circumstances, "there is always a way to take refuge in a healing and liberating presence".

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Several months ago I came across Brach's first book, *Radical Acceptance* while at a friend's house. The book addressed many issues that I had been struggling with, such as low self-esteem and guilt and shame. My friend let me borrow her copy. The book spoke directly to my relationship with myself. As I read it and followed the teachings it helped me heal some of my own inner conflicts. After reading it, I bought my own copy. I've also gotten and shared her guided meditation CDs. When I learned of Brach's new book, *True Refuge*, I immediately got a copy. I'm impressed with how she effectively segues from her first book to this one. In *True Refuge* she describes a place, a peaceful sanctuary, a place of true refuge that exists within all of us--which we find once we navigate through our own turbulent emotions, self-defeating thoughts, and toxic behavioral patterns. This "place" is within and accessible to everyone. This place is the True refuge. Brach effectively details the way to the safety, serenity, and refuge that can be accessed by practicing the mindfulness techniques that she describes in the book. Brach also provides the reader examples of how readily accessible one's own personal refuge is. Brach, is a wonderful writer, takes the reader by the hand and walks them through the different techniques she describes in her text until the reader is in the quiet, observant refuge that resides within all of us. The True Refuge that is within. I liked *True Refuge* so much, I finished it in just a few days. I highly recommend this book for anyone interested in cultivating or deepening their mindfulness practices, anyone interested in the relationship between psychology and Buddhism, or Buddhist psychology, for anyone who wants to deepen and enrich their existing meditation practice or to develop one. Most importantly I would recommend Brach's book for anyone who longs for the peace and solace that can only be found in the True Refuge within. For inspiration of classic Buddhist teachers, I recently received and thoroughly enjoyed a review copy of *Extraordinary Zen Masters: A Maverick, a Master of Masters, and a Wandering Poet*. A nice supplement to Brach's modern Buddhism.

I've reread Tara's "*Radical Acceptance*" several times; once it literally saved my life (one of those *Midnights of Despair*, several years ago.) So I couldn't wait to begin "*True Refuge*." I LOVE this book! I'm blessed to live in DC, so I've attended several talks and one retreat led by Tara. Imagine a loving presence, filled with wisdom and humor, speaking right to you, about how to move through your deepest sufferings till you find love on the other side of the moment. And what a story teller!

Each story (of her own experiences and those with whom she has worked) illustrates the point she is making in such a real way that I can't help but take it in. And she doesn't preach; she invites you to consider her words, and try those practices that have made a difference in her life. To me, that's Tara. And her special gift is that she writes as she speaks, as though she is right there in the room, sharing her wisdom and deep love with me personally. Just recently, at a book signing, I got to ask Tara why I have "failed" so many times in trying to let go of using food as my "false refuge." She looked at me, in this audience of hundreds, and with her loving smile, told me that forgiveness is my first step. That food is the earliest "false refuge" that we find as little ones wanting to feel loved, and therefore most deeply entrenched. And that I'm already on the path. (Progress not perfection as they say in the 12 Step programs!) I believed her! I fully recommend "True Refuge" to all who are seeking a wise path in life, one that can be filled with love and joy and service and even fun, as well as relief of suffering - not by numbing it (with "false refuges" like too much food, sex, money, drugs) but by becoming Present to each moment in a compassionate and forgiving way - coming home to our "true refuge," our true selves, who we really are beneath all the suffering. I'm still stumbling/soaring/stumbling along this path. Tara makes me believe it's real and possible, no matter how many times I "fail/fall." And I know she wouldn't call those moments falling or failing! Thank you, beloved Tara!--

Drawn from decades of spiritual practice and work as a clinical psychologist, the book is filled with profound insights and stories of awakening to truth and love, even in the face of grief and loss. It is also impressively organized into a coherent theoretical framework - translating formal Buddhist philosophy and psychology for people who are completely new but curious about them and are interested in their applications to their lives.

Welcome this sense of self that Tara Brach is able to touch with us. One of the wonderful things about Tara Brach is her ability to know us through knowing herself, and what she's able to give to us in her advice and examples is how we all connect. There is light within if we open to it. But this is not a "spiritual" book in the sense of being vague or lofty, but a very "practical" book that is based in meditation practice and in being straight with ourselves. What I sense most is her welcoming us to be in touch with ourselves and accept and trust who we are. Unlike our Facebook self, this is the true self that grows and heals with our touching and knowing it. She is a fine writer and guide.

Teacher Tara Brach hits her stride in this important contribution to integral mindfulness. The

seamless interweaving of psychological knowledge and experience with dharma wisdom is unique in the field. The meditation exercises included with every chapter should prove particularly helpful to those working in the helping professions as they lead others through especially thorny patches of their growth and healing journeys. I am particularly excited to see this compassionate woman's voice find her way into the cannon of American Buddhism. Her grounded generosity is a gift!

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