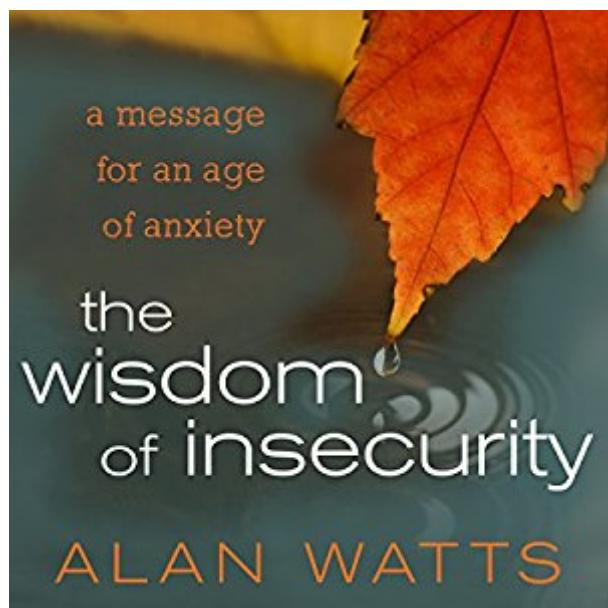


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The Wisdom Of Insecurity: A Message For An Age Of Anxiety



Synopsis

Alan W. Watts' "message for an age of anxiety" is as powerful today as it was when this modern classic was first published. We spend too much time trying to anticipate and plan for the future, too much time lamenting the past. We often miss the pleasures of the moment in our anxious efforts to ensure the next moment is as enjoyable. Drawing from Eastern philosophy and religion, Watts argues that it is only by acknowledging what we do not and cannot know that we can find something truly worth knowing. In order to lead a fulfilling life, one must embrace the present - live fully in the now. Elegantly reasoned and lucidly written, this philosophical achievement contains all the wisdom and spirit that distinguished Watts' long career and resonates with us still.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 3 hours and 57 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Macmillan Audio

Audible.com Release Date: March 7, 2016

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B01COAR830

Best Sellers Rank: #12 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > History #13 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern > Buddhism > Zen > Spirituality #13 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Religion & Spirituality > Buddhism & Eastern Religions

Customer Reviews

I particularly love Watts when he was still a deeply thinking Christian. But all his books are great, especially for those of us who are interested in the real life of the spirit, but don't want to 'be' a Buddhist, a Christian or join anything.

Alan Watts was an artist at explaining what cannot be easily expressed words. I have read almost all of his books and listened to many of his speeches. This book in particular is the best thus far. The world is a better place because Alan Watts was here and recorded his ideas of what the truth of our being is all about. This is not easy reading, but if you are a seeker, you will be amazed. Heck, even if

you aren't, you will be amazed.

It is hard to believe but in the first part of his life Alan Watts was an Anglican priest. His first two books, "Behold the Spirit: A Study in the Necessity of Mystical Religion" and "The Supreme Identity", were written in that Christian mode. Watts however went back to college to study Eastern religion and philosophy, and this book is the first fruits of that work. If I were rating just the first half of this book it would get five stars. In these first four chapters Watts gives a brilliant diagnosis of the problem of modern man. Put very briefly we are caught in the eternal 'I', feeling separate from life, and caught up in contemplation of past hurts and future hopes. We never really live our life, which after all is in the here and now. We are driven to escape a sense of "insecurity" without realizing that this very uncertainty is a basic feature of life. In the second half of the book Watts tries to describe a new way of living based on 'now consciousness'. His task is I guess impossible as he is trying to describe something which is basically unknowable unless you actually live it. I did really understand his point that if you mind shifts off the 'I' it naturally turns to contemplating others, and this is the basis of compassion. I suspect that this second half of the book will mean more to me when I have experimented a little and reread a few times. This second half of the book has certainly given me something to think about. Don't let my comments in the above paragraph put you off reading the book. Maybe you are brighter or more 'enlightened' than me and so it will all make instant sense to you. Maybe you will become instantly "enlightened" as you read, where I was not.

Get this book alone for Watts's lucid discussion of belief vs faith and how he reconciles science with faith. He puts succinctly what many argue about endlessly. Additionally, how he touches upon our need for true meaning and in its absence, we distract ourselves with the fad of the moment hit home for me. Though old, this book will remain relevant to many for a long time.

I like Alan Watts. I would not say this book was disappointing because with Watts you learn to let go of your expectations and he is masterful at getting you there. But in general this book struck an unusually condescending tone and ended up saying only so little. The author has the reader attempt several thought experiments and exercises that illustrate trivial concepts. Perhaps there is wisdom here but for your money you might find it better stated in another work of Watts. The man is a treasure, this book is not.

This book has really helped me through some hard times and has put my mind into perspective. Alan Watts has a beautiful way of helping us better understand why our poorly evolved brains work the way that they do and how to go about dealing with the psychological problems we all deal with. This is one of my very favorite books.

Ordered with prime and arrived when expected. Book wasn't rolled up or bent out of shape. And of course the content was wonderful. There's something really rad about the way Alan manages to relate sensational ideas and philosophy to the lay-person. Answering the questions that your average person would ask about his ideas, and making analogies that are really straightforward so you don't lose your train of thought as you process what he's saying. Great quality print, great read, and a great author.

Watts was wise beyond his years when he wrote this book.

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