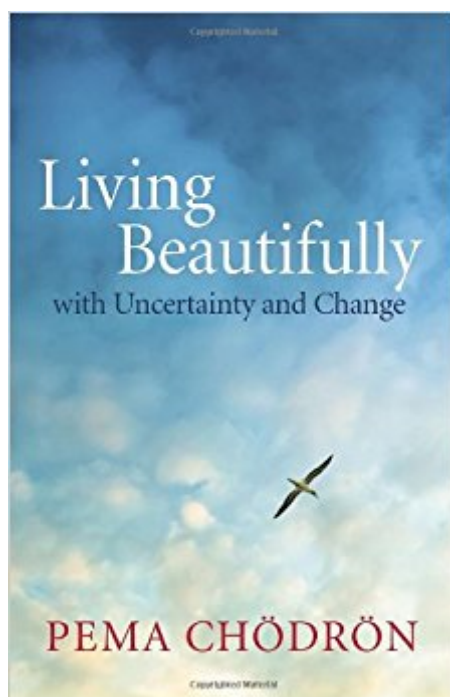


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# Living Beautifully: With Uncertainty And Change



## Synopsis

The best-selling author and spiritual teacher shares practices for living with wisdom and integrity even in confusing and uncertain situations. "Is it possible to live well when the very ground we stand on is shaky? Yes, says everyone's favorite Buddhist nun, it's even possible to live beautifully, compassionately, and happily on shaky ground—and the secret is: the ground is always shaky. Pema shows how using a traditional Buddhist practice called the Three Vows or Three Commitments, offering us a way to relax into profound sanity in the midst of whatever non-sanity is happening around us. Just making these simple aspirations can change the way we look at the world and can provide us with a lifetime of material for spiritual practice. The Three Commitments are three methods for embracing the chaotic, uncertain, dynamic, challenging nature of our situation as a path to awakening. The first of the commitments, traditionally called the Pratimoksha Vow, is the foundation for personal liberation. This is a commitment to doing our best to not cause harm with our actions or words or thoughts, a commitment to being good to each other. It provides a structure within which we learn to work with our thoughts and emotions, and to refrain from speaking or acting out of confusion. The next step toward being comfortable with groundlessness is a commitment to helping others, traditionally called the Bodhisattva Vow. It is a commitment to dedicate our lives to keeping our hearts and minds open, and nurturing our compassion with the longing to ease the suffering of the world. The last of the three commitments, traditionally known as the Samaya Vow, is a resolve to embrace the world just as it is, without bias; a resolve to see everything we encounter, good and bad, pleasant and painful, as a manifestation of awakened energy. It is a commitment to see everything and anything as a means by which we can awaken further.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Using as the basis of this book the idea that all of our suffering comes from our fear of uncertainty, Chodron presents her path to freedom from this suffering. She presents the notion of "living by vows." Now, we're not talking head-shaved monastery living. Nor the drop-out (if enlightened) approach of *I Walked to the Moon and Almost Everybody Waved*. No, this book is for spiritual people committed to living in the modern, secular world. It's for laypeople. So these are meant more as guideposts than strict practices. The three vows are:- Pratimoksha. Commitment to personal liberation and doing no harm.- Bodhisattva. Selfless service and alleviation of the suffering of others.- Samaya. Accept reality as it is -- "awakened energy." If this sounds intriguing, provocative, or helpful to you, I recommend this book.----Pros: Communicates a reassuring message that we can be free from fear. Also about the essential goodness of humanity, and the fact that no failure is final. Has plenty of practical teaching.Cons: You may have run across some of this material before. Like many spiritual teachers, Chodron tends to repeat herself. So while there is new material here, there's much that won't surprise you if you're a seasoned Chodron reader.---7/19/13 Edit/Addition: I'm just about done reading *Extraordinary Zen Masters: A Maverick, a Master of Masters, and a Wandering Poet* and finding it a subtly inspiring book. I highly recommend it for anyone on the Buddhist or spiritual path. It won't wow you at first, but it grew on me as I appreciated its quiet--bumps and all--interesting profiles of three historically important Zen masters.

A distinctive compilation on the beauty of continuous change in everyday life, Pema Chödrön - once again - clearly and effortlessly shows her reader how to live a committed life within the present moment. Chödrön displays this approach to life by providing an educational framework concerning three forms of commitment. These "Three Commitments" entail embracing the fundamental groundlessness or impermanence in life, and the prevention of intentional harm to oneself and others; taking on the courage and responsibility to embrace others as oneself; and embracing the world just as it is. Through this framework, Chödrön provides her reader with the tools to progressively see the underlying stories that construct the ego, which - in turn - allow the mind's clouds (i.e. thought and emotion) to gradually dissipate, and eventually leave a clear mind of unconditional, non-judgmental, self-acceptance. With this clearing mind in progress, one is free to live beautifully with endless change and embrace life simply as it is.

With her straight forward writing style and keen awareness for what it is like to be naturally human, by page two Pema nails the most common difficulty our own humanity brings: We want naturally want stability and surety in a world that is constantly in flux. Luckily Pema doesn't stop at pointing out this inner struggle, but continues on with easy to read and follow steps for becoming more comfortable and authentically comfortable in a world filled with constant change. "Aha Moments" abound throughout the book. I started highlighting passages I related to and advice I wanted to remember and quickly realized I had more areas highlighted than not. I've read several of Pema's books and find this to be the best collection of the essence of her works and message. Frankly, at times I can get pretty anxious not knowing what's around the corner. This book was the most helpful of any I have read for overcoming my worries and developing a new perspective. I HIGHLY recommend it to anyone who would like to relax and be more comfortable with change.

I read this book because my life is so full of uncertainty and change right now. I am unemployed, and the anxiety of not being able to pay the rent, the car loan, the bills is incredibly stressful. Pema's words do not allow me to escape the essential problems of my life, but to find the courage to act without the overwhelming sense of fear. Her words are like a soothing balm. Instead of just fear, she has helped me to see that I can take this as a time of deep spiritual growth - in a very real, honest way. I will read this book over and over again.

This woman, this wisdom . . . "When Things Fall Apart" was given to me a decade to go, and it turned out to be just what I needed. After reading a brief excerpt of Pema Chodron's new book in Tricycle Magazine, I had a feeling this might be for me what "When Things Fall Apart" was years ago. I warn you, I haven't yet finished, in fact I'm only about 32% through it; but of that 32%, I've highlighted/underlined close to 75% . . . Were this a paper edition, I would put my yellow Sharpie away and trade it for a paint brush and yellow paint; as it is, I'll simply keep the highlighting function on my Kindle going til I finish. It is a wonderful book. Clear. Concise. It goes straight to the heart.

Great book if you are seeking answers in decreasing your personal pain & suffering & improve a greater awareness & self acceptance. Learning to be okay with okay~ letting go of self destructive/controlling behaviors that ultimately held me back from my true happiness. Effective techniques I use daily to keep myself more in balance. I recently was diagnosed with a medical condition that requires interferon treatments (a 10 year breast cancer survivor, I just

dreaded going down that road of being so sick from pharma drugs) I felt like my emotions were spiraling out of control because I.. Being in control was what I was good at. The news made me anger, retreat and I diffidently went into a dark place of depression, anger etc.. Big time fear! A friend recommended any of Pema's books, I am glad she did. I am in a much better-place (mentally) as I await further medical answers/tests

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