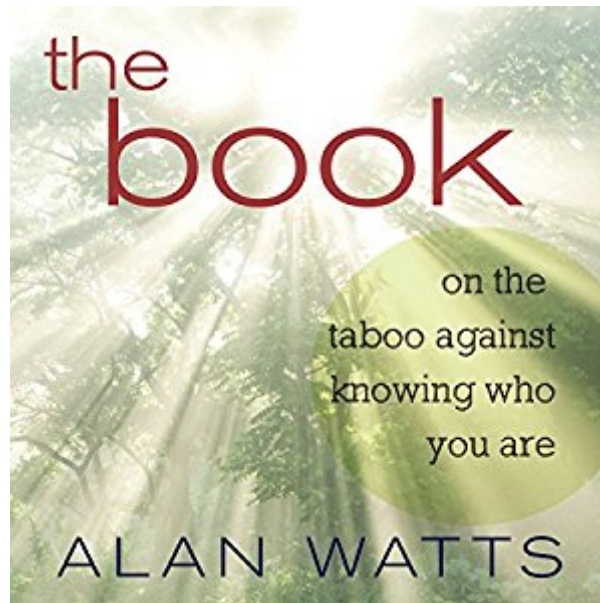




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The Book: On The Taboo Against Knowing Who You Are



Synopsis

Modern Western culture and technology is inextricably tied to the belief in the existence of a self as a separate ego, separated from and in conflict with the rest of the world. In this classic book, Watts provides a lucid and simple presentation of an alternative view based on Hindu and Vedantic philosophy.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Loved the book, Alan Watts describes and explains eastern philosophy better than most. This book, along with "The Secret Oral Teachings in Tibetan Buddhist Sects" (<http://www..com/Secret-Teachings-Tibetan-Buddhist-Sects/dp/0872860124>) Should be bought as companions. They compliment each other.

In his pursuit of science man emphasizes the difference between things: this is not that. This approach has created the technological world in which we live, but the very same mind set has created a culture in which man feels cut off from the world, isolated in the eternal 'I', lonely and at odds with those around us. "You are not me", we say. But in this book Watts wants to teach us a different way of looking at the problem. Things do not exist in separate categories of, for example, 'right' and wrong. Rather the world is a set of continuums and polarities which are basic to our understanding. Right and wrong are interdependent and we can't understand one without knowledge of the other. Also, we are not divided off from the world, but intimately linked to the

environment. In a witty scenario Watts explores the inter-relationship between an ant in a hole in the ground and you, via your own kitchen. You and I share certain qualities, though of course we may have different degrees of them. This book is, at its heart, Watts' take on the philosophy of Indian, Verdic (Hindu) literature. As usual it is very accessible reading and is filled with witty descriptions and arguments that lead you to think more deeply about life. I read the book several months ago and am still taking on board some of his apparently simple arguments. I found, however, that I agreed with Watts through his long chains of arguments only to balk at his final conclusion. This happened repeatedly. Specifically I cannot agree that man is a total microcosm of the macrocosm, that we are a unique, yet complete, expression of Brahma, God, Absolute Meaning, or whatever you choose to describe the ultimate 'It' as. This is just too much metaphysics and theology for me. It must be remembered that Watts is an ex-Anglican minister and I think his background shows here. I also wished that Watts had spent much more time defining modern man's current predicament as I feel that this is where he is at his very best. For example I loved the first half of his earlier book *The Wisdom of Insecurity* for that very reason. Of course your understanding of the world may be very different to mine, so you may like the book better than I did. I certainly didn't dislike it, but I do not feel that it is his best.

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Alan Watts was amazing. But, like everyone, he sometimes gets carried away. Many of the chapters in this book have great insights. However, it takes a lot of digging to get there. Perhaps he needed an editor who could remove redundant arguments and help Watts see that he needs to simplify and clarify his thoughts. .

If you know Alan Watts, then this book is a necessity in your "Alan Watts Library" If you are new to Alan Watts, this is a great book that takes eastern philosophy and puts it in a way someone from a western world could understand. Don't expect the information to be spoon fed to you, Mr. Watts wants you to come to your own conclusions, and he is here to plant an idea in your head, so it can grow on its own and evolve naturally. Please enjoy!

I enjoy considering the works of Alan Watts; deceased (1972). Considering the pace that many live at today, Mr. Watts brings some very sincere concepts to light that never seem to tarnish with age. It behooves one to acquire an audio version of his works after reading some of his material. This will permit the novice to gain a better understanding of the man and his work. Alan would certainly be a member of the "International Slow Movement." The best thing that I have done for myself was to consider the highlighted book. After that, I went on to purchase other printed and audio materials such as "Out of your Mind."

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