



Taking the Leap
By Pema
Chödrön

Shambhala Books

In the moments when we wake up at 3:00 A.M., feeling lost, confused, afraid, in a state of despair, desperate to trade in the habitual patterns that are causing us repeated pain and needing to turn to someone for advice, Pema Chödrön's words offer comfort and solace. Her newest book, *Taking the Leap*, seems to speak directly to the angst we are currently facing and she is spot on with her teachings.

Chödrön is effective not because she coddles the reader, but because we get the sense that she understands exactly what this pain feels like. She understands how to read the maps and where to shine the flashlight to find the way out. Sometimes the way out involves dissolving the resistance, as she describes in a particularly poignant passage where she grapples with an experience of intense anxiety when she felt "very vulnerable, very afraid and raw." Her teacher Dzigar Kongrül said, "I know that place." He identified it as the Dakini Bliss. Subsequently, she was able to meet the intensity with acceptance and surrender, rather than resistance and aversion.

This is part of the key to this teaching. When we need to make a dramatic leap away from continually strengthening and being hooked by our fear-based habits, the initial spring before we jump must be accompanied both by compassionate acceptance as well as an ability to inhabit the present moment. We have the capacity to do this, Chödrön insists, and it is necessary, more now than at any other point of time. She dares to say that it is part of our responsibility as a society to change our habits, to be present, to be compassionate.

Chödrön tells us, "We all have the natural ability to interrupt old habits. All of us know how healing it is to be kind, how transformative it is to love, what a relief it is to have old grudges drop away." We all have three qualities of being human, as she says, "natural intelligence, natural warmth and natural openness." When we forget, when we cry out in the night, Chödrön's words in *Leap* offer a reminder.

—Reviewed by Felicia M. Tomasko RN



iMeditateWithErich
iPhone Application

Enlightenment comes to the iPhone or iPod with the new application iMeditateWithErich. Yoga teacher, author, technologist and all-around guru, Erich Schiffmann has brought meditation to everyday experience through this easy-to-use and fun app.

In the bestselling *Moving Into Stillness*, Erich writes that the practice of meditation is the most important part of Yoga, far more than *asana* (posture). With this in mind, Erich and his brother, Karl, have designed iMeditateWithErich to make meditation easy and accessible for meditate for the beginner while encouraging a new level of practice for the experienced.

The app has a cool look and great sound. Erich's voice guides you via pure, simple and non-denominational instructions into and out of a meditative state. These meditations were recorded live in classes or workshops, so they are full of shakti. The tones of a beautifully tuned meditation bowl create instant focus to come in and out of the space. There is a lot of material: two-and-a-half hours of twenty different meditations and variations. How it works:

1. Select one of twenty different meditations by Erich, ranging from guided to simply beginning and ending with the sound of the meditation bowl.
2. Select the amount of time you want to meditate with the adjustable duration timer, anywhere from one to sixty minutes.
3. Close your eyes and log onto Big Mind in real time for a journey on the network that connects us all.

Through a consistent meditation practice, I have discovered the most fulfilling experience of the Infinite. The iMeditateWithErich app is helpful to keeping our meditation practice consistent, which is truly the secret for a happy life.

—Reviewed by Arthur Klein, yoga activist and filmmaker of most recently, *Y Yoga Movie*. Currently he is dividing his time between teaching Pursuit of Happiness YOGA Workshops, developing new film projects and working for mainstream entertainment companies: YYogaMovie.com.

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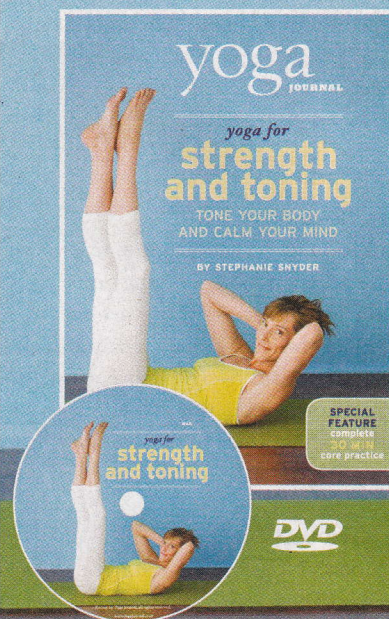
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