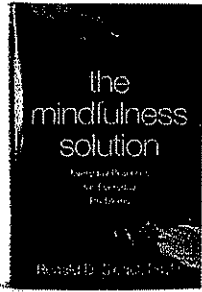




RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW *Living in the moment*



The Mindfulness Solution

by Ronald D. Siegel

Siegel is an assistant clinical professor of psychology at Harvard Medical School.

THIS IRREPLACEABLE MOMENT—and all moments are fleeting—might be a painful one. So maybe you'd rather zoom past it, wolfing it down like a bad-tasting meal. Understandable, but you'd miss its meaning. Mindfulness helps you appreciate both aspects of this paradox. Through the practice, you'll notice the pleasurable, all-too-brief dimensions of experience, while simultaneously exploring the variety and fluidity of negative things. "Having sadness in our lives," author Ronald D. Siegel writes, "doesn't just make it possible to recognize joy. It may make it possible to feel joy." Deny pain, and you "dampen" pleasure. Emotional and physical suffering have two "arrows"—the actual sensation and the

anxiety we add—and they can be separated. Siegel offers slow-down and open-up exercises, beginning with that old pal, your breath, revealing the interconnectedness of pleasure and pain. He describes exercises with meditative themes: Think of yourself as an eternal mountain surrounded by the changing trees and seasons; this widens the landscape, and by inviting curiosity, transforms the bluntness of good and bad. Couples, in another exercise, can be mindful together, face to face, each imagining the other through the phases of life, from childhood to today and onto old age. "Be aware that your partner has had thousands of moments of joy and sorrow, fear and anger, longing and fulfillment—just like you." Walking meditation draws attention to the slowest of slow motion, the incredible fullness we have—if we notice it—each step along the way. ***