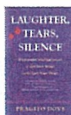


enlightened reading

Even the most self-sufficient among us can use a little help sometimes.

These six books offer a variety of perspectives on living a fulfilled life—serving up everything from practical tips to philosophical musings.



Laughter, Tears, Silence: Expressive Meditations to Calm Your Mind and Open Your Heart

BY PRAGITO DOVE (New World Library)

In this charming book, trained meditation master and spiritual teacher Pragito Dove makes meditation accessible for all, setting a relaxed tone by defining it as “any activity done with awareness.” The book is arranged in concise studies of specific emotions, often demonstrated through the author’s personal experiences. Each chapter includes a number of exercises, nearly all of which deviate significantly from the stereotypical sit-stiffly-for-several-hours-and-focus-on-your-breath model. The four-minute “Playfulness Is Here Now” and “Watch Rush Hour Go By” meditations are great for beginners.



The Fifth Agreement: A Practical Guide to Self-Mastery

BY DON MIGUEL RUIZ AND DON JOSE RUIZ
WITH JANET MILLS (Amber-Allen Publishing)

Don Miguel Ruiz’s *The Four Agreements* caused an exhilarating shift in self-awareness for many readers when it emerged years ago. This new installment of Toltec wisdom, co-authored by Ruiz’s son, reviews those first four important lessons and adds a thought-provoking fifth: “Be skeptical, but learn to listen.” One theme definitely worth contemplating is the rejection of the “nobody is perfect” mindset based on the fact that “everything in creation is perfect.” It seems the real challenge, then, is to shift our perceptions of perfection and accept ourselves as already-perfect beings.