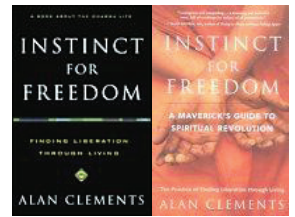


Instinct *for* Freedom

Finding Liberation Through Living

by Alan Clements



Alan Clements was the first American to become a Buddhist monk in Burma, where he lived for the good part of a decade. Since disrobing, he has become a spiritual maverick, working for global human rights and teaching his contemporary understanding of liberation to audiences around the world. After 20 years of leading meditation retreats, *Instinct for Freedom* is his first book of spiritual exploration, a visionary blend of adventurous autobiography, with candid and touching stories of a life of gutsy, radical inquiry.

Dharma intelligence is another way of talking about conscience mixed with courage, compassion and instincts. Dharma intelligence is a quality of trusting your deepest experience—a core knowing beneath personas and defenses and stories of loss and fear, beneath every compromising trick of the mind that keeps freeing us every day, every way. That’s being true to oneself. That’s attuning to one’s instinct for freedom.

Clements presents from various angles what he calls “World Dharma,” an essential spirituality that can be common to all people—a creative mysticism based in one precious human value: freedom, the liberation from fear, ignorance and dogma, and the elevation of dignity, conscience, and beauty.

World Dharma is the wisdom of shared presence and co-creative evolution. It sees no ultimate separation, no duality, no demarcation where self and other begins and ends. When in doubt, I ask myself if I am avoiding relationship or engaging it. This Dharma is not about being here now with myself alone, but being here now, together, so we grow.

In detailing his years of living in silence in an isolated monastery, Clements presents a rare, beautiful, and nuanced account of the actual nitty-gritty of intensive meditation and what it can offer. He also describes how for him that solitary, meditative life was essential but not complete, and offers considerable searching inquiry into what are lives really are.

Breaking free from the gravitational force of a fear-driven presence, we re-inspire our courage again and again, until we truly understand that our dignity is our greatest worth and that our instinctual intelligence is the natural wisdom that will guide us in finding liberation through living.

What I’m talking about should not be confused with transcendence, or an attempt to escape one’s self or the world. This way of being has nothing to do with life-denying attitudes. Nor am I proposing a return to a “primordial beingness” as the only true means by which to overcome human suffering. This freedom is not fear-driven but life-giving — it includes the flesh, the ordinary self, the sacred and mundane as one. It’s about making life our art.

“Alan’s life is material for a legend. An intellectual artist, freedom fighter, former Buddhist monk, he shares his insights and experiences with a passion rarely seen and even more rarely lived. He’ll make you think and feel in ways that challenge your entire way of being.”

~ Catherine Ingram, author of *In the Footsteps of Gandhi* and *Passionate Presence*

Visit Alan’s web site at:
www.WorldDharma.com