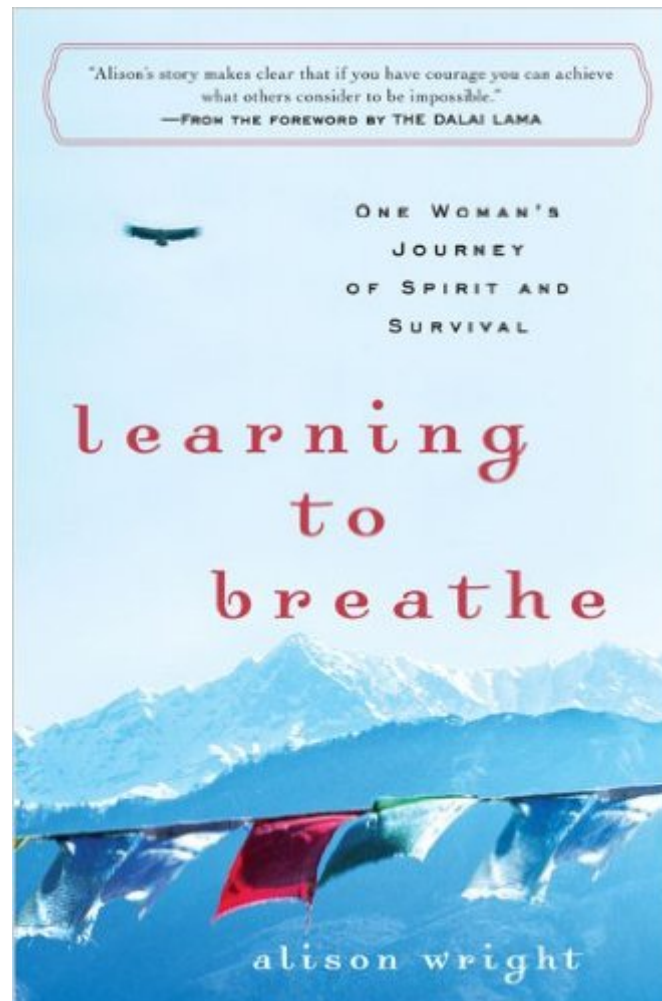


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Learning To Breathe: One Woman's Journey Of Spirit And Survival



Synopsis

An extraordinary spiritual memoir about the will to survive . . . one breath at a time Alison Wright, covered human conflict with her camera until her own life was nearly cut short during a horrific bus accident with a logging truck on a remote jungle road in Laos. Suffering from excruciating life threatening injuries she drew upon her years of meditation practice, concentrating upon each breathe believing it to be her last. Wright's recent memoir, "Learning to Breathe; One Woman's Journey of Spirit and Survival," chronicles this inspirational story of survival and years of rehabilitation, and her ongoing determination to recover and continue traveling the world as an intrepid photojournalist. The book details her ascent of Mt. Kilimanjaro as well as her circumambulation of Mt. Kailash in Tibet.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Author Alison Wright's book "Learning to Breathe: One Women's Journey of Spirit and Survival" is more than just a personal story - it speaks of the greater self and our ability to find courage and power within. I was truly touched by reading her inspiring story. She takes what happens to her and moves past the pains and the potential hardships and learns something much greater about her own self. The reader is taken along on this spiritual journey of discovery. Alison is able to communicate her experiences not only in the physical sense of what was happening but also from a point of view that allows the reader to fully sense what she was feeling and thinking. The real story is her inner journey and that is what makes her work so much more powerful. I bought this book for my older sister to read as a birthday gift and will gift other women in my life with copies as well. I feel

that women need to see and read about strong courageous women; and to me, Alison Wright truly represents what a true hero is. She faced her pain and fears and through her will power and determination she met her future dreams with success. This book is both inspirational and entertaining and will be hard to put down. I read it though in one sitting because I wanted to know the full story and how she came out. The book earns The American Authors Association's highest book rating of FIVE STARS. This book also gets my personal endorsement and fullest recommendations. This book is no doubt one of the top 10 best inspirational books of the last decade.

I was excited to read this book, having an interest both in adventurous women and Buddhism, however, I have to agree with Publishers Weekly that harder editing would have helped. I was surprised to read that, during Wright's visit to Wat Pa Ban Tat monastery in Thailand described on pages 93-4, a Thai monk would call Wright a 'bodhisattva.' Thai monks belong to the Theravada tradition that uses the term 'bodhisattva' to refer only to the past lives of the Buddha, such as those recounted in the Jataka tales. This is a major distinction between the Theravada and Mahayana traditions. In the Tibetan Mahayana tradition, however, that Wright is familiar with, both monastics and lay practitioners are referred to as 'bodhisattvas' once they have taken vows to deliver all beings. Another instance that surprised me occurs on page 209. Wright throws out, "Next stop Uganda, to white-water raft the Zambezi River, in hair-raising class five rapids." The Zambezi certainly doesn't flow anywhere near Uganda. It rises in Zambia about 690 miles southwest of Uganda, and flows south through Angola and Zambia to the border with Zimbabwe, and then east to Mozambique and finally to the Indian Ocean. Wright is a gifted photographer dedicated to humanitarian issues. Her story of determination and courage deserved better editing in general. It is often presented in a style that seemed like a rush from here to there in the pursuit of physical recovery. I wished for more of her insights and development as a Buddhist practitioner, especially on her development of lovingkindness on the path of a bodhisattva.

This inspiring memoir could have been so much better if the author or her editor knew how to spell, knew the difference between too and two; knew the difference between whose and who's, the difference between better and best, etc. Strange also was her description -- in the third-to-last page of the book -- of finally learning about the death of Alan Guy. And then five pages later, in her Acknowledgments, writing: (Alan, please call me. I still owe you a beer.) Sloppy stories, incorrect geography, incomplete references. Her story of physical survival deserves better.

I'm glad I read this book. It's not what I thought it would be about but I'm glad I read it. This woman's amazing recovery is inspirational for anyone needing hope in times of great difficulty. Having said that I was waiting for a bit more philosophical perspective and a little less self-promotion. This story is tragic and I don't discredit that by any means. My feeling is that as a reader I was looking for more spirituality on the journey. Sometimes the book feels like a "look what I've done" and less a story of where she is going. I applaud Alison's courage, determination and hope. And I am impressed that her meditation practice helped her to live, for without that she would not have survived at all.

"Learning to Breathe" by Alison Wright is a true story about Alison's recovery from a horrific bus accident in Laos, Asia. Alison is a photojournalist, traveling all over the world in order to be a part of the story and take part in dangerous adventures. Unfortunately, on a bus trip to photograph an amazing view, her bus collided head-on with a logging truck. Alison was directly at the point of impact. After fourteen hours of waiting for medical assistance, Alison was rushed into surgeries that would last for years after her accident. For instance, one of her first surgeries had the outcome of placing her internal organs (which had been smushed into one of her shoulders) back where they belonged. Alison finally was able to be transferred back to the United States with the goal of healing and once more being able to photograph and travel the world. "Learning to Breathe" is inspirational, uplifting, and helps to remind you to live life to the fullest and to appreciate every moment of every day. This book is more enjoyable than the ever-popular "Eat, Pray, Love" (which I thought was highly overrated). Alison's journey is interesting, tough to read at times, but motivating. Alison is able to overcome an experience that many doctors say she should have died from, and strives to continue to achieve her dreams (which she does, and it states so in the first chapter so that's not a spoiler!). Check out more about Alison here! What is the most inspirational story you have read or heard about? Thanks for reading, Rebecca @ Love at First Book

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