



# Open to Desire: The Truth About What the Buddha Taught

*Mark Epstein*

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“A masterpiece. . . . It teaches us how not to fear and repress, but to rechannel and harness the most powerful energies of life toward freedom and bliss.” —ROBERT THURMAN

It is common in both Buddhism and Freudian psychoanalysis to treat desire as if it is the root of all suffering and problems, but psychiatrist Mark Epstein believes this to be a grave misunderstanding. In his controversial defense of desire, he makes clear that it is the key to deepening intimacy with ourselves, each other, and our world.

Proposing that spiritual attainment does not have to be detached from intimacy or eroticism, *Open to Desire* begins with an exploration of the state of dissatisfaction that causes us to cling to irrational habits. Dr. Epstein helps readers overcome their own fears of desire so that they can more readily bridge the gap between self and other, cope with feelings of incompleteness, and get past the perception of others as objects. Freed from clinging and shame, desire's spiritual potential can then be opened up.

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