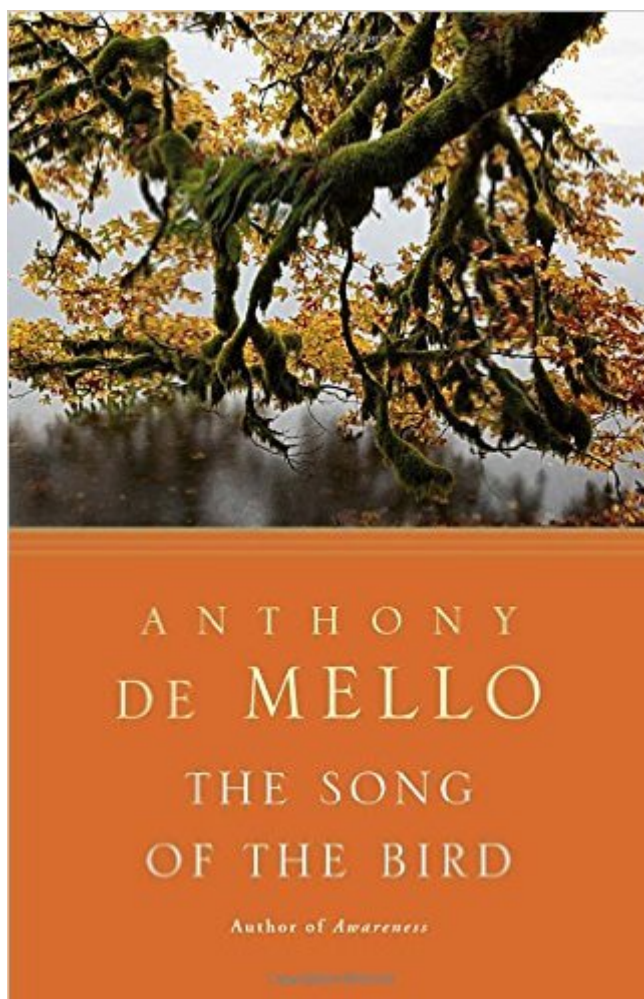


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The Song Of The Bird



Synopsis

"Every one of these stories is about YOU." --Anthony de Mello
Everyone loves stories; and in this book the bestselling author of *Sadhana: A Way to God* shares 124 stories and parables from a variety of traditions both ancient and modern. Each story resonates with life lessons that can teach us inescapable truths about ourselves and our world. De Mello's international acclaim rests on his unique approach to contemplation and ability to heighten self-awareness and self-discovery. His is a holistic approach, and in the words of one reviewer: "his mysticism cuts across all times and peoples and is truly a universal invitation." *The Song of the Bird* uses the familiar yet enduring medium of the story to illustrate profound realities that bring us in touch with the problems and concerns of daily life, as well as with our common spiritual quest. The aim is to develop the art of tasting and feeling the message of each story to the point that we are transformed. "Let the story speak to your heart, not to your brain," the author directs. "This may make something of a mystic out of you." Enhanced by lovely ink drawings, this is indeed a volume to treasure, to share, and to read many times over, for it is everyone's best companion on the road to spiritual growth.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I first came across this book at the Trinity Church Bookstore in Manhattan about 16 years ago. It's been at or near the top of my 'pile' of books on spirituality ever since. For a number of years now I've been teaching an adult class at a local Methodist church, and once every several months I let the class wrestle with one of these parables for an hour or so. They always prove very provocative,

just as many of those used by Jesus centuries ago. One I like has a guy going into a shop to buy 'the truth'. He backs off though when he hears what the price is : "your security." Just the 'message' for our materialist society.. Also: For a number of years (before I discovered audiocassettes!), I loved to 'gift' people I cared about with books. The most frequent one I chose : this de Mello gem. If you care about your own spiritual growth, get this book at once!(Note - this is an extremely personal book, suitable whatever your faith beliefs might be.)

deMello has taken 124 ancient and contemporary stories from various religious traditions and recorded them in a sequence that leads the reader to greater spiritual growth. Most stories are followed with a commentary that provide insight for further reflection. In the preface, deMello instructs the reader to read each story three times before moving on to the next, taking time to reflect on its inner depth and meaning.I followed deMello's instruction and confined my reading to one parable or tale each morning. Throughout the day it would return to me, either to amuse, enlighten or both.. Interestingly, I was already familiar with many of the tales but viewed them differently in the past. deMello has generated a refreshing, sometimes novel, interpretation that always inspires.Song of the Bird is a book that will be read again and again. The compilation is proof that although Truth has many ways of revealing itself, it remains consistent and eventually reveals itself to all who seek it.

Anthony de Mello was a religious master of the twentieth century teaching profound spiritual truths through stories and discourses. This book, one of his early works was first published in 1982 in India. The present volume is a reprint edition that targets the American reader. It contains 124 stories, both ancient and modern, from a variety of cultures, countries and religions. The author takes credit only for stringing them together and appending a comment to most of the stories. These comments are often insightful and provocative. The book as a whole is an enjoyable reading, illustrative of profound realities.

Unlike the man standing by the river selling water, I was a purchaser. When my "guru" gave me this book to read, I devoured it and the Truth became clear. But it was only a part of the Truth. Through the years since then, I have read many many spiritually oriented books and find that the short stories in this one use few words to say a lot. Start at the beginning as de Mello advises when reading it for the first time for one story lays the foundation for the rest. Later you will skip around when you need a bit of calming reality in this hectic world.

I received this book from a Catholic priest in 1986, shortly after it was published. The Song of the Bird is simply a collection of one and two page stories, often told by masters of spiritual wisdom. I still refer to many of the stories and once a year or so reread some of them. I was in bible study 3 mornings ago and we were talking about how to pray. How silly it seems to have a mnemonic such as "ACTS" to pray. I recalled and related to the group the story of a priest who went to a tiny remote island in order to teach a couple of the isolated monks there how to pray. He took them out in his boat and started by asking what they knew. They were deeply peaceful men. They recanted their version of the Lord's Prayer, full of misverbage and some nonsense. The priest chastized them and corrected their errors. They felt badly that they had been praying wrong, and walked on water, back to the shore, where they might practice how to pray correctly. Every story is simply timeless.

This is the first book I have read by this enlightened author, and I was impressed by his understanding of the esoteric teachings of the basis of Islamic Sufism. This is a great introduction to sufi teachings and those who enjoy the introspections introduced in the Song of the Bird would marvel at Sufi parables and the works of Rumi. Truth has no boundaries and organized religion essentially helps members of a given society work towards a common goal - that of self discovery and the meaning of existence. As Rumi put it - there are many ways to kneel and kiss the ground (ie pray). It is the motive not the motion that counts at the end of the day.

A book with short stories (1 page each), short tales, talking about life, about different point of view from different parts of the world in different times and different religions. A perfect gift for yourself or for somebody facing stress or recovering from any kind of loss. Keep it with you as a reference when you need peace in the middle of the day to day stress.

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