Books

This small book packs abundant yogic wisdom along with compassionate psychological insight in a just-over-three-weeks-long beginning chapter, each one is arranged according to the chakras, with an overview, the benefits of strengthening and meditating upon that chakra, and a short meditation. Each meditation is unique. You may find pranayama (yogic breathing exercise), yoga poses, information about the chakras, and affirmations. Not only are the meditations beautifully written, they are also very practical. We have had occasion to try the meditations during trying times and found that they work. The book’s purpose is “to give you a yoga mind—one that focuses on love and the truth that you are a spiritual being...” Everyone on your gift list may benefit.


Nuns protesting nuclear armament, campaigning against budget cuts affecting the poor, creating safe houses for survivors of human trafficking and former prisoners, fighting for women’s rights and LGBT rights, keeping an eye on corporate America, running the Ironman—these are not your typical Catholic sisters but a force of nature! With a lively journalist style filled with personal conversations and experiences with each sister, Jo Piazza describes these “Ten Sisters on a Mission” with candor and heart, often sharing their individual prayers as well. Whatever their calling, each of these women is fearless and firm in her belief that she is serving God through her fellow beings. The nuns sparkle with humor, amazing energy, humility, deep faith, and most of all profound humanity. After a two-year journey researching and writing the book, the admittely agnostic author writes in the Epilogue, “These days, I often find myself thinking, What would the nuns do?”

Transcendent Mind: Rethinking the Science of Consciousness by Bruce Banura and Julia Mossbridge. Hardcover. 7.25x10.25, 249 pp. $69.95. American Psychological Association 2017. order@apa.org.

The authors of this cutting-edge book are experimental psychologists with a special interest in consciousness research. They are addressing, in somewhat technical language, psychologists, psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, neuroscientists, and all those interested in consciousness and the mind. After many decades of fruitless searching for a mechanism in the brain that creates consciousness, they propose that science look elsewhere.

Their presentation ranges from ancient philosophy to paranormal psychology, from classical physics to special relativity and quantum mechanics. Citing abundant published research, they discuss topics such as shared mind experiences, rethinking the concept of time, mediumship, out of body and near-death experiences, telekinesis, mind-to-mind communication, and reintegration of subjectivity into consciousness research. Also discussed are implications for clinical practice, which still often assigns disease diagnoses to spiritual experiences, as well as opportunities for further scientific discovery. The authors’ expertise is enhanced by their objectivity and the ability to see the lighter side of weighty subjects. Scientists as these, who step beyond dogma (and sometimes beyond job-preservasion) into unexplored frontiers, deserve to be gratefully admired. Thirty-six pages of references are included.

Noteworthy

The E-WORD. Ego, Enlightenment & Other Essentials by Cait Montana. Paperback. $25.00. Orbis Books 2016, orbisbooks.com)

The roots of war is fear: Thomas Merton’s advice to pacifists by Joanne—the first of many essays written by Merton about countering conflict. Joanne’s story, in the Prologue to this book, begins to chart the two key words: I Am. A final section on The Spiritual Ego and Enlightenment sums up her findings: I am the Truth and I am you. Even her discussion of quantum mechanics is fun reading. Stories, practices and exercises are included. (Paperback, 221 pp, $18.00; Enlighten Books/Aria Books 2016, www.simonandschuster.com)

The Root of War is Fear: Thomas Merton’s Advice to Pacifists by Joanna St. John—Thomas Merton’s efforts to prevent war and encourage the non-violent resolution of conflict were an integral part of his identity as a monk. His stance as a conscientious objector in WW II, and wading through a turmoil of new streams of thought, always seeking “the calm, spacious truth underneath.” Ego Mechanics 101 is followed by Toward A Transpersonal Understanding of Self and Reality, always returning to two key words: I Am. A final section on The Spiritual Ego and Enlightenment sums up her findings: I am the Truth and I am you. Even her discussion of quantum mechanics is fun reading. Stories, practices and exercises are included. (Paperback, 221 pp, $18.00; Enlighten Books/Aria Books 2016, www.simonandschuster.com)

Holy Daring: The Earthly Mysticism of St. Teresa, the Wild Woman of Avila by Tessa Bielecki—Bielecki brings Teresa of Avila to life with lively quotes in contemporary language. She is one of the spiritual heroes: fearless in her path to union with the Lord, fearless before men of authority in sixteenth-century Spain, fearless before the Inquisition, traveling, founding convents and her own order, and in confronting herself. She was a great mystic and also a woman of great common sense and practicality. For example, when a young novice came to her begging to learn the art of prayer, Teresa sent her to the kitchen, saying, “Learn to pray among the pots and pans.” She serves as a model today with timeless advice for all seekers. To become acquainted with St. Teresa is to deepen your own path, with her, read this inspiring book. (Paperback, 151 pp, $15.95; Adam Kadmon Books 1994, 2016, monфикlypublishing.com

Children/Young Adults


Abhishek Singh is an artist, graphic novelist and animation film director. His graphic novel, Krishna: A Journey Within, is cinematic in design and scope, combining the ancient and modern with striking originality. Krishna tells his life story...
throughout the narrative: from childhood to Kingship and the Mahabhara—“Great War”—that took place on India’s soil five millennia ago. Intertwoven in the story is Krishna’s teaching from the Gita, the Ten Incarnations of Vishnu, and his Vishvarupa or Universal Form as revealed to his disciple Arjuna before the great battle. Each spread of this glossy, full-color book consists of a single image up to a dozen frames or more—a feast for the eyes with explosive color and energy. Needless to say, this is a work of art that will appeal to wisdom lovers of all ages and paths. To see more of Abhishek’s awesome art and storytelling visit Abhishekart.com.

Audio


CARRIE GROSSMAN’S long-awaited new album, The Ram Sessions, is her first, a soul-map of her spiritual journey. Through longing she discovered the sweetness of chanting to Ram, like countless seekers and saints who have taken refuge in the holy Name over centuries. Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Ram is the mantra that blesses this album as her lovely voice soars in many chants into the eight styles of meditation he explores. These chants in English are primarily original compositions by devotees of Swami Amarnathji, written and sung over decades, that Swami Amarnathji has poured over. ByJi’s performance imbues the film with humility, beauty and grace. Based upon a short story by author, writer and journalist Ted Chiang, Arrival is told from the perspective of a linguistics expert who has tragically lost her memory. Dr. Louise with her daughter from birth to death are lyrically rendered. Louise’s search continues, and prepares the mind for meditation. Love for devotees of Swami Amarnathji, written and sung over decades, that Swami Amarnathji has poured over. ByJi’s performance imbues the film with humility, beauty and grace. Based upon a short story by author, writer and journalist Ted Chiang, Arrival is told from the perspective of a linguistics expert who has tragically lost her memory. Dr. Louise with her daughter from birth to death are lyrically rendered. Louise’s search continues, and prepares the mind for meditation. Love for...