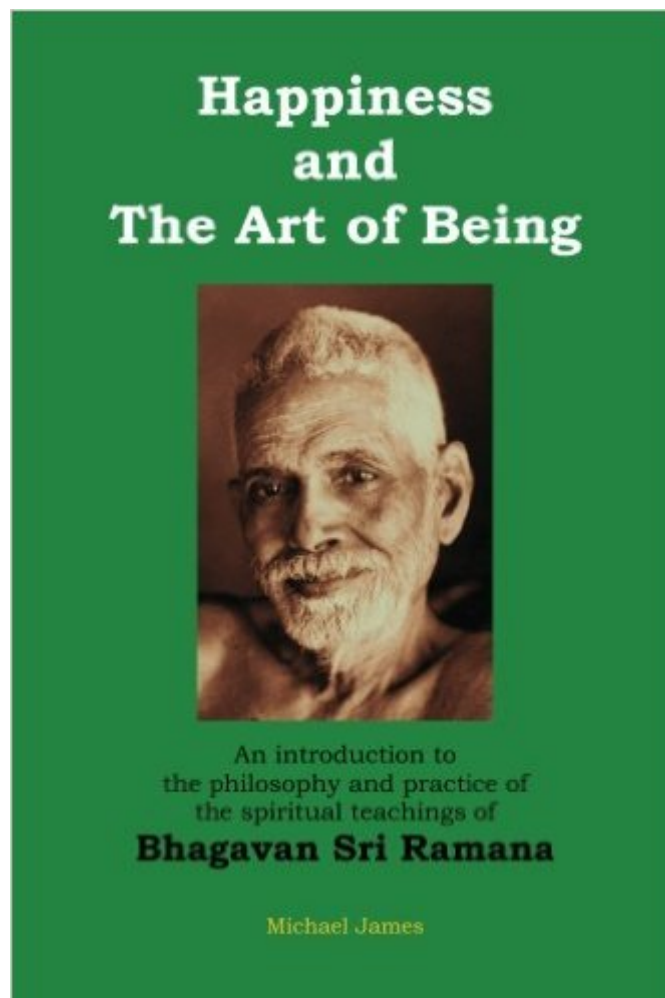


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Happiness And The Art Of Being: An Introduction To The Philosophy And Practice Of The Spiritual Teachings Of Bhagavan Sri Ramana (Second Edition)





Synopsis

Happiness is our true nature, our essential being. The transient happiness that we seem to derive from external experiences actually arises only from within ourself, and is experienced by us due to the temporary calming of our mind that occurs whenever any of our desires are fulfilled. So long as our mind is extroverted, attending to anything other than our own essential self-conscious being, we can never experience perfect, permanent and unqualified happiness. To experience true and eternal happiness, we must attain the experience of true self-knowledge â ” that is, absolutely clear consciousness of our own essential being, 'I am'. Such is the truth revealed by Bhagavan Sri Ramana. The philosophy of Sri Ramana derives solely from his experience of true, absolute, non-dual self-knowledge, an experience that transcends all thought, both rational and irrational. However, since we imagine the existence of duality, multiplicity and relativity, we seem to lack the non-dual and absolute knowledge of our own essential self-conscious being that Sri Ramana experienced as his natural state. Therefore he presented his philosophy to us in terms of a rational and logical analysis of our present experience of ourself as a finite individual consciousness, in order to enable us to be firmly convinced of the absolute reality that underlies and supports this finite consciousness that we now mistake to be ourself. However, the spiritual teachings of Sri Ramana are not only a rational philosophy, but are also a precise science and art. He intended his philosophy to serve only as the theoretical foundation upon which we should practise the empirical science of self-investigation (atma-vicara), which is the art of keenly self-attentive and therefore perfectly thought-free being. This book, Happiness and the Art of Being, is an in-depth exploration of both the philosophy and the practice of the spiritual teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana. Though it is intended primarily to be an introduction to his teachings, it is not a brief one, because in a clear and simple manner it provides a very detailed and deep insight into their core. Therefore though it has been written with the intention that it should be easily understood even by readers who have no previous acquaintance with any form of spiritual philosophy, it should also be useful to readers who already have a good understanding of his teachings. Like the aim of his teachings, the aim of this book is to prompt each one of us to think more deeply about the reality of all that we as a seemingly limited individual consciousness experience and know, to help us to understand that the only absolute reality in our entire experience of duality and relativity is our fundamental consciousness of our own essential being, 'I am', and thereby to reinforce our love and effort to attend keenly and exclusively to this essential self-consciousness 'I am' in order to discover its true nature. The author of this book, Michael James, spent more than eight years studying the original Tamil writings of Sri Ramana and of his foremost disciple, Sri Muruganar, in minute detail under the clear guidance of

another close disciple, Sri Sadhu Om. Therefore the central focus of this book is on the teachings of Sri Ramana as expressed in his own original writings, and hence it contains accurate and carefully worded translations by the author of the whole of Sri Ramana's prose treatise *Nan Yar?* (Who am I?) and of most of the verses of his philosophical poems such as *Upadesa Undiyar*, *Ulladu Narpadu*, *Ekatma Pancakam*, *Anma-Viddai* and *Upadesa Tanippakkal*. This second print edition is a slightly revised version of the first print edition, and contains a detailed glossary. For more information about Sri Ramana and his teachings, please visit the author's website: happinessofbeing.com.

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Customer Reviews

I was blown away by David Godman's "Be as you are". It provided all the answers to the basics on man's apparent problems & solutions. However I could not find a single book that explained all the nitty, gritty of Advaita Vedanta direct from a master like Sri Nisargatta. They were all scattered in a zillion books on Sri Ramana & other Saints from India. Michael James has done an excellent job of consolidating all the relevant teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana in his magnum opus must have book for a spiritual aspirant at any stage of his apparent journey.

I'm loving this book. I read the introduction and last chapter and am now re-reading a page-a-day and making notes. If your intention is to just "be", author Michael James analyzes everything Bhagavan Sri Ramana (an adept at existence) ever said, wrote or did, repeating over and over in every conceivable way, that happiness IS our essential being. To attain true and eternal happiness,

we must attain the experience of true SELF-KNOWLEDGE--absolutely clear consciousness of our own essential being.

Michael James has produced the definitive guide of our time for Sri Bhagavan's practice of Atma Vichara. Clear, concise and created with love, following the practice detailed in this manual will lead one to Recognition of the Self.

I cannot recommend this book highly enough for anyone who wants to immerse themselves in the lifechanging teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi. Of all the books I have read on, and by, Sri Ramana, I have found this the most useful. It is extremely well-written and it explains ideas clearly and logically. I found it immensely helpful, explaining clearly and simply concepts that I hadn't understood from reading other books. I also found it very inspiring, written with great love and care.

Michael James is amazing! Here we have the most articulate spiritual man in our language who doesn't claim to be enlightened. This is a first. Imagine a business-man who admitted that he wasn't really an entrepreneur. Being rich isn't the same thing as being an entrepreneur, you see, but people mix up the two (especially the rich). An entrepreneur is a rare state indeed. Only a few special people achieve entrepreneur-hood. From the outside, an entrepreneur looks like a business-man and this is how the rich get away with it. The guru industry is the same. The world 'enlightenment' is used by almost all people who have published a book to describe themselves. Or the modest are merely 'awakened'. I listen to the excellent podcast called Buddha at the Gas Pump and I have noticed a pattern. Almost all the guests claim to be there already and most of these guests say that it was a 'park'... An obvious cliché because Goethe loved nature, as did Terence McKenna, and all genius' rave on about nature, so it's an obvious meme that you will use when you want to convince yourself. Personally, I enjoy grand architecture. People claiming to have had a glimpse and are indeed enlightened because they can talk the talk are two a penny these days. But Michael James is one of those very clever people who really understands all those Sanskrit words and Tamil words, but he is honest and humble enough not to anoint himself semi-divine, like a mad emperor from Roman times. This book is big and all you need to know is in these pages. James lived in India for years and he really knows a thing or two. One worrying thing that I'm sure others have noticed. Michael James is so so articulate and nice but he admits to not getting anywhere near this stuff! What chance do you and I have?

A truly amazing book. Page after page, paragraph after paragraph leads to nowhere but "I am", explaining what we call life along the way. Reading Michael's book while practicing Self Inquiry is like practicing Self Inquiry while practicing Self Inquiry.

An excellent spiritual book which draws very close parallels to several forms of religion including Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism in its discussion of non-dualism. This book was easily read and understood although somewhat repetitive in areas. I feel that I have a much better understanding of Advaita Vedanta. I understand that the author will be writing two additional books on the teachings of Sri Ramana. I look forward to reading them.

Based on what i read from the website [...] about this book, I immediately ordered and have begun reading it. I'm very much attracted to this book due to the science/practicality of how to know one's Self and that is enough for me. My recommendation? Check the site first and if you're open minded enough to understand and accept what is there, you will not have a second thought to invest in this book. And if you want to quickly get started, get this book first: THE MOST DIRECT AND RAPID MEANS TO ETERNAL BLISS - Michael Langford Thanks Michael James!

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