

BOOK REVIEWS

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ZUKAV, GARY. (2007). *Soul to soul: Communications from the heart*. New York, NY: Free Press. xix + 336 pp. ISBN: 13 978-0-7432-3700-0. Hardcover, \$26.00. Reviewed by *Sahibou Oumarou*.

The purpose of *Soul to Soul* is to address two of the most significant questions about the different aspects of life: Human experiences as portrayed by the seasons and cycles of life, and the shared love that makes soul to soul bonding more solid and universal. This book is intended for all men and women who are in search of self-improvement, spiritual understanding and growth. Though the book embraces the full spectrum of transpersonal psychology's curricula, it is written for popular readers in a non-academic style. The information in the book derives from the author's own knowledge and experiences rather than the outcome of scientific research.

The author leads the readers through the lessons of his own observations. He is also presenting to the readers what he has learned growing up, and what he understands now. According to him, seasons portray human experiences with accuracy, including the challenges that not only speak to us, but also contribute to our wellbeing and spiritual unfolding. Nothing exists for itself alone, but as an intricate part of the whole, and/or as a constant player in the Cosmic game called existence. *Soul to Soul* invites readers to view life as an ally. In that vein, Zukav argues that even, "your painful emotions are designed to bring your attention to the parts of your personality that you were born to challenge and change accelerates this process" (p. 29). When this change happens, you will become more, "compassionate, wise, and grateful for life" (p. 29).

Zukav holds that happiness is more in the effort to perfect oneself than in perfection itself. When the journey through life is off track, it is never too late to make a course correction. To illustrate his arguments, he reports that a Rabbi once told him that to sin is like shooting an arrow and, "missing the mark" (p. 36), and when this happens, Jewish people go into a period of introspection and prayers to put themselves back on track. To live is to be self-responsible, and it is only by learning to be pro-active, as opposed to being reactive with regard to life's challenges, that one can enjoy a fulfilling life. To shift awareness, one needs to ask the right question. "When you see your life as a learning opportunity in which you are provided with continually updated class material that is uniquely suited to your needs, you will see your life as a gift that is worthy of your value and close attention. You will also begin to see

the universe as a wise and compassionate partner in your educational process and you will be grateful for it” (p. 57). It is the author’s intention in this book to let the readers understand that nothing in life is left to chance.

Zukav views life as a process, which when ended gives birth to another process. He thus believes in reincarnation, which he considers a reason to have hope for a better and more fulfilling life (in future incarnations). When one’s current life becomes an uphill race, one should drop one’s resistance in order to enjoy the process. Life is more than the appearance we see; it is like a plant with its root deep in the soil. “The root that produced the plant has produced other plants in the past, and will produce more plants in the future” (p. 64). He also believes that life is better when lived in cooperation with others, not in isolation. It is more rewarding to leave one’s, “habitual consciousness behind in order to support one another” than remain trapped in one’s own victim consciousness.

Zukav also strongly believes that this earth plane is a school we are all attending. We are here to learn to appreciate every situation in our lives. “Appreciating abundance, awareness and patience are important lessons. Every experience that you have in the earth school is designed to help you learn them” (p. 75). Additionally, although we may think that we are separated from each other, we are a part of a web that connects every individual. Thus, “the hurt of one person is the hurt of all, and the honor of one is the honor of all” (p. 81). We are on the earth plane to share our moments of joy, pain, love, and other feelings and experiences. We might think of others as friends or foes, but “the things you don’t like about yourself are the same things that you do not like about other people. The way you treat yourself is also the way that you treat other people. If you don’t like yourself, you will assume that other people don’t like you either, no matter what they say or do” (p. 89).

In conclusion, for those in search of meaning in life and answers to their spiritual questions, this is a good book to read. The author’s goal is to take the readers beyond the boundaries of their limitations, and help them experience true freedom from the inside out. This book is indeed an anthology of Zukav’s personal life experiences and his wisdom accrued from such.

The Author

Gary Zukav is the author of *The Dancing Wu Li Masters: An Overview of the New Physics*, *The Seat of the Soul*, *Soul Stories*, and many others. He is a graduate of Harvard University and a former U. S. Army Special Forces (Green Beret) officer with Vietnam service. He lives in Oregon with his spiritual partner, Linda Francis.

The Reviewer

Sahibou Oumarou, M.A., is originally from Niger (West-Africa). He is a 5th year Ph.D. student at Sofia University. At this moment, Sahibou is writing his dissertation on personal life stories. Sahibou has a special interest in cultures, religions, and mystical traditions around the world. He is a world traveler and

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