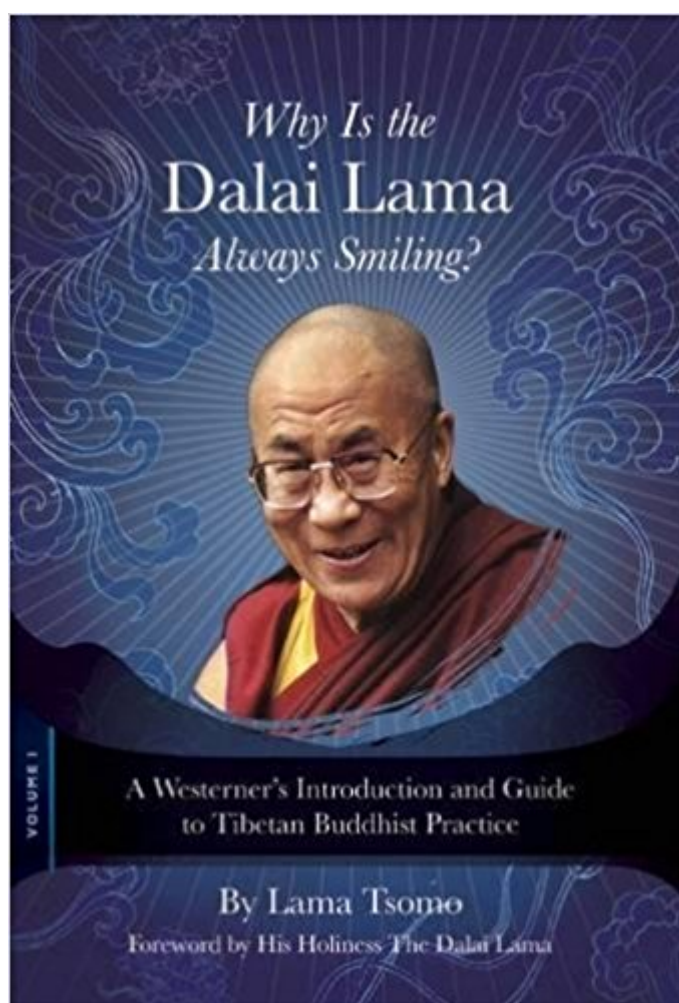


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# Why Is The Dalai Lama Always Smiling?: A Westerner's Introduction And Guide To Tibetan Buddhist Practice



## Synopsis

Ancient Wisdom for Today If you think meditation is only for monks, think again. Today's world seems to be growing more and more stressful by the minute--for all of us. So now, as a teacher of Tibetan Buddhist practice and a 21st-century woman, Lama Tsomo offers us time-tested tools for getting underneath our everyday worries and making our lives richer and more fulfilling. In *Why Is the Dalai Lama Always Smiling?* she acts as our lively, approachable guide to using the ancient traditions and practices of Tibetan Buddhism to find happiness and peace in this modern world. Through step-by-step instructions, photographs, and helpful explanations, Lama Tsomo shows how we can start experiencing the many benefits of meditation for ourselves. She offers proven techniques for sharpening our focus, enhancing our relationships, and living each day more mindfully and joyfully. Laced with humor, compassion, and stories from Lama Tsomo's own life, *Why Is the Dalai Lama Always Smiling?* meets us where we are and guides us onto, and along, the path to a deeper awareness of our world and ourselves. Lama Tsomo's personal and spiritual journey to greater happiness can now be ours as well. As she invites in the Prologue, "Won't you come along?" The book features an introductory letter from H.H. Dalai Lama, portable meditation cards, "Science Tidbits", glossary of buddhist terms and lessons used in Namchak Foundation eCourses and retreats.

## Book Information

Paperback: 276 pages

Publisher: Namchak Publishing; Pap/Crds edition (April 5, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0990571106

ISBN-13: 978-0990571100

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1 x 8.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.9 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 18 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #301,886 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #45 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern > Buddhism > Dalai Lama](#) #352 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern > Buddhism > Tibetan](#) #63669 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality](#)

## Customer Reviews

I am happy to see the publication of this new book, written by Lama Tsomo, a longtime student and

practitioner of Tibetan Buddhism. The book outlines the basic views of the Tibetan tradition and examples of some of its practices for the interested modern reader. --From the Introductory Letter by HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA

Lama Tsomo is a great guide, helping us to make mindfulness a habit and put ourselves on the path to a more fulfilling and a more joyful life.

--ARIANNA HUFFINGTON, founder of the Pulitzer-Prize-winning The Huffington Post, and author of Thrive

An extraordinarily engaging, fascinating, pragmatic, and useful guide to happiness. A gem.

--MARTHA BECK, life coach, columnist, O, The Oprah Magazine, and author of Finding Your Own North Star

Lama Tsomo takes ancient wisdom and practice and makes it accessible and available. At this time in history, we need more people to take on being present and grounded, open minded and open hearted no matter what they are faced with. We have a lot of healing to do. May this book help you on that path.

--SEANE CORN, internationally celebrated yoga teacher, co-founder Off The Mat, Into The World

Lama Tsomo (Lama Sangak Yeshe Tsomo) brings her unique perspective to *Why Is the Dalai Lama Always Smiling?* Born into a Midwestern Jewish household, she followed a path of spiritual inquiry that ultimately led to her ordination as one of the few American female lamas teaching Tibetan Buddhism. She now speaks Tibetan fluently and has done extensive spiritual retreat both in the U.S. and abroad, deepening her understanding and mastery of Tibetan Buddhism under the tutelage of Tulku Sangak (sometimes spelled "Sang-Ngag") Rinpoche, the holder of the Namchak lineage of Tibetan Buddhism and spiritual head of the Namchak Foundation. Rinpoche has asked Lama Tsomo to oversee the planning and construction of the Namchak Retreat Ranch, and she does so through her service on the board of the Namchak Foundation, an educational resource for a national learning community. Her teaching has inspired American and international students, who appreciate her warm intelligence and her informal, often humorous style. Lama Tsomo is both the mother of three grown children and a grandmother. She shares her mountain home with her two dogs, whom she describes as her "constant, loving companions throughout the entire, years-long journey of writing this book."

I bought the CDs because I do so much driving, and I couldn't be happier with my "choice" (I believe it wasn't a choice at all, but just the way it's supposed to be). Lama Tsomo has a smooth and melodious way of sharing her story, and when she makes a tiny error in the voice over, she calmly and cutely fixes her error. I suspect Lama Tsomo is unaware that the audio engineer left her flubs on the CDs, but I also suspect that she will read the reviews, because she is obviously enlightened

but not yet Buddha. ;) When she does, I hope she appreciates the pleasure her new devotee receives from this. I say devotee, because whatever follows, I have found so much power and value in Namchak that I am deeply involved in the research and practice, and of course my goal is to meet Lama Tsomo in Montana and listen to her there. She is a beautiful vessel of the wisdom she delivers.

Well written, easy to read, only time will tell if I got the good out of it! Meditation techniques are well described and gently guided! Wish I could visit with this woman in person!

This is a delightful introduction into Tibetan Vajrayana. Lama Tsomo teaches these important practices in a fun, witty humor that keeps you engaged. Soon you will be smiling just like the Dalai Lama!

nice read

How can the Dalai Lama always be smiling and full of love and forgiveness given what has happened during his lifetime to the Tibetan people? In Lama Tsomo's encyclopedic introduction to Tibetan Buddhism, she answers this question in depth, having followed the same ancient traditions to find a new way of living for herself. I now understand why and how the Dalai Lama, and the monks and people who were lucky enough to flee Tibet when the Chinese took over, did not suffer PTSD despite the horrors experienced, and were able to feel compassion for their persecutors. Lama Tsomo offers a guide to Tibetan Buddhism with steps to build a meditation practice that will lead you to the same inner peace as the Dalai Lama. She starts with an interesting account of her own spiritual exploration, while going through two failed marriages and having three children. After a 25-year spiritual quest, she found the teacher who would offer a course of study for her spiritual enlightenment whom she trusted when she met Tulku Sangak Rinpoche. Despite the fact that she feels any serious student of Tibetan Buddhism needs to study with qualified masters (retreats or total immersion worked best for her), she does provide sufficient background in the Buddha's teachings along with techniques which can be tried on one's own. These techniques are designed to help remove ego identification to allow our true nature of compassionate awareness to shine forth. It will take a lot of time and effort, but as the author asks, "Do I have something better to do?" Lama Tsomo recounts scientific evidence that the meditation practices of Tibetan Buddhism can help one replace knee-jerk reactions to people and situations with more balance, constructive

responses, and improve one's focus, memory and mood. Instead of clinging to one's small, separate self, even in times of misery, the seeker of enlightenment learns to see themselves as one with the vast ocean, the one great mind, and be motivated to help others with love and compassion. The book includes an envelope of practice cards that you can use to build a daily practice and see if you are called to immerse yourself further in Tibetan Buddhism. If so, she offers numerous resources, including books, other media and websites. This book is not one I could read straight through, but rather dip into and contemplate what I was learning a little at a time. While a glossy paperback with beautiful color photographs, at its heart, it is a serious textbook for those who want a guide to practicing Tibetan Buddhism. It can be a bit overwhelming as a first introduction to Buddhism (even with the glossary), but for the serious student, this could be an invaluable guide on their path. Namaste! Becca Chopra, author of The Chakra Energy Diet

This review is for the *Why Is the Dalai Lama Always Smiling?: A Westerner's Introduction and Guide to Tibetan Buddhist Practice*. This is a very detailed book on the author's experience with Buddhism from the standpoint of a westerner. She details her retreats and interactions with Lamas and teachers, and on the different lives and seeming contradictions of Buddhists. When you read a book like this you must do so with an open mind. There are so many things that will be foreign to you, and if you are like me find some practices unpractical. I tried the vegetarian thing for a bit as an example. There are some good parts on meditation that I found useful. Regardless of what religion you may or may not come from or practice you should find this helpful. Prayers are in fact meditations. I found the section on agitation quite enlightening, as was the part on dullness. This really hits home with our society / world's constant bombardment of information always attacking our peace. While the book is meant as a primer to steer you to full blown Buddhism, even those such as myself where it just will never happen, can find some very positive aspects to add to our lives.

I first heard of Lama Tsomo on the 10% Happier Podcast. I thought this book was going to be all about the Dalai Lama. I was pleasantly surprised at the quality and breadth of information throughout. She writes as if we are friends. She's sincere, personable and full of knowledge. Growing up with a Christian background, learning about this Tibetan Buddhist practice was definitely new material. Her writing is easy to follow and filled with personal stories, poetry, many lessons and instruction from Asian masters and of course, meditation practices. At the end of the book, it says this is the first in a three-book series. I will look forward to reading the next one!

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