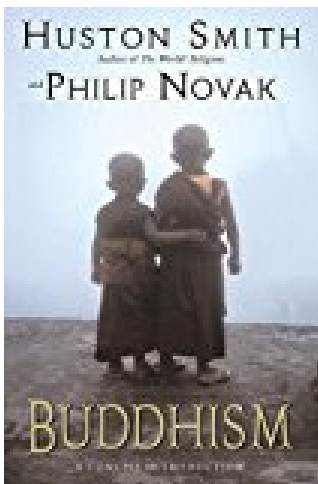


# [PDF] Buddhism: A Concise Introduction

Huston Smith, Philip Novak - pdf download free book

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**Books Details:**

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**Description:**

**From Publishers Weekly** Bookshelves abound with introductions to Buddhism, many written by luminaries and spiritual giants of the faith. But this primer co-written by Smith, whose magnum opus *The World's Religions* has sold more than two million copies, is distinguished by its gentlemanly erudition and thoughtful attention to Buddhist diversity. The book's first half is an expanded and updated version of the Buddhism sections of *The World's Religions* and was penned by Smith. Special attention is given to Theravada Buddhism, which "was overshadowed by Mahayana" in the original version; one chapter provides a helpful side-by-side chart illuminating the basic differences between the traditions, while the next features an in-depth

discussion of Theravada's influence in South Asia and its emphasis on insight meditation. The primer's all-new second half-written by Smith's former doctoral student Novak-presents the story of Buddhism in the West, discussing its multifaceted presence in the United States. While Novak devotes time to the rise of Buddhism in Germany, England and France, it is clear that he finds the "New Buddhism" of America, with its emphasis on lay involvement, social engagement and the cross-pollination between Buddhist traditions, to be the source of the most exciting contemporary innovations. Smith's helpful afterword gauges the rising importance of Pure Land Buddhism in America, though this vital information should have merited a full chapter. Novak and Smith's collaboration is a fine contribution to the admittedly crowded corpus of introductions to Buddhism: the strokes are broad, the writing style engaging and the chapters short and accessible.

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**From** Smith, the dean of religious studies in America, and his former student, philosophy and religion professor Novak, offer a concise, readable, enlightening introduction to Buddhism. They present the history of the man Buddha, born about 563 B.C.E. in what is now Nepal, and of the religion, which they compare with its Hindu roots. They examine Buddhism's original teachings and what Buddhism was (an empirical, pragmatic, therapeutic, and egalitarian response to the world of its founding) and what it was not (a religion devoid of authority, ritual, and tradition). They discuss such Buddhist essentials as the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path and such other basic concepts as nirvana, the three marks of existence, and emptiness. Like most other religions, Buddhism has not been immune to schism, and Smith and Novak explain why it split into its present many divisions. They devote a goodly portion of the book to Zen Buddhism and Buddhism's increasing popularity in the West and to its remarkable resiliency, especially evident in the meditation-centered New Buddhism of America. *June Sawyers*

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Buddhism is a set of methods that helps us to develop our full human potential by understanding the true nature of reality. Founded 2,500 years ago in India by Siddhartha Gautama — better known as Buddha — Buddhism spread throughout Asia and is now the world's fourth largest religion. Buddha spent most of his life teaching the methods for awakening that he had realized, so that others could become enlightened Buddhas themselves. He saw that while everyone is equal in their ability to become a Buddha, people also differ vastly in their preferences, interests and talents. Respecting this, he taught otherwise, Buddhism: A Concise Introduction is a wonderful reminder of the awesome beauty of Buddhism. — Fred Phillips, author of *The Conscious Manager: Zen for Decision Makers*. Read more. — Put simply: this one is the best basic introduction to Buddhist thinking and practice and history I've found. And to my mind, the thing that makes this volume so singularly valuable is how clearly and thoroughly and \*accurately\* it portrays Theravada. Most information in the United States about Buddhism up until the early 1990s basically gave the impression that Buddhism was all about Tibetan and Zen practice. No thought or scholarship -- or little \*accurate\* thought of scholarship -- was given to the older (and to my mind the most helpful and realistic) means of practice: Theravada. The Buddha focused much of his teaching on how to overcome suffering. He saw that all living things suffer in being born, in getting sick, in growing old, and in facing death.[4] By overcoming suffering, he taught, a person will be truly happy. Early teaching. His first lesson after becoming enlightened was to other seekers who had also renounced the world. This was a group of holy men or monks with whom the Buddha had studied for five or more years. To them he first presented what he saw as the Four Noble Truths of life and the Eightfold Noble Path (see below). These teachings identify the ca... — Buddhism: A Concise Introduction. HarperSanFrancisco. ISBN 978-0-06-073067-3. Buddhism, religion and philosophy that developed from the doctrines of the Buddha, a teacher who lived in northern India between the mid-6th and mid-4th centuries BCE. Buddhism has played a central role in the spiritual, cultural, and social life of Asia, and, beginning in the 20th century, it spread to the West. — Article Contents. Introduction. The foundations of Buddhism. The cultural context. The life of the Buddha.

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