



Still Here: Embracing Aging, Changing, and Dying

By Ram Dass



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More than thirty years ago, an entire generation sought a new way of life, looking for fulfillment and meaning in a way no one had before. Leaving his teaching job at Harvard, Ram Dass embodied the role of spiritual seeker, showing others how to find peace within themselves in one of the greatest spiritual classics of the twentieth century, the two-million-copy bestseller **Be Here Now**. As many of that generation enter the autumn of their years, the big questions of peace and of purpose have returned demanding answers. And once again, Ram Dass blazes a new trail, inviting all to join him on the next stage of the journey.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

After being introduced for a lecture, Ram Dass eschewed the stairs and, from his front row seat, leapt up on to the stage--or tried to, anyway, but age and gravity brought him crashing back to earth. Like other baby boomers, Ram Dass has learned the hard way that aging is unkind to the body. But he has also learned that it can be an opportunity for growth. While others begin to devalue you, you can reconnect with the spiritual, grow into wisdom, and create value for yourself. In *Still Here*, Ram Dass offers a philosophy for aging that teaches us how to diminish our suffering despite the aches, pains, and limitations of age. This becomes possible when we step away from the ego-self and into the soul-self, where we can witness our thoughts and emotions and evaluate their effects on us. If aging has brought challenges to Ram Dass, it has also brought him wisdom, which, through his personal anecdotes and stories of others in the struggle against aging, he shares with great generosity. --*Brian Bruya*

From Publishers Weekly

In 1971, Ram Dass became an icon for a generation of spiritual seekers with the publication of *Be here Now*, a hip, heartfelt chronicle of a search for truth that began when he got kicked out of Harvard along with Timothy Leary for tripping on psilocybin mushrooms and launching a psychedelic movement. The author, who was born Richard Alpert, discovered the magic of reality itself in India, when he met his guru, Maharaji, who gave him a name that means "Servant of God." In the decades since, Ram Dass has produced a stream of books about how heart-and mind-expanding service can be. His writing (and his globe-trotting lectures) were suffused with the ebullient humor and insight of a born storyteller. Then, one evening in 1997, as he lay in bed wondering how to finish this work on the wisdom potential of aging, Ram Dass was hit with a massive stroke that left him wheelchair-bound, partially paralyzed, requiring round-the-clock care. This book was revised and edited by Ram Dass as he struggled to say what he wanted to say without the words that had poured out of him before. What has emerged from the suffering is a humble masterpiece of being. "The stroke has given me a new perspective to share about aging, a perspective that says, 'Don't be a wise elder, be an incarnation of wisdom,'" writes Ram Dass in the introduction. The energy of this new state of awareness resonates under the words of this work. Ram Dass delves in to the aspects of aging that terrify most of us--loss of roll and independence, the threat of senility--and affirms there is an awareness in each of us that transcends all the attributes that necessarily diminish with age. Ram Dass shows readers of all ages that it is possible to stay present in the midst of suffering, to be still and know that God is here now. (June). Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal

Dass, former Harvard psychologist turned spiritual guide, here shares a positive view of aging that seeks to embrace and not erase the suffering that accompanies it. Building on years of teaching others how to grow old with wisdom and the stroke he suffered in 1997 while writing this book, he offers a perspective on disease and aging that focuses on spiritual growth and healing rather than a return to the way things were. Meditation techniques and advice on coping with pain, powerlessness, and other age-related problems are also covered. Dass's personal honesty and sense of hope make this a worthwhile purchase for public libraries that serve many baby boomers. For a more Western treatment of Dass's themes, see James Hillman's *The Force of Character and the Lasting Life* (LJ 8/99). Madeleine Nash, York Coll. Lib., CUNY
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Users Review

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Charles Anderson:

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