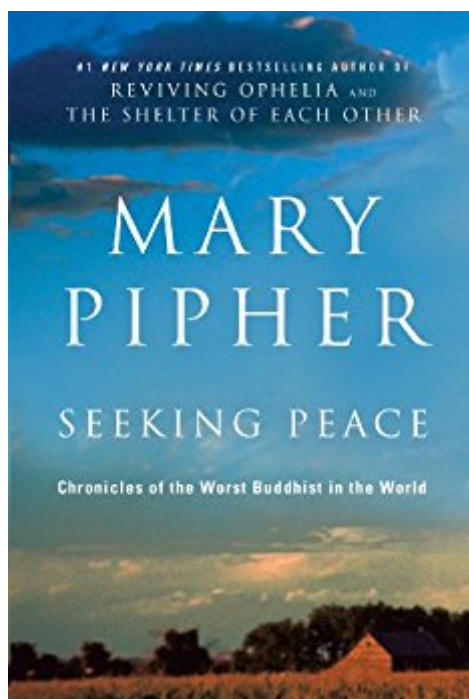


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# Seeking Peace: Chronicles Of The Worst Buddhist In The World



## Synopsis

"An absorbing chronicle of discovery" (Booklist) from the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Reviving Ophelia* and *The Shelter of Each Other*. Like most lives, Mary Pipher's is filled with glory and tragedy, chaos and clarity, love and abandonment. She spent her childhood in small Midwestern towns, the nurturing daughter of a doctor mother and a restless, jack-of-all-trades father. Later, as a wife, mother, and therapist, she was able to do what she most enjoyed: learn about the world and help others. But after the surprising success of *Reviving Ophelia*, she found herself overwhelmed by the demands on her time and attention. In 2002, Pipher experienced a meltdown. She realized that success and fame were harming her, and she began the long journey to a quieter, more meditative life that would carry her toward self-acceptance and joy. In *Seeking Peace*, Pipher tells her own remarkable story, and in the process reveals fundamental truths about our individual search for happiness and love. Candid, surprising and moving, *Seeking Peace* offers a map for our own journey toward a more fulfilling, more joyously lived life.

## Book Information

File Size: 3723 KB

Print Length: 284 pages

Publisher: Riverhead Books; Reprint edition (February 21, 2009)

Publication Date: March 19, 2009

Sold by: Penguin Group (USA) LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B001TMCF42

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #603,289 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #64

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Biographies & Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Religious

> Buddhism #421 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Professionals & Academics > Social

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## Customer Reviews

This memoir deserves more than five stars! I just finished it and had to come here and post a review. I've been waiting and waiting for this book to come out and it not only didn't disappoint, but it by far exceeded my highest expectations. Whether Mary writes about the elderly or adolescence or the experiences of refugees and immigrants, she is always among the most insightful and heartfelt writers I've ever read. *Seeking Peace* is her autobiography. I wasn't sure what to expect.

Autobiographies of fantastic individuals somehow too often turn out to be surprisingly dull but *Seeking Peace* is so naturally well written, so genuine and poignant and at times very funny, and allows you throughout the chapters to make meaningful parallels to your own in such a way that by the end of the book, I was able to see into the innermost creases and particulars of my own life in compelling, unexpected new ways. What I love about Pipher most of all is the wide pasture she has always allowed for people to be exactly who they are and her extraordinary ability to write about individuals and their challenges in such a way that you can't help but see your fellow human beings in more forgiving, compassionate, and broader ways. Learning about her own history and how she came to be who she is was a wonderful read. There wasn't one dry, unnecessary sentence in the book. Some autobiographies are filled with too much detail and content without the balance of thoughtful insight and observation accompanying it along the way. *Seeking Peace* wasn't like that at all. Her writing style is the best part, as if she is sitting in her living room simply reminiscing out loud. I almost wish I had gotten it on audio cd for that reason. It's a deeply personal, courageously honest, and ultimately very inspiring book.

I am an avid reader and peruser and have never written a review, but have to respectfully post my opinion this time to statistically increase the "star rating" average! With respect to the previous reviewer, I couldn't disagree more. Perhaps because it is from my own personal vessel of life experiences from which I read the book. I don't think I have ever identified more strongly with a writer, and I found her to be so open, giving, and thus vulnerable, with the end-effect that I simply felt changed. So "self-involved" is not at all how I would characterize the writing. Quite the opposite. Thank you, Mary for your humble, yet startling writing. We readers are all better for it.

People who think this is a how-to book are wrong, as are those who think it's a resource guide for Buddhist meditation. I think the only bad thing about it, actually, is the misleading title. Embrace this terrific little book for what it actually is: an insightful memoir by a fine Everywoman philosopher. I've been reading Mary Pipher for years and love her insightful, humanistic writing. Her previous books tended to cover a major topic of societal upheaval, like immigration issues or the aging of the

population but this is a deeply personal book about who she is and how she got that way. I was shocked to read about some aspects of her childhood, reassured to learn that she stumbled starting out on her career path and incredibly moved by how difficult life became when her first book made her a national celebrity. Most people don't want to hear that the dream of becoming a bestselling author might actually turn out to be a nightmare: it certainly was to Mary. But regardless of your own dreams, this book puts things beautifully into perspective. I recommend it highly, and think it would make a perfect gift for someone reaching a major milestone birthday, like 40, 50 or 60, and wants to think about what matters in life.

With each of her previous books, Mary Pipher demonstrated a talent for examining a drop of water and finding a way to understand, and - fortunately for the rest of us - to explain the ocean. Whether she focuses on adolescent girls, immigrants, the elderly or families, Mary is able to trace the connections between the individual and the culture and find the stories that explain us to ourselves and strangers to one another. Her new book, *Seeking Peace: Chronicles of the Worst Buddhist in the World*, is no exception to this pattern. Even though the topic of this new book is her own life, a decidedly interesting one, its merits do not remain there. While rooted in the intimate experiences of one human being, the book flowers into a treatise about what it means to be Human. Like the stories that Mary's mother told her that became the bedrock for her moral education, Mary's life story teaches us something about how to behave toward ourselves and toward others. The book sparkles with wisdom and humor. There are dozens of paragraphs that stopped me with sadness as I recognized something that reflected my own life with crystalline clarity (as when she writes of her father, "My memories of our interactions contradict each other. He could turn my heart to butter and to stone. Across the broad landscape of time, I can't remember who he truly was."), but it's also laced with such surprising wit. (Okay, I admit I laughed out loud when I came across the sentence "The concept of a blow job was almost beyond my ability to understand, but Rhonda's explanations were riveting.") Ultimately the book gives us, if not a road map, at least a likable, well-read, soft-spoken traveling companion for our own journey toward peace.

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