



The Endless Practice: Becoming Who You Were Born to Be

By Mark Nepo



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Poet, philosopher, and cancer survivor Mark Nepo has been breaking a path of spiritual inquiry for more than forty years. In his latest book, the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author “writes reflectively and poetically about the lifelong spiritual journey” (*Publishers Weekly*).

Called one of the finest spiritual guides of our time, Nepo explores what it means to become our truest self as we face life’s challenges—as well as its joys. Navigating some of the soul’s deepest, most ancient questions, he asks: How do we stay vital and buoyant amid the storms of life? What is the secret to coming alive? The soul’s journey is inevitable, and no matter where we go we can’t escape this foundational truth: *What’s in the way is the way*. As Nepo writes, “The point of experience is not to escape life but to live it.”

Featured on Oprah’s *Super Soul Sunday* program, and a key presenter in Oprah’s nationwide The Life You Want Weekend Tour, Nepo inspires each of us to discover who we were born to be. Like his bestselling *The Book of Awakening*, *The Endless Practice* is filled with insights and stories, guidance and practice that will bring you closer to living life to the fullest.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Navigational tips for the journey--ways to grow and expand, ways of handling mess and sorrow, and ways of finding love and beauty and joy. The Endless Practice brings Mark Nepo’s many years of teaching and writing and musing into one potent offering. I recommend it heartily.” (Elizabeth Lesser, cofounder of Omega Institute and author of *Broken Open: How Difficult Times Can Help Us Grow*)

“In *The Endless Practice*, Mark Nepo is a kind friend, sage mentor, and curious fellow journeyer, walking alongside us as he observes the magnificent complexities of the human experience. The notion of an endless practice gives us hope and encouragement—that even when we trip, struggle, grieve, or feel lost, we have an opportunity to expand, and that it’s through this lived experience, with all its ups and downs, that we come closer to the heart of who we were born to be.” (Kris Carr)

“In his deep understanding of our complicated lives, Mark Nepo says, “Love the task and work the light.” I’ve done this ten thousand times as the curtain lifted on stage, never thinking to try to live that way after the curtain dropped, in my everyday life. It wasn’t until I fought my addiction and won that I realized I was in my own way, and until I put something else in front of me, the life I wanted wouldn’t show up. And then one day, along with all the blessings I received, I picked up a copy of *The Book of Awakening*. And fourteen years later, I’m on my third copy, because as I read each day I underscore and leave my own notes. But the journey ain’t over as Mark’s new book, *The Endless Practice*, is yet another candle to light our understanding along the spiritual path called Life.” (Steven Tyler)

“I have spent my life searching for the reason I was born. I think anyone in middle age does. Mark Nepo has been my guide in the quest. Simple and yet wildly profound, his words of clarity and, most importantly, connection, his ideas and suggestions, are ones I inculcate and metabolize daily.” (Jamie Lee Curtis)

“This book held me in its warm embrace. Mark is a true poet of the soul, using fresh, vivid language to capture realities that are too often cast as mere cliches. What a blessing!” (Tosha Silver, author of *Outrageous Openness: Letting the Divine Take the Lead*)

“A poetic and marvelous invitation into presence and love. Let this book quiet your mind and open your heart, and help you live from the rhythms of your soul.” (Jack Kornfield author of *A Path With Heart*)

“Mark Nepo has created and encoded a work of wisdom, love, truth and beauty. Reading his words will open your heart, expand your mind, and nourish your soul. Just holding this book shifted me into a state of grace.” (Arielle Ford, author of, *Wabi Sabi Love: The Ancient Art of Finding Perfect Love in Imperfect Relationships*)

"Nepo writes reflectively and poetically about the lifelong spiritual journey. His tone is intimate, his perspective mature. Mystics will delight." (*Publishers Weekly*)

"Mark Nepo’s *The Endless Practice* is the kind of spiritual book you will want to read slowly so that the wisdom and the epiphanies can simmer in your consciousness." (*Spirituality & Practice*)

About the Author

Mark Nepo is the author of eighteen books, including *Seven Thousand Ways to Listen*, *The Endless Practice*, and the #1 *New York Times* bestseller, *The Book of Awakening*. His work has been translated into more than twenty languages. Mark traveled the country with Oprah Winfrey on her sold-out 2014 “The Life You Want” tour and has appeared several times with Oprah on her *Super Soul Sunday* program (OWN TV). He lives in southwest Michigan. Visit him online at MarkNepo.com and ThreeIntentions.com.

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THE DAILY MIGRATION

We have been stopped for so many years by not being able to follow small things.

—Lars-Anders Hansson

I recently learned about the daily migration of microscopic zooplankton in the world’s water supply—trillions of them. Plankton are organisms—comparable to sea larvae and tiny jellyfish—that drift in oceans, seas, and bodies of fresh water. The word *zooplankton* comes from the Greek *zoion*, meaning animal, and *planktos*, meaning wanderer or drifter.

Their migration isn’t like the journey of whales or butterflies or flamingoes over thousands of miles or like caribou who circle the same arctic edge every year. The daily migration of these unseeable creatures is a persistent drift from depth to surface and back to depth. Along the way, they eat and process phytoplankton and, through their daily rite of survival, they serve as a filtering agent and so play their role in the aquatic food web. Innately, they both survive and contribute to the survival of the waters they live in.

This daily odyssey can span a few feet in small ponds or as far as five hundred yards in the open sea. Environmentalist Alan Burdick tells us that this is equivalent to a human being rowing a small boat five hundred miles every day to breakfast and back!

This is microscopic evidence that we need to work very hard to arrive where we are. The journey is inevitable—essential to our own survival and the health of the Universe we are a small part of. In fact, it’s fair to assume that every part of life has its own version of this daily migration by which it exercises its being into place.

This persistent drifting from depth to surface and back is particularly instructive for the life of the soul, and how we need to stay in the world and process our experience in order to feed and cleanse both our working spirit and the small part of the Universe we inhabit. For years, I thought I was inwardly fickle, struggling to surface when drowning in the deep, only to be battered at the surface and long for the stillness of the depth. And now these microscopic creatures present a fractal of the larger physics at work. Now I wonder about *the practice of persistent drift*—from depth to surface and back—and how the many aspects of being and becoming are all part of the constant cleansing action that keeps us and life healthy.

In spiritually practical ways, this book is an inquiry into the practice of persistent drift: into the cleansing action of introspection, creativity, love, friendship, and how we deal with pain; into our need to stay in the world and process our experience; into the very hard and inevitable work to arrive where we are; and into the soul’s daily migration from depth to surface and back. Relentlessly, the sea of life keeps us vital and buoyant while we in our small way serve as tiny cleansing agents of the sea of life. Mysteriously, spirit is known by its movement through the depth of the world, the way wind is known by its movement through waves and trees and prayer flags strung along the mountain’s ridge.

So still yourself briefly and picture an infinite wave of zooplankton pulsing their way up through the planet’s water and down again, cleansing it as they go. Imagine the tiniest cells of being rising within you this very moment, cleansing your thoughts and feelings. Imagine how you and I pulse our way through the days eating and processing the food of relationship, meaning, and care. All of us processing each other, drifting toward the healthiest exchange, the way plants and humans exchange oxygen and carbon dioxide.

Despite our endless plans, we are animals of being drifting with an instinct to survive and process. Despite our endless struggles, our need to survive and process is cleansing. It's beautiful and humbling to realize that the spirit inherent in each thing on Earth, including worms and flowers, is migrating to where it is and that this pulsation of being is the self-cleansing agent of all life-force. After all this way, it's never been about getting to the surface or getting to the bottom, but the inborn call to inhabit the journey in between.

The daily migration is a persistent drift from depth to surface and back to depth. This is how we deal with pain and stay in the world while cleansing life itself—through introspection, creativity, love, and friendship.

A Reflective Pause

In your journal, describe one way that you move between depth and surface during your day. Where are you more comfortable, in the world or the interior? One is a native strength, the other, an aspect of your self you need to know better. Name one way you might explore whichever you are uncomfortable with, the world or the interior.

In conversation with a friend or loved one, describe your own practice of persistent drift. Choose one of the following—introspection, creativity, love, or friendship—and explore how this inner way of being helps you deal with pain and stay in the world.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jean Spence:

Have you spare time for the day? What do you do when you have considerably more or little spare time? Yes, you can choose the suitable activity intended for spend your time. Any person spent their particular spare time to take a go walking, shopping, or went to typically the Mall. How about open as well as read a book called The Endless Practice: Becoming Who You Were Born to Be? Maybe it is being best activity for you. You realize beside you can spend your time together with your favorite's book, you can smarter than before. Do you agree with it has the opinion or you have different opinion?

Alma Rasmussen:

Do you among people who can't read satisfying if the sentence chained inside straightway, hold on guys that aren't like that. This The Endless Practice: Becoming Who You Were Born to Be book is readable by means of you who hate those perfect word style. You will find the information here are arrange for enjoyable examining experience without leaving possibly decrease the knowledge that want to provide to you. The writer of The Endless Practice: Becoming Who You Were Born to Be content conveys objective easily to understand by a lot of people. The printed and e-book are not different in the articles but it just different by means of it. So , do you nonetheless thinking The Endless Practice: Becoming Who You Were Born to Be is not loveable to be your top list reading book?

Brandon Macdonald:

Hey guys, do you really want to find a new book to read? Maybe the book with the concept The Endless Practice: Becoming Who You Were Born to Be suitable to you? The particular book was written by a well-known writer in this era. The actual book titled The Endless Practice: Becoming Who You Were Born to Be is the main one of several books that everyone reads now. That book was inspired many people in the world. When you read this publication you will enter the new dimensions that you never knew before. The author explained their thought in a simple way, and so all of people can easily know the core of this book. This book will give you a wide range of information about this world now. In order to see the representation of the world in this particular book.

David Moore:

This The Endless Practice: Becoming Who You Were Born to Be is a new way for you who has curiosity to look for some information mainly because it relieves your hunger for details. Getting deeper you get more knowledge, more you know or you who still have a little digest in reading this The Endless Practice: Becoming Who You Were Born to Be can be the light food in your case because the information inside this particular book is easy to get by means of anyone. These books acquire themselves in the form and that is reachable by anyone, sure I mean in the e-book type. People who think that in book form makes them feel tired even dizzy, this book is the answer. So there isn't any in reading a reserve especially this one. You can find what you are looking for. It should be here for you actually. So, don't miss the item! Just read this e-book style for your better life as well as knowledge.

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