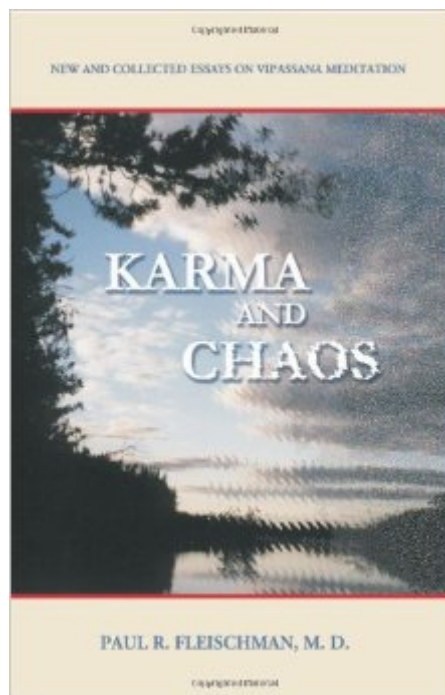


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# Karma And Chaos: New And Collected Essays On Vipassana Meditation (Vipassana Meditation And The Buddha's Teachings)



## Synopsis

These eight essays explore the interface between psychiatry, science, and the timeless teachings of the Buddha. Drawn from the personal experiences of a therapist and practitioner of Vipassana meditation, this work explores meditation's similarities and differences with psychotherapeutic and scientific endeavors. In the title essay, parallels are drawn between the atomic synthesis of free choice and lawful consequence in Chaos Theory and karma, offering contemporary insights into one of Buddhism's core concepts. The empirical roots of meditation, its relevance to daily life, and the challenges and benefits of daily practice of Vipassana meditation are also addressed. Practical examples for continued observation outside of formal meditation retreats guide readers in incorporating Buddhist practice into daily life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This collection of essays is the most lyrically beautiful and forcefully personal account of the effect of the Buddha's teachings in real life I have ever read. Dr. Fleischman writes with the soul of a poet and the critical thought of a scientist. His and his family's life and growth together in Dhamma shine through again and again as the real theme of the essays. Anyone who wonders about the amorphous interface between modern psychotherapy and the Buddha's path should not miss the essay, "Vipassana Meditation: A Unique Contribution to Mental Health." And the title essay, "Karma and Chaos" is an amazingly fertile presentation of the ancient and timeless teachings of the Buddha

in light of the cutting edge discoveries of western science. Mu Soeng, director of the Barre Center for Buddhist Studies, has said of it: "I just finished reading the essay on Karma and Chaos from your book and I want to congratulate you on an extraordinary piece on Dhamma and scientific perspectives. I would like to say that it is one of the shining moments of how ancient wisdom tradition from the East is being received in the West. The language is beautiful and there is a cogent and passionate communication of some very complex ideas in ways that do not oversimplify them and yet make them accessible."

Paul Fleischman's writing stirs more ideas than could be followed through in the space of an essay. His language has a technical tone yet tends toward the poetic. Some sentences need to be read more than once. But for those who find themselves drawn into his writings, these challenges fall away to reveal a rare gem. His unique style is integral to the power it evokes, and he writes things I have always wanted to be able to read. My favorite was the title essay, Karma and Chaos, where he explains, and better yet, demonstrates, how a life in line with karma can yield a balanced personality without sacrificing intellectual integrity. To me this book exudes compassion, wisdom, and joy.

- - -In Karma and Chaos a scholar (professor/psychiatrist/meditation teacher) and his son examine the ancient doctrine of karma in the light of modern Chaos Theory. Though most religious and moral philosophies express a belief in some law of "you reap as you sow," from the limited perspective of an individual this seems to be contradicted by accidents, luck, and an unscientific, mystical cosmology. The idea that there might be a higher moral law that functions independent of capricious, supernatural powers in a complex but rational way is intriguing. In this book the complexities of karma are made more intelligible, even rational, by applying an overview of Chaos Theory. This helps one transcend the limited linear rationality of the individual and examine karma within a cosmic framework. Whatever your views of karma, Karma and Chaos provides unique and interesting insights. And it's only one of seven essays in the book. It's worth a read.

Paul Fleischman introduces the reader to the age old tradition of Vipassana through these essays. The thoughts are presented in a very lucid manner leaving the reader with something to think about. His language has a poetic touch. The thought presented in a sentence is so profound that one needs to read it more than once to get the full impact of it. The title essay, Karma and Chaos, where he explains, and better yet, demonstrates, how a life in line with karma can yield a balanced personality

without sacrificing intellectual integrity. This book exudes compassion, wisdom, and joy of living a life where one is at a peace with one self. A wonderful experience. Surendra

This book shows how psychiatry and Buddhism overlap. Freud and Buddha both discovered that we can free ourselves only by confronting the source of our suffering. Getting in touch with our formative memories is difficult and often impossible. According to the Buddha, however, our thoughts become EMBODIED, that is, we can access these memories through our body. Like all mammals we strongly identify with the sensations in our body. We think we are responding to external stimuli but in fact we are really responding to our physical sensations that are triggered by what we see, hear, think and feel. With Vipassana meditation we can systematically reduce our mental conditioning by directly experiencing our physical sensations. Just like those who lived 2,500 years ago, people today want ease, happiness and clarity in their lives. The integrity of Paul Fleischman, MD, definitely comes through in his words and his excellent book points the way to a technique that can take us there.

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