



# The Poetry of Impermanence, Mindfulness, and Joy

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Over 125 poetic companions for all life's ups and downs.

The Buddha once told a disciple that good spiritual friends are the *whole* of holy life. The poems expertly gathered here offer all that one might hope for in such spiritual friendship: wisdom, compassion, peacefulness, good humor, and the ability to both absorb and express the deepest human emotions of grief and joy.

The Poetry of Impermanence, Mindfulness, and Joy offers a wide-ranging collection of 129 ancient and modern poems unlike any other anthology on bookshelves today. It uniquely places Buddhist poets like Han Shan, Tu Fu, Saigyo, Ryokan, Basho, Issa, and others alongside modern Western poets one would not expect to find in such a collection—poets like Wallace Stevens, Robert Frost, Elizabeth Bishop, William Stafford, Denise Levertov, Jack Gilbert, Ellen Bass, Billy Collins, and more. What these poems have in common, no matter whether they are explicitly Buddhist, is that all reflect the essential truths the Buddha articulated 2,500 years ago.

The book provides an important poetic complement to the many prose books on mindfulness practice—the poems here both reflect and embody the dharma in ways that can't be matched by other modes of writing. It's unique features include an introduction that discusses the themes of impermanence, mindfulness, and joy and explores the relationship between them. Biographical notes place the poets in historical context and offer quotes and anecdotes to help readers learn about the poets' lives. A short essay at the back of the book on "Mindful Reading" helps readers approach the poems from an experiential, non-analytical perspective and illustrates the similarities between meditation and the mindful reading of poetry.

Brehm also includes a guided meditation on sound that helps readers appreciate the sonic qualities of poetry and shows how the anthology might be used in ongoing spiritual practice.



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