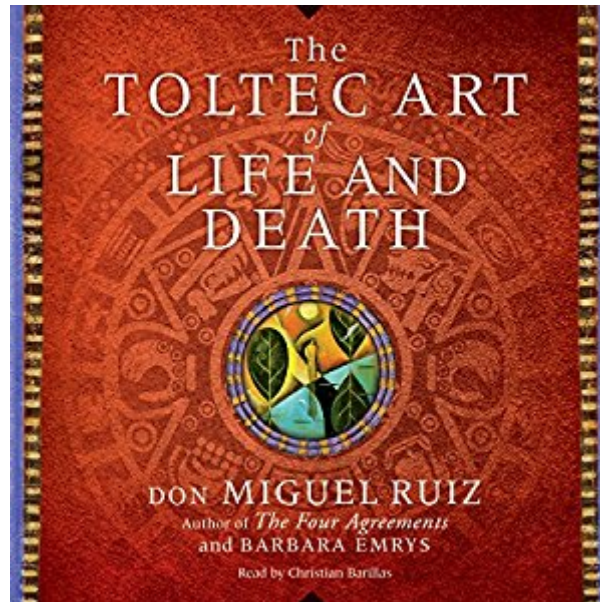




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The Toltec Art Of Life And Death



Synopsis

The beloved teacher of spiritual wisdom and author of the phenomenal New York Times and international best-seller *The Four Agreements* takes listeners on a mystical Toltec-inspired personal journey, introducing us to a deeper level of spiritual teaching and awareness. In 2002, Don Miguel Ruiz suffered a near-fatal heart attack that left him in a nine-weeks-long coma. The spiritual journey he undertook while suspended between this world and the next forms the heart of *The Toltec Art of Life and Death*, a profound and mystical tale of spiritual struggle. As his body lies unconscious, Ruiz's spirit encounters the people, ideas, and events that have shaped him, illuminating the eternal struggle between life - unending energy and truth - and death - matter and subjective knowledge - in which we are all called to engage. Over 10 years in the making, *The Toltec Art of Life and Death* invites listeners into the mind of a master of spiritual seeking, offering an unparalleled and intimate glimpse into the development of a soul. In this culmination of a lifetime's learning, Ruiz shares with listeners the innermost workings of his singular heart and mind and summons us to grapple with timeless insights, drawn from ancient Toltec wisdom, that are the essence of transformation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I very nearly gave up trying to discover how and why Ruiz's mother persuaded him to come back from the death that he had embraced and was at peace with. (Spoiler alert: Ruiz sort of answers why he opted not to die in the last few pages of the book.) He had previously courted death by recklessly walking into the dangerously hot rim of a dangerous volcano in order to demonstrate a

healthy approach to life and fear of death to a touring group of his disciples, and had injured his heart. Insufficient explanation is given to undo the impression that this was machismo. Finally, I hung in with my attempt to follow the narrative of what Ruiz experienced in his dream state. Some dream - that can go on for nearly 400 pages with such detailed recall! But I guess that can happen while you're in a coma for nine weeks. The description of his development as a healer or Nagual (Toltec-speak for a shaman) and his learnings from his shamanically inclined mother and grandfather serve as interesting autobiography; and as a physician, I can admire his finding a deeper calling in sharing wisdom than continuing his medical practice. However the weaving of the narrative from Ruiz, to Ruiz's spirit, to his mother, to her spirit, to grandfathers, and to the enigmatic Lala (who can often be very bad-tempered) is confusing and (for me) unconvincing. She is revealed as the personification of knowledge, and Ruiz goes into great detail about his early infatuation with knowledge and his subsequent intense ambivalence about it. He portrays it as a seductive woman who is like a constant companion and temptress. The whole book could be seen as Ruiz's struggle with "knowledge".

This autobiography by Don Miguel represents the major movements of his life, values, and highlights exemplary wisdom from his teachings. The book differs significantly from his other books, but does not defer from his teachings which are highly polished in this volume. This is a fascinating accounting of his reluctance to pick up the family wisdom teachings early in his life, only to embrace them wholeheartedly later in his journey, and then spread the wisdom prolifically in the Common Square. The book is well written with excellent insight into his family history and the Eagle Knight Lineage, his mentors including his Mother, Grandfather, and others. For those not familiar to the family wisdom, the book provides a powerful recollection of his Mother's intent in the opening chapters to bring Miguel back from death. If only we could mimic her inner 'solidness' of 'faith' predicated on intent, the world would be a very different place than it is today. The hardcover is well worth the price of admission. I read it everyday until I turned the last page. Above the biographical information, the book always turns back to the family wisdom which deepens the Agreements and our understanding of them. Furthermore, Don Miguel's exquisitely penetrates the veils 'between the worlds' that each of us negotiates with 'death' and I found this theme to be the most compelling in the book. As the narrator tells us in the book on page 114, "Miguel was the piper, Artful and shameless, returning at last to sing humanity awake with a lively ballad. He came to sing about the wonder that occurs between life and death. He came to sing about awareness, and every rock and stone would join in the chorus.

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