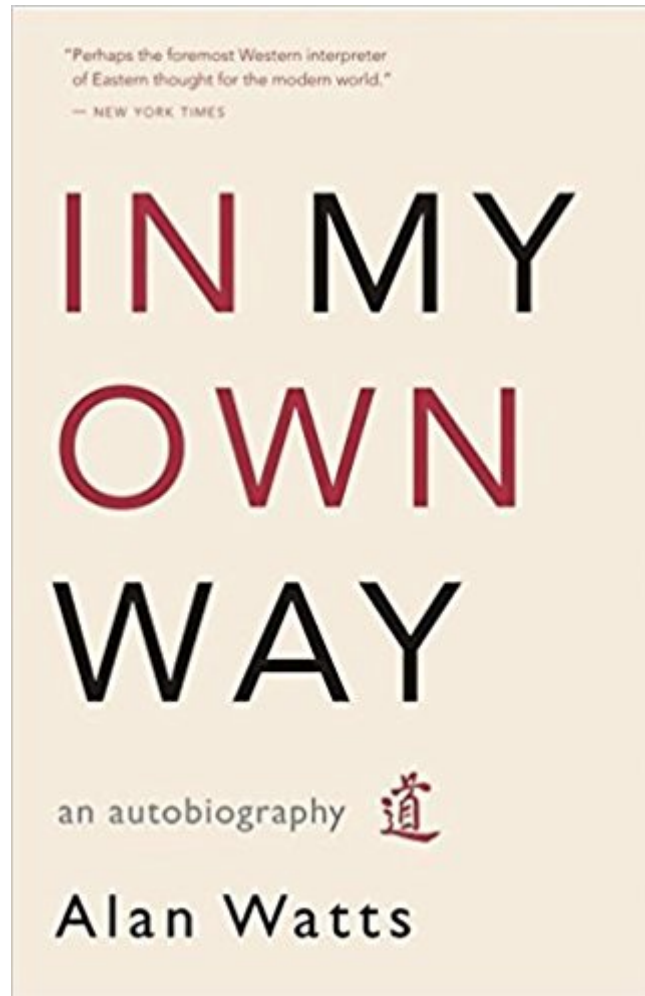




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# In My Own Way: An Autobiography



## Synopsis

In this new edition of his acclaimed autobiography *In My Own Way*; long out of print and rare until now; Alan Watts tracks his spiritual and philosophical evolution from a child of religious conservatives in rural England to a freewheeling spiritual teacher who challenged Westerners to defy convention and think for themselves. From early in this intellectual life, Watts shows himself to be a philosophical renegade and wide-ranging autodidact who came to Buddhism through the teachings of Christmas Humphreys and D. T. Suzuki. Told in a nonlinear style, *In My Own Way* wonderfully combines Watts's own brand of unconventional philosophy and often hilarious accounts of gurus, celebrities, psychedelic drug experiences, and wry observations of Western culture. A charming foreword written by Watts's father sets the tone of this warm, funny, and beautifully written story of a compelling figure who encouraged readers to "follow your own weird" something he always did himself, as his remarkable account of his life shows.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Enthralling . . . a most engrossing autobiography . . . unlike anything you've ever read . . . Those who like myself have found the solution to at least one momentous riddle of the universe inside each of Mr. Watts's memorable books will be enlightened beyond expectations by this chronicle of the web of interlacing experiences and ideas which have constituted his inner life."

Henry A. Murray, MD, Harvard University

"Exuberant . . . It is possible to categorize Watts's autobiography as merely a diverting, candid, brilliantly written egocentric memoir of one man's expeditious use of philosophy, religion, even science and the arts, to achieve name,

fame, a good living and a secure niche in the current cultural scene. Actually *In My Own Way* cannot be dismissed in quite such simplistic terms, for it is the account of an exceptional man's search for the basic truth of his own nature. . . .

- Nancy Wilson Ross, New York Times Book Review
- A beautiful presentation as only the old master could do it.
- John C. Lilly
- A thoroughly entertaining book.
- Publisher's Weekly

this book had some boring patches where the details were a drag. it was however amazing overall, to learn watts story. he hung out with many people i have heard of, or read, and much of his influential early reading was similar if not the same as mine. watts lead a fairly interesting life. the complaints against him coming off arrogant in this book were acknowledged at first, but that dissolves when you understand he would rather just boast from time to time than suffer false modesty, he feels false modesty robs the world of some of its color. much is to be said and discussed about this book that i cannot put here. although i wish he was still alive so that i could converse with him, i feel i would become good friends with him.

Alan Watts was a contemporary of Timothy Leary but to my mind a much more interesting individual. His immersion and exploration of Christianity, Hinduism and Zen Buddhism plus many more "isms" coupled with a comprehensive command of the English language and a master story teller to boot makes him a very good read for anyone interested in the study of self and reality. "In My Own Way" takes the reader through Alan's life, philosophy and spiritual explorations and experiences from his early childhood to his eventual move to California where he was witness to the emergence of the 60's Hippy Culture. A most interesting and engaging read for anyone interested in the subject and period.

*In My Own Way* by good old Alan was a fantastically joyful experience, and I am still not quite at the end, although I have sneak-peaked at what the end is about, so I am convinced the last chapter will be just as fulfilling. In the beginning of the book, Watts points out that in a biography there is basically two stances that the writer can take; either he/she boasts or confesses - that was not what our spiritual entertainer had in mind, even though, as he states in the book, he has of course had some wonderfully satisfying experiences at, and made even more enjoyable with, the expense of stuffy people. What I am trying to say here is that this book is not the ordinary autobiography at all, and that if you are expecting a very detailed and honest insight to his life, like a confession or a pompous description of himself, this book will disappoint you greatly. Although he lets out a few

hints of his character at times, there is more of his always charming and complex descriptions of his experiences with places and people that impressed upon him more than usual. If anything is to be said about his philosophy within this book, I think it is safe to conclude that this book contains a large collection of his most profoundly written work, delivered within very short bursts, so naturally this book requires you to have heard some of his lectures and or read his other books before you delve into this one. He does not explain it very thoroughly, because it is his glimpses, and once again he most definitely wrote this in the assumption that you have been involved in his work before. The only negative remarks I can contrive about this book is that it, at times, becomes somewhat uninteresting - but I am fully prepared to admit that that is because I have not yet the mindset to fully grasp his mumbling about detailed flower-types et cetera. This book was written by a man in his late 50's, and at the age of 17, I think, there is still a lot to be found in his work, which is why I always pay more and more attention to his work as I go my way; in Alan's work there are several layers, whether he planned that to be or not. Some of the layers you discover within the book or in his other work might even be your extended philosophy with his as the basis, so give yourself some credit when this happens! What I meant by uninteresting, was that he, as is obvious, because anything that is uninteresting to you is uninteresting for the very reason that it is uninteresting, writes about things that become quite lengthy and incomprehensible at times (for me who does not have the interest to go back and read it several times, but rest I am certain I will some time). But, however, these things that he writes of is probably the knowledge of a man who had really understood that it was his own life, and his interests were his universe; his playground. It is up to others if they want to hop in the sandbox and join in or go to church and whatnot. Overall, this is a very witty and humorous book, describing only in elaborate detail his encounters with other famous philosophers and artists, and the dialogue between them of which he has a very good recollection. Enjoy In My Own Way, and even though I did not like parts of the book, there is a subtle feeling in me which tells me that I will at some point, which is why I gave this book five stars. I hope this book becomes a prominent influence In Your Way, as it did me!

Inspiring, beautifully written account of an amazing life, completed one year before he died. Treat yourself to a wonderful read.

It starts slow but well worth the read. Applicable story-telling and classic Alan Watts teachings interwoven together. This belongs as part of the Alan Watts book collection - it is not a separate exception. Tear jerking ending.

I have recently "turned on" to Alan Watts. I find his autobiography fascinating as it shows the development of his philosophy and style. I particularly like his references to the vast array of learned people he associated with as Aldous Huxley, Carl Jung, Timothy Leary, Ram Dass, to name just a few. He was a clear thinking intellectual with a great memory, a critical thinking individual with a great sense of humor, and a capacity to truly enjoy life. This book is a must for any Alan Watts fans.

A deep insight into the life of Alan Watts. It reads much like a personal conversation than a recounting of ones life from 'that bathtub to the crematorium' at Alan would say.

What can you say about Alan Watts?Has he ever written a "bad" book?Not in my view.Genius at work.Read this book you shall.

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