

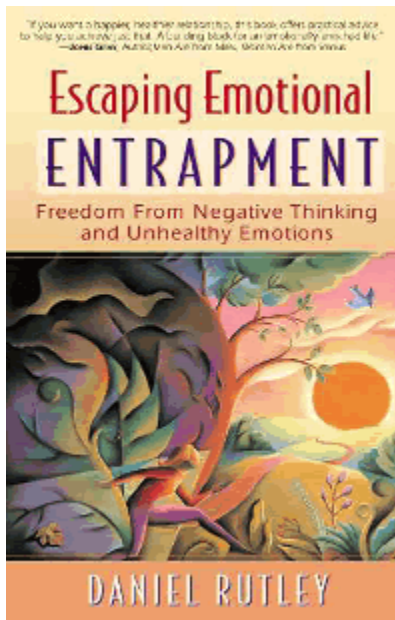
ESCAPING EMOTIONAL ENTRAPMENT

By Daniel Rutley

Reviewed By Jason R. Hewlett

I know, I know. Last week we reviewed a book on Zen and this week we're giving our two cents on a self-help book!?! What are we, a bunch of freaks?

The answer is "Yes!" but that is beside the point.



I won't lie to you, Constant Reader. I've been to my share of counselors and psychologists and have read a whole slew of books on self-help, anger management, and psychotherapy. I'm no stranger to the quest to find inner peace and happiness with one's self. Self improvement is no laughing matter, and many people are very touchy when it comes to their own sense of self, but I've always felt that, as with things in life, if you have a little fun with bettering yourself then it will come a lot easier.

That's also what got me excited about Daniel Rutley's book "Escaping Emotional

Entrapment." *Here is a guy, a psychotherapist, who thinks that one of the key ways to feeling better about yourself is to have fun with life.*

The book starts by covering the most important part of any person's quest for improvement: self love. I know many people in today's world scoff at that statement and associate self-love with a bunch of psychobabble but Rutley puts it this way: if you don't take care of yourself first, then how can you take care of those you love? When put into that context then accepting that a healthy diet, plenty of sleep and exercise, and just plain enjoying and feeling good about yourself starts to make sense.

Rutley walks you through the stages of rekindling your romance with yourself and emphasizes realistically putting your own needs first when it comes to taking care of you. I've long had a problem with any section in any

self-help book that has to do with the whole “I love me!” issue but Rutley put it into a language that made sense and didn’t sound like a bunch of gushy nonsense.

The rest of the books deals with the issues of anger management, stress, self-worth and chronic worry and provides easy to understand ways to analyze and deal with any emotional problems one has in those areas. The basic way to deal with any one of these issues is to change one’s own way of thinking about themselves and how they perceive the world around them. This of course can be easier said than done but *Rutley puts everything in a language that you don’t need a Ph.D. to understand or apply.*

That’s what made this book easy to digest and apply to my own life: it’s written in a fun, breezy, non-condescending, layman fashion that made the book *a joy to read.* He continually points out that being absorbed in self-pity and self-doubt was just being overly self-involved and an unproductive way to live your life. He continually asks the question “Would you rather be happy, or would you rather be miserable?” and then shows you the way to “get over yourself” and move on to a more fulfilling way of living...and thinking.

The final section of the book, and the part that struck home the most for me, is the area that covers having fun in your life.

Rutley basically tells us to shrug off the status quo of living life in a boring, tedious, politically correct induced haze and to seize the child within and release him. He emphasizes that doing those things we enjoyed as a youth (jumping into mud puddles, running up the down escalator, etc.) can still add to the enjoyment of our lives now. He teaches us techniques to help put aside the fears of what others will think of us and then implores us to go out and enjoy life...as long as it doesn’t harm ourselves or others.

There’s a lot more going on in this book than I can ever cover here in one short review. *The book is a good read and can help you overcome many issues that one has* but you have to be willing to listen to what Rutley has to say and do the exercises outlined in the book.

As with anything worthwhile, self-improvement is not easy and is an ongoing process. Also, one book isn’t going to solve all your problems either. Still, if your willing to give it a go, “Escaping Emotional Entrapment” is a good place to start.