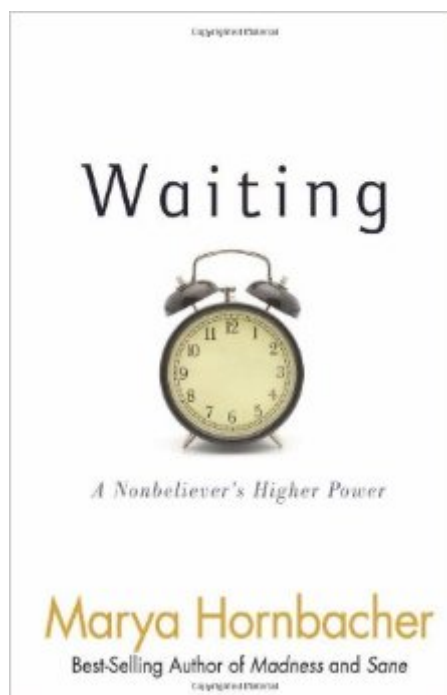


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Waiting: A Nonbeliever's Higher Power



Synopsis

For those who don't believe in God, feel disconnected from the ideas of God presented in organized religion, or are simply struggling to determine their own spiritual path, Marya Hornbacher, author of the New York Times best sellers *Madness and Wasted*, offers a down-to-earth exploration of the concept of faith. Many of us have been trained to think of spirituality as the sole provenance of religion; and if we have come to feel that the religious are not the only ones with access to a spiritual life, we may still be casting about for what, precisely, a spiritual life would be, without a God, a religion, or a solid set of spiritual beliefs. In *Waiting*, best-selling author Marya Hornbacher uses the story of her own journey beginning with her recovery from alcoholism to offer a fresh approach to cultivating a spiritual life. Relinquishing the concept of a universal "Spirit" that exists outside of us, Hornbacher gives us the framework to explore the human spirit in each of us--the very thing that sends us searching, that connects us with one another, the thing that "comes knocking at the door of our emotionally and intellectually closed lives and asks to be let in." When we let it in and only when we do, she says, we begin to be integrated people. And we begin to walk a spiritual path. And there are many points along the way where we stop, or we fumble, or we get tangled up or turned around. Those are the places where we wait. *Waiting*, you'll discover, can become a kind of spiritual practice in itself, requiring patience, acceptance, and stillness. Sometimes we do it because we know we need to, though we may not know why. In short, we do it on faith. Marya Hornbacher is the author of two best-selling nonfiction titles, *Madness: A Bipolar Life* and *Wasted: A Memoir of Anorexia and Bulimia*. She has also authored a recovery handbook, *Sane: Mental Illness, Addiction, and the 12 Steps*, and a critically acclaimed novel, *The Center of Winter*.

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Customer Reviews

AA is not a religious program, it's a spiritual one. But to a newcomer, it sure looks like religion. God is mentioned in six of the twelve steps. However, the relief valve is in the phrase, "as we understood him," which means we can choose any conception of God we wish. And then there's that old AA cliché: "Religion is for those who are afraid to go to hell. Spirituality is for those who have already been." The nonbeliever can have a tough time when he or she comes to AA. Most don't stick around long enough to discover what Marya Hornbacher has. Hornbacher is the author of "Waiting: A Nonbeliever's Higher Power", which is a spiritual guide for the nonbeliever through the twelve steps. The steps are more than a way to stay sober. They are meant to teach us how to live, how to become better people. They are a spiritual practice requiring action. They are the steps to spiritual transformation and Hornbacher expertly illustrates how to live a spiritual life without belief in a higher power. It takes humility to accept that we don't know everything, that we don't have all the answers, and humility is an indispensable ingredient of a spiritual life. Hornbacher says it's OK to doubt - just accept it. Even believers experience doubt from time to time. Why, even Jesus, hanging on the cross, felt forsaken. Hornbacher believes that fulfillment may come from finding our spiritual sources here in the world, in each other, in ourselves, and in all that we give. Connecting with other people is what's going to fill that "God-shaped hole" that we addicts feel. After all, addiction is mostly the result of feeling isolated from the rest of humanity. We used in order to feel connected, but in the end, it only alienated us even further.

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