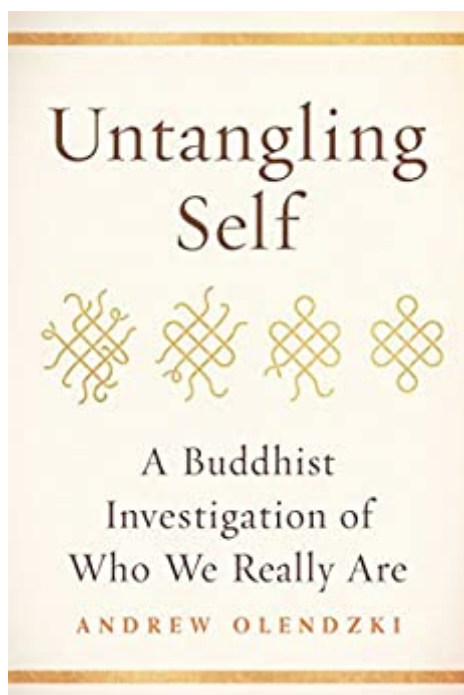


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# Untangling Self: A Buddhist Investigation Of Who We Really Are



## Synopsis

Untangling Self invites us to see nonself, interdependence, and mindfulness as rational, real-world solutions to the human condition of suffering. In psychologically rich essays that equally probe traditional Buddhist thought and contemporary issues, Andrew Olendzki helps us to reconcile ancient Buddhist thought with our day-to-day life. His writing is sophisticated and engaged, filled with memorable imagery and insight drawn from decades of study, reflection, and meditation on Buddhist teachings. Seasoned Buddhist readers and anyone interested in the intellectual heart of Buddhism will find this collection of fascinating essays rewarding.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A wealth of insight from Andrew Olendzki that bears close reading and re reading. I treasure it.

Very lucid and succinct. Recommended for secular Buddhists in particular.

A real treat. This author knows what he is talking about and knows how to teach it. You will love it.

Fascinating! Andrew has an impressive style to explain and blend Buddhist practices and make the

process accessible.

Excellent!

I think, if you stop trying to find the exact point in this book and hold it to that standard, it suddenly seems very useful. This book might be about untangling self, but for many who have not yet divined what they believe self is, it can be awfully confusing. Still, if you take a look at this book as a whole, it has a lot of very good advice for looking at the world through a Buddhist lens. If you can come into this book with an open mind and relax when you read it, the advice becomes much clearer. Once I was fully engaged with this book, I felt like I learned a lot from the examples that the author gave. Over all, I thought this was a helpful book with a lot to offer the reader. This review is based on a complementary copy from the publisher, provided through Netgalley. All opinions are my own.

In this wonderful book, Andrew Olendzki skillfully unpacks the complex teachings of early Buddhism and presents us with the psychologically transformative program the Buddha laid out for us for the relief of human suffering. And he does so in language that is clear, and deceptively concise. Within the pages of this slender volume one finds the foundational tenets of Buddhist psychology. In nine short chapters, Olendzki takes us on a tour of much of the Buddhist enterprise, thus placing into context many terms and practices that have caused much confusion for those who entered this field through the portal of the modern mindfulness movement. Olendzki's gift to us is in how he presents these concepts in a manner wholly relevant to our modern times, and surprisingly consistent with modern western psychological theory. The notion of an autonomous self is a powerfully felt fiction, we learn, the product of a mind that grasps at certainty and solidity, and refuses to glean the naturally occurring working of impermanence. The sense of self as substantive and unchanging is a "largely unexamined psychological reflex." How the construction and perception of the self as immutable is the source of great self-inflicted suffering is laid out with a coherence I have not found elsewhere. I highly recommend this book for those seeking to delve deeper into the understanding of Buddhist practices and concepts.

This short book is packed with insights. Would definitely recommend it to friends who are new to, but curious about, the Dhamma and what the Buddha was talking about. Eminently quotable and quick to get to its points, it's an enjoyable read. Especially the final chapter on The Promise of Nonself, which hits every nail on its head. It's also enjoyable to read a work by a scholar who

meditates and gets what is going on practice-wise. Give it a try!

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