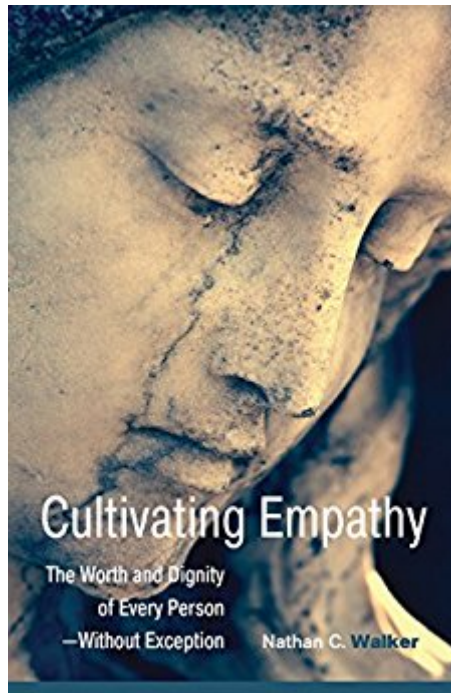


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Cultivating Empathy: The Worth And Dignity Of Every Person-Without Exception



Synopsis

In this emotionally honest and personal exploration of conflict, the Reverend Nathan C. Walker introduces a creative and compassionate way to develop empathetic responses. He explores the concept of the moral imagination—a way we can project ourselves into a conflict and understand all perspectives, aware that understanding need not imply agreement. Walker presents a series of revealing essays about his wrestlings with personal and cultural conflicts and his commitment to stop "otherizing"—which occurs when we either demonize people or romanticize them. His remedy for these kinds of projections is to employ the moral imagination as an everyday spiritual practice. Through his engaging and thought-provoking vignettes, he endeavors to find connection with skinheads, murderers, homophobic preachers, privileged 1-percenters, and Monsanto executives. As he experiments with this approach, he shows a model that can help us all nurture greater empathy for those we have previously held in contempt.

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Customer Reviews

The concept of moral imagination is a powerful antidote for the hard-line dualism of many of the public and private conversations taking place in this country during the last 25 years. Fear of a different "other" closes our ears and our hearts, resulting in rigid fundamentalism - both liberal and conservative. I was deeply moved by the author's intimacy and sharing. I highly recommend this book for all who want to grow emotionally and spiritually, as well as those interested in the practice of "civil discourse".

I consider this a superb and inspiring piece of writing. It is brief and readable and very much to the point. He speaks from experience -- not all laudable -- thus helping us to acknowledge our own empathic failures, but suggests practical ways of finding support for doing the right thing.

Reverend Nate walks the fine line between preaching and testifying brilliantly. The moral imagination may be the most important spiritual practice for 21st century living. Constantly bombarded by opinions, fear and hate via mass media, Walker shows us how he walks, balancing on the edge, offering a hand to those who have yet to see life lived with empathy and compassion. He also admits that he's missed a few opportunities, and spent time down there himself. But the constant application of the moral imagination makes us all stronger.

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