



*Alive Until You're Dead* by Susan Moon

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“Reading this book is like finding a friend, someone who is a bit wiser and more clear-sighted, honest and plain-spoken, someone who faces her fears and will help you face yours. *Alive Until You're Dead* should be required reading for all mortals.”—**Ruth Ozeki**, author of *The Book of Form and Emptiness*

# Alive Until You're Dead

## *Notes on the Home Stretch*

By Susan Moon



Zen teacher Susan Moon persuades us that as we notice our impermanence, we come **alive in new ways.**



Aging isn't easy. But it can still be filled with joy—maybe even more joy than we expect. Described by the *New York Journal of Books* as "a Buddhist Anne Lamott," Zen teacher and writer Susan Moon shares stories from her own life on topics including knee replacements, Zoom chats with grandchildren, ongoing companionship with a close friend who is moving deeper into dementia, and a season as a Zen monk in the wilderness. Moon illustrates the strength that can come from within, sometimes unexpectedly, even as our bodies fail. Our radiant aliveness can be discovered and rediscovered any time up to the last moment.

*Alive Until You're Dead* offers a Zen approach to facing our impermanence. Moon's stories explore being present with what is, not turning away from what's difficult, wishing for and working for the wellbeing of others, and being willing not to know what's next. These field notes from an old human being invite us to feel more alive in the final stretch, whatever it holds.



“Beautiful, inspiring essays. Deep truth in this work and the world needs to hear it.”—**Natalie Goldberg**, author of *Three Simple Lines* and *Writing Down the Bones*

“This is such a lovely book. I couldn’t put it down. Susan Moon is by now our most beloved Buddhist voice and here she realizes that voice completely, telling story after story that will break your heart with its emotional truth. How can she so nakedly, so bravely, face what no one wants to face, and express it all with such understated elegance, sentence after sentence, in essays as intimate as they are true? Being old, approaching death, is baffling and difficult. *Alive Until You’re Dead* won’t solve the problem but it will illuminate it, giving much to muse on and savor. You will want to read this book slowly . . . and again.”—**Norman Fischer**, author of *When You Greet Me I Bow*

“Deep, delightful, challenging, uplifting, this wonderful book is full of wisdom and a must-read for all of us.”—**Joan Halifax**, author of *Being with Dying* and *Standing at the Edge*

“I truly love anything Susan Moon writes. These latest essays are filled with her trademark simple-but-profound life stories and humor woven with Buddhist teachings and oodles of wisdom. Her depth and authenticity, as always, shine through. I can think of no better guide along the path to aging and the unknown than Susan Moon.”—**Diana Winston**, director of mindfulness education at UCLA’s Mindful Awareness Research Center, author of *The Little Book of Being*

“In this wonderful book Susan Moon uses stories of her life to explore the joys and tragedies of being human. She is a great satirist, and this book is full of humor and wisdom.”—**Wes Nisker**, author of *The Essential Crazy Wisdom* and *Buddha’s Nature*

“As she faces the inevitable end of her long life, Susan Moon considers what it means to be satisfied. With wit and the wisdom of decades of Buddhist practice, Moon considers the gifts and struggles of age, where joy and sorrow walk hand in hand.”—**Sallie Tisdale**, author of *The Lie About the Truck* and *Advice for Future Corpses*

## About the Author

**SUSAN MOON** is a writer, editor, and lay Zen teacher. Her books include the memoir *This Is Getting Old*; the groundbreaking collection, *The Hidden Lamp: Stories from Twenty-Five Centuries of Awakened Women*, with Florence Caplow; and *What Is Zen?* with Norman Fischer. She lives in Berkeley, California, and practices at the Berkeley Zen Center and with the Everyday Zen Sangha. For many years she has taught and led Zen retreats in the Bay Area, around the country, and internationally. She hopes this is her last book about old age and death.

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