



The Seeking Self: The Quest for Self Improvement and the Creation of Personal Suffering

Richard E. Lind

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Whether seeking recognition, spirituality, or personal success, we are endlessly striving to become something "better." But even if we obtain what we are looking for, we cannot refrain from creating another quest. Driven to distraction in pursuit of our goals, we are never able to enjoy even the life we have.

This provocative book explores the harmful side of our cultural and personal preoccupation with seeking. Psychologist Richard Lind suggests that there are no alternatives to seeking because our culture is singularly obsessed with personal development. Modern individuals have been taught since youth to believe that the quest for an ideal, future state is the sure road to happiness. Yet, as Lind shows, ideal goals remain out of reach. Instead of bringing inner peace, the compulsive quest for self-improvement creates psychic fragmentation, inner conflict, and personal suffering. It leads individuals to feel that their lives are never good enough, and results in the manipulation of the self and others.

Rather than advocating without qualification the value of "growth," "development," and "progress," Dr. Lind suggests that self-transformation can only occur if we are able to stop interfering with the experience of who we naturally are. Supporting his case with historical examples and insights from diverse wisdom traditions, Lind shows how inner fulfillment can only be obtained by giving up "empty desires" and "empty striving," and by becoming directly present again to the world of living experience.

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