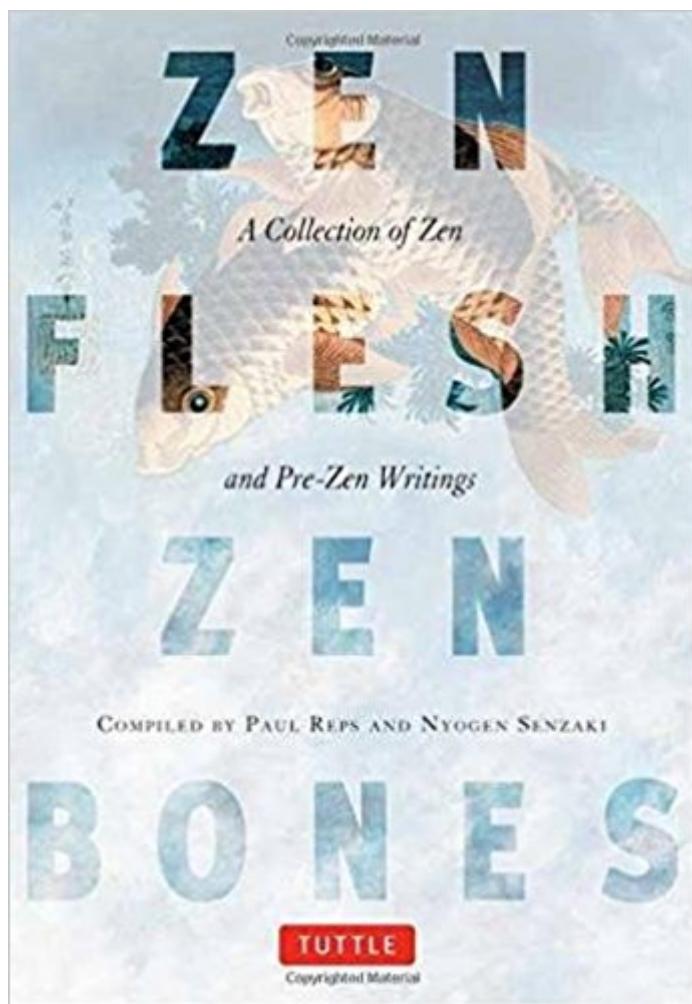


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# Zen Flesh Zen Bones: A Collection Of Zen And Pre-Zen Writings



## Synopsis

When Zen Flesh, Zen Bones was published in 1957 it became an instant sensation with an entire generation of readers who were just beginning to experiment with Zen. Over the years it has inspired leading American Zen teachers, students, and practitioners. Its popularity is as strong today as ever. Zen Flesh, Zen Bones is a book that offers a collection of accessible, primary Zen sources so that readers can struggle over the meaning of Zen for themselves. It includes 101 Zen Stories, a collection of tales that recount actual experiences of Chinese and Japanese Zen teachers over a period of more than five centuries; The Gateless Gate, the famous thirteenth century collection of Zen koans; Ten Bulls, a twelfth century commentary on the stages of awareness leading to enlightenment; and Centering, a 4,000 year-old teaching from India that some consider to be the roots of Zen.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"It has stayed with me for the last 30 years, a classic portraying Zen mind to our linear thinking." •Phil Jackson, Head Coach of the Chicago Bulls and author of *Sacred Hoops*"This book was my introduction to Buddhism nearly thirty years ago. I am delighted to see this new edition of this wonderful classic." •Sylvia Boorstein, author of *It's Easier Than You Think*"This book has been a steadfast portal through which millions in the West have peered to catch at the very least a glimpse of Zen mind at play in all its thought-shattering dialogue, humor, joy, and wisdom." •Jon Kabat-Zinn, author of *Wherever You Go, There You Are*"Perhaps the first Dharma

book I ever read, Zen Flesh, Zen Bones, remains a classic, a gem, a gift to us all." —Dr.

Daniel Goleman, author of Emotional Intelligence

Paul Reps, the compiler, was an American who lived in many countries, including India, Norway, and Japan, and studied many of man's efforts to find and realize his true spiritual stature. He was the author of several books of poems and prose. He once said that he felt "the equal of each grass blade and pebble and believe that it is possible to be happy though human and grown up." Nyogen Senzaki, a Buddhist scholar of international character to whom Reps acknowledged a deep debt of gratitude, was born in Japan. Early in life he became a "homeless monk," wandering the land and studying from Buddhist monastery to monastery. His wanderings eventually took him to America, where for over 50 years he lived in California, with no connection with any sect, denomination, or cathedral, radiating the free and creative spirit of Zen upon all who cared to share his study, meditation, wisdom, and loving kindness.

A real way to learn about Zen. Avoid the wordy, egocentric, how-to books. This is a great classic and almost better as an audiobook. It's mostly a collection of Koans (short, riddle-like stories) that each individual reader should think/listen about deeply. You 'could' look up their meanings through other resources, and others thoughts about each one, and this would be quite damaging. They are meant for you to think about in solitude, and to come to the answers and meanings in the same way that a person "gets a joke". When you see through them, you just smile. To have it explained to you, you don't 'get' it at all, and your vision is blocked further even. It's probably the single best resource for Zen. Surprisingly (or not) there are many resources and experts that try to explain these in academic exercises and clearly don't really understand them at all, but still curiously have a sizable following. Overall, anyone interested in Zen should get this book, and consult no one about it. Only read or listen to it, over and over again. You'll be surprised what comes to you.

This was my first Buddhist book way back in the '70s and I replaced it because it is wonderful and I found myself wanting to re-read some stories that made me laugh out loud. Also, This copy has the illustrations of finding and losing your bull. Those simple illustrations were a personal requisite when I looked up the different books available.

I don't know how long I have been without this book now. I first read it over 40 years ago and somehow I no longer have it. Perhaps one of my housemates took it and did not return it to the

common room book shelf (I would certainly never discard it, and I'm not in the habit of lending books). However I do remember how wonderful this book was, and I remember some of the stories, but more than anything I remember the subtlety, the ingenious in-a-nutshell quality that imbued the stories. It gave me my lifelong sense of zen and contributed considerably in my quest to have the wit to adapt and grow in life's unpredictable circumstances. A couple of days ago the question arose "how did I get into zen?" I looked for the book, half realizing I no longer had it (although I have other books on zen), and then searched for zen books and after looking at maybe 2 dozen titles saw it, and I'm not at all surprised that there are 50 some reviews and the average is 5 stars. Edit: A month or so after writing this review I ordered a copy, received it yesterday. The cover is different, of course. It's interesting to see that on the cover there are testimonials by several very famous people attesting to the decades long impact this book has had on their lives.

one of my favorite koan books. it doesn't spend a time of time having some sort of pretext and after thoughts on each koan, unlike a lot of other koan books. instead of giving the authors opinion on what the koan means, it leaves it up to the reader, which i prefer. I recommend this book a lot to anyone interested in philosophy, the arts, buddhism, zen, and even people going through tough times as it's helped me get through tough times. great read.

So this is a great book - but the Kindle book has tons of typos in it. For example "roared like a Hon" is supposed to be "roared like a lion". "Banker" instead of "Bankei". And that is in just the first few pages... Did they even \*read\* the text after they put it in ebook format? The book itself is a five star book, but this version needs fixed.

I still own my battered, much-read paperback copy of this sublime little book, which I bought in 1971. To this day it seems to me the single best introduction to Zen available, not as theory or philosophy or even daily practice, but as direct experience. Like most of the previous reviewers, I can return to its pages again & again, finding wisdom & food for thought ... or non-thought, if you will. :) Here is the paradox of mystery composed of absolute clarity & purity, as expressed through often humorous, even (seemingly) ridiculous stories ... yet they make sense at a very deep level, one that bypasses rational, logical thought or conscious understanding. Behind the sometimes giggling face of the monk is a most rigorous, utterly focused mind, one that cuts preconceptions & ego to ribbons. For anyone interested in the essence of Zen, for anyone wanting to step outside of the world of ten thousand shallow, mass-produced things, this book is indispensable. Most highly

recommended!

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