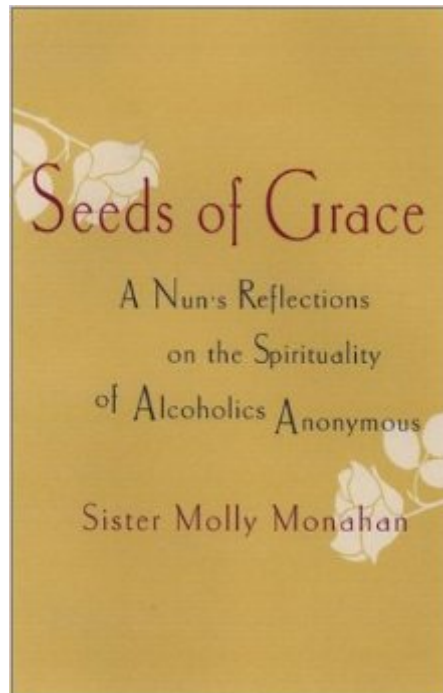


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Seeds Of Grace: A Nun's Reflections On The Spirituality Of Alcoholics Anonymous



Synopsis

A surprising and enlightening assessment of AA-its basic tenets and how it works on the spirit-by a nun and recovering alcoholic. When Sister Molly Monahan joined Alcoholics Anonymous she was looking for the help and support she needed to stop drinking. But what she found was something more, something that surprised her: a deeper spirituality than she had ever experienced in her religious community. How could a nonreligious group espousing the most basic of spiritual beliefs have anything to teach a nun who had already spent three decades steeped in the values, rituals, and traditions of the contemplative life? The mystery of the effectiveness of AA has yet to be explained. This book looks at that question in new, interesting, and important ways. In *Seeds of Grace*, Sister Molly Monahan traces her progress through the Twelve Steps and identifies the lessons that Alcoholics Anonymous has to instruct all of us about grace, forgiveness, community, and, in AA parlance, "the God of our understanding." Along the way, through a series of meditations, she shares her insights on why AA works, how it works, and how it has changed her life and the lives of millions of people.

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Customer Reviews

Sister Molly Monahan is a member of AA who honors its traditions and so writes under a pen name. She does not write as a spokesperson for AA, but what she hands on is its essential and important message along with some sense of what is it like to follow its program and take part in its fellowship and meetings. In passing she explains also a lot of its slogans that are called clichés but are in

reality informal shorthand for big chunks of wisdom that are foundations for recovery and sobriety. People expecting an unusual story because she is a nun might be disappointed; alcoholism afflicts nuns and priests pretty much like every other kind of person, and their decline and recovery are remarkably like anyone else's. But she hands on what got and keeps her sober and it is a message worth repeating. Only at the end of the book does she touch on her Christian beliefs in any depth to show how AA has helped her come to a deeper appreciation of different elements of her faith. She has found, she says, in AA the link between the experience of being saved from her alcoholism by faith in a loving God and the truths and practices of the Catholic religious tradition. That is something she does not push on other AA's, but Christians in the program might be especially interested in that section. A good message plainly and clearly put.

I am neither a Nun nor an alcoholic, but I read this fascinating, profound, and even humorous book in a single sitting. "Molly Monahan" is a wonderful writer, whose description of her own experience of alcoholism and recovery gave me some insight I never had before - "It's not about will power" - and a new understanding and appreciation for the power of the 12 Steps, not only for AA but for me, as well. And she does all this with great wit and humor, as well as compassion. I laughed and cried as I read this book and I want to give copies to everyone I know. Way to go, Molly!

This book presents a cogent and insightful analysis of the spirituality of AA. However, it does far more. There is something valuable and helpful in the book for anyone interested in spirituality-- insights about forgiveness, thanksgiving, gratitude, humility, peace of mind and freedom. Monahan's breadth of vision is not surprising, since she believes that all of us, at some time in our lives, are powerless over something, that alcoholism stands for our human condition in its sad, lost and sorry state, and that AA can show us what God has in mind for everyone in community, love, and service. In particular, Monahan uncovers within the Twelve Steps the ancient threefold way of the spiritual life-- purgative, illuminative and unitive. While providing the reader with a better understanding of alcoholism as a threefold disease -- physical, mental and spiritual -- Monahan offers deep insights into the relationship between the 12 step program and one's search for God.

This is a book for anyone who wants a better life -- spiritual or not. Live Molly's journey through each of the twelve steps with real people confronting real demons supported by real angels. In my prayer group, we use this book as a study guide to challenge us on our personal faith journey. Who are my angels? What demons do I have to overcome? Who helps me? Who do I forgive? I learned

the twelve steps are universal (previously thinking the twelve steps are for those other people). Each step has a different spirituality that uniquely mine -- twelve times. Each step helps me live a more authentic life. Profound book!

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