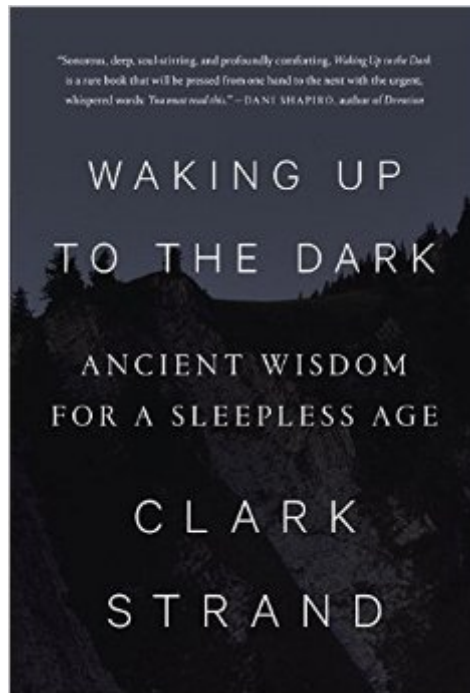


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Waking Up To The Dark: Ancient Wisdom For A Sleepless Age



Synopsis

In the tradition of Thomas Merton's spiritual classic *The Seven Storey Mountain* or Thomas Moore's *Care of the Soul*, *Waking Up to the Dark* is a deeply resonant and personal project—a modern gospel that is an investigation of the relationship between darkness and the soul. The darkness Clark Strand is talking about here is literal: the darkness of the nighttime, of a world before electricity, when there was a rhythm to life that followed the sun's rising and setting. Strand here offers penetrating insight into the spiritual enrichment that can be found when we pull the plug on our billion-watt culture. He argues that the insomnia so many of us experience as "the Hour of the Wolf" is really "the Hour of God"—a wellspring of rest and renewal, and an ancient reservoir of ancestral wisdom and inspiration. And in a powerful yet surprising turn, he shares with us an urgent message for the world, received through a mysterious young woman, about the changes we all know are coming. *Waking Up to the Dark* is a book for those of us who awaken in the night and don't know why we can't get back to sleep, and a book for those of us who have grown uncomfortable in real darkness—which we so rarely experience these days, since our first impulse is always to turn on the light. Most of all, it is a book for those of us who wonder about our souls: When the lights are always on, when there is always noise around us, do our souls have the nourishment they need in which to grow? Praise for *Waking Up to the Dark*—a celebration of the life-enriching "indeed, indispensable" properties of the night . . . Strand delivers a significant amount of experiential melding to existential thoughtfulness in this book about the sublime and elemental powers of the dark. . . . An exigent, affecting summons to rediscover the night. "Kirkus Reviews" This book is small in size and mighty in spirit. It is at once a clarion call and a meditation. Sonorous, deep, soul-stirring, and profoundly comforting, *Waking Up to the Dark* is a rare book that will be pressed from one hand to the next with the urgent, whispered words: You must read this. "Dani Shapiro, author of *Devotion*—In a modern world flooded with artificial light, Clark Strand reminds us what we have left behind in the dark. This beautiful, haunting meditation is filled with surprises and lost knowledge. Read it by candlelight—you will never forget it. "Mitch Horowitz, author of *Occult America* and *One Simple Idea*—In this exhilaratingly original work, Clark Strand shows us that the key to enlightenment lies where we don't want to look. It is hidden in plain sight, but we have to turn the lights off to find it. "Mark Epstein, M.D., author of *Going to Pieces Without Falling Apart* and *The Trauma of Everyday Life*—Breathtaking and revolutionary, a small masterpiece for a world that has grown uncomfortable with the darkness and a poignant plea to take back the dark as the Hour of God, as the great friend of faith, awakening, and soul nourishment. "Gail Straub, co-founder of Empowerment Institute

and author of *Returning to My Mother's House* "Wonder, solitude, quiet, intimacy, the holy darkness holds these treasures and more. If we want to connect with God, argues Strand in this wise and compassionate book, we will be awakened to the dark." Paul Bogard, author of *The End of Night*

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Customer Reviews

"Turn off the lights," says spiritual author and former Zen Buddhist monk, Clark Strand, "and leave them off, and after a few weeks you will discover something miraculous." This book is miraculous in how it weaves seemingly disparate elements such as a sleep study, a press conference at the White House, religious observances and practices that take place at the "Hour of God," with the author's own personal experiences of the "Dark." The book then goes beyond these and shares the author's nightly visitations by a young woman who is later identified as Mary. Through her loving guidance and instruction, she leads him and us, if we care to follow, further into the ancient path of "deep time" and towards prayer and union in the darkness. For a culture saturated with light and "daylight" consciousness, which leaves its people starved for true intimacy, this book shows us the path that can feed our souls once again, a path that perhaps can lead us to "salvation." Not the salvation sold by organized religion, but the salvation of our souls, and of all beings. Wise, compassionate, deep and poetic, this book is a true gospel for our times. Read it and you will want to pass it along to others.

Wow! I'm floored by this beautiful book. Exquisitely written, mesmerizing, and surprising. Clark

Strand is an ex-Buddhist monk, once editor of Tricycle, and author of Buddhist books, who was on a plane with his family when it began to fall from the sky. The air masks were released, luggage flew, people screamed, and Strand astonished himself by praying to God. When his family survived, he had to take a deep look at his reaction. Which places this lifetime seeker on a journey he never would have imagined, a journey that actually began when he was a child and would awake in the middle of the night to go out walking in the dark--as our ancestors did for centuries before electricity. In those dark hours, the Buddha was enlightened and Jesus prayed. If we awaken to the dark again we too would come closer to the divine, something our ancestors took for granted. But there's more. Strand is visited by the Virgin Mary, Blessed Mother, Our Lady, the Goddess. Strand gives the last pages of his book to this Mother God, who has something very important to say. Read this book. Give this book as gifts. It's a jewel.

In his fascinating new book, Clark Strand ponders intriguing aspects of the darkness and its relation to human evolution, religion, sexuality, and our concept of ourselves. He explores our fears of the dark, insomnia and our dreams, sleep studies, and the way in which the invention of fire made humans feel they had to be more than nature, and that nature was just a backdrop to our accomplishments. He recommends that we learn to turn out the lights and turn off the news, and recall who we are in order to confront our true selves. *Waking Up to the Dark* is written in gorgeous prose, and illustrated with lovely black-and-white drawings. Thought-provoking and inspiring, this celebration of the darkness is a must-read for anyone interested in philosophy, psychology, religion, sexuality, or ecology.

Clark Strand followed his heart and his "instructions" and wrote a book that needed to be written. *Waking up to the Dark* is a book any one who lives in this culture of excess should read. That would include everyone! We have lost the gifts that can only be gotten in the silence of the dark. This book brings the necessity of darkness for spiritual growth, into the light!!! Clark Strand talks about "saturated minds and bodies," unable to rest because of perpetual moving, thinking, and doing. The being has gotten lost to the doing and Strand's experiences, as well as his research, as revealed in this book, is a gift to those who haven't yet had time to spend with oneself in the dark of the night. Just reading the book is a meditation. I have read it once and plan to read it again. It's a book I can read and get something new out of each time I return to it.

Great, important, in fact, mandatory book for the purpose of safely navigating the crossroads we

unstable, sleep-deprived, (light switch) trigger-happy humans are going thru at present. The book provides the real solution to the growing "end of days" dread that we all feel is imminent: Turn out the lights. Everything follows from that. It's actually quite revolutionary.

If I could tell you to read just one book this year, it would be this one. "Waking Up to the Dark" is original, totally absorbing, and soulful on a cosmic scale. It will expand your consciousness in the most lyrical way, and transform your understanding of everything from the primal to the sublime. If I could give it 10 stars I would, but I'm going to have to settle for giving it to everyone I know. Enjoy!

Why are we all supposed to wake up in the middle of the night? What would happen if we turned out the lights, all the lights, in our world? Why don't we need to be scared in the dark? Why should we be much more terrified with all the lights of modern life blazing around us? A book with implications for our bodies, our hearts, our souls and our earth that journeys from the halls of NIMH to the charterhouses of the Carthusians, you've got to read this if any of the above questions resonates with you. It is a lyrical revelation, a genuine gospel, and a book that you can read in one sitting, look up, and realize that your entire consciousness has transformed.

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