



Balancing Heaven and Earth: A Memoir of Visions, Dreams, and Realizations

By Robert A. Johnson, Jerry M. Ruhl

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One of this century's most popular psychology scholars, Robert A. Johnson was among the first to present Carl Jung's rich but complex theories with simple elegance and grace, opening them to an entirely new and hungry audience. His masterful works--including the best selling *He, She, Inner Work*, and *Owning Your Own Shadow*--are known and loved as much for their beautiful retellings of timeless myths and folktales as for their deep wisdom and profound insight.

Balancing Heaven and Earth reveals, for the first time, Johnson's own fascinating and mystical life--from his near-death experience at the age of eleven to the lifelong soul journey that has informed his writing and taught him how to live a spiritual life in the endlessly challenging modern world. Full of compelling, humorous, and surprising stories of encounters with an assortment of "sages, saints, and sinners," it lays bare Johnson's own inner world and its dazzling landscape of powerful dreams, mystical visions, and synchronistic events.

Beginning with a vivid retelling of the childhood accident that claimed the lower part of his right leg, Johnson describes the life-defining moment when he was transported by a mystical vision to a realm that exists just beyond ordinary consciousness--a realm he calls the "Golden World." With this experience, described as "both my curse and my blessing," Johnson is launched on a spiritual quest that leads him in search of Eastern wisdom, to encounters with such wise men as J. Krishnamurti and D.T. Suzuki, and finally to Carl Jung, who shows him his destiny revealed in a dream. Johnson's experiences lead him to a unique understanding and acceptance of the slender connecting threads at work in all our lives, guiding us and shaping who we are--"call it fate, destiny, or the hand of God."

As much a personal guide as a memoir, *Balancing Heaven and Earth* teaches us to follow, as Johnson has, the subtle influences of dreams, visions, and even our deepest sufferings in order to live attuned to our spiritual selves. A pure delight for Johnson's many fans and a splendid example of his trademark blend of illustrative myth and psychological insight, this is a work of incomparable beauty and inspiration showcasing the wisdom of a lifetime.

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Balancing Heaven and Earth: A Memoir of Visions, Dreams, and Realizations By Robert A. Johnson, Jerry M. Ruhl Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #371430 in Books
- Published on: 1998-01-20
- Released on: 1998-01-20
- Ingredients: Example Ingredients
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.25" h x 1.05" w x 5.50" l, .90 pounds

- Binding: Hardcover
- 320 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Johnson was 11 years old and close to death after a car accident when he experienced the "Golden World," an "antechamber of heaven" where he felt "purely tranquil" and experienced "joy beyond bound." Recurring physical hardship due to the loss of his leg triggered a second illuminating experience several years later that motivated him to embark on a quest for self-knowledge. Johnson eventually embraced Christian mysticism and became a Jungian analyst. Here, the author of *We* (and of the companion volumes *She* and *He*, as well as seven other books) credits following the "slender threads" of fate for his well-being. Johnson expresses the belief that there is "one, and only one, appropriate action in any given moment of time"—an action that "balances" spiritual needs with more mundane concerns. Despite his faith in divine will, Johnson often seems at odds with organized religion, some aspects of which he criticizes as "nothing but institutional mother complexes, with selfishness and ego regression running rampant in the name of spirituality." Throughout, Johnson and Ruhl, the director of the C.G. Jung Society of Colorado, in addition to offering an inspiring memoir, weave in explanations of psychology, synchronicity theory and dream analysis to create a useful personal guide to Johnson's brand of self-realization.

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Review

"Please remember, Carl Jung told Robert Johnson, 'it is what you are that heals, not what you know.'

"Balancing Heaven and Earth" shows us who Robert Johnson is. Its healing power is palpable."--Marion Woodman, author of "Leaving My Father's House"

About the Author

Robert A. Johnson, a noted lecturer and Jungian analyst, is also the author of *He, She, We, Inner Work, Ecstasy, Transformation, and Owning Your Own Shadow*.

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