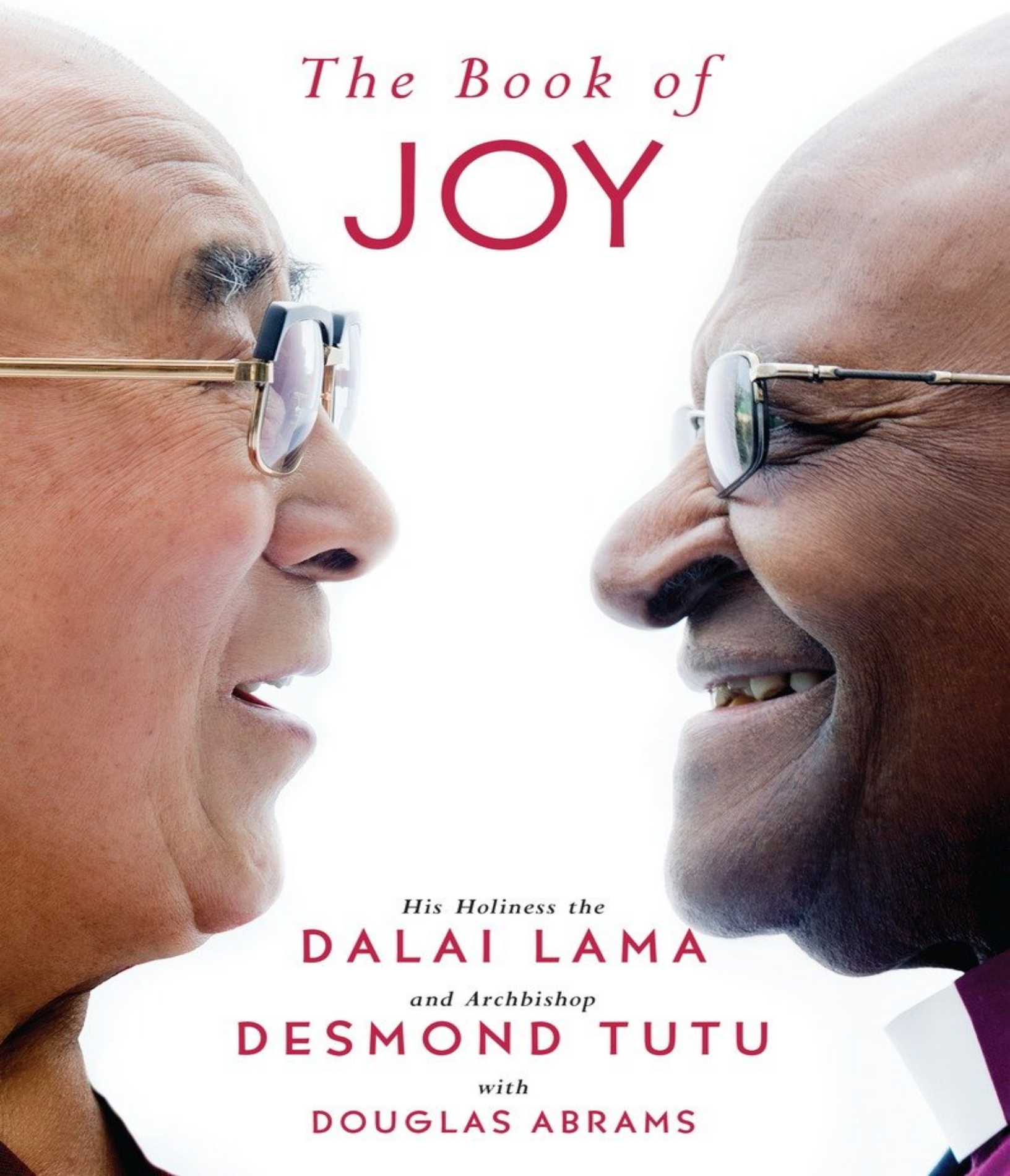


LASTING HAPPINESS
IN A CHANGING WORLD

The Book of
JOY



His Holiness the
DALAI LAMA
and Archbishop
DESMOND TUTU
with
DOUGLAS ABRAMS

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JOY

*Lasting Happiness in a
Changing World*

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA
AND ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU

with Douglas Abrams

AVERY *an imprint of Penguin Random House* NEW YORK



An imprint of Penguin Random House LLC
375 Hudson Street
New York, New York 10014



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eBook ISBN: 9780399185069

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV, date. | Tutu, Desmond, author.

Title: The book of joy : lasting happiness in a changing world / His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, with Douglas Abrams.

Description: New York : Avery, 2016.

Identifiers: LCCN 2016026669 | ISBN 9780399185045

Subjects: LCSH: Happiness—Religious aspects. | Joy—Religious aspects.

Classification: LCC BL65.H36 B78 2016 | DDC 294.3/444—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2016026669>

p. cm.

Version_1

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The Invitation to Joy

To celebrate one of our special birthdays, we met for a week in Dharamsala to enjoy our friendship and to create something that we hope will be a birthday gift for others. There is perhaps nothing more joyous than birth, and yet so much of life is spent in sadness, stress, and suffering. We hope this small book will be an invitation to more joy and more happiness.

No dark fate determines the future. We do. Each day and each moment, we are able to create and re-create our lives and the very quality of human life on our planet. This is the power we wield.

Lasting happiness cannot be found in pursuit of any goal or achievement. It does not reside in fortune or fame. It resides only in the human mind and heart, and it is here that we hope you will find it.

Our cowriter, Douglas Abrams, has kindly agreed to assist us in this project and interviewed us over the course of a week in Dharamsala. We have asked him to weave our voices together and offer his own as our narrator so that we can share not only our views and our experience but also what scientists and others have found to be the wellsprings of joy.

You don't need to believe us. Indeed, nothing we say should be taken as an article of faith. We are sharing what two friends, from very different worlds, have witnessed and learned in our long lives. We hope you will discover whether what is included here is true by applying it in your own life.

Every day is a new opportunity to begin again. Every day is your birthday.

May this book be a blessing for all sentient beings, and for all of God's children—including you.

TENZIN GYATSO,
HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA

DESMOND TUTU,
ARCHBISHOP EMERITUS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA



INTRODUCTION

By Douglas Abrams

As we stepped off the plane at the small airport, the howl of the jet engines deafening and the snowcapped foothills of the Himalayas looming behind us, two old friends embraced. The Archbishop touched the Dalai Lama's cheeks tenderly, and the Dalai Lama pursed his lips as if blowing the Archbishop a kiss. It was a moment of enormous affection and friendship. In the yearlong preparations for this visit, we were quite aware of what the meeting might mean for the world, but we never realized what a week together might mean for the two of them.

It has been a profound privilege and a daunting responsibility to convey the remarkable week of dialogues that took place in Dharamsala, India, at the Dalai Lama's residence in exile. In this book I have tried to share with you their intimate conversations, which were filled with seemingly endless laughter and punctuated by many poignant moments of recalling love and loss.

Although they had met only half a dozen times, the men shared a bond that transcended these brief visits, and each considered the other his "mischievous spiritual brother." Never before, or likely after, would they have a chance to spend so much time in each other's company, reveling in the joy of their friendship.

The heavy footsteps of mortality were never far from our conversations. Our trip itinerary had to be reworked twice so that the Archbishop could attend funerals for his peers. As health and global politics have conspired to keep them apart, we recognized that this might be their last time together.

For a week we sat in a pool of soft light, arranged carefully to avoid hurting the Dalai Lama's sensitive eyes, as five video cameras filmed around us. During our quest to understand joy, we explored many of the most profound subjects in life. We were in search of true joy that was not

dependent on the vicissitudes of circumstance. We knew that we would need to tackle the obstacles that can so often make joy elusive. During the dialogues they outlined eight pillars of joy—four pillars of the mind and four pillars of the heart. These two great leaders agreed on the most important principles, and offered illuminating differences, as we attempted to gather insights that might help readers to find lasting happiness in an ever-changing, and often aching, world.

We had an opportunity each day to sip warm Darjeeling tea and to break bread—Tibetan flat bread. All who were working on filming the interviews were invited to join these daily teas and lunches. One exceptional morning, the Dalai Lama even introduced the Archbishop to his meditation practice in his private residence, and the Archbishop gave the Dalai Lama communion, a rite generally reserved for those who are within the Christian faith.

Finally, at the end of the week, we celebrated the Dalai Lama's birthday at the Tibetan Children's Village, one of the boarding schools for children who have fled Tibet, where the Chinese authorities have prevented them from receiving an education based on Tibetan culture and language. The children are sent by their parents over the mountain passes with guides who promise to deliver them to one of the Dalai Lama's schools. It is hard to imagine the heartbreak of parents sending their children away, knowing that they will not see them again for more than a decade, if ever.

In the midst of this traumatized school, more than two thousand students and their teachers cheered as the Dalai Lama, who is prohibited by his monastic vows from dancing, took his first tentative shimmy encouraged by the Archbishop's irrepressible boogie.

• • •

The Dalai Lama and the Archbishop are two of the great spiritual masters of our time, but they are also moral leaders who transcend their own traditions and speak always from a concern for humanity as a whole. Their courage and resilience and dogged hope in humanity inspire millions as they refuse to give in to the fashionable cynicism that risks engulfing us. Their joy is clearly not easy or superficial but one burnished by the fire of adversity, oppression, and struggle. The Dalai Lama and the

Archbishop remind us that joy is in fact our birthright and even more fundamental than happiness.

“Joy,” as the Archbishop said during the week, “is much bigger than happiness. While happiness is often seen as being dependent on external circumstances, joy is not.” This state of mind—and heart—is much closer to both the Dalai Lama’s and the Archbishop’s understanding of what animates our lives and what ultimately leads to a life of satisfaction and meaning.

The dialogues were about what the Dalai Lama has called the very “purpose of life”—the goal of avoiding suffering and discovering happiness. They shared their hard-won wisdom of how to live with joy in the face of life’s inevitable sorrows. Together they explored how we can transform joy from an ephemeral *state* into an enduring *trait*, from a fleeting feeling into a lasting way of being.

• • •

From the beginning this book was envisioned as a three-layer birthday cake.

The first layer is the Dalai Lama’s and Archbishop Tutu’s *teachings* on joy: Is it really possible to be joyful even in the face of our daily troubles—from frustration with morning traffic to fears of not being able to provide for our families, from anger at those who have wronged us to grief at the loss of those we love, from the ravages of illness to the abyss of death? How do we embrace the reality of our lives, deny nothing, but transcend the pain and suffering that is inescapable? And even when our lives are good, how do we live in joy when so many others are suffering: when crushing poverty robs people of their future, when violence and terror fill our streets, and when ecological devastation endangers the very possibility of life on our planet? This book is an attempt to answer these questions and many more.

The second layer is made up of the latest *science* on joy and also on all the other qualities that they believe are essential for enduring happiness. With new discoveries in brain science and experimental psychology, there are now many profound insights into human flourishing. Two months before the trip I had lunch with neuroscientist Richard Davidson, a pioneer researching happiness. He has studied meditators in his lab and found that

meditation confers measurable benefits for the brain. We sat at an outdoor table at a Vietnamese restaurant in San Francisco, the ever-present wind blowing the gray-black locks of his boyish haircut. As we ate spring rolls, Davidson said that the Dalai Lama had once confessed to him that he found the science on meditation inspiring, especially when getting out of bed to sit in the early morning. If the science helps the Dalai Lama, it can help the rest of us even more.

Too often we see spirituality and science as antagonistic forces, each with its hand at the other's throat. Yet Archbishop Tutu has expressed his belief in the importance of what he calls "self-corroborating truth"—when many different fields of knowledge point to the same conclusion. Similarly, the Dalai Lama was adamant about the importance of making sure that this was not a Buddhist or Christian book, but a universal book supported not only by opinion or tradition but also by science. (Full disclosure: I am Jewish, although I also identify as secular—it sounds a little like a joke: A Buddhist, a Christian, and a Jew walk into a bar . . .)

The third layer of the birthday cake is the *stories* of being in Dharamsala with the Dalai Lama and the Archbishop throughout the week. These up-close and personal chapters are meant to allow the reader to join the journey from the first embrace to the final goodbye.

We have also included a selection of joy practices at the end of the book. Both teachers shared with us their daily practices, the anchors of their own emotional and spiritual lives. The goal here is not to create a recipe for a joyful life but to offer some of the techniques and traditions that have served the Dalai Lama and the Archbishop and countless others over the millennia in their respective traditions. These practical exercises will hopefully help you take the teachings, the science, and the stories and incorporate them into your daily life.

• • •

I have had the privilege of working with many of the great spiritual teachers and scientific pioneers of our time, helping them convey their insights about health and happiness for others. (Many of these scientists have generously contributed their research to this book.) I am sure that my fascination—okay, obsession—with joy began while growing up in a loving home that was shadowed by the black dog of depression. Having witnessed

and experienced such pain from a very young age, I know that so much of human suffering occurs within our own head and heart. The week in Dharamsala felt like an extraordinary and challenging peak in this lifelong journey to understand both joy and suffering.

As the people’s ambassador, I sat there for five days of interviews, staring into the eyes of two of the most compassionate people on the planet. I am very skeptical about the magical sensations that some attribute to being in the presence of spiritual teachers, but from the very first day I found my head starting to tingle. It was startling, but perhaps it was simply an example of how my mirror neurons, those special empathic brain cells, were internalizing what I was witnessing in the eyes of these two extremely loving men.

Fortunately, I was not alone in the daunting task of distilling their wisdom. Thupten Jinpa, the Dalai Lama’s principal translator for more than thirty years and a Buddhist scholar, accompanied me from start to finish. For many years he was a Buddhist monk, but he gave up his robes for a life of marriage and family in Canada, making him the perfect partner for translating between worlds as well as languages. We sat together during the dialogues, but Jinpa also helped me to prepare the questions and interpret the answers. He has become a trusted collaborator and a dear friend.

The questions were not ours alone. We invited the world to ask their questions about joy, and although it turned out we had only three days to collect them, we received more than a thousand. It was fascinating that the most asked question was not about how we could discover our own joy but how we could possibly live with joy in a world filled with so much suffering.

• • •

During the week their fingers were often wagging at each other teasingly, moments before their hands were clasped together affectionately. During our first lunch the Archbishop told the story of a talk they were giving together. As they were getting ready to walk on stage, the Dalai Lama—the world’s icon of compassion and peace—pretended to choke his spiritual older brother. The Archbishop turned to the Dalai Lama and said, “Hey, the cameras are on us, act like a *holy* man.”

These two men remind us that how we choose to act each day is what matters. Even holy men have to act like holy men. But how we think holy men act, serious and severe, pious and reserved, is hardly how these two greet the world, or each other.

The Archbishop has never claimed sainthood and the Dalai Lama considers himself a simple monk. They offer us the reflection of real lives filled with pain and turmoil in the midst of which they have been able to discover a level of peace, of courage, of joy that we can aspire to in our own lives. Their desire for this book is not just to convey their wisdom but their humanity as well. Suffering is inevitable, they said, but how we respond to that suffering is our choice. Not even oppression or occupation can take away this freedom to choose our response.

Right until the very last minute we did not know if the Archbishop's doctors would allow him to travel. The prostate cancer had returned and was slow, this time, to respond to treatment. The Archbishop is now on an experimental protocol to see if it will hold the cancer at bay. As we were landing in Dharamsala, what surprised me most was the excitement, anticipation, and perhaps a touch of concern, on the Archbishop's face that could be seen in his wide grin and twinkling blue-gray eyes.



Arrival: We Are Fragile Creatures

We are fragile creatures, and it is from this weakness, not despite it, that we discover the possibility of true joy,” the Archbishop said as I handed him his sleek black cane with the silver handle shaped like a greyhound. “Life is filled with challenges and adversity,” the Archbishop continued. “Fear is inevitable, as is pain and eventually death. Take the return of the prostate cancer—well, it does focus the mind.”

One of the side effects of the medicine the Archbishop was taking is fatigue, and he had slept for most of the flight to India, a beige blanket pulled up over his head. We had planned to talk on the flight, but sleep was most important, and now he was trying to share his thoughts quickly as we approached Dharamsala.

We had stopped off in Amritsar for the night so he could rest and because the airport in Dharamsala was open for only a couple of hours a day. This morning we had visited the famed Harmandir Sahib, the Sikh religion’s holiest site. The upper stories are clad in gold, resulting in its popular name, the Golden Temple. There are four doors to get into the *gurdwara*, which symbolizes the tradition’s openness toward all people and all religions. This seemed like an appropriate place to pay our respects, as we were embarking on an interfaith meeting that would bring two of the world’s great religions, Christianity and Buddhism, into deep dialogue.

As we were swallowed into a throng of the temple’s one hundred thousand daily visitors, we got the call. The Dalai Lama had decided to meet the Archbishop at the airport, a rare honor that he bestows on very few of the endless stream of visiting dignitaries. We were told that he was already on his way. We raced to get out of the temple and back to the airport as we pushed the Archbishop in his wheelchair, his bald head covered by an orange handkerchief, a required sign of respect at the temple, which made him look like a Day-Glo pirate.

The van tried to inch its way through the traffic-choked streets of Amritsar as a symphony of car horns played, the mass of cars, pedestrians, bicycles, scooters, and animals all jostling for position. Concrete buildings lined the roads, their rebar sticking out in an always unfinished state of expansion. We finally made it to the airport and onto the plane. We wished that the twenty-minute flight would go even faster, concerned now that the Dalai Lama would be waiting on the tarmac.

“Discovering more joy does not, I’m sorry to say,” the Archbishop added, as we began our descent, “save us from the inevitability of hardship and heartbreak. In fact, we may cry more easily, but we will laugh more easily, too. Perhaps we are just more alive. Yet as we discover more joy, we can face suffering in a way that ennobles rather than embitters. We have hardship without becoming hard. We have heartbreak without being broken.”

I had witnessed both the Archbishop’s tears and his laughter so many times. Well, more his laughter than his tears, in truth, but he does cry easily and often, for that which is not yet redeemed, for that which is not yet whole. It all matters to him, it all affects him deeply. His prayers, in which I have been enveloped, reach around the world to all who are in need and suffering. One of his book editors had a grandson who was ill and on the Archbishop’s very long daily prayer list. Several years later, the editor asked if he would once again pray for his grandson, because the child’s illness had returned. The Archbishop replied that he had never stopped praying for the boy.

From the plane, we could see the snow-covered mountains that are the postcard backdrop to the Dalai Lama’s home in exile. After the Chinese invasion of Tibet, the Dalai Lama and a hundred thousand other Tibetans fled to India. These refugees were temporarily settled in the lowlands of India, where the heat and mosquitos led a great many to become ill. Eventually the government of India established the Dalai Lama’s residence in Dharamsala, and the Dalai Lama was very grateful for the higher altitude and the cooler weather. Over time many Tibetans came to settle here as well, as if the community was heartsick for the mountainous landscape and high altitude of their home. And of course most of all, they wanted to be close to their spiritual and political leader.

Dharamsala is in the north Indian state of Himachal Pradesh, and the British, when they ruled India, also used to come here to escape the

relentless heat of the Indian summer. As we approached this former British hill station, we could see the green carpet of pine trees and agricultural fields below. Dense storm clouds and fog often close the small airport, as it did on my last visit. But today the sky was blue, the wisps of clouds held at bay by the mountains. We descended for the steep landing.

• • •

One great question underlies our existence,” the Dalai Lama had said before the trip. “What is the purpose of life? After much consideration, I believe that the purpose of life is to find happiness.

“It does not matter whether one is a Buddhist like me, or a Christian like the Archbishop, or any other religion, or no religion at all. From the moment of birth, every human being wants to discover happiness and avoid suffering. No differences in our culture or our education or our religion affect this. From the very core of our being, we simply desire joy and contentment. But so often these feelings are fleeting and hard to find, like a butterfly that lands on us and then flutters away.

“The ultimate source of happiness is within us. Not money, not power, not status. Some of my friends are billionaires, but they are very unhappy people. Power and money fail to bring inner peace. Outward attainment will not bring real inner joyfulness. We must look inside.

“Sadly, many of the things that undermine our joy and happiness we create ourselves. Often it comes from the negative tendencies of the mind, emotional reactivity, or from our inability to appreciate and utilize the resources that exist within us. The suffering from a natural disaster we cannot control, but the suffering from our daily disasters we can. We create most of our suffering, so it should be logical that we also have the ability to create more joy. It simply depends on the attitudes, the perspectives, and the reactions we bring to situations and to our relationships with other people. When it comes to personal happiness there is a lot that we as individuals can do.”

• • •

We lurched forward as the brakes seized the tires, and then the plane rumbled and shook, stopping quickly on the short runway. Out the window of the airplane we could see the Dalai Lama standing on the

tarmac, a large yellow umbrella held over his head to protect him from the bright Indian sun. He was wearing his maroon robe and red shawl, although we could see a small patch of saffron yellow on his sleeveless vest. An entourage of office staff and airport officials in suits flanked him. Indian soldiers in khaki uniforms were providing security.

The media had been kept outside of the airport. This was going to be an intimate reunion with only the Dalai Lama's personal photographer taking pictures. As the Archbishop hobbled down the steep stairs in his blue blazer and signature fisherman's cap, the Dalai Lama approached.

The Dalai Lama was smiling, his eyes sparkling behind his large square-framed glasses. He bowed low and then the Archbishop spread his arms out, and they embraced. They separated and held each other's shoulders, gazing into each other's eyes, as if trying to convince themselves that they were really together again.

"I haven't seen you in a long while," Archbishop Tutu said as he touched the Dalai Lama's cheek tenderly with the tips of his fingers and inspected him closely. "You look very good."

The Dalai Lama, still holding the Archbishop's small shoulders, puckered as if to blow him a kiss. The Archbishop raised his left hand, gold wedding ring shining, and clasped the Dalai Lama's chin as one might do to one's precious grandchild. Then the Archbishop went in for a kiss on the cheek. The Dalai Lama, not used to kisses from anyone, flinched but also laughed with delight, which was quickly accompanied by the Archbishop's high-pitched cackle.

"You don't like a kiss," the Archbishop said, and gave him another on the other cheek. I wondered how many kisses the Dalai Lama had received in his whole life, taken from his parents at age two and raised in a rarefied realm far away from kisses.

They stopped for the formal presentation of *khata* (a white scarf), a Tibetan custom of greeting and respect. The Dalai Lama bowed with hands pressed together at his heart, the gesture of welcome that recognizes our oneness. The Archbishop took off his fisherman's cap and bowed in return. The Dalai Lama then draped the long white silk scarf around the Archbishop's neck. They whispered into each other's ears, trying to talk over the noise of the jet still droning in the background. The Dalai Lama took the Archbishop's hand, and then they were more eight than eighty,