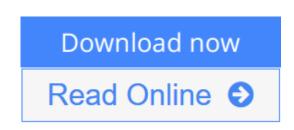


## The Inner Voice of Love: A Journey Through Anguish to Freedom

By Henri J. M. Nouwen



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This is Henri Nouwen's "secret journal." It was written during the most difficult period of his life, when he suddenly lost his self-esteem, his energy to live and work, his sense of being loved, even his hope in God. Although he experienced excruciating anguish and despair, he was still able to keep a journal in which he wrote a spiritual imperative to himself each day that emerged from his conversations with friends and supporters.

For more than eight years, Henri Nouwen felt that what he wrote was too raw and private to share with others. Instead, he published *The Return of the Prodigal Son,* in which he expressed some of the insights gained during his mental and spiritual crisis. But then friends asked him, "Why keep your anguish hidden from the many people who have been nurtured by your writing? Wouldn't it be of consolation for many to know about the fierce inner battle that lies underneath so many of your spiritual insights?"

For the countless men and women who have to live through the pain of broken relationships, or who suffer from the loss of a loved one, this book about the inner voice of love offers new courage, new hope, even new life.

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#### **Editorial Review**

#### Amazon.com Review

*The Inner Voice of Love: A Journey Through Anguish to Freedom* is a collection of passages from Henri Nouwen's journals, written during a period when his self-esteem evaporated, his energy to work disappeared, and God seemed entirely unreal. This is not a book to be read straight through: each short chapter takes time to digest, because, like the following passage, each of Nouwen's thoughts has the raw complexity of real honesty:

Your body needs to be held and to hold, to be touched and to touch. None of these needs is to be despised, denied, or repressed. But you have to keep searching for your body's deeper need, the need for genuine love. Every time you are able to go beyond the body's superficial desires for love, you are bringing your body home and moving toward integration and unity.

#### --Michael Joseph Gross

#### From Publishers Weekly

Nouwen, Catholic priest and popular author (The Wounded Healer, 1972), hit a six-month spiritual and mental crisis at the end of 1987 during which he "wondered whether I would be able to hold on to my life. Everything came crashing down?my self-esteem, my energy to live and work, my sense of being loved, my hope for healing, my trust in God... everything." This book is his personal journal written during his time of anguish. For years, Nouwen felt his experience was too personal to share with the world, but on advice from friends, and in the hope that these insights would help nurture others, he published his journal entries. Although there are occasional gems here, most of these meditations are rather generic. Perhaps this generic quality may make Nouwen and his work more human to a public that has come to view him as a spiritual giant.

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#### From Library Journal

The late Nouwen, a popular spiritual author and Catholic priest, referred to these writings as his "secret journal," written during the darkest period of his life, from December 1987 to June 1988. He was sustained during this time of personal despair by the support of others and by the spiritual imperatives he wrote to himself, which he shares here. In these dialogs of the soul, Nouwen forges through the anguish of personal doubt with a deep sense of humility and truthfulness. His insights are grounded in the conviction that individual suffering can lead to profound healing when love of self, others, and God remain present throughout our struggling. Recommended for public and theology libraries. Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.

#### **Users Review**

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#### **Charles Bryce:**

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