



# Taking the Leap: Freeing Ourselves from Old Habits and Fears (Shambhala Library)

By Pema Chodron

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## Taking the Leap: Freeing Ourselves from Old Habits and Fears (Shambhala Library) By Pema Chodron

In this pithy, inspiring book, Pema Chödrön presents the Buddhist concept of *shenpa*, which can be translated as "getting stuck" or "getting hooked." *Shenpa* arises in that moment when life suddenly becomes disappointing, difficult, or painful. Perhaps someone criticizes your work, your appearance, or your child. Something within you tightens, shuts down. That's *shenpa*. After we tighten, we instinctively start to blame ourselves or others. We might get angry and lash out at others in words or actions. Or we might reach for a cigarette, a drink, or some other addictive substance to numb our pain. Chödrön shows us that our habitual reactions to life's difficulties keep us locked in cycles of suffering.

In *Taking the Leap* she shows us a new way of responding to life's upsets: learning to stay present. Rather than habitually running from life's hurts, you can actually stop and open your heart, thereby discovering true courage and compassion. This book presents "the four R's" of working with *shenpa*: recognizing, refraining, relaxing, and resolving. With her characteristic warmth and encouragement, Pema Chödrön offers transformational teachings and practices that readers can immediately put to use in their daily lives.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This gently encouraging book by popular teacher Chödrön (*When Things Fall Apart; The Places That Scare You*) applies Buddhist wisdom to the problems of deeply ingrained reactions. An American Buddhist nun in the lineage of Tibetan master Chogyam Trungpa, she writes that we already have what we need to change and heal. Chödrön focuses on the preverbal moment—called *shenpa* in Tibetan—in which individuals are hooked into harmful stories, emotions and actions within the flux of their experiences. Clear descriptions of how this process works are accompanied by simple techniques to begin to break the cycle. Her suggestions can be easily practiced by anyone at any time without meditation training, although she presents the benefits of sitting meditation. With anecdotes from her teachers and examples from her own and others' lives, Chödrön demonstrates that people can stop their suffering and access their natural intelligence, warmth and openness. Throughout, she emphasizes the global implications of personal change. Among her strengths are compassion for the difficulty of human existence and her willingness to acknowledge her own failings. This short guide provides valuable tools for change in uncertain times. (Sept. 8)

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### Review

“This short guide provides valuable tools for change in uncertain times.”—*Publishers Weekly*

### About the Author

Pema Chödrön is an American Buddhist nun in the lineage of Chögyam Trungpa. She is resident teacher at Gampo Abbey in Nova Scotia, the first Tibetan monastery in North America established for Westerners. She is the author of many books and audiobooks, including the best-selling *When Things Fall Apart* and *Don't Bite the Hook*.

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