



What The F#@k Is Enlightenment?

Kamaria G. Powell

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What the F#@k is Enlightenment? offers a message of empowerment based in a strong personal spiritual practice.

"I am not a saint. I don't go to church every Sunday, and I curse like a sailor in my mind," writes Kamaria G. Powell in *What the F#@k is Enlightenment?* Raised by a mother who struggled with mental illness and a reformed drug-dealer father, Powell was drawn to God as a child. Rebelling against spiritual complacency, she left mainstream religion behind to chart her own course to enlightenment.

"I took it upon myself to search for the answers and create my own unique spiritual pathway to the Divine, and I've never felt more connected and aligned with Spirit," writes Powell. Her search led her to what her church could not provide: an intimate, personal relationship with a God who did not see her as flawed and in need of "fixing," but instead loved her beyond all imagining—enough to live within her.

Powell defines enlightenment as the conscious awareness of being part of the divine, of being an integral part of all that is. This awareness honors each person's unique spiritual identity. Lacking awareness of this relationship with the divine, her book suggests, leaves a person vulnerable.

Written in a friendly, conversational tone and using many examples from Powell's own life, the book addresses deep, meaningful topics in the realm of personal spirituality. Based on introspection and in-depth self-analysis, Powell has crafted a unique and personal spiritual practice. She challenges and encourages seekers to explore on their own, suggesting using something like music, art, dance, or time spent in nature to craft their own spiritual practice.

Especially notable is the book's discussion of the ways in which fear can hamper personal and spiritual growth, and the methods offered for dealing with fear are wise, compassionate, and easy to employ.

Powell writes that she deliberately chose the book's title as a challenge to the illusions of what a spiritual person is generally thought to be, and her language throughout is spiced with similar expletives. The text presents occasional errors in grammar, syntax, spelling, and punctuation. There are also several errors in word usage, and the narrative flow is occasionally hampered by disorganized sentences.

The overall design and layout of the book are pleasant and easy on the eye, and the inclusion of the author's heartfelt poems—some having a touch of the rhythm of rap, while others are contemplative and serene—adds a personal touch to the text.

Kamaria G. Powell's *What the F#@k is Enlightenment?* offers a message of empowerment based in a strong personal spiritual practice that honors the unique contribution that each awake and aware individual can make toward the creation of a better world.

KRISTINE MORRIS (June 16, 2017)

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