

Embetterment Reading List

6/9/2026

Read (JeP)	Title	Author	Category	Recommended By	Comments
x	Art & Fear	Bayles, David and Ted Orland	Embetterment	JeP	Art & Fear explores the way art gets made, the reasons it often doesn't get made, and the nature of the difficulties that cause so many artists to give up along the way.
	The Birth and Death of Meaning: An Interdisciplinary Perspective on the Problem of Man	Becker, Ernest	Embetterment		Uses the disciplines of psychology, anthropology, sociology and psychiatry to explain what makes people act the way they do.
x	Atlas of the Heart	Brown, Brene	Embetterment	JeP	Takes us on a journey through eighty-seven of the emotions and experiences that define what it means to be human.
x	Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead	Brown, Brene	Embetterment	JeP	Dispels the cultural myth that vulnerability is weakness and argues that it is, in truth, our most accurate measure of courage.
x	Bittersweet: How Sorrow and Longing Make Us Whole	Cain, Susan	Embetterment	JeP	Bittersweetness is a tendency to states of long-ing, poignancy, and sorrow; an acute aware-ness of passing time; and a curiously piercing joy at the beauty of the world. It recognizes that light and dark, birth and death—bitter and sweet—are forever paired.
x	Designing Your Life	Evans, Bill and Dave Evans	Embetterment	JeP	Shows us how design thinking can help us create a life that is both meaningful and fulfilling, regardless of who or where we are, what we do or have done for a living, or how young or old we are.
	Limbo	Fox, Dan	Embetterment		In a world that demands faith in progress and growth, Limbo is a companion for the stuck, the isolated, delayed, stranded and those in the dark.
x	Blink: The Power of Thinking Without	Gladwell, Malcolm	Embetterment		
	Meditation for Fidgety Skeptics: A 10% Happier How-to Book	Harris, Dan	Embetterment		The authors embark on a gonzo cross-country quest to tackle the myths, misconceptions, and self-deceptions that keep people from meditating. The book is filled with game-changing and deeply practical meditation instructions
	On Looking: Eleven Walks with Expert Eyes	Horowitz, Alexandra	Embetterment		Exploration of how we perceive and discover our world.
x	The Art of Stillness	Iyer, Pico	Embetterment	JeP	Investigates the lives of people who have made a life seeking stillness: from Matthieu Ricard, a Frenchman with a PhD in molecular biology who left a promising scientific career to become a Tibetan monk, to revered singer-songwriter Leonard
x	Awe: The New Science of Everyday Wonder and How It Can Transform Your Life	Keltner, Dacha	Embetterment	JeP	presents a sweeping investigation and deeply personal inquiry into this elusive feeling. Revealing new re-search alongside an examination of awe across history, culture, and within his own life, Keltner shows us how cultivating awe in our ev-eryday lives leads us to appreciate what is most humane in our human nature.
x	Born to Be Good: The Science of a Meaningful Life	Keltner, Dacha	Embetterment	JeP	Investigates an unanswered question of human evolution: If humans are hardwired to lead lives that are “nasty, brutish, and short,” why have we evolved with positive emotions like gratitude, amusement, awe, and compassion that promote ethical action and cooperative societies?
	Steal Like an Artist: 10 Things Nobody Told You About Being Creative	Kleon, Austin	Embetterment		An inspiring guide to creativity in the digital age.
	Enchantment: Awakening Wonder in an Anxious Age	May, Katherine	Embetterment		Many of us feel trapped in a grind of constant change: rolling news cycles, the chatter of social media, our families split along partisan lines. We feel fearful and tired, on edge in our bodies, not quite knowing what has us perpetually depleted. For Katherine May, this low hum of fatigue and anxiety made her wonder what she was missing.
	Inner Excellence	Murphy, Jim	Embetterment		
	Archetypes: Who Are You?	Myss, Caroline	Embetterment		dives into the world of archetypes, which have been the subject of her work for more than 25 years. Archetypes are universal patterns of behavior that, once discovered, help you better understand yourself and your place in the world. In short, knowing your archetypes can transform your life.
	How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy	Odell, Jenny	Embetterment		Sees our attention as the most precious—and overdrawn—resource we have. And we must actively and continuously choose how we use it.
	Beauty: The Invisible Embrace: Rediscovering the True Sources of Compassion, Serenity, and Hope	O'Donohue, John	Embetterment		The human soul is hungry for beauty; we seek it everywhere in landscape, music, art, clothes, furniture, gardening, companionship, love, religion, and in ourselves. When we experience the Beautiful, there is a wonderful sense of homecoming; we feel fully alive.
x	A Place of My Own	Pollen, Michael	Embetterment	JeP	When Michael Pollan decided to plant a garden, the result was the acclaimed bestseller Second Nature. In A Place of My Own, he turns his sharp insight to the craft of building, as he recounts the process of designing and constructing a small one-room structure on his rural Connecticut property.
	The Effortless Day	Rogers, Heather	Embetterment		
	Chess for Zebras: Thinking Differently about Black and White	Rowson, Jonathan	Embetterment	ES	This book assists all players in their efforts to improve, and provides fresh insights into the opening and early middlegame.
	Beyond Words: What Animals Think and Feel	Safina, Carl	Embetterment	CR	Offers an intimate view of animal behavior to challenge the fixed boundary between humans and nonhuman animals.
	Life Is Meals: A Food Lover's Book of Days	Salter, James	Embetterment		a charming, beautifully illustrated food lover's companion that, with an entry for each day of the year, takes us from a Twelfth Night cake in January to a champagne dinner on New Year's Eve.
	A Step Away from Paradise: The True Story of a Tibetan Lama's Journey to a Land of Immortality	Shor, Thomas K.	Embetterment		The true story of a charismatic visionary lama and his remarkable expedition. Their aim: to open a crack in the very fabric of reality and go to a land we would all wish to inhabit if it were only there—a land of peace and concord.
x	How to Be an Explorer of the World	Smith, Keri	Embetterment	JeP	Artists and scientists analyze the world around them in surprisingly similar ways, by observing, collecting, documenting, analyzing, and comparing. In this captivating guided journal, readers are encouraged to explore their world as both artists and scientists.
	Expected Goals: The story of how data conquered football and changed the game forever	Smith, Rory	Embetterment	RJB	This is the story of modern football's great data revolution and the group of curious, entrepreneurial personalities who zealously believed in its potential to transform the game.
x	Envisioning Information	Tufte, Edward R.	Embetterment	JeP	This book celebrates escapes from the flatlands of both paper and computer screen, showing superb displays of high-dimensional complex data.
	He Held Radical Light: The Art of Faith, the Faith of Art	Wiman, Christian	Embetterment		Explores the relationships between art and faith, death and fame, heaven and oblivion.

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x	Why Buddhism is True: The Science and Philosophy of Meditation and Enlightenment	Wright, Robert	Embetterment	JeP	The mind is designed to often delude us about ourselves and about the world, and it is designed to make happiness hard to sustain. But if we know our minds are rigged for anxiety, depression, anger, and greed, what do we do? Wright locates the answer in Buddhism.
x	Little Book of Hygge: Danish Secrets to Happy Living		Embetterment	JeP	Why are Danes the happiest people in the world? The answer is hygge. Hygge is a sense of comfort, togetherness, and well-being.

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