



**Naked in Ashes**

reviewed by  
molly roemer

Our culture cannot fathom, let alone relate to leaving behind all worldly

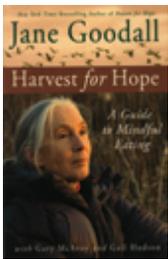
possessions and attachments in order to find God. In the film, *Naked in Ashes*, humility will wash over you watching those who have chosen a life of austerity, chastity, poverty and devotion. Viewers are given a palpable glimpse into the lives of Eastern Yogis. Out

of the billion people who live in India, 15 million Yogis are recognized in this documentary. Their underlying quest exemplifies man's primordial desire to experience God. They are not interested in this life on Earth, rather they practice self-denial and relinquish the physical body. They only take what they need, the essentials, living on the fringes of society. Some give up food, trusting that God will nourish and feed their bodies. One man, Raman Giri, has been standing, not sitting or lying down, for twelve years, a discipline he has chosen to transcend his physical body. They cleanse their sins in a holy bath and wipe

ashes of the dead all over their bodies, a symbol of immortality. One man said, "One day you will merge with the Earth, so why wait until you are dead?" You become a voyeur into the lives of Indian Yogis, getting a raw, candid observation of their daily activities, soaking up their wisdom, and watching them prepare for their pilgrimage. Seeing them live the words of the ancient yoga texts, reminds us that yoga is much more than doing asanas. This film will provoke introspection and alter your perception of what yoga is.

*paradisefilmworks.com*

reading



**Harvest to Hope: A Guide to Mindful Eating**

reviewed by  
lucia cordeiro

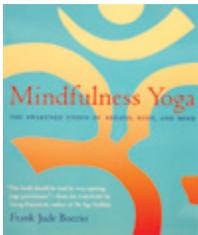
Most of her life has been spent observing nature and learning

from it. Yes, Jane Goodall, the lady famous for working with chimpanzees in Tanzania,

released yet another inspirational book. This time, Goodall makes the readers aware of how much each one of us can help the planet by simply choosing what to eat. From buying local products, to informing our children of healthy eating and knowing what really happens in the more recent farming practices, Goodall offers countless reasons to change one's eating habits. Full of optimism, the focus of the book is on helping Western societies adopt healthier measures, which can change

both people's lives individually and the planet as a whole. *Harvest to Hope: A Guide to Mindful Eating* is a motivating book for those who are ready to make a few changes in their lives, with the added benefit of creating a more balanced world.

\$24.95 - warnerbooks



**Mindfulness Yoga**  
by Frank Jude Boccio

reviewed by  
robin palmer

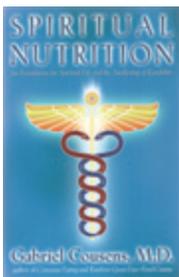
In his introduction to *Mindfulness Yoga*, yoga teacher/

mindfulness meditator, Boccio says, "one doesn't 'do yoga' at all, but rather one is yoga or is in yoga—or one is not." It is this idea

of yoga as a state of mind, rather than just a physical form of exercise, that is the premise of the book. Boccio begins by giving readers a succinct primer in Buddhist teachings and the Four Noble Truths before gracefully segueing into a discussion of Patanjali's Eight-Limbed Path. In doing this, as George Feuerstein points out in the foreword, Boccio is able to build a bridge "between 'heady' meditation practice and 'body-driven' hatha yoga." From there, Boccio presents four sequences of poses, constantly reminding the reader/prac-

titioner to adapt a "witness" attitude while moving through the asanas so that the idea of impermanence can be explored. The poses presented are basic and repeated throughout the various sequences, presumably so that students can come to know and understand them on a deeper level. While not necessarily a book for beginning yoga students, it's a good antidote for those experiencing burnout with their practice by reminding them that there's more to yoga than a killer Warrior I.

*Wisdom Publications \$19.95*



**Spiritual Nutrition**  
by Gabriel Cousens, M.D.

reviewed by  
robin palmer

Generations ago, those seeking en-

lightenment would go live in ashrams, where not only would their material needs be taken care of, but they would be provided with a safe cocoon when the more dramatic side

effects of moving from a mundane to spiritual existence began to manifest. One of the more powerful of these side effects was a rising of the kundalini energy which would then result in a profound awakening of consciousness. Nowadays, in our "mainstream mysticism" society, enlightenment is open to everyone. In his book, Gabriel Cousens gives readers a blueprint for an "evolutionary diet" in order not only to help the kundalini rise, but also prevent it from going haywire and causing severe psychic and physical damage. At 599 pages, Cousens' tome is part mystical memoir/

part dietary handbook and covers everything from the Ayurvedic tridosha system to how the various colors of food corresponds to the colors of the seven chakras. While it's obvious that Cousens knows his material, I question the messages of such chapters entitled "Under-eat!" and "Spiritual Fasting." One would hope that those who decided to follow his nutritional plan without the loving protection of an ashram environment would do so in an intelligent and safe manner.

*North Atlantic Books, \$30*