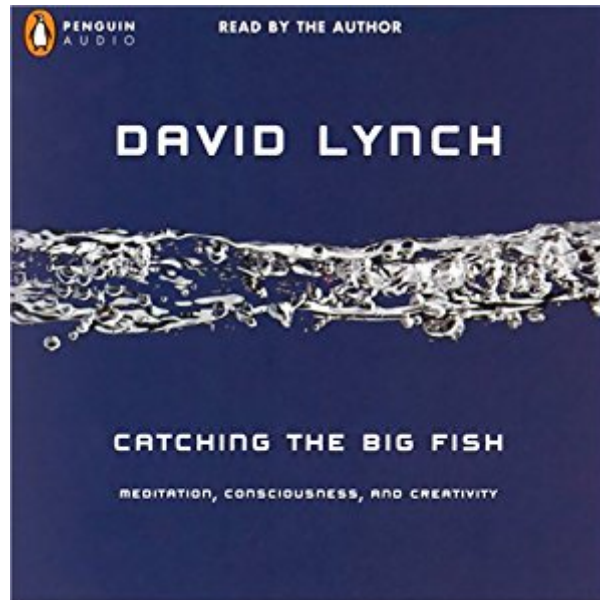


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# Catching The Big Fish: Meditation, Consciousness, And Creativity



## Synopsis

In *Catching the Big Fish*, internationally acclaimed filmmaker David Lynch provides a rare window into his methods as an artist, his personal working style, and the immense creative benefits he has experienced from the practice of meditation. Lynch describes the experience of "diving within" and "catching" ideas like fish and then preparing them for television or movie screens and other mediums in which he works, such as painting, music, and design. Lynch writes for the first time about his more than three-decade commitment to Transcendental Meditation and the difference it has made in his creative process. In brief chapters, Lynch explains the development of his ideas: where they come from, how he grasps them, and which ones appeal to him the most. He specifically discusses how he puts his thoughts into action and how he engages with others around him. Finally, he considers the self and the surrounding world and how the process of "diving within" that has so deeply affected his own work can directly benefit others. *Catching the Big Fish* will come as a revelation to the legions of fans who have longed to better understand Lynch's personal vision. And it will be equally intriguing to those who wonder how they can nurture their own creativity.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Get the audiobook instead of the book (either on CD if you want to own the physical CD like me, or as a download). I got the audio CD and imported it into my iPod. The audio CD (by the way, it's 2 CDs) works much better than the book because you get to hear David Lynch talking and it's like a conversation with him. It's also unabridged so you get all the same content as the book however in

my opinion, it's better than the book and is a rare opportunity to listen to David Lynch talk about many of the ideas that make him tick. David Lynch was my hero before and now he is my idol.

David Lynch's new book, "Catching the Big Fish: Meditation, Consciousness, and Creativity" is creative, charming, brief and playful. Written in small passages that flow, despite uniquely defined ideas, and seem to jump right off the page and dance and twinkle in your mind as you continually turn the pages, Lynch takes the reader through a deeply contemplative--though subtle in description--journey into 'that which all things emerge.' I actually acquired this for a friend of mine and when I present it to him, I'll promptly admit to reading it--in its entirety--before giving it to him. I'll tell him how Lynch touches on his films, but only chooses one or two interesting anecdotal items regarding these films and then moves on. Much the same with his life. I'll also share with him the positivity that Lynch exudes throughout and how important and real this state of mind is to him. How his whole aim is to be less and less and less restricted by anger and depression and sadness and hostility and all the other negative aspects of life. According to Lynch, it's all because of Transcendental Meditation and consciousness-based education. Lately, he's been giving many interviews and talks and whatnot to propagate his progressive thinking with regards to the many benefits of Transcendental Meditation. His foundation--the 'David Lynch Foundation For Consciousness-Based Education and World Peace'--is dedicated to introducing and maintaining this principle to young people and educators around the world. In one passage of the book, Lynch says that Van Gogh "would have been even more prolific and even greater if he wasn't so restricted by the things tormenting him. I don't think it was pain that made him so great--I think his painting brought him whatever happiness he had." I suppose I'm charmed. And I now believe in world peace.

There are some remarkable insights to be gleaned from this short treatise on the process of creation, by one of our most creative and challenging filmmakers. It is very well written, in a simple and economical style that manages to deliver much more of interest than many much larger volumes on the subject of creation. The book consists of a series of apparently disconnected (but in fact well ordered) reflections on his own life, his work as a filmmaker, his practice as a meditator, and on the larger themes of creation and of human motivation and of relation between the conscious and unconscious mind and the role of art in revealing truth. Lynch is also careful not to limit the applicability of the ideas he develops to his own field of filmmaking, but (humbly) suggests ways in which the same insights can apply to other art forms, to business, to dealings with other people, and to life in general. The central metaphor of the book, suggested by the title, is that to

catch the really big fish (i.e. to discover a profound truth, create a beautiful work of art, or develop a novel and powerful new way of doing things) one must swim in the depths (i.e. find some regular and continued practice, such as meditation, whereby your mind is opened up beyond its subjective limitations, a practice that encourages thinking to transcend its dependence on the narrow perspective of common sense and prejudice we inherit). He indicates a number of ways in which he has been able to do this in his own life, primarily through meditational practice. It is a quick read, but is the kind of book that would could be browsed repeatedly, with the reward of renewed insight. What keeps the book from its potential of being a minor short classic on the creative process is its apparent attempt to proselytize on behalf of Transcendental Meditation. Despite their own claims to being superior to other meditational practices, Transcendental Meditation (as far as I can tell) offers nothing that can't be found in a variety of other approaches that don't carry the same kind of intellectual baggage as the TM organization, don't require you to spend several hundred dollars to be trained in, or to be given an "exclusive" and "personalized" mantra. It is wonderful that Lynch's discovery of meditation in this form has facilitated his own creative process and personal contentment, and I don't begrudge his allegiance to the approach that he learned -- but it is clear that at some level this book was written as a kind of testimony to the special benefits of an approach to meditation that has taken truths handed down through centuries as an intellectual inheritance and made them into the for-profit product of a large and fairly powerful quasi-religious organization. That emphasis dimmed my enthusiasm for what is otherwise a remarkable little volume. Having said that, the book is in no way a piece of propaganda -- it merely makes appreciative reference to TM in several places, in addition to "advertising" his own foundation for the teaching of TM meditation. The book remains well worth reading, especially for fans of Lynch's work -- but I believe a slightly more general emphasis on the power of meditation and a description of the methods he finds worthwhile (without reference to a specific organization that teaches these methods and claims falsely to offer benefits found nowhere else) would have given this work something of the more timeless and abstract appeal of his films. To use the metaphor from the title, I think this could have been a bigger fish.

I thought David Lynch's *Catching the Big Fish* would be an intellectual discussion about creativity. Instead, I found it to be a delightful experience of creativity. In reading it, I was surprised to find myself feeling happy, content, and bright inside. It's an easy read - nice, well contained, short chapters, yet not simplistic. While fun to read, I felt I was also growing in insight and wisdom. I've never met Lynch, yet I feel like he's a friend now. He's open enough to share his ideas and

opinions, and caring enough to share his feelings on creativity, art and life as a whole. I didn't want the book to end.

This book reminded me of Lynch's wonderful and understated "Straight Story" in its unpretentious simplicity and quiet power. And like Straight, this book may not be what some Lynch fans initially were expecting. But don't let that throw you. This book is a gem! At first I thought I might have liked it more if it had some of Lynch's amazing art throughout it - some of his paintings, a few chosen film stills, maybe even some of his thoughtful stylish furniture. But as I sat back with the simple words on white pages (so UN-Lynchian some might at first think), I realized that every aspect of the book was an intentioned aquarium view of anecdotes and insights of the Lynch mind and art - an outstanding exposition of a cutting edge artist's approach to, and cultivation of, the creative process. Delightful and bold - I loved it!

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