

## **ZEN and the Brain**

**Onderstaand de flaptekst van het boek ZEN and the BRAIN. Het is een indrukwekkend boek dat een goed inzicht in wat zen en meditatie in het algemeen met ons doet. Tegelijk maakt het ook duidelijk hoe gecompliceerd deze zaak is.**

**Meer dan 700 pagina's wetenschappelijk en filosofisch zeer interessant stof. Voor de ware onderzoeker van lichaam en geest een aanrader. Austin is een man die werkelijk helemaal wetenschapper is, maar tegelijk een diep inzicht toont in de praktijk en filosofie van zen.**

**Zen and the Brain**

*Toward an Understanding of Meditation and  
Consciousness*

James H. Austin, M.D.

Aldous Huxley called humankind's basic trend toward spiritual growth the "perennial philosophy." In the view of James Austin, the trend implies a "perennial psychophysiology"—because awakening, or enlightenment, occurs when the human brain undergoes substantial changes. What are the peak experiences of enlightenment? How could these states profoundly enhance, and yet simplify, the workings of the brain? *Zen and the Brain* presents the latest evidence.

In this book Zen Buddhism becomes the opening wedge for an extraordinarily wide-ranging exploration of consciousness. In order to understand which brain mechanisms produce Zen states, one needs some understanding of the anatomy, physiology, and chemistry of the brain. Austin, both a neurologist and a Zen practitioner, interweaves the most recent brain research with the personal narrative of his Zen experiences. The science is both inclusive and rigorous; the Zen sections are clear and evocative. Along the way, Austin examines such topics as similar states in other disciplines and religions, sleep and dreams, mental illness, consciousness-altering drugs, and the social consequences of the advanced stage of ongoing enlightenment.

James H. Austin, M.D., is Professor Emeritus of Neurology at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center. He is the author of *Chase, Chance, and Creativity* and the author or coauthor of more than 130 publications in the fields of neurochemistry, neuropharmacology, and clinical neurology.