



# Learning to Fly

*Sam Keen*

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## **Learning to Fly** Sam Keen

The acclaimed author of **Fire in the Belly** presents an exhilarating memoir of his late-blooming love affair with the flying trapeze--and a provocative look at the potential it offers for growth and transformation.

Since he first experienced the joy and freedom of flight while swinging from trees as a boy in Alabama and Tennessee, Sam Keen dreamed of being able to fly. But it was only when, at age sixty-one, he happened upon a trapeze training program at the San Francisco School of Circus Arts that he took up the quest in earnest. After ascending to the platform thirty-one feet in the air and grasping the trapeze bar, Keen dove into the ocean of emptiness above the net, lost in the pleasure of swinging. Returning to the trapeze again and again, he gradually developed the poise and confidence that allowed him to release himself from the bar and soar--airborne--into the hands of a catcher. Having tasted the elation of actual flight, Keen's childhood dream became a passion and a vehicle for exploring the challenges and dilemmas of life.

In **Learning to Fly**, Keen traces the life journey that led him to respond to the lure of the trapeze late in his life and shares what his five years of intensive practice have taught him about living more intensely and passionately. He also recounts how his recognition of this art form's transcendent powers led him to launch Upward Bound, a trapeze workshop for anyone facing deeply rooted fears.

An unprecedented adventure of the soul and psyche, **Learning to Fly** teaches us to soar on the wings of possibility as we watch Keen and his students progress through breathtaking exercises. As he describes take-offs and knee hangs and thrilling mid-air catches, Keen imparts moving revelations about risk-taking, trust, bravado, true strength, falling, and letting go. Guiding us on a remarkable inner journey through the "circus of the mind," **Learning to Fly** reveals the grace of ascending in body and spirit--and living with levity.

A film documentary of **Learning to Fly** is also available on video, produced by Quest Productions based in Berkeley, CA.

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