

## Spirituality for the Godless

Many people describe themselves as secular rather than religious, but they often qualify this statement by claiming an interest in spirituality. But what kind of spirituality is possible in the absence of religion? In this book, Michael McGhee shows how religious traditions and secular humanism function as ‘schools of wisdom’ whose aim is to expose and overcome the forces that obstruct justice. He examines the ancient conception of philosophy as a form of ethical self-inquiry and spiritual practice conducted by a community, showing how it helps us to reconceive the philosophy of religion in terms of philosophy as a way of life. McGhee discusses the idea of a dialogue between religion and atheism in terms of Buddhist practice and demonstrates how a non-theistic Buddhism can address itself to theistic traditions as well as to secular humanism. His book also explores how to shift the centre of gravity from religious belief towards states of mind and conduct.

Michael McGhee is Honorary Senior Fellow in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Liverpool. A British philosopher who was educated at a Roman Catholic seminary, he later became a practising Buddhist. He is the author of *Transformations of Mind: Philosophy as Spiritual Practice* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), editor and co-editor of various collections on philosophy and spirituality, and a founding editor of *Contemporary Buddhism*.

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**MICHAEL MCGHEE**  
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*This book is dedicated to my wife, Rosemary,  
and to our daughters, Imelda, Eleanor, and Amy,  
in gratitude*

Who would have thought my shrivel'd heart  
Could have recover'd greenesse? It was gone  
Quite under ground; as flowers depart  
To see their mother-root, when they have blown;  
Where they together  
All the hard weather,  
Dead to the world, keep house unknown

George Herbert, *The Flower*

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