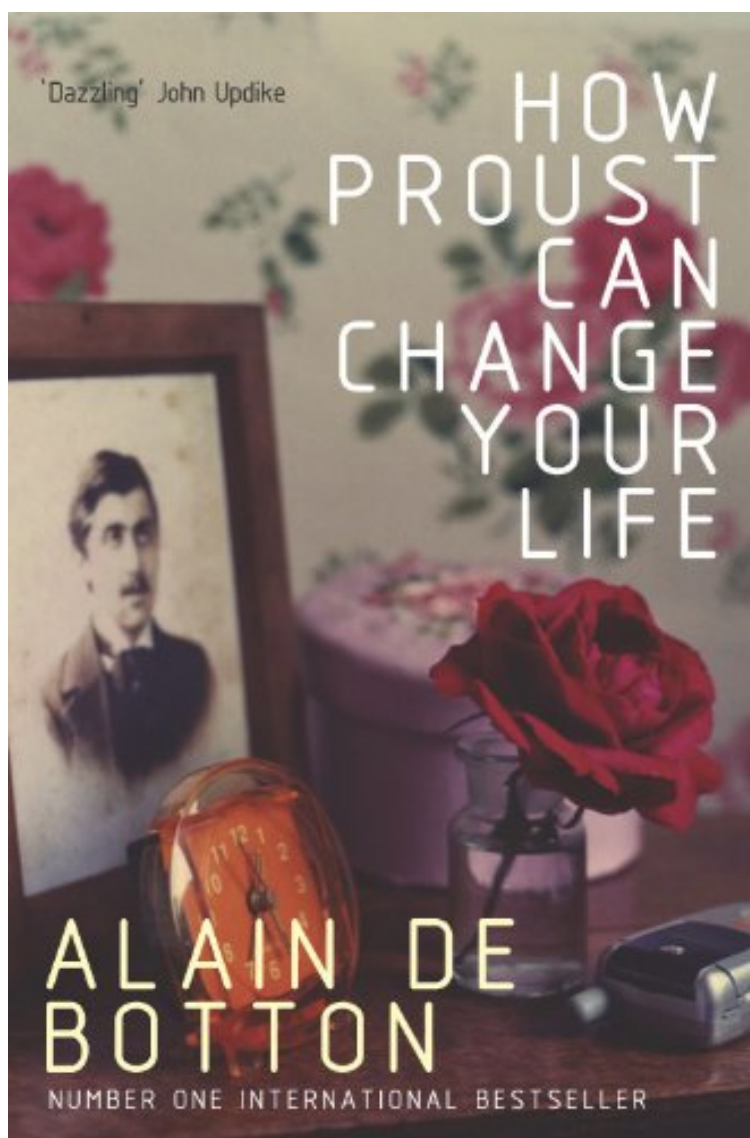


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# How Proust Can Change Your Life (English Edition)



*Par Alain de Botton*  
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## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurWhat a marvellous book this is . . . de Botton dissects what [Proust] had to say about friendship, reading, looking carefully, paying attention taking your time, being alive and adds his own delicious commentary. The result is an intoxicating as it is wise, amusing as well as stimulating, and presented in so fresh a fashion as to be unique . . . I could not stop, and now much start all over again. Brian Masters, Mail on Sunday De Botton not only has a complete understanding of Prousts life . . . but what is particularly charming about this small, readable book is its tongue-in-cheek benignity, its lightly held erudition and its generous way of lending itself to what is not only the greatest book of the century but also

the darkest and the most eccentric Edmund White, Observer It contains more human interest and play of fancy than most fiction . . . de Botton, in emphasizing Proust's healing, advisory aspects, does us the service of rereading him on our behalf, providing of that vast sacred lake a sweet and lucid distillation. John Updike, New Yorker De Botton's little book is so charming, amusing and sensible that it may even itself change your life. Allan Massie, Daily Telegraph This engaging book is one of the most entertaining pieces of literary criticism I have read in a long while. Sunday Telegraph A very enjoyable book Sebastian Faulks.com This is a genius-level piece of writing that manages to blend literary biography with self-help and tongue-in-cheek with the profound. The quirky, early 1900s French author Marcel Proust acts as the vessel for surprisingly impressive nuggets of wisdom on down-to-earth topics such as why you should never sleep with someone on the first date, how to protect yourself against lower back pain, and how to cope with obnoxious neighbors. Here's proof that our ancestors had just as much insight as the gurus du jour and perhaps a lot more wit. De Botton simultaneously pokes fun at the self-help movement and makes a significant contribution to its archives. Extrait Following is an excerpt from Chapter 8, "How to be Happy in Love": Q: Did Proust have any relevant thoughts on dating? What should one talk about on a first date? A: Advice is scant. A more fundamental doubt is whether one should accept dinner in the first place. There is no doubt that a person's charms are less frequently a cause of love than a remark such as: "No, this evening I shan't be free." If this response proves bewitching, it is because of the connection made... between appreciation and absence. Though a person may be filled with attributes, an incentive is nevertheless required to ensure that a seducer will focus wholeheartedly on these, an incentive which finds perfect form in a dinner rebuff. Q: Was he against sex before marriage? A: No, just before love. And not for any starchy reasons, simply because he felt it wasn't a good idea to sleep together when encouraging someone to fall in love was a consideration. Women who are to some extent resistant, whom one cannot possess at once, whom one does not even know at first whether one will ever possess, are the only interesting ones. Q: Surely not? A: Other women may of course be fascinating, the problem is that they risk not seeming so... Q: Are there any secrets to long-lasting relationships? A: Infidelity. Not the act itself, but the threat of it. For Proust, an injection of jealousy is the only thing capable of rescuing a relationship ruined by habit... The threat of losing their partner may lead them to realize that they have not appreciated this person adequately... If someone threatens the relationship, they get jealous, wake up for a moment, have another kiss with the horny tusk, and get bored once more. Condensed into a male heterosexual version, the situation runs like this: Afraid of losing her, we forget all the others. Sure of keeping her, we compare her with the those others whom at once we prefer to her.