

Living Realization

A Simple, Plain-English Guide to Non-Duality

Scott Kiloby

NON-DUALITY PRESS

LIVING REALIZATION

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NON-DUALITY PRESS | PO Box 2228 | Salisbury | SP2 2GZ
United Kingdom



ISBN: 978-1-908664-46-4

www.non-dualitypress.org

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INTRODUCTION: Living Realization

YOU KNOW WHEN you are ready for a message like Living Realization. You feel it to the very core of your being. You're pulled towards it by an unmistakable knowing that there is something deeper, something more to life than what you currently believe or perceive.

You have come to this message because its words resonate with you on a level deeper than the mind. There is a peace within you that you know is present, but that seems somehow buried under the noise of life, with its personal drama and constant seeking towards the future. Now, you are ready to move beyond these self-centered patterns. You are ready to begin looking into your present experience in a deep and specific way. You are ready to see why it is that you suffer, why you seek, and why human life contains so much conflict.

Perhaps you've suffered from self-loathing, doubt, depression, anxiety, addiction, over-thinking, or some other emotional or psychological issue. Maybe you have always felt uncomfortable in your own skin. Maybe you have experienced conflict with others, or painful regret and guilt in relationships. If you are like most humans, you've experienced yourself as incomplete or deficient in some way.

For some of us, life has been fine. No real breakdowns. No intense hardships. We may have experienced some degree of contentment or even moments of real freedom. Yet even those of us who have had pretty good lives often carry a subtle, ongoing, and gnawing sense that an important piece of life's puzzle seems somehow just out of reach.

Many of us have searched for life's answers everywhere but here and now. We thought the answers were in the future, so we sought them there. We looked for relief in relationships, jobs, material success, self-help programs, drugs, alcohol, meditation, prayer, or belief systems.

In our search for contentment, we may have come across religions, philosophies, self-improvement programs, or spiritual teachings that swept us off our feet with beautiful language and the promise that further down the road, after many years of work, we might discover the contentment we are seeking. We may have become diligently and earnestly involved in these programs, seduced by promises of fabulous worldly goods or other-worldly spiritual planes.

The treasure here is quite different. It is not a promise of future fulfillment. It is not an elaborate system designed to revise our personal stories. It is an invitation to put all that aside long enough to look deeply into our present experience and to realize that the wholeness and healing that we seek are already here. When we make this discovery, we find that love, peace, compassion, and wisdom are naturally present. The key is to recognize this treasure. We have just been overlooking it, searching in all the wrong places.

Living Realization is nothing short of a love affair with life. It is like falling in love with experiencing itself, and seeing that our present experience is perfect just as it is, no matter where we are or what is happening. This does not mean that we escape pain or challenging situations, like illness or death. Rather, we see that everything that happens—the good and the bad—is equally drenched in freedom. To see perfection in

every experience, and in everyone and everything, is to realize that our fundamental nature is experience itself. When we come to realize that present experiencing is what we are, we live in a deep and natural acceptance of each moment as it is. This is freedom in the midst of every single happening in our lives.

Living Realization is about more than just learning a new language or employing a new method. Although it is a language and method, it is actually a vehicle designed to reveal present freedom. This is about a realization that is lived, not just entertained intellectually. If language alone were enough, one could walk to the local bookstore, pick up any well-written book on human freedom, and magically experience that freedom simply by reading or memorizing the words.

Teachings, religions, courses, methods, paths, and practices are merely tools. They are invitations to look into our own direct experience. If a teaching is not designed to redirect us back to our own experience, it is a distraction. This is not about focusing on a method or practice for years with the hope of a payoff down the road. It is not about memorizing fancy spiritual words. Rather, the method here is always directing us to look into our *present* experience. It is about discovering that the treasure of liberation is already contained within what we are.

The Main Invitation

TO THE BEST of your ability, put aside everything you have ever learned or read about freedom or happiness for long enough to hear this message. Start anew!

Let's get to the crux of the matter, which is a constant reminder that only you hold the key to realization. No one can give it to you, not even the clearest path, method, or teaching in the world.

Let every word you read disappear as soon as you've read it. Let the words be like breezes that blow through your mind only long enough to remind you to recognize awareness in all situations.

The main invitation in Living Realization is this:

- * Recognize awareness
- * Let all appearances be as they are
- * See that appearances are inseparable.

There are many other pointers, tools, and inquiries in this book, but these simple pointers are really all you need to recognize freedom in the midst of your life.

We must start with something fundamental: basic, everyday awareness. What is awareness? Right now, before you entertain your story of who you are and before any other thought arises, there is a basic awake, thought-free awareness here. Awareness is the basic capacity to be aware. It's as simple as that. If you try to understand that intellectually, you miss the simplicity of it. Before you think about it, are you aware right now? That is awareness.

Stop for one moment and bring your full attention to this basic awareness. It is what allows the present moment to effortlessly be as it is. Notice that when you are not thinking, this basic awareness simply allows, for example, the wall to

be as it is. It naturally allows a table to be as it is. It naturally allows the air in the room to be as it is. It takes no effort to let everything be as it is. Discover this for yourself. Stop thinking for long enough to get one glimpse of the fact that there is a basic awareness already here. All you have to do is notice that it is here. Then notice that when a thought arises, this basic awareness allows even that thought to be as it is.

At first, this awareness may not seem like a big deal at all. Perhaps thoughts rush right back in very quickly, one after the other, and take over your attention. But that one glimpse of life without thought is actually monumental. It is a doorway to freedom.

The more we return to this basic awareness, over and over, throughout the day, the more we see that it is always and already present. We discover for ourselves exactly what the words acceptance, freedom, love, peace, compassion, wisdom, and selflessness are really referring to: our own immediate experience in the here and now, free of the belief in separation.

The first chapter of this book is devoted to encouraging you to recognize basic, everyday awareness in your own direct experience. Please take your time with Chapter One. Read it through several times, if necessary. Do not try to understand awareness intellectually. It cannot be grasped by the mind. Just follow the pointers.

The remaining chapters direct you into the profound realization of inseparability, which is the energetic felt sense that nothing is separate in your present experience. I devote several chapters to discussing “appearances.” Appearances include thoughts, emotions, sensations, states, and experiences. This discussion becomes the doorway into the experience of inseparability. The direct experience of the inseparability of life is the key to acceptance, freedom, love, peace, compassion, wisdom, and selflessness. You begin to experience all appearances as coming and going inseparably to awareness, rather than to a personal story of self. In allowing all thoughts to be as they

are, and recognizing awareness as the basic space to which thoughts come and go, you rely less and less on thinking. You rely more and more on simple, basic, everyday awareness. You come to see through the belief in separation that is embedded in the thought stream. This releases you from suffering, seeking, and conflict.

I want to be clear about what is meant by the word “suffering” as it is used in this book. Many people have the idea that suffering refers to intense physical agony or extreme mental and emotional depression. This is not how the word “suffering” is used in this text. To suffer is to be in any way resistant to life as it is appearing right now. Suffering could be as simple as not wanting to feel a present emotion or sensation, or even a minor irritation. Suffering is the non-acceptance of life as it is in this moment.

If you are having trouble “getting” all this, don’t worry. This method is designed to help you relax naturally into this realization. Some may recognize the release from suffering, seeking, and conflict very quickly. For others, there may be a more gradual unfolding. But everyone comes to see that this is a present, lived experience. Welcome to your freedom!

The Middle Way

The Living Realization message is designed to awaken us from the belief in separation into the present experience of inseparability—Oneness. This recognition allows us to naturally move and act in the world in a new way, free from the sense of separation from each other and from all things in life. However, if we then begin to emphasize viewpoints or beliefs at the other end of the spectrum, such as “nothing exists,” we have gone too far. We have denied conventional existence completely. The Middle Way is freedom from these dualistic mental positions of “everything exists separately” and “nothing exists.” The Middle Way is the way of balance. It keeps us from turning Oneness into a belief system that denies the play of relativity. Relative viewpoints are always in play when we are thinking, speaking, creating, and responding to each other in relationship. Yet those viewpoints do not bring about suffering, seeking, and conflict in our lives when we no longer identify with them. They wash through our present experience temporarily, leaving no trace, and no self to take ownership of them.

Conventional existence just means relativity. In this method, even as we see through the belief in separation, we continue to feel completely free to refer to relative things for the sake of convenience. Although you will no longer energetically experience yourself as separate, you will continue to be comfortable referring to yourself by your name, taking care of the practical needs of your body, your health, and your family, and expressing your unique talents, skills, and knowledge. This may seem contradictory at first. But it becomes quite natural. It is only the *belief* in being a completely separate person that troubles us. Thoughts about a self and the appearance of having a body and even a story are no problem at all once there is no longer a deeply rooted identification with those appearances.

We start to experience a kind of delicious irony in the Middle Way. We start to see life more and more as a play, where we know in the deepest sense that the characters and things in the play are not truly separate, yet we enjoy the play anyway. Nothing is separate does not mean, “Nothing exists.” Life continues appearing with all of its relationships, experiences, colors, shapes, tastes, smells, and labels, yet nothing appears inherently separate and cut off from everything else.

How do you discover the Middle Way? It just shows up, automatically and naturally, when you get involved in this method. It’s like jumping into a boat that feels very natural and comfortable from the start, even though you don’t know exactly where it’s going. Taking up the invitations in this book is like following a map of the river. In recognizing awareness as ever-present and seeing through separation, you find that you are living the Middle Way naturally. Living becomes effortless and the map is not relied upon as much. Direct experience takes over.

This is how the Living Realization method works in our lives:

1. We start out with the belief that we are separately existing selves in a world of other, separately existing people and things. Most people have this belief operating in one degree or another. The belief in separation is the root cause of suffering, seeking, and conflict.
2. In this method, we start with a very basic invitation to recognize awareness in all situations. Awareness is seen to be always present in the midst of whatever is happening. This allows us to relax from our tendency to focus and rely on thinking so much. We find a natural ease and well-being as we recognize awareness.

3. We experience emotions and sensations more and more without labeling them and placing them into a personal story. This relieves the constant desire to escape into the future in order to feel better. Every emotion and sensation is allowed to be as it is presently. This provides a natural healing, a mental and emotional balance in our lives.
4. We discover that every object is inseparable from the thoughts, emotions, and sensations that “make it up.” We see that all thoughts, emotions, and sensations appear and disappear inseparably to awareness. We use the Unfindable Inquiry to see that we cannot find a separate thing anywhere. The belief in separation dissolves, either all at once or gradually.
5. In seeing through the belief in separation, we continue to refer to things relatively for the sake of convenience. This is the Middle Way. Conventional existence is the appearance of different things, like self, other, cars, cities, justice, apples, the Earth, and science. We see that everything is empty of separate nature and yet things still appear. In conventional existence, everything is relationship, but separation is nowhere to be found.

Basic Points

Here are the basic points of the method mapped out in more detail. The chapters that follow explain these points more fully.

This is the *main invitation* in this method:

- * Recognize awareness
- * Let all appearances be as they are
- * See that appearances are inseparable.

- ❖ Awareness is the basic capacity to be aware. It is that to which all appearances come and go.

- ❖ Through resting as awareness, in brief moments, repeatedly throughout the day, awareness is recognized to be ever present, regardless of what appears and disappears.

- ❖ An appearance is anything that comes and goes temporarily to awareness, including all thoughts, emotions, sensations, states, and experiences.

- ❖ Letting all appearances *be as they are* means letting each thought, emotion, sensation, state, and experience come and go freely, without trying to analyze, neutralize, overcome, get rid of, or do anything else with it.

- ❖ To say that appearances are inseparable from awareness is to recognize that they never appear outside awareness. Thoughts, emotions, states, sensations, and experiences always appear to awareness; they cannot appear independently of (separate from) awareness. This becomes more obvious as we recognize awareness as ever-present.

- ❖ The Middle Way is another name for Living Realization. It is the direct experience that things do not exist separately—only conventionally. To say that a thing exists conventionally means that it appears only in relation to other things. It cannot exist on its own side, apart from everything else. The appearance of a thing is dependent upon thought, emotion, sensation, awareness, and other appearances. The appearances are seen to be like mirages—like reflections shimmering upon the surface of water. They appear in their brilliant uniqueness, but they have no independent nature. This gives rise to the seeing that all things, being empty of separate nature, are interdependent in conventional existence.

CHAPTER ONE: Recognizing Awareness

THE MAIN INVITATION is to:

- * Recognize awareness
- * Let all appearances be as they are
- * See that appearances are inseparable.

We start by relaxing into a direct, experiential introduction to awareness. We recognize awareness as often as possible, throughout the day, every day, until that recognition is unshakable and uninterrupted. We recognize awareness whenever we remember to do so. No matter what we are doing—relaxing, walking, sitting, working, engaging in physical exercise, or lying in bed at night—we take a moment to recognize awareness.

In recognizing awareness in every experience, it dawns on us that awareness is always and already present, regardless of what is happening in our lives. This provides a peace and stability that passes all understanding. In seeing that awareness is ever-present, we realize that awareness is our real identity. This naturally and effortlessly releases the tendency to identify with the various appearances (including thoughts, emotions, sensations, states, and experiences) that come and go to awareness.