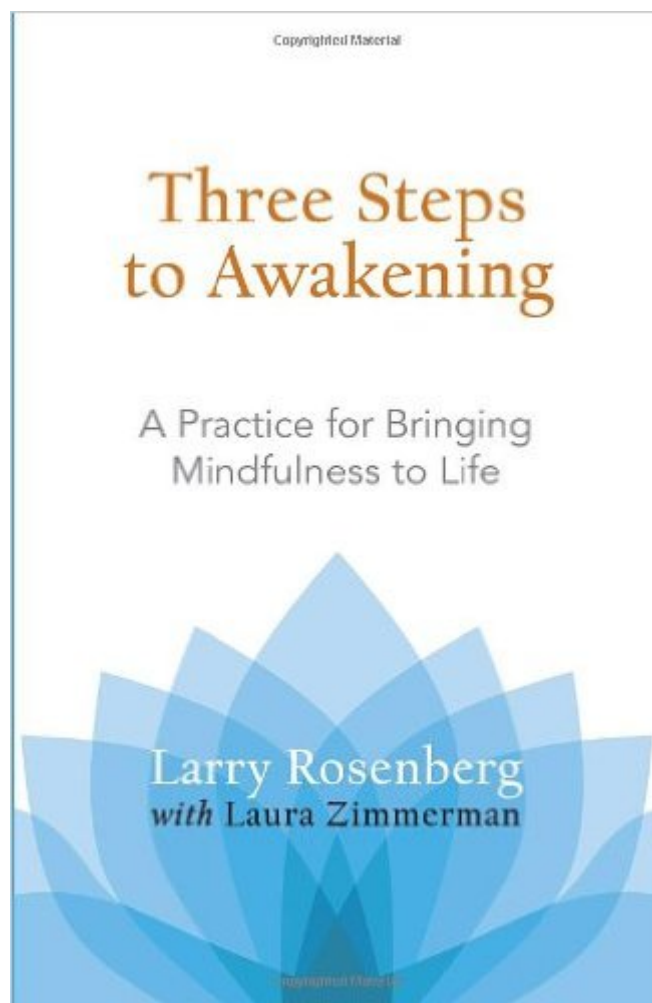


The book was found

Three Steps To Awakening: A Practice For Bringing Mindfulness To Life



Synopsis

A unique three-phase model for meditation practice that ties together elements of the various Buddhist traditions and that is remarkably adaptable to modern life and changing situations. This book represents the distillation of Larry Rosenberg's more than forty years of teaching. Drawing on the various Buddhist traditions in which he has practiced, he describes three subtly different but complementary forms of meditation practice: (1) breath awareness, (2) breath as anchor, and (3) choiceless awareness. Having the three methods in one's repertoire gives one meditation resources for any life situation. In a time of stress, for example, one might use breath awareness exclusively. Or on an extended retreat, one might find choiceless awareness more appropriate. The three-step method has been taught to Larry's students at the Cambridge Meditation Center in Cambridge, Massachusetts, for many years. After teaching the three-step method, Larry goes on to show how to bring the awareness gained in meditation to the world off the cushion, into relationships and into all areas of daily life.

Book Information

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: Shambhala (December 3, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1590305167

ISBN-13: 978-1590305164

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.5 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars See all reviews (17 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #599,965 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #139 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern > Buddhism > Theravada #3040 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Alternative Medicine > Meditation #10460 in Books > Self-Help > Personal Transformation

Customer Reviews

It occurred to me as I finished this book that in a way Larry Rosenberg has written the same book three times (I'm referring to his first book, "Breath by Breath;" his second, "Living in the Light of Death;" and now this one. "Breath by Breath" was an instant classic - a true "desert island" guide to both mindfulness of breathing and carrying the practice off the cushion into every part of daily life. For many practitioners it can easily be the first -and last - meditation manual they will ever need.

"Living in the Light of Death," which came out some years later, offers even greater clarity and really does, as Rosenberg so wryly puts it, "attempt to answer the question of whether there is life BEFORE death" by showing us that the groundless, infinite mystery most of us spend our entire lives avoiding is always there to free us if we turn towards it instead and make it our practice. Unlike a zillion other books that offer speculation about what happens after death, it is a guide to how to live, moment by moment, developing a heart-mind that is ready for whatever comes next, whether the "next" in question is next moment or next life. "Three Steps," in the context of these two other classic, essential books, is so short, so jargon-free and simple that a casual reader might miss the profound "pith essence" nature of the instructions it contains. It is the distillation of four decades of intensive practice and inquiry and an enormous amount of teaching. The three steps (mindfulness with breathing, the four applications of mindfulness, and choiceless awareness) are taught as precisely and concisely as possible, with helpful Q & A from students interspersed.

Since mindfulness found me several years ago I have read pretty much anything I can put my hands on about the topic. There are some excellent books too by authors like Thich Nhat Hanh, Jon Kabat-Zinn, Thubten Chodron, Bhante Gunaratana, Marc Lesser, Mark Williams etc. But there's really some very poor stuff out there – and as mindfulness goes mainstream I suspect that's a wave we'll need to get used to: lots of opportunists with little of value to add jumping on the bandwagon for a few sales. Because I have purchased some really useless works on the topic I have tended to be guided recently by the number of readers' reviews and the average ratings – not an altogether bad strategy. However, if I had followed that path I'd have missed this one of a kind book by Larry Rosenberg (the perils of being judgemental!). Rosenberg's book is, in my experience, unique. He provides a three-part approach to "cushion practice" that I suspect will be the backbone of my practice for many years to come. But more than that – for someone like me who cannot get away for lengthy retreats he offers a perspective on a way of making everyday life, our relationship and real life challenges, as valuable a tool for practice as time spent on the cushion. This is without doubt the most practical book I have purchased on mindfulness – it fills a void that so many others seem to miss. This doesn't make it a better book than the other classics works – it complements all the others extremely well and, in my experience, helps one to draw more meaning from those others.

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