

Three Steps into Oneness

Holistic Spirituality As a New View on Awakening
including Indigenous, Traditional and Modern Wisdom

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The Essence of “Three Steps into Oneness”

- We need to remember the authentic, original purity and power of our wisdom traditions.
- We need to update and elaborate our spiritual traditions.
- We must work within the body-house (body-mind) as we combine traditional and modern spiritual practices with contemporary, „awakened“ science at the relative world, by also restoring the value for elderhood.
- We must recognize and stay connected to the Absolute.
- On the path within the Relative towards realizing relative wisdom holistic spirituality needs to integrate a profound, holistic world-view.
- We need to introduce a new approach for the integration of old and new aspects of a holistic, developmental spirituality.
- To reach final ONENESS we need to unfold both forms of wisdom – within the Relative and the Absolute – on our path, completely and simultaneously...
- ...like the two wings a bird needs to fly.



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my brothers Andrea and Felix,
my grandma Herta*

*“ONENESS is the great nature
As the endless space and its essence,
Centered mindful within our hearts
Showing in complete effortlessness.”¹*

¹ The whole poem „Steps into ONENESS“ by Thomas Rüedi see at the Appendix

Note and Book Review from the Editor

This book was written in English, but that language is not the native one of the author. While the entire book could have been rewritten to be fully in-line with the norms of writing and communication, we made a decision that it was better to edit the book to be as clear as it could be, but to not convert the rest of the manuscript into perfect English. The reason for this is simple: there is a transmission that happens through the writing, one that would likely be lost if an editor like me were to rewrite every sentence of the book to conform to the norms of English grammar and sentence structure.

I would encourage you, the reader, to think of this book like having a conversation with someone whose English is good but not perfect and to relax into the sometimes unusual sentence structure and uncommon turn of phrase. I found, in editing the book, that I quickly came to appreciate the unconventional tone and that it actually allowed for a deeper transmission of Thomas' insights and wisdom.

As you read this book, I hope that you too will discover this new territory and the richness that lies herein.

We live in a curious time, when we have access to ancient wisdom, modern "hacks" at meditation, brain science, and so much more. But where we still struggle is with wisdom, with finding a way to integrate our own experiences with a desire to plug into a source deeper than ourselves -- awakening, enlightenment, or being liberated from our suffering. Thomas Rüedi's book offers something utterly unique: a way to honor the wisdom of Indigenous peoples, cultivate the clarity of Buddhism, honor the insights of mysticism, and understand our modern world. He helps the reader find a throughline that lets us develop relative wisdom and absolute knowing, and to integrate these in a map of wholeness that brings together the very best parts of our collective humanity.

Thomas doesn't suggest we "go back to the way things were" but rather see the power traditional cultures had, and have, in relationship to the natural world. But he also understands psychosocial shadow, trauma, and attachment, the history of colonialism and systemic bias, and the importance of understanding how these things still influence us, and keep us apart from the wisdom that is our birthright. More than any book I've read, this one offers a path to a genuine wholeness, of body, mind, soul, and world -- a bridge from the past to now, and into our collective future. Written with heart, passion, and a discerning and penetrating clarity, this book is a must-read for anyone looking to find a deeper meaning in the world.

Keith Martin-Smith, *editor*

Introduction

Even though the English language is not my mother language, intuitively I know and understand clearly what my inner voice is telling me: when I am supposed to write this book I should do it in English language. I trust deeply to the wisdom guidance of elderhood inside me – knowing what is needed to be told and how to be expressed in this book and it will be done properly. It will be both, the verbal and non-verbal communication, the whole and full message and I wish by all my heart that this message can reach you by this way.

Reflecting deeply on the essential meaning of the message I can hear inside me, it is basically a call of (re-)awakening an ancient and actualized understanding of what the term “relative truth and wisdom” is about. It is the wisdom to be re-discovered within the Western world, the wisdom of daily life we live in on planet earth that has been getting lost, been buried and hidden by a growing intensity, greediness and superficiality inside its individual and collective development within our culture of the last 200 years.

To make the message of it authentic and original you will also notice that this voice I was hearing inside me and that was letting me write these words down has obviously and intentionally taken some liberties with proper English grammar and sentence structure to express itself. To have access to this message fully, please feel invited to relax into it, which can help this English version to be read as close as possible to where ever it is originally coming from. Using not such a fluent and distinct language you might know from most other English books and from authors with an English mother language, the call inside the text wants us to join the entire flow of both – a verbal rather cognitive and a non-verbal, mystical message of it simultaneously. And, if you should even intuitively hear a Swiss cow “mooing,” hear an echo of an alphorn and yodel in the high mountains, the ticking of a Swiss watch or you should experience the disturbing strong and delicious taste of Swiss chocolate on your tongue while

reading this book, then please forgive me – as I am Swiss – relax and enjoy it.

Publishing this book, the holistic view and purpose of it asks to address it to human beings interested in this matter and able to read English all over the world. This prevents it be written out of a single “biotope view and language” of one country or continent alone, which would be contradictory to this.

I have been lucky enough to travel, to address my curiosity to and come to know many countries and cultures in the Middle East, Asia, Africa, America and Europe I am coming from. This helps me to open the window to a holistic world view, a part of this book is all about.

Along this book you will notice that I will bring up many different issues by giving you some essential information and/or offering you an experience on them. Then to deepen into the different matters, there will be always links for pages on the internet or information about related books in the footer to follow. So like this you might go deeper into certain matters of interest by stopping in the book for a moment, while some other themes you are fine to have an essential information of it.

Living and breathing in a world of great change, challenge and degeneration – in Buddhist terms: moral degeneration, wars, nature disasters, fires, floods and droughts – , the innate light within certain human beings out of their hearts is able to get stronger, to get lightened by all of this turmoil. It is my deepest wish, as an elder, to help to increase this light in all brother- and sister-human-beings, in all sentient beings, through our hearts to shine in- and outside, to help to enter into a great clarity of our spirits and also to find a heartfelt, caring relationship to our “body-houses (body-minds)” we are living in. As there are individual clouds or shadows that cover the sun of our lives – trauma, accidents, loss of close ones, etc. – , there also are collective shadows that cause a lot of irritation and confusion these days – natural disasters, pandemics and wars, etc.

Using the term “body-house” as a holistic and spiritually elaborated version of body/mind or body-mind, I like to use this term originally created by **Dr. Rüdiger Dahlke**², a German doctor and philosopher. The deeper meaning of it in my view is, that our spirits (the element of space or quintessence), as they incarnate in this relative, physical world, live for the length of their earthly existences in body-houses – as a composition of the four elements (earth, water, air, fire) and inside the different levels of the physical, vegetative, emotional and mental bodies. This view and discrimination gives us a picture to skillfully work with it and helps us to furthermore be able to dive into the contents of this book.

This is a time where some of us are in despair and suffer from great anxiety – especially because of particular traits or traumatic histories – finding no support and getting caught in our roles as victims. Some of them might find some release in therapies. Or some others – also fixed and narrowed in to the relative world – are pretending there is no change, ignoring the processual movement in their lives, always try to keep on going as before, trying to get immediately back into or to stay in their comfort zones. **Tom Johanson**³, one of my spiritual teachers, called this way of life some 25 years ago British “Beefburger-Life” for fast food, meaning that as soon as we had a burger, we sooner or later need another one, marching on and on in the rat race... No development at all, no consciousness of the spiritual at all.

And it is also a time, paradoxically, where the opposite is happening. People are trying to escape their discomforts, shadows, and need for support and therapy on the relative level by focusing exclusively on the spiritual. They want to pretend that the relative world is “less real” than the Absolute, and so try to ignore it altogether.

² <https://www.dahlke.world/about>

³ <https://vimeo.com/19622063>

ther. And most find out this bypassing simply does not work. This is because there are some misunderstandings about wisdom traditions or falsifications of them saying, we should only focus on the spiritual and the relative is all fake and is to be given up fully at once.

Recently in a new book from an American author (which happened to be my book editor), **Keith Martin-Smith** with the title “**When the Buddha needs therapy**”⁴ and a video on ARTE “**Buddhismus: Missbrauch im Namen der Erleuchtung** (Buddhism: Abuse in the name of enlightenment; German version)”⁵ we are confronted with and shocked by the fact that, as in other religious traditions worldwide – especially in Catholicism – there have been and still happen different forms of abuse on adults and children (sexual, violence, neglect, etc.) inside religious institutions or between some religious dignitaries and their students. In the case of a very famous Tibetan Buddhist Lama in the West, **Sogyal Rinpoche** and the organization **Rigpa**⁶ (I was part of the sangha 25 years ago), this unacceptable conduct contrasts and polarizes in the extremes to his famous book “**Tibetan book of living and dying**”⁷, being a bestseller and still a very inspiring book about the spiritual in Tibetan Buddhism. This is of course a sign to us, that we need also a different and more comprehensive culture, education, and code of ethical conduct for monks, nuns and dignitaries, coming out of deep work on the relative level for anybody, at any position – as a human being.

⁴ “When the Buddha needs therapy,” Keith Martin-Smith, ISBN-13 978-1737288695

⁵ <https://youtu.be/ctPMsYNIQk> – in German

⁶ <https://www.rigpa.org/>

⁷ “The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying”: The Spiritual Classic & International Bestseller; ISBN-10 0062508342

But also in these times mentioned above, we are not disconnected to the heavens, to the wisdom of the so-called Absolute – in the contrary seemingly contradictory... We are even closer !

Some of us are getting awakened now to find new, creative and powerful solutions for the great challenges we are into and our species has to face. In an ancient and yet integrated understanding our world, our living planet earth which we are a part of, dwells on a threshold of potential overwhelm and catastrophe. Within this space it is the completely new we are supposed to find or will find us by being open in our spirits, minds, hearts and bodies. And with **Pablo Picasso's**⁸ famous quote, **“I do not seek. I find”** it is not our searching, but our intension of finding that opens up new horizons and visions of wisdom for us.

Sensing, contemplating profoundly into my path at this stage of my life I can feel and hear this call inside me to find an actual role as an elder of this culture, to follow and to place my service to disposal of the urge of it. The call is on one hand in the understanding of Buddhism as a yogi (and tiny “tertön” or treasure revealer) being able to receive transmissions by being connected to the **Lineage of Dzogchen**⁹ and being able to reinterpret or help others to understand Buddhism newly today.

But on the other hand it is also the call of the **“Warriors of the Rainbow”**¹⁰, many ancient native traditions are telling us about (see also later in the book). It is the call of offering my skills as a messenger to reconnect ourselves to the original, pure power and wisdom within our earthly existence and to once again rediscover our natu-

⁸ <https://www.pablopicasso.org/quotes.jsp>

⁹ <https://www.dzogchen.org.in>

¹⁰ <https://theearthstoriescollection.org/en/the-legend-of-the-rainbow-warriors/>