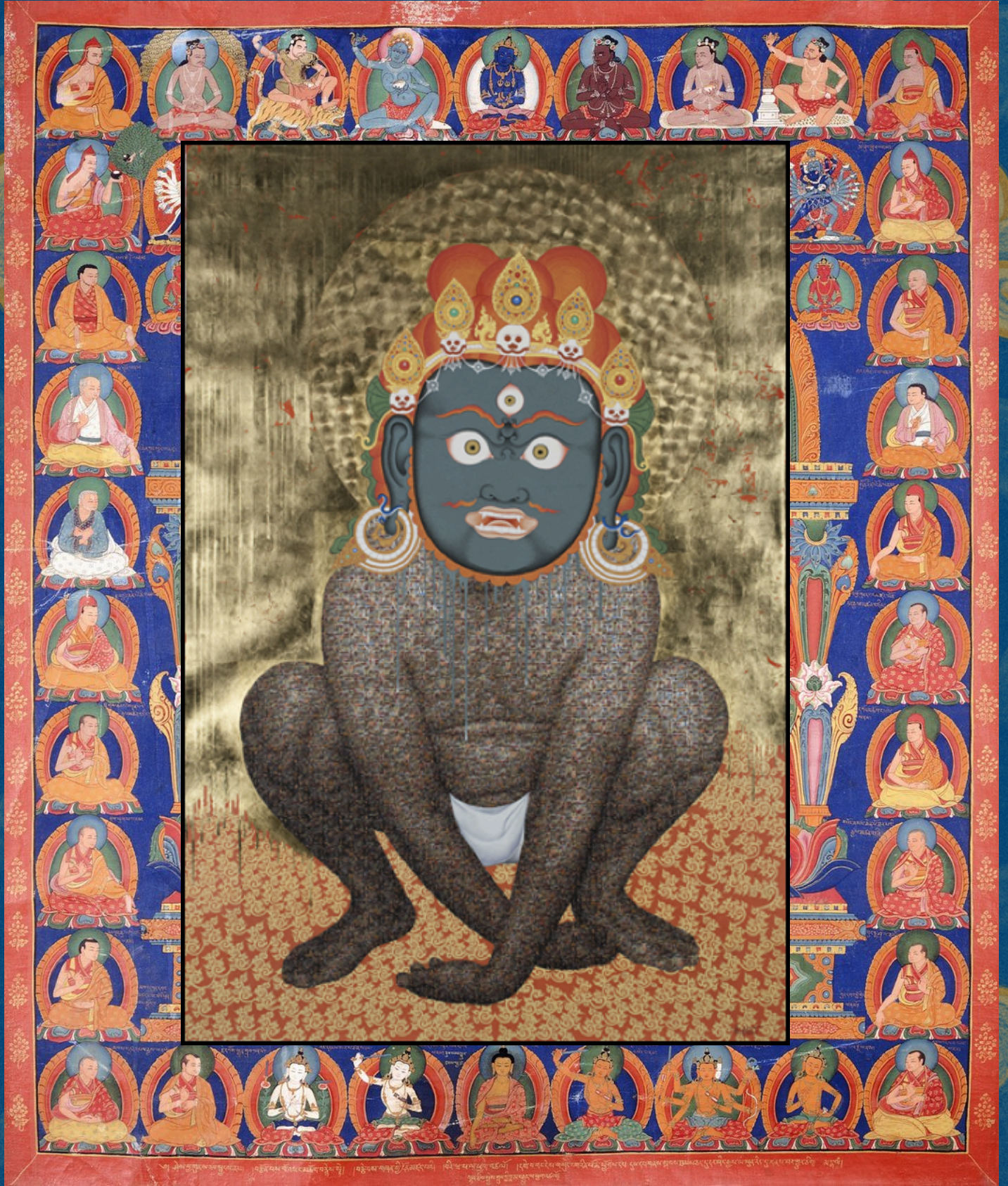


Wake Up!



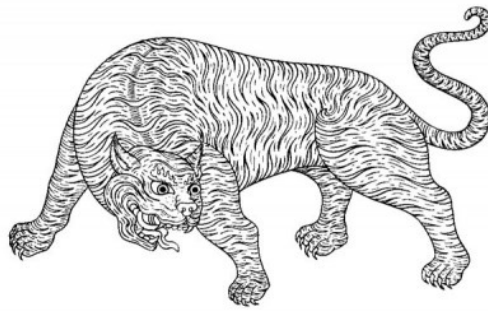
The Wonder of Being



Natural Freedom

Direct Pointing-Out Instructions

(A Treasure of Radiant Clarity)



Secrets from the Tiger's Nest

Introduction

We are living in a time of extraordinary stimulation and much confusion. Never before have so many people had access to so much information, practices, and teachings, and yet so many feel inwardly disconnected, anxious, or quietly lost. What people took for truth and reality, is no longer the case. The speed of modern life, with its constant screens, and endless self-improvement narratives subtly pull attention away from the direct radiant clarity of present awareness.

Here is a short little guide to support direct recognition of one's true nature in this very moment. In this guidebook we will integrate some of the profound traditions of awakening from the Dzogchen and Mahamudra teachings that arose from India, before finding their different expressions in Tibet. Fundamentally this guide is to bring us home to our true nature, which is ever present awareness, which in times gone by might have been referred to as awakening, buddha nature, nirvana or atman.

When we use the word “true nature” in this context, we are not pointing to a thing, a personality, or a hidden essence inside you. We are pointing to what is already present before any description of ourself appears. Our true nature is the simple fact of being aware. Not what we are aware of, but the capacity in which all experience appears.

From a Dzogchen perspective, enlightenment is nothing other than recognising one’s true nature. It is not a future attainment, not a special state, and not the result of perfecting the mind. It is the direct recognition of rigpa, the primordial awareness that is already present.

In Dzogchen, we are not ignorant because true nature is absent; we are ignorant because it is unrecognised. The mind (sem) is busy with thoughts, emotions, memories, and interpretations, and attention gets absorbed in these movements. Enlightenment happens the moment this confusion relaxes and awareness recognises itself as what has always been here: empty, luminous, and knowing.

This recognition is not conceptual. It is not trying to understand or work out or analyse our true nature, but seeing it directly, as the ground of awareness that is aware of thoughts, rather than the thoughts themselves. When rigpa recognises rigpa, there is no meditator, no object of meditation, and no separation between awareness and experience. This is why Dzogchen says enlightenment is self-liberation, appearances continue, but they no longer bind.

Importantly, enlightenment in Dzogchen is not the end of thoughts or emotions. Thoughts still arise, feelings still move, life still unfolds, but what changes is identification. Experiences are recognised as the spontaneous display of awareness, not as something happening to a self. Liberation is not escape from life, but the natural freedom within life.

So, recognising one’s true nature is enlightenment, not because we suddenly be free of all our worries, but because the fundamental mistake of imagining we are our identity as a separate self falls away. Here, nothing needs to be improved; recognition itself is complete.

Dzogchen arose within the Tibetan cultural arena, heavily influenced by Buddha dharma. The essence of Buddhism and the dharma has always been practical rather than religious, as a direct way of seeing through the habits of mind that create unnecessary suffering. In a modern world that constantly reinforces identity, comparison, and distraction, this clarity is more valuable than ever.

This booklet is inspired by that essential insight, but it is not an attempt to transmit a belief system, a tradition, or a set of views to adopt. Nothing here asks you to believe in Buddhism, the dharma, or anything at all. The language has been deliberately stripped back, freed from cultural and religious framing, and oriented toward direct experience. The intention is simple: to offer clear, usable pointers that can help you recognise your own nature in the midst of everyday 21st-century life, and to discover a freedom that does not depend on belonging to any tradition.

In my early 20s I travelled to India many times, in those days we had no phones, no computers, no podcasts or netflix. Once you were there, you were there, no easy escape. The first time I went, it was for six months I had about £400. I remember arriving in Delhi, the first thing that hits you is the smell, then the noise, the chaos, the heat, the intensity of every moment, spontaneously arising and passing in a seemingly endless circus of life and death.

The first night we stayed in the cheapest hostel we could find, there were rats running around the bathroom. I felt sick, scared, I wanted to go home. Instead we made a runner for the Himalayas and never looked back, six months later when it was time to go home, I had tears in my eyes, I didn't want to leave! I ended up going to India, Nepal and Tibet, many times, over many years.

In that first six months I ended up doing many things including working at meeting mother Theresa and volunteering at her home for destitute and dying in Calcutta. I visited obscure ashrams in Bengal, where no western folk had ever went. I had many profound and strange experiences, one of them was in an Hindu ashram, after a huge fire ceremony on one of the holy festivals for Shiva. The big guru came to visit with all his sadhus (Indian holy men and women) and they held an elaborate fire ceremony for days. It was normal in this fervour for people to fall into ecstatic trances, I first thought they were having epileptic fits, but soon found out this was something entirely different.

At the end of the fire ceremony, the old guru, gathered the ash from the fire onto his thumb and would press the ash into each persons forehead. After my turn, I fell into a deep trance and had a crystal clear dream about a Mahasiddhi, living in a cave. The dream said I had to go to the Himalayas as that was where my pathway lay. So I did and spent many years travelling in Ladakh, Tibet. Nepal and the Himalayas. I met many wonderful teachers and guides along the way, they still influence me every moment and their essence is in this book.

Later I learnt that many of the Mahasiddhis were based in Bengal and were the founders of what became known as Tantric Buddhism, that ultimately spread to Tibet and across the Himalayas. Their practice was called 'Sahaja' and they were very present, yet free and easy in their ways, unlike the monastic traditions with all their rules and rituals. I found their style fascinating and still do, that's why they are included in this book, for they have something profound to offer us here and now in 21st century life.

Sahaja means the natural or innate state, the way awareness already is before we try to improve, manage, or escape ourselves. Rather than offering another ideal to reach, Sahaja points to the simple recognition of what is present in the midst of ordinary life, including thinking, feeling, working, relating, resting.

Its relevance to modern life is profound because much of our stress comes from constant self-monitoring, self-improvement, and the pressure to become something better in the future. Sahaja dissolves this tension by revealing that nothing essential is missing, that awareness is already whole, even when the mind is busy or emotions are strong. This doesn't remove challenges or responsibilities, but it changes our relationship to them; instead of being driven by identity, comparison, or fear, actions arise more naturally and intelligently from the moment itself.

In a world of speed, distraction, and endless striving, Sahaja offers not an escape from life, but a way of being fully present within it, simple, grounded, and free without needing to withdraw from the world.

This booklet is not a map of concepts, but a set of direct invitations. Nothing here asks you to adopt a new identity, belief, or lifestyle. The intention is much simpler: to help you recognise what is already present, learn to trust it, and allow it to inform the way you live in the world. The word *dharma* simply means "the way things are" and the guidance that helps us see that clearly. It is not a religion and it does not ask for belief or obedience. At its heart, dharma is practical wisdom offered as a medicine for anxiety, as a way of understanding the mind, the body, and experience so that we are no longer trapped by confusion or unnecessary struggle. In the 21st century, where attention is constantly fragmented, identity is endlessly reinforced, and stress has become normal, this medicine feels more relevant than ever.

What makes this moment unique is that the dharma can now be shared free from cultural baggage, stripped of dogma, and spoken in ordinary language. For the first time in history, it can meet people exactly where they are, offering a direct opportunity to wake up in the midst of modern life, rather than retreat from it.

The dharma was never meant to be a belief system or a cultural identity. It was offered as a medicine, prescribed in response to a specific form of suffering, the confusion that arises when we mistake our thoughts, roles, and stories for who we imagine ourselves to be. In the 21st century, that confusion has intensified rather than disappeared, our attention is constantly pulled outward, our nervous systems rarely rest, and our sense of self is increasingly shaped by screens, comparison, and speed. Yet this moment also carries an unprecedented opportunity.

Never before have so many people had access to teachings, language, and conditions that make direct recognition possible in ordinary life. When freed from dogma and presented simply, the dharma meets modern life exactly where it is, by not asking us to escape the world, but inviting us to awake within it, with clarity, compassion, and a freedom that does not depend on circumstances.

The word Buddha simply means “the awakened one.” It comes from the Sanskrit root *budh*, which means *to wake up, to notice, to be aware*. It does not mean a god, a prophet, or a special kind of person. It describes a state of recognition, not an identity. In its original sense, a Buddha is someone who has woken up from confusion, free from the habitual tendency to mistake thoughts, roles, and stories for who we really are. What is awakened is not something new, it is awareness recognising itself.

This is why early Buddhist texts often use everyday metaphors: waking from sleep, seeing clearly, coming out of a dream. Nothing mystical is added. Something false is simply seen through. From the Dzogchen and Mahamudra perspective, this goes even further: awakening is not something a person achieves, but the moment it is recognised that awareness was never asleep to begin with. The word *Buddha* points to that recognition, not to a figure on a throne, but to a possibility that is present in every human life.

In that sense, *Buddha* is less a name and more a reminder.

The traditions of the Mahasiddhas, Mahamudra and Dzogchen did not arise as belief systems or philosophies. They arose as direct responses to this exact human dilemma: the tendency to overlook our own true nature while searching everywhere else for fulfilment.

These traditions all point to the same essential discovery, though they arose in different places and cultures. Dzogchen, which emerged in Tibet, emphasises the immediate recognition of our natural state, open, aware, and already complete. Mahamudra, which developed in India and later Tibet, uses direct insight into mind and experience to reveal that same openness through lived observation.

The Mahasiddhas were not monks in ivory towers, but often unconventional figures, wanderers, householders, artists, and outcasts, who realised truth in the midst of ordinary, sometimes chaotic lives. What unites all three is their refusal to turn awakening into a belief system or magical illusion. Again and again, they point back to what is already present here and now, inviting recognition rather than effort, and freedom rather than improvement.

The heart of the approach in this booklet comes from Garab Dorje, the first human teacher of Dzogchen, who lived in India sometime between the 1st and 6th centuries. Rather than offering a complex system, he distilled the entire path into three simple points: first, directly recognising the nature of mind; second, gaining confidence in that recognition; and third, allowing it to naturally integrate into the flow of everyday life. These were not meant as abstract doctrines, but as practical guidance for real people, in real conditions. Stripped of cultural language, they remain as relevant now as they were then, offering a direct and workable orientation for life in a fast, distracted, 21st-century world.

The structure follows the essential heart of Garab Dorje's three statements, expressed here in plain, contemporary language:

First, recognising the natural state.

Second, gaining confidence in that recognition.

Third, allowing it to integrate naturally into everyday life.



“All the philosophical theories that exist have been created by the mistaken dualistic minds of human beings. In the realm of philosophy, that which today is considered true, may tomorrow be proved to be false. No one can guarantee a philosophy's validity. Because of this, any intellectual way of seeing whatever is always partial and relative. The fact is that there is no truth to seek or to confirm logically; rather what one needs to do is to discover just how much the mind continually limits itself in a condition of dualism.

Dualism is the real root of our suffering and of all our conflicts. All our concepts and beliefs, no matter how profound they may seem, are like nets which trap us in dualism. When we discover our limits we have to try to overcome them, untying ourselves from whatever type of religious, political or social conviction may condition us. We have to abandon such concepts as 'enlightenment', 'the nature of the mind', and so on, until we are no longer satisfied by a merely intellectual knowledge, and until we no longer neglect to integrate our knowledge with our actual existence.”

Namkhai Norbu, Dzogchen: The Self-Perfected State

PART ONE

Recognising the Natural State

Before you begin reading further, pause for a moment, just pay attention to this moment and notice the words on the page and the space where the words appear. Notice that which is aware of both words and space. Simply pause the momentum of seeking and be with what is here and now, in its simplicity, without adding anything, just simply being in this very moment in all its splendour.

Notice that experience is already happening by itself. Sounds are present, sensations are present, thoughts pass by, yet you are not doing any of this, it is simply appearing and happening by itself, spontaneous and natural. This fact is more important than it may first seem as it points to something already functioning prior to effort, intention, or control. Awareness is not something you generate, it is not something you switch on through practice, it is always already operating effortlessly.

Thoughts, sensations and emotions all naturally appear and are known. Even confusion and anger, frustration or unease is known. Instead of focusing on what appears, gently notice the knowing itself. That which is aware of what arises, not as an object or a thing, but as the simple fact that whatever arises is already known.

There is nothing mystical about this, it is completely ordinary. Many people assume awakening requires stopping thought, but this misunderstanding alone has delayed recognition for countless practitioners. Thoughts are not the problem, they are natural expressions of the mind. The difficulty comes from unconsciously following them, believing them, grasping onto them as real and trying to resolve them. So much of the challenge of simple recognition, is trying to work it out!

Here we remember to relax and just be, instead of achieving and doing! We relax into simply being, letting awareness be as it is, aware of everything as it appears precisely in each moment without grasping onto the object, whether it be a sound or a form, we just let it be without having to name or define it. Just let it be!

For a moment, allow thoughts to arise without interference. Just let them be as they are, like clouds in the sky. Your mind is like the sky, thoughts are like the clouds, just let them pass by, leaving no trace. Do not follow them, do not suppress them, but simply notice how they come and go on their own. They arise from the great empty essence and dissolve back into the vast emptiness. Just like that!

What remains when a thought dissolves?

Now gently turn attention back toward what seems to be aware of this moment.

Look carefully, not intellectually.

Is there a solid centre? A boundary?

A location where awareness resides?

How big is your mind?

Does it have any limits?

If nothing can be found, do not rush to name that absence, but simply stay with the openness of not finding. This open, aware knowing is not a void, it is awake, clear, and present. It is important to be clear here, recognition of the natural state is not a special experience, state, or altered condition. If you are waiting for fireworks, bliss, or a dramatic shift, you are likely overlooking what is already here.

Recognition is the simple noticing of what has always been the case, and yet because it is so close, it is easily missed. This natural state feels ordinary because it is ordinary, as it says, its just natural. Nothing fancy, no added extras, its the ground where everything arises, the space where appearance arises, it is just this which is aware of these words right now.

Pause for a moment and notice what is aware of these words before you think about them. That simple knowing is already here, effortless and immediate. It has no shape, no centre, no age, and no personal history. Thoughts, sensations, emotions, and perceptions appear within it and disappear, but it does not come or go with them. It is not inside your body; the sense of body appears within it. It is not something you can reach or improve, because it is what you are prior to any effort. If you look for the one who is aware, you will find no one at all, yet awareness itself remains clear, open, and present. Rest as that, without trying to hold it or name it. This is your true nature, awake before thought, unchanged by experience, and already complete.

Relax, Relax Alert, Alert!

Machig Labdron

Stop!

Before a thought appears

What is here?

The pure knowing of this moment.

That knowing is not “someone.”

It has no shape, no centre, no edge.

It does not begin or end.

It cannot be harmed or improved.

It is not inside the body.

The body appears inside it.

It is not in the mind.

The mind appears within it.

It is not a state.

All states rise and fall within it.

This knowingness is the Absolute

closer than breath,

prior to the world,

free of time.

You cannot reach it.

You cannot lose it.

It is what is looking through your eyes right now.

Everything

your story, your name, your past,

your identity, your personality

is appearing and disappearing

in this luminous, ownerless, awareness.

You are not a part of it.
You are not connected to it.
You are it.

The seeker cannot find it
because the seeker is an appearance within it.

Let the seeker fall away.
Look from the place you are looking *from*.

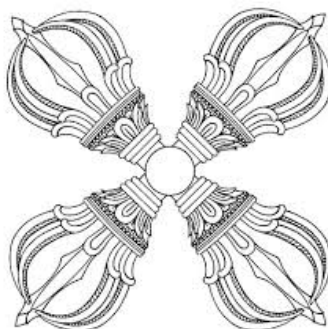
Right now, without moving:

Everything you see,
everything you feel,
everything you think,
every sound, sensation, and breath—
is the Absolute expressing itself
as this very moment.

There is nothing behind it.
Nothing outside it.
Nothing else.

This is our true nature.
This.
Exactly as it is.

Already complete.
Already free.
Already You.



PART TWO

Gaining Confidence in Recognition

Relaxing the Search

Once recognition has occurred, even briefly, the most common mistake is trying to hold onto it. The mind subtly turns recognition into an object and effort re-enters. This is not a failure; it is simply habit. Instead of trying to maintain anything, relax.

Let awareness be as it is. Recognition stabilises through ease, not control.

Trust grows naturally when effort softens.

Nothing Needs to Be Removed

From this perspective, emotions, thoughts, and habits are not obstacles. They are expressions arising within awareness.

Anger, sadness, joy, and fear do not disqualify recognition. In fact, they provide opportunities to see that awareness remains unchanged regardless of content.

Notice how even strong emotions arise, move, and dissolve without needing to be fixed. Freedom is not the absence of experience. It is the absence of fixation.

Short Moments of recognition, repeated often are one of the main practices that the this approach. Rather than trying to remain continuously present, return again and again to simple recognition.

Brief moments are enough. A second is enough. Over time, repetition gently erodes the habit of identification. This approach is practical and simple, and suited to modern life. It does not require withdrawal from the world.

Realise that forgetting Is Part of the Path You will forget. Attention will be captured. Old patterns will reassert themselves.

This is not a problem.

The moment you notice you are lost in thought, awareness has already reappeared. Recognition is present in the noticing itself.

There is no need for self-correction or judgment. Simply notice again.

The key point here is simply to relax back into awareness, again and again. We have spent a lifetime caught up in appearances. We have become addicted to thoughts, imagining we can think our way out of any situation. Whilst analysis is essential, here we do not need to work it out. Changing the habit of a lifetime, may happen instantly, but it is more likely that when we relearn how to turn our attention from the object, back into awareness itself, our perception will naturally reset itself. It will become simply natural, like learning to ride a bike.

The essential thing is to have confidence in awareness. To learn to trust that awareness is always here, always present.

Often we do not trust ourselves. For whatever reason, through Ayr life experience, we may have been told we are not good enough, that this mantra has somehow embedded deep within our psyche. But here it is not a matter of being good or bad, you don't have good meditations and bad ones, there is nothing to achieve.

The problem is that many people have been told or believe that enlightenment is some distant goal that we may reach one day. But there is no other moment than this one. There is only ever this moment of now. Beliefs and concepts are simply like the clouds passing by, no matter how lofty, of who told you, be free of these thoughts and ideas for a moment, let yourself be free for a moment! This is the biggest gift you can give, the gift of being present!

Here, there is nothing special. This is not a competition. Recognising your natural state, does not make you better than anyone else, you do not become a buddha, you already are naturally awake, it's simply letting go of the falsity of beliefs and stories that we have woven around this imaginary identity, that sets us free.

Also freedom, does not mean that suddenly our life is all sorted and magically sorts itself out. All the vast array of feelings and emotions, thoughts and sensations still arise, it's just that we are no longer identified with them as our sense of self.

We are born and given a name. That name is not who we are. It is simply a symbol we use to navigate in the world of words and language. We need language to communicate and create relationships with the world. But when we name things, we can imagine that the name makes it real. But fundamentally names are simply empty signifiers that help us create meaning and conversation. What is a tree, if we

do not name it? It simply is. It is the same for this body and consciousness, it simply is an arising in awareness, ever changing in every moment.

This is a wonderful gift to realise. I am not what I think I am. I am, is a co arising with the world, for in essence we are the world, being aware of its infinite flavours in every moment. Constantly expressing itself in its ever changing appearances.

So having confidence in our true nature, is not an arrogant duality of us and them, that I am awakened and everyone that isn't, is somehow worse off. The beauty of recognising our innate freedom is that we can move in the world free from the constant feeling of anxiety, that limits and creates a sense of duality in the first place. Ramana Maharishi, the great Indian saint said "Your own Self Realisation is the greatest service you can render the world."

Why?

Because we can then support other people who are experiencing anxiety and suffering to find another way to be in the world. Not by becoming some great hero, but by opening our heart with loving kindness and compassion to any suffering we experience, by supporting a sense of spaciousness and clarity that allows us to step out of the constant need for self gratification. In a world that is obsessed by narcissism, greed and consumerism, finding another way to be, really is a liberation!



PART THREE

Finding Freedom in Everyday Life

The Ordinary World Is the Practice

The natural state is not found by escaping daily life but is revealed within it. This is not about escaping to some remote mountain retreat, but you are welcome to go that way if you wish. But here we are mainly looking at how, we live in the world, with the life that we already inhabit, whatever that looks like.

So whether it's conversations, work, relationships, technology, parenting, and uncertainty, these are not distractions, but they are the very ground in which recognition matures. It's not about sitting in meditation, going to a workshop or retreat and being peaceful and spiritual, then just getting pulled back into the drama, then escaping to the yoga class, like a human yo yo. Here we are looking at integration with every facet of life, from sex to doing the dishes. It's all part of the great display of emptiness, so there is no escape and no need to! We are not trying to get out of it, but getting into it! Our aim is to be with the natural flow, as it is!

What is especially beautiful and relevant about the Mahasiddha approach is that they were householders, wanderers, artisans, parents, lovers, workers, and outsiders. They lived in the middle of society, not outside it, and their realisation did not depend on withdrawing from life but on meeting life directly as it is. This makes Sahaja profoundly suited to 21st-century life, where most people are navigating relationships, work, family, technology, and constant stimulation rather than monasteries and long retreats.

In a world driven by speed, productivity, and comparison, we are subtly trained to believe that something is always missing and that fulfilment lies in the next achievement, upgrade, or self-improvement project. Sahaja cuts through this pressure at its root. It does not ask us to become calmer, better, or more spiritual versions of ourselves.

It simply reveals that awareness is already complete, even in the midst of stress, distraction, or emotional intensity. This recognition removes the constant background strain of trying to manage or perfect ourselves.

The Mahasiddhas showed that awakening is not fragile and does not require ideal conditions. Anger, desire, fatigue, confusion, love, and creativity were not obstacles to realisation; they were expressions of the same living awareness.

In modern life, where emotions run fast, identities are complex, and the nervous system is often overloaded, this is crucial. Sahaja does not demand control of experience, but a change in relationship to it. Thoughts can be busy, feelings can be strong, and yet awareness remains open and boundless.

Perhaps most importantly for our time, Sahaja undermines the sense of isolation and personal failure that so many people carry. When life is lived from identity, everything feels personal, success defines us, failure shames us, and comparison exhausts us. Sahaja reveals that there is no fixed person at the centre of experience, only a natural flow of life unfolding in awareness. From this perspective, action becomes more responsive, relationships more compassionate, and creativity more free.

In the 21st century, amid ecological crisis, mental health challenges, digital overload, and social fragmentation, the Mahsiddha message is quietly radical: you do not need to escape the world to be free, and you do not need to fix yourself to be whole. Freedom is not found in a perfected future but in recognising the natural state that is already present, right in the middle of ordinary, messy, human life.

Notice awareness right now, whilst reading these words. Notice awareness while speaking, listening, waiting or scrolling. Notice that there is awareness of all these movements in space. Like a mirror it reflects everything, no matter how big, how small, yet just like the mirror, awareness never gets tainted by the appearances.

We simply change our perception, from imagining we are defined by life and its thoughts, feelings and beliefs, to becoming awareness where all these constantly dance in the sky like awareness of our true nature.

Now life itself becomes the teacher, the guru. Notice how life is forever offering its potential to be present, to notice, to be still and alert, to relax and be present. .

As trust and confidence deepens, action begins to arise with less self-consciousness. Responses become simpler and defensiveness softens. Compassion appears without effort as the natural response to the radiant wonder of each moment.

This is not because we are trying to be a better person, but because action is no longer filtered through a tightly held identity. Wisdom dawns and expresses itself naturally when fixation relaxes. Ultimately, natural freedom is about trust. Trust in awareness itself, that nothing essential is missing. This trust is not blind belief, but is grounded in the direct experience of being available to our life unfolding in this very moment. Right here, Right now!

Again and again, notice that awareness is present regardless of circumstances. It does not come and go, and does not improve or deteriorate, for there is no final state to reach and no endpoint to defend. What a relief, to simply let go of having to keep up appearances. Living this understanding becomes an ongoing, responsive process. As clarity deepens, humility and love for life deepens.

Nothing needs to be concluded.

Natural freedom is not hidden.
It is not reserved for special people.
It is not found in the future.

It is the simple fact of awareness knowing itself, here and now.

Nothing needs to be believed.
Nothing needs to be achieved.

Only recognised, again and again.

This is the wonder of being!

May all beings find freedom!

Written by Huw Wyn

Tiger's Nest

December 2025

Year of the Wood Snake

www.tigers-nest.com





This booklet is a small taster of the retreats we offer and a new book coming out in 2026, which will explore all the dimensions of these webs of life we weave and how the wonder of awareness can transform even the most challenging moments. Find out more on: www.tigers-nest.com

Sahaja is the art of relaxing so deeply into being that the body itself reveals its innate bliss, and awareness and sensation are no longer two. Bliss is not the opposite of sorrow, it is the freedom to feel everything fully. When you look at the wound without turning away, it becomes the door to the sky.

Saraha

