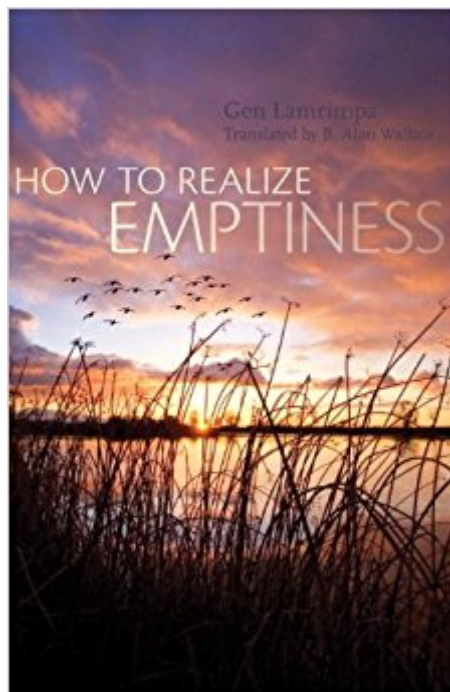


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How To Realize Emptiness



Synopsis

Realizing emptiness or grasping the true nature of reality lies at the heart of the Buddhist path. In this book, Gen Lamrimpa offers practical instruction on Madhyamaka, insight meditation aimed at realizing emptiness. Drawing on his theoretical training as well as his extensive meditative experience, he explains how to use Madhyamaka reasoning to experience the way in which all things exist as dependently related events.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Written by a genuine Buddhist master, How to Realize Emptiness gives accurate directions to explore the nature of reality and come to the correct view of the Middle Way." [Ven. Thubten Chodron](#), author of *Buddhism for Beginners* "Not quite emptiness made easy [but it is at least emptiness made comprehensible.](#)" [Dharma Life](#) "An important commentary clarifying the Madhyamika view and synthesizing venerated scriptural references, enhancing understanding of the view of emptiness. Ven. Gen Lamrimpa's elucidation reflects his remarkable practice and life." [Tenzin Kacho](#), resident teacher of Thubten Shedrup Ling and Buddhist Chaplain with the United States Air Force Academy "The teachings are profound and clearly guide one toward realizing the nature of emptiness. . . . Each chapter is a gem detailing in clear language the apparent nature of ignorance and its dependence on the individual for its existence." [Inner Directions](#) "Gen Lamrimpa has a down-to-earth approach to this difficult subject which is immediately accessible to beginning students, further clarified by B. Alan

Wallace's translation. . . . Gen Lamrimpa's teachings, which combine analysis with practical exercises, are redolent with compassion and insight." – •Mandala Magazine "Some of the material is rather technical and merits several readings, but it is effort that pays off. In less than one hundred pages, Gen Lamrimpa manages to give the reader . . . a practical presentation of the reasoning commonly employed in Tibetan Buddhism to experience the way in which all things exist as dependently related events. In addition to the scholarly presentation of emptiness, this book also contains a brief but illuminating biography of Gen Lamrimpa and two appendixes; one on Dzogchen and the other on Madhyamaka and Dzogchen. That a traditionally trained Gelugpa scholar monk should take time out to discuss Dzogchen is refreshing and shows that Gelugpas are not necessarily in disagreement with the approach of Dzogchen. Perhaps it is not so surprising when one considers that Gen Lamrimpa is not just a scholar monk but a meditator with decades of experience much of it in retreat." – •Buddhism Now

Gen Lamrimpa, born in Tibet in 1934, spent most of his life in meditative retreat in Dharamsala, India. He is the author of *Calming the Mind*, one of the clearest books in English on shamatha meditation.

This is NOT for development of insight. It is not for meditation practice. It's a condensed and detailed theoretical exposition of the Madhyamaka philosophy. What I could really appreciate was the concise biography of the Geshe at the beginning of the book, the rest is just academical jargon.

The concept of "emptiness" is mentioned a lot by Buddhist teachers but it is often given a short explanation that remains cryptic to someone that has not yet realized it experientially. Whenever I read these explanations I struggled to understand, for instance, how we can say "I" or the "self" doesn't exist or how we can say that all phenomena is empty of inherent existence. These claims seem to defy logic, intuition, and experience. The short treatment is unfortunate because the concept is so central to the Buddha's teachings and personal progression along the path. In this book Lamrimpa breaks the concept down into somewhat excruciating detail. This isn't a book you can skim or read through quickly. It is dense and I found myself restarting from the beginning several times to make sure that I was grasping everything. But, it solidified my understanding many times over. In the past I would ponder the concept and try to guess at its application and exact meaning but never felt confident that I was interpreting and applying it correctly. This detailed account was more helpful than anything else I've read on the topic and I would recommend it to

anyone interested in the Dharma with the only warning being that it is concept heavy and you should come into it knowing that you'll have to intellectually struggle to grasp its meaning simply because of the complexity of the subject (the perceptual and conceptual mind interacting to create illusion and ignorance). I am impressed with Wallace's skill as a translator. It's amazing how precise the language is and without a very accurate translation this book could easily have been more confusing than helpful. I'll definitely be seeking out other translations by him. This book is in my top three Dharma books after having read probably 20 or so.

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