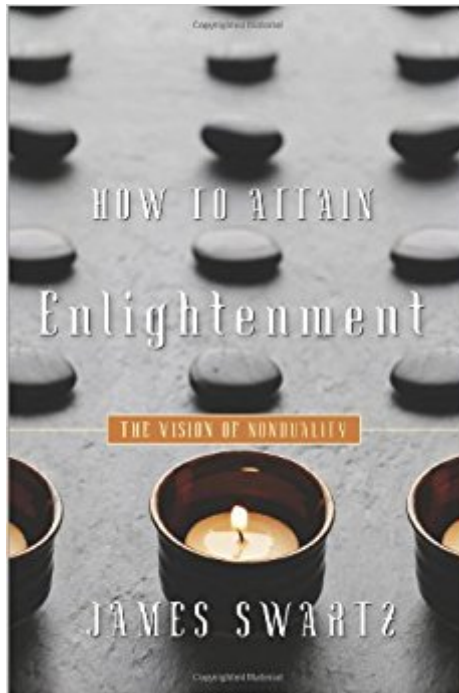


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# How To Attain Enlightenment: The Vision Of Nonduality



## Synopsis

This complete guide to enlightenment presents the wisdom of the ancient science of self-inquiry, a time-tested means for achieving spiritual freedom. The author convincingly refutes the popular view that enlightenment is a unique state of consciousness and debunks a host of other myths. In his straightforward style he reveals proven methods for purifying the mind, and takes the reader from the beginning to the end of the spiritual path, patiently unfolding the logic of self-inquiry.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Vision of Nonduality explains methods of Vedanta in his survey of spiritual techniques, pairing theory with practice and explaining the myths and realities behind an enlightened state. From reflections on moving to a larger living space and clutter to assimilating experiences, How to Attain Enlightenment is a powerful survey any new age library needs. (The Bookwatch, May 21, 2010)How to Attain Enlightenment explains and focuses on Vedanta, the science of self-inquiry, and considers the myths behind the state of enlightenment and its connections to happiness. The ancient teachings of Vedanta form a foundation of knowledge and practice that has questioned the nature of reality itself, and this survey of love, lifestyle, experience and more offers a fine survey perfect for new age libraries. (Midwest Book Review)Though based on the ancient wisdom and knowledge of Vedanta, it comes as a breath of fresh air. A biased outlook may regard this information as old and musty, but the modern perspective displays a new approach to this gleaming and invaluable treasure. Any worldly and material knowledge is incomplete, for it is merely a minuscule part of the whole Universe. But self-knowledge, which emphasizes oneness and the non-dual, presents

knowledge which is complete and whole. This book goes through the entire gamut of topics covered by the Vedas, making use of yoga, detachment, the ego, karma, dharma, love, meditation and much more, to bring about an inner growth, wherein is visible the enlightened and luminous self. (East and West Magazine)

Sentient Publications presents its next best-seller, *How to Attain Enlightenment: The Vision of Nonduality* by acclaimed author James Schwartz, who offers his ample wisdom on the ancient teachings of Vedanta. In Hinduism, Vedanta is a system of philosophy that further develops the connotation in the philosophies that add to the theology of ancient Hinduism. In his first chapter, *Inquiry into Object Happiness* Schwartz holds the key to what it means to discover enlightenment – rather, a higher sense of awareness and consciousness to receive guidance and be in unison with the power of the Universe: “What we call reality is governed by the uncertainly principle,” writes Schwartz, “Because our source of food, animal or vegetable, is unconcerned about our need to survive, we are forced to either pursue it or cultivate it. Shelter does not simply happen on its own but requires effort to obtain. The same principle holds true in what he further elaborates that even when material needs have been met, individuals often find that they are still not completely fulfilled or satisfied in their lives – this is where having and maintaining a state of Vedanta helps soul seekers to be at one with the self and with the Universe, regardless of life circumstances. If you are on a quest for wisdom and are ready to manifest a heightened state of consciousness so that you can become liberated and freed from the limitations that negate your personal and spiritual happiness, then gain the knowledge you need that Schwartz offers in his book *How to Attain Enlightenment* through a vast array of teachings, meditations, and more. (CarolAnnB)

Would you like to learn how to attain enlightenment? Well regardless of the semantics of whether enlightenment is something to be attained, welcome to the enlightenmentdudes.com review of *How to Attain Enlightenment* by James Swartz. This really is a handbook of enlightenment. He covers what enlightenment is not, such as not an experiential state, and then gets into what enlightenment is. He talks about qualifications, or a background of spiritual maturity the seeker needs to have. And he explains what self inquiry really is. Swartz also spends time debunking enlightenment myths and exposing the inaccuracy of the teachings of neo-advaita (primarily western) instant enlightenment spiritual teachers. The book reminded me of how it is to enter a relationship. It started off well, but then you reach a point where you ask yourself whether you want to go on. There was a period where I was wondering what kind of point he was trying to make and if it was actually going anywhere. Like weathering a relationship through the tough times, I went on, and I’m glad it did. Swartz is very funny in parts of the book, and it was refreshing to see a guy write in a fashion that uses descriptive terms that don’t have you

reading the words consciousness, awareness or pure being in every paragraph. There are too many spiritual books full of that crap, and Swartz is a very pleasant departure from that. The writer has a very keen understanding of self inquiry and other methods on the spiritual path, and he discusses the benefits of each. Swartz spent considerable time in India learning self-inquiry and has a chapter dedicated to questions about Ramana Maharshi. Swartz's teacher was not a Ramana follower so there are areas where he differentiates from Ramana. He also discusses how one's lifestyle has a major impact on enlightenment and he differentiates terms awakening and enlightenment as being two different things. Overall, if you can get through the slow parts, this is an excellent and comprehensive book. You'll realize when you get through it that slow parts actually were part of a plan and have importance. Enlightenmentdudes.com highly recommends this book, and gives it an 8 out of 10 on our infinity scale. (Enlightenmentdudes.com)

James Swartz grew up in Montana and attended Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin and the University of California at Berkeley before finding his niche in the world of business. He saw great success as a businessman, but in 1967 he experienced a major epiphany that turned him away from that path. Instead, he traveled to India on a spiritual journey, searching for the path to enlightenment. It was here that he learned of the famous Indian sage Swami Chinmayananda, whose knowledge and teachings proved to be the means to set James free. Now a disciple of the sage, James travels extensively to cities in America, Europe, and India to hold seminars on Vedanta, the science of self-inquiry. He provides resources for understanding non-duality through his website, [www.shiningworld.com](http://www.shiningworld.com). James has previously self-published two non-fiction books: *Meditation: An Inquiry into the Self* (1998) and *The Mystery Beyond the Trinity* (1998).

A masterpiece of Vedanta literature. James is a true scholar and teacher of this amazing science of life & consciousness. I've studied numerous Vedanta books from the Shankara tradition. James is very true to that lineage but speaks directly to the western mind cutting through a lot of the New Age experiential dribble and speaks directly about the non-dual reality that most humans fail to realize. The vision of enlightenment presented in this book is not some mystical mind altering experience. It is a fundamental challenge to the way human beings generally view themselves and others. It's goal is the total liberation of the self.

James Swartz is the best Vedanta teacher I have EVER come across. I am so grateful to God for bringing this book to me. I HIGHLY recommend this book if you are a fan of Rupert Spira and

Maharshi; those teachers simply give you the WHAT, but James brilliantly gives you the HOW.

Without a doubt the finest book I've ever read on Non-duality. Advaita Vedanta is the highest teaching period. Eloquently expounded by James Swartz, can't recommend it highly enough!

The writer seems to put "religion and spirituality" into an undesirable category and says that his version of the truth is "scientific" and therefore credible. There are some things that I may agree with, but I found this book to contain too much pontification of the author's personal opinions, which I had to wade through in searching out essential truths. Were I to edit this book, I would reduce it by at least 60%. If you want a book that is densely packed with truth without all the fluff, try "Paths to Transcendence," by Reza Shah-Kazemi. My advice to readers is don't get too attached to personalities. It is better to read Shankara himself, the original Upanishads, the Bhagavad-Gita, and find the truth inside yourselves. That does not mean the author doesn't present Vedanta. I'm not saying that. But I had serious concerns about opinions. For example, the author says there is no value in helping others, and then gives the pull-yourself-up--by-your-own-bootstraps argument. That is a serious error. It may be that things don't matter when taking the perspective of the Absolute. But in the relative world we have been placed into, helping others is not only valuable, it is mandatory if we are to live consciously. That was one example. Many of these personal opinions could give seekers an excuse to live in a self-centered egocentric manner and at the same time call that enlightenment. This is a view which disconnects enlightenment from virtue. It doesn't pass muster to place "religion and spirituality" outside the realm of enlightenment. This isn't at all what Shankara was teaching. Also, awareness isn't the final word on enlightenment, but only one aspect of the enlightened consciousness, which is compassionate and caring of other beings. Enlightened consciousness is a "you first" perspective. It isn't a self-centered "me first" endeavor that indifferently watches others flounder.

Gives you the insight i've been always looking for, explains the mother of all holy scriptures 'Vedanta the way it should be in a simple, lucid & convincing way that you have no choice but to surrender yourself to it's teachings which has remained changeless with the passage of time.

First saw James on you tube was totally overwhelmed by his down to earth logic. He has a scholars knowledge of Vedanta his book is beyond believe. I have been reading eastern philosophy for 40 years. Reading all Allen Watts books, Robert Pirsig books, Franklin Merrill Wolff books, Martin

Buber book I and Thou, Emanuel Kant, Carl Jung, many many more . All great scholars all great communicators of eastern wisdom. No one and I mean no one has bridged the gap between east and west like James Swartz . If you have a real heart for seeing through the matrix, study this book , become this book, I promise you will become one with that element inside you that is eternal. I had the privilege of spending three days with James in Princeton NJ this July 2013 and he is as down to earth and real as a high school buddy. Except for one thing, he is there and if you do not know what is meant by that this is one tool that will get you there. James has brought the soul of Vedanta into the heart of western man in our time. Im telling you folks this is the real deal if you want to get in touch with the eternal element alive in each one of us read this with your heart and mind. Im not fooling around with this, it is real. The mind can be the tool to touch the door to eternity use this book as that tool.

Just buy it. Read it. Think about it. This is the only thing you need and you already have it.

The cover art is in the Zen aesthetic style; however this book is direct methodology of Avidya Vedanta (the science of the Self recorded in the ancient Upanishads). This is a must read for the serious student because of the clarity it is able to provide. I personally think it would be life changing for anyone who took the time to read this book. The author has a rich source of his other writings on his website at 'shiningworld' as well as his interesting biography and time with guru while a young man. That website is where I started. It also provides a full chapter of this book, more of a sample than provides. James Swartz is in his 80s and has developed the teaching ability to provide clarity as he leads the reader.

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