



A Six-Month Open Path Training
with Pir Elias Amidon

THE OPEN PATH

Recognizing Nondual Awareness

Engineer's House, Bristol, UK

Seminar I: May 2-5, 2019 (Thursday to Sunday)

Seminar II: October 9-12, 2019 (Wednesday to Saturday)

Seminars are non-residential; 10 AM — 6 PM each day.

The Open Path training is a non-sectarian approach to spiritual realization. Its purpose is to introduce you to the aware openness of our original nature, free from religious interpretations and obligations. With this unadorned recognition we experience release from our insecurities and judgements of others. As a result we are able to respond spontaneously to whatever comes up for us with equanimity, creativity, and with a kind heart.

THE OPEN PATH TRAINING

Structure of the Training

Open Path trainings have been held in the UK, US, Holland, Austria, and Germany for the past 12 years. Each training spans a period of six months. The programme consists of two four-day non-residential seminars; between seminars we connect with each other by telephone on a regular basis. This telephone work is a central aspect of the training. There are group conference calls with Elias approximately every three weeks, and individual calls with Elias or other Open Path guides are also scheduled. In addition, each student has one or more partners in the class to work with by telephone on exercises and inquiry work.

The textbook for the course is *The Open Path — Recognizing Nondual Awareness* by Elias Amidon. Participants will need to purchase the book prior to the training — it is available in bookstores and on Amazon. The essays and practices in the book focus our work together.

Purpose of the Training

In its essence, the training is an opportunity to reconnect with your original innocence and presence — an experience of what is often called *the natural state* or *pure awareness*. It is a process of natural enlightenment belonging to everyone. Usually this experience begins with short glimpses of its lucid clarity. As these glimpses are pointed out, you learn to open to them again and again. The natural ease they reveal becomes increasingly familiar. This familiarity allows you to sustain and integrate the realization of the natural state in your daily life.

In the Open Path training we are committed to *direct experience* rather than studying *about* the recognition of the natural state. We acknowledge the mind's tendency to make up stories and interpretations about what is real,

and for these interpretations to give us a measure of security. We try to be gentle with ourselves here, neither blaming ourselves for objectifying our experience with concepts nor exerting tremendous effort in attempts to stop our habits of thinking and conceptualizing.

The key to our “work” in the Open Path is to allow ourselves to relax from the need to figure out what is true. This relaxation - often called *unknowing* - is not laziness or dreaminess. It is an openness to direct experience of the present moment in all its spontaneity and mystery.

While we do explore many exercises and practices, and share many “pointing out” conversations and written material, the heart of this Path is not didactic. Our explorations are primarily devoted to evoking each person’s direct experience of the natural state – timeless awareness – without relying upon belief or cognitive understanding to convince ourselves of its presence.

How Much Time is Involved?

In addition to the two 4-day seminars, the training involves approximately 20 minutes each day in a contemplative practice over the six months of the course. You will also spend about one to two hours (or more as you wish) each week in reading and in exercises done independently or shared with other participants. In addition, you should be prepared to spend about two hours each month on the group and individual telephone calls. You may also wish to read from the bibliography, outside the course work. If you are not sure you can devote this amount of time to this work over the six months of the course, we recommend that you wait until your life schedule will allow it.

Who Is this Training For?

The Open Path Training is appropriate for people who are psychologically stable, emotionally resilient, and who are invested with a deep spiritual calling for realization. Of course, everyone experiences ups and downs in his or her life—the stability and resilience mentioned here is the capacity you have to deal with these natural ups and downs honestly and wholeheartedly. In engaging with this course it is also helpful to be someone who has a strong love for life and who has a natural generosity—these qualities serve to support your commitment to the learning involved, as well as deepen the contribution this work can make to the well being of your family, friends and community.

While it is often beneficial to have had a background in meditation practice or in a spiritual tradition, it is not necessary. Most important is a steadiness of commitment over time and an honest curiosity to explore your direct experience of being.

Fee for Six-Month Open Path Training

The fee for the 2019 Open Path training is £1,150. This fee includes: Two 4-day seminars • Engineer's House facility fee, including lunches • Open Path individual practices and shared exercises • Contemplative readings • Conference calls with Elias approximately every three weeks • Individual calls with Elias or other Open Path guides • Weekly calls with a practice partner.

The fee for those who have previously taken the training is £850. (Note: students frequently choose to take the training twice (or more); repetition of the Open Path experience and material helps to deepen its realization.)

A deposit of £200 is required to secure your registration. The balance is due two months

prior to the first seminar. You may also pay the balance in installments. If you need to cancel your registration, your deposit will be refunded minus a £50 fee if you notify us by March 20, 2019.

A scholarship fund has been established through the generous donations of past students; it is our hope no one will be prevented from attending Open Path programmes for financial reasons. To apply for a partial scholarship, write to openpath@sufiway.org, describing your financial circumstances and the amount you feel able to pay. If you can contribute toward the scholarship fund we would be most grateful.

If you have any questions about this program or the registration process, please write to sufiwaybristol@gmail.com.

TO REGISTER, go to:

www.regonline.com/OpenPathTraining2019Bristol

Engineer's House, Bristol

Engineer's House is a well-known landmark in Clifton and will be a delightful venue for our seminars. The address is: Engineers' House, The Promenade, Clifton Down, Bristol, BS8 3NB. For detailed directions visit: www.eef.org.uk/venues/bristol-engineers-house/how-to-get-here.

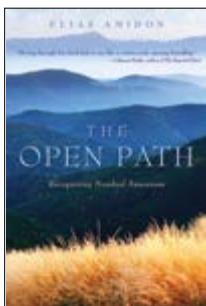
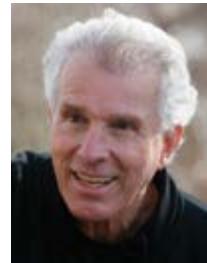


The Lineage of the Open Path

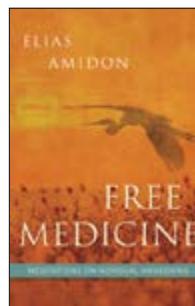
The Open Path is a contemporary and non-sectarian approach to the journey of awakening that is at the heart of all mystical traditions. The particular style of the Open Path emerges from the lineage of western universal Sufism expressed by the Sufi Way (www.sufiway.org).

Elias Amidon

The Open Path Training is taught by Elias Amidon, the spiritual director (Pir) of the Sufi Way. Elias teaches and holds retreats on nondual spirituality and Sufism throughout Europe and the United States, and is known for his direct and experiential approach to spiritual realization. He has worked for many years in the field of peace and environmental activism in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, and with indigenous tribes on land-rights issues. He is the author of *The Open Path: Recognizing Nondual Awareness; Free Medicine: Meditations on Nondual Awakening; and Munajat: Forty Prayers*.



The Open Path
Recognizing Nondual Awareness
by Pir Elias Amidon
Available on Amazon



Free Medicine
Meditations on Nondual Awareness
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COMMENTS ON *THE OPEN PATH* BOOK:

"*The Open Path* is a powerful evocation of nondual awareness by a great teacher and friend to the world."

—Roshi Joan Halifax

"It is rare and wonderful when a man, who has been such a force for good in our world, opens to us his inward path. For those who would explore the teachings of nonduality, Elias Amidon will be gratefully recognized as a valuable resource and guide."

—Joanna Macy

"Elias Amidon offers us a lucid and practical gift: how to open our hearts to awareness, to what is real. This is a loving and helpful offering that will unquestionably serve those who read it. It is truly a beautiful book."

—Roshi Pat Enkyo O'Hara

"Among many mysteries explored here: spontaneous prayer, kindness, emptiness, starting from where you are, the freedom of the universe, awakening, is one that Elias barely mentions — friendship. Moving through this book feels to me like a continuously opening friendship."

—Coleman Barks

"This is one of the clearest and most practical books I have ever read on the subtleties of recognizing nondual awareness. Elias's heartfelt clarity carries the signature of someone who has walked the journey himself and discovered there is no road."

—Roger Housden