



# REVIEWS

## **The Oneness Blessing**

By Paula Rosenfeld

### **250 Word Review – by Sara Connell**

Paula Rosenfeld’s book *The Oneness Blessing* warmly takes the reader on a voyage into the Oneness movement, birthed in Southern India that has since emerged on the American landscapes and in countries across the globe. In her engaging voice, she shares the origins and history of the movement, stories and case studies from prominent Oneness leaders, and woven throughout, her personal experience of transformation that has resulted from her participation in the Oneness movement.

In addition the movement’s history and examples, the book defines terms such as “awakening” as: the ability to be with “what is” (without judgment or charge) in the present moment. Ms. Rosenfeld helpfully explains that to utilize Oneness there is no belief, dogma or non-belief required. The book goes on to give examples of the ways Oneness can uplift, heal, and improve everything from relationships to finances, to health, and has brought thousands a sense of greater peace.

I had the opportunity to receive a Oneness Blessing at the spiritual center near my home. I brought my three-year-old son with me and each week thereafter, he has requested we stay so that he can receive the Blessing. Reading the book gave me the history, scientific details and some context to what I tangibly felt in the Oneness Blessing: an inpouring of unconditional love and an expanding sense of inner peace. This is a fantastic book for anyone looking for a deepened spiritual practice, for spiritual seekers or, frankly, anyone looking to improve their lives.

—SARA CONNELL, author of *Bringing In Finn* [nominated Elle Magazine book of the year 2012]

### **750 Word Review – by Sara Connell**

Paula Rosenfeld’s book *The Oneness Blessing* is a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the Oneness movement out of Southern India. In an engaging voice, Ms. Rosenfeld demystifies what could seem like an esoteric practice, giving practical, relatable applications to everyday life.

What is Oneness? Ms. Rosenfeld answers this question ably, threading her own personal journey with the Oneness movement in both America and along with others who have also studied at Oneness University in India. Rosenfeld's book gives the historical origins, as well as interviews with leaders in the movement and individuals who have had extraordinary to simply peaceful encounters with the various practices of Oneness.

From the book, it seems Oneness works in two primary ways: First, through the practice of being with "what is" - one's actual feelings, thoughts, emotions in the present moment (without the judgment, stories and projections of the past) - no small feat. And secondly, re-wiring of the brain, a neurobiological shift, potentially accomplished through Deeksha, which is a kind of flooding of grace or divine energy transmitted through a Oneness Blessing Giver.

20<sup>th</sup> century Western philosopher Earnest Holmes said he wanted a movement that was against nothing and for everything. He would have liked Oneness. In the book, Rosenfeld explains that engaging with Oneness does not ask anyone to believe, renounce, convert or subscribe to any dogma or religious philosophy. Practicing Oneness techniques will complement and enhance any beliefs one holds and fully work with those who do not hold any spiritual beliefs.

Through the practices of Oneness blessings- Deeksha, study and staying with "what is"- something that one can do more and more automatically and easily by receiving Deeksha/Oneness Blessings, a person becomes what the Oneness trainers and Oneness University calls "awakened". This state is simply defined as the ability to be with "what is"- to be present to feelings and emotions in the present moment without judgment or emotional charge.

Without Ms. Rosenfeld's book as a guide, a quick glance at the Oneness movement or its vernacular (awakened, enlightened, deeksha) may conjure up cultish images or religious orders. But the book clearly and straightforwardly moves past any of that to reveal the essence of Oneness; a simple and inclusive practice that has ability to transform lives.

Each chapter begins with a quotation from one of the Oneness teachings and an exploration of how Oneness work has created upliftment, healing and positive change in the areas of relationships, finances, health, wellbeing and that sometimes more elusive peace of mind that is happiness.

The personal stories, the author's own journey, the Oneness readings and questions for inquiry at the end of most chapters give not only a thorough picture of the Oneness movement, but thanks to Ms. Rosenfeld's skillful writing, offer the reader a little glimpse of the experience of Oneness. While reading, I felt myself feeling a little more centered, peaceful and open; as if, just by reading about this intriguing movement, I had myself received a little bit of deeksha- of Oneness, itself.

My favorite idea, from a later chapter in the book is that the state of Oneness is like a fire, and our charges (the stories and pain from our past that we tend to carry around with us) are like dry logs of wood; Oneness just burns them up.

Before reading this book, I had the opportunity to receive a Oneness Blessing at a non-denominational spiritual center near my home. I had no context or history; I simply sat in a designated chair and the Oneness Blessing Giver held their hands over my head. Despite no actual physical contact, I felt a washing sense of peace that stayed with me for several hours. My three-year-old son sat with me and has since asked repeatedly to go for Oneness Blessings again.

Paula Rosenfeld's book gave me the history, scientific explanation and case studies to explain what I already felt when receiving Deeksha. By the end of the book, I found myself wanting to explore Oneness further for myself—starting with a trip to the Oneness center near my home city.

This book is a wonderful read for any spiritual seeker, anyone who has heard of the Oneness movement and anyone that is interested in exploring a non-traditional, non-medicinal way to improve their life.

—SARA CONNELL, author of *Bringing In Finn* [nominated Elle Magazine book of the year 2012]