

WELCOME!

Welcome! It seems that more people are making use of the website and so I offer some words of welcome and a brief introduction to how we are.

OUR LINEAGE

Our lineage comes to us through my guru C.R. Lama also known as Chimed Rigdzin Rinpoche. He was a refugee, as were all the great Tibetan teachers who fled to India to escape the colonial urge that intoxicated the Chinese under Mao Zedong. It is not easy to be a refugee. They had to survive with few resources in a challenging climate, learning new languages and modes of behaviour and staying on the sweet side of their hosts.

To be a refugee is to live on the raw edge of impermanence, to lose land, possessions, books, ritual objects and so on. It is to be separated from friends and family and to be at the mercy of the good will of others. This is the Dharma teaching made flesh and brought into daily experience. Attachment is suffering. C.R. Lama had lost his country of origin and would not see his guru, Tulku Tsorlo, again. Yet, at least in my long experience of him, he was not sad or regretful. He was present with full awareness and this he could not lose or have taken from him.

This is the teaching for our time, a time when war and climate change are generating so many millions of refugees. Clinging to outer forms highlights our powerlessness to control events. Facing the twists and turns of inflamed egoic politics none of us know how secure our futures will be. So many of our past mothers are wandering without shelter, are staying in thin tents, are denied care. We ourselves might feel a little of how lonely and desolate this can be.

What will help all these beings? Our practice. Death will come to us all. The sufferings among the animals, hungry ghosts and hell residents are continuous. Therefore we are advised to pay attention to the many forms of suffering and to the roots of these sufferings and to use this as an encouragement to develop all-inclusive kindness, the bodhicitta mind of enlightenment free of prejudice. However, if you feel this great suffering with too much intensity you may well be overwhelmed. So it is vital to study and practise in order to awaken to the truth of the absence of inherent existence in all beings and in all phenomena. There are no truly existing sentient beings. All beings arise in dependence on other arisings within the

great dynamic expanse of unborn becoming, the dharmadhatu. Every day I was with C.R Lama he would emphasise emptiness, the emptiness of people, of cows, of houses, of our translation work, and of Padmasambhava. There is nothing to cling to except delusion. Do not grasp. Let it go.

Thus ours is the lineage of letting go, of opening to the here and now free of stories of past, present and future. There is only this and this you cannot have. It is not a possession. Yet we are part of the here and now, participating in each ungraspable moment. This is where you will find Padmasambhava, C.R. Lama, and your own awakened presence.

OUR WORK

The outer form of the work we do is available on the Simply Being website. The hub of this work is Barbara Terris who has overseen the archiving of texts and teachings since the beginning and has striven to make them easily available. She is supported in this by Chris who keeps an eye on the web functioning. So many people collaborate to make these teachings available: the translators, the transcribers, those who prepare the audios, the Zoom sessions, the videos and so on. Their names are there with the texts and the videos and audio recordings on the website. This is our work. It is not my work alone.

Of course my name goes on the books and recordings. Yet if you asked me to write one of these books again I would not be able to do that. The James Low who wrote *SPARKS* is long gone. James Low is a name. As Heraclites said, “You cannot step in the same river twice.” The name of the river endures yet the water that *is* the river is a ceaseless ungraspable flow. This is the same for all of us. This is true for me. ‘James Low’ is the name applied to these ripples in the flow of co-emergence. The ripples play with other ripples and no one knows what patterns will arise. This is our inner relational work.

If you focus on the patterns and generate your own sense of who you are then this belief in your identity as a knowable existent will hide your own ever-fresh unknowable transient patterning. Look for your mind – you cannot find it as something. The flow of thoughts and feelings does not stop. Look for your speech: this sound is vanishing as it arises. Look for your body: your postures, your gestures, your rate of breathing all arise in conjunction with specific situational factors.

We are all essentially ungraspable. If you want to see how I am, look at yourself. Look without relying on assumptions. Look till you see with fresh eyes – then you will see your

unseeable presence, then you will know your unknowable presence. This is our innermost work free of inner and outer.

Names, signs, data banks, artificial intelligence, information – these are the currency of our samsaric world. If you are relaxed, open and present then they can manifest as your nondual kindness. But if you are asleep in the dreams of your dualistic consciousness then they will catch you, limit you, and dull you into becoming their servant.

Our work is to collaborate with all while resting in intrinsic open awareness. We do this by not believing the stories others tell – for we see that they are illusions. Yet we attend to the unique specificity of their stories as they are offered to us – and in this way we work with the circumstances of their obscurations. This practice is the inseparability of wisdom and kindness.

The true nature of all sentient beings is multifaceted like a well-cut diamond. Our ungraspable core is the silent space of infinite presence. All that occurs at any time and in any place is inseparable from this. We cannot find this true nature – for it is not a thing. Yet we can find ourselves inseparable from this true nature. Using the Guru Yoga of the White A and other approaches we let go of identification with the grasper and the grasped. Arisings arise and pass. We abide in unchanging openness. This is the dharmakaya, the site of Amitabha, the Buddha of Limitless Light. All is light, bright and uncatchable. Inseparable from this is the sambhogakaya, the site of Avalokitesvara, the bodhisattva whose kindly eyes see all that occurs. His kindness manifests the nirmanakaya, the site of Padmasambhava, the many formed apparition who loosens our deluded belief in reified entities. These inseparable aspects of the mystery of our actual presence become alive for us through our practice.

Our practice is deconstructive. It does not construct anything, nor does it destroy anything. Rather it brings us into the presence of the ungraspable illusory nature of all that we grasp at, all that we adopt or reject. We are rainbows among rainbows – no wonder the Buddha smiles.

We practise because we cannot see the difference between our clothes and our skin. We are unaware of our intrinsic fresh open naked presence. We sustain the activity of reification which is the weaponisation of unawareness. Evanescent concepts are adopted as clothing and then allowed to define our sense of who we are. Misapplying them, we mistake them for tools which we use to install fixation and limitation.

We identify some arisings as 'self' and the rest as 'other'. We do this. This is the dualistic activity consequent on unawareness of the absence of inherent existence in all that occurs. We are unborn openness, and, at the same time, we simultaneously believe that we exist as real people who can be identified by our name. When we truly see how we are, our ungrasped delusion is self-resolving and does not have to be removed or destroyed.

Imagine if this deep wisdom and unlimited kindness was available to all! Our work is our specific mode of participation in the ever-awake. It may seem small but it is not. You may feel that you are limited yet you are not. To live this is our work.

James Low

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