

The End of the Great Search

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You will not find Happiness until you stop seeking it.
—Chuang Tzu

What you seek is already present.
—Jesus of Nazareth

The nature of mind is Buddha from the beginning... Realizing the purity essence of all things, to remain there without seeking is the meditation.

—Garab Dorje (*The Three Vajra Verses*)

View, Path and Fruition. The wisdom teachings that have arisen within the primordial Great Wisdom Tradition of human history have a View (*darshana*, theory) which explains the Ground (*gzhi*), the great Source (*cittadhatu*) of all appearing reality, and a Path (*marga*) which establishes the Meditation (*bhavana*) that seeks the continuity of recognition of the Ground leading to The Result or Fruition of the practice of the Path. This endpoint is “The Fruit” that is ultimate realization of our inherently nondual primordial wisdom sourceground that is, paradoxically “already accomplished” and “always already” present at the spiritual heart (*hridayam, nyingpo, kokoro*) of each human being. This final or ultimate realization is seen as the essence, if not the cause of human happiness, and in the highest nondual teaching of each tradition as ultimate Happiness Itself (*paramananda, mahasuka, beatitudo*). In Buddhism this blissful Result of the realization of the wisdom of emptiness is Buddhahood. The Path is the confusion of the gradual seeking strategies to this “goal” of liberation enlightenment. Regarding the View, the teaching is generally presented exoterically. Thus, as knowledge deepens to wisdom in the prepared practitioner the teaching becomes more and more esoteric (inward, secret, nondual). Regarding the View of the Fruition (result/realization) of the path, it may be either gradual (*zenjo, rim-gys-pa*), or non-gradual (sudden, direct, *tongo, cig-car-ba*). In actual practice these two are interdependent, and the “gradual/non-gradual” dualism becomes a false dichotomy. We make the goal the path (Boaz, 2006, “Does Buddhahood Have a Cause?”).

The Paradox of Seeking. Our Great Wisdom Tradition teaches that this paradox of the path—the paradox of seeking—is that the happiness we desire through all our seeking strategies is already here, indwelling, timeless, perfectly awake, prior to the cyclic suffering of the endless painful dualities that this flesh is heir to. “The path is emptiness. Emptiness is the path.” “What you seek is already present, but you do not know it.” “Wonder of wonders, all beings are Buddha.” This recognition is after all, the very definition of religion—*religare/religio, yoga/zygon*, union with the whole—our inherent primordial urge and impulse toward Spirit, the unbroken whole that is our “supreme identity” and “supreme source,” the ultimate nondual “transcendental signified,” prior to all dualistic, conceptual signification and idolatry. “We cannot become happy, we can only be happy.” We cannot become enlightened, we can only be enlightened. Why? Because seeking happiness to avoid suffering is a form of suffering. Indeed seeking is

a subtle form of the very ignorance (*avidya*) that causes suffering. Liberation from suffering—ultimate Happiness Itself—is not a separate reality, some state or thing to be sought, caught and grasped by a knowing subject. “The seeker and that sought are one and the same” (*Padmasambhava*). Agent and action are not separate. Meditator and meditation are not separate. Yogin and enlightenment are not separate. We need not cling to the existence or non-existence of anything at all. Thus our seeking motive is destroyed and we enter in the immediate, naked pristine awareness of the nondual presence (*vidya/rigpa*) “always already present,” the perfect sphere of *Dzogchen*, the Great Perfection, our primordial buddhahood—by whatever name—that is fully awake, if unrecognized, from the very beginning. Thus our liberation from the endless suffering strategies of seeking happiness cannot occur in the future. It cannot occur in the past. It can only be right here now (*turiya*), not transcendent, but just in between our awareness of past and future. Yet, we must remember that this mythical “eternal now” has meaning to human consciousness only relative to a past and a future. This liberation, but decidedly not annihilation of adventitious discursive mind is our ultimate happiness, the non-idealized happiness that cannot be lost. “Now is the time to enter into it” (Garab Dorje).

In the pre-transcendental “pure view” (*dag nang*) of the Ati Yoga of *Dzogchen* there is nothing to be transformed or transcended; nothing to be fabricated, contrived or deconstructed by the mind because all that arises from the primordial purity (*kadag*) of the base or ground (*kun gzhi*)—negative, positive, neutral—is always already spontaneously present (*lhundrub*) and self-perfected (*rang grol*), and naturally self-liberated (*rang bzhin gyis mya ngan las ‘das pa*) from the very beginning. This non-logocentric, non-signified conceptually ineffable radiance is primordially pure just exactly as it is now and thus cannot be tainted by anything. The great teaching is, simply relax into it, into That (*Tat/Sat*). That is the continuity of the great (*chen*) completion (*dzog*) that is the perfection of the natural state, natural ordinary mind that is “The Bright” of the light of the mind and everything appearing therein, always arising from this present primordial purity that is our very ground of being. Practice that, moment to moment, and be supremely happy. Thus it is. Now there is nothing left to do, so that everything we do is selfless, authentic and kind. Thus do we choose our reality. Thus do we create our individual and thereby collective destiny.

So, nondual, non-separate Spirit, Ultimate Reality Itself, already transcends yet includes and embraces the “explanatory gap” that is the duality of mind and body, subject and object, self and other, right here now. Always now (*turiya*). This reality is who we actually are, our supreme identity. So there is no need to try to *become* something else, try to change anything. “Leave it as it is, and rest your weary mind, all things are perfect, exactly as they are” (Shakyamuni Buddha). This is the perennial paradoxical (to concept-mind) truth of the spontaneous effortless action of *wu-wei*, our effortless acts of *surrender* to the wisdom of emptiness, non-seeking, not seeking something outside, nor inside, not seeking anything at all. “Let it be as it is,” and all that arises—positive, neutral, negative—spontaneously self-liberates at the very instant of its arising (if we don’t think about it). This is our liberation from unhappiness and suffering. This is the primordial wisdom teaching of *Dzogchen*, and indeed, of our nondual Great Wisdom Tradition.

As it is. All the masters have told it. That happiness you seek is “always already” present. The heartseed of enlightenment, our Buddha Nature (tathagatagarbha), our Christ Nature (christos), by

whatever name, is always here within the continuum of our mental-emotional nature at the very heart (hridayam, kokoro, nyingpo) of the human bodymind. Can we really be that presence, this space of sky, in the chaos of our splendid earth? Yes, according to the supreme “innermost secret” nondual view of the wisdom traditions. We can *be* that because *That* is our actual original face, our primordial wisdom nature (*gnosis, jnana, yeshe*), the very nature of our mind—our original “Basic Goodness,” not our original sin.

How do we do this? Again, the masters of the three times—past, present, future—have told it: We take refuge in “The Three Jewels” of our spiritual path—whatever path that may be. Thus do we transition from the preconscious “horizontal” spiritual path, to the conscious “vertical” spiritual path. These Three Jewels are the spiritual master, the teaching, and the spiritual community. All three are required. Now commit to the moment to moment practice of your path and train your mind in equanimity and compassion. Follow this path with its meditation practice and injunctions, under the guidance of a qualified master, all the way to the end of it. Then, some sunny day, realize that “it is already accomplished” from the very beginning. “Wonder of wonders, all beings are Buddha.”

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

—T.S. Eliot, *Little Gidding*

You have always been one with the Buddha, so do not pretend you can attain this oneness by various practices. If, in this very instant, you could know that it can never be attained by effort... you would now be the Buddha Mind... Do not seek Buddhahood, your seeking is doomed to failure.

—Huang Po (Kraft, *Zen Tradition*, 1988)

In this very act of seeking, the truth is revealed, just for a moment... Buddha is within you, clear and bright and vast as space. This is the meditation. In this quiet, vast emptiness there is nothing to construct and nothing to do. In a carefree way, let it be as it is, and just relax into it... there is nothing other than this... Now then, rest in *That*.

—Lama Wangdor Rinpoche (Santa Fe Retreat, 2003)

Who is it? Who is it that desires to know, and to be happy? Who is it that is afraid and angry? Who is it that is born, suffers and dies? Who is it that shines through the mind and abides at the heart of all beings, forever liberated and fully awake?