



Your Safest Haven

An Excerpt from Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's Latest Book, *The True Source of Healing*



Photo by Anja Benesch

There is no better protection than the refuge of unbounded sacred space, infinite awareness, and genuine warmth. Any external source of refuge is ultimately unreliable. Looking for refuge in money or material possessions cannot protect you from the pain of loss, because everything you have will be lost to you someday. No matter how good your health insurance is or how healthy your lifestyle, sooner or later you will suffer from injury or sickness; eventually you will die. Finding your perfect soul mate cannot protect you from someday losing your beloved through separation, divorce, or death.

With the inner refuge, you are not depending on someone or something outside you to make you feel secure. The first refuge, unbounded sacred space, is a true support because it is unchanging, indestructible, beyond birth and death, eternal. Whatever difficulties you face, the first refuge supports you in allowing your experiences and hosting them fully. The second inner

refuge, the light of awareness, can never be diminished or extinguished by any cause or condition. Inner light is unceasing – forever luminous and clear. Even in the darkest of circumstances, you can trust that it is always there. You can also trust that the warmth of the third refuge is within you. It spontaneously arises from the union of openness and awareness.

There may be moments when you feel emotionally cold and dark, when it seems that all the light has gone from your life. But your experience and inner truth are not in sync – the light is always there. At these moments, access to the inner refuge may seem distant, but a sense of trust may bring you a glimmer of the inner refuge that can lead to a shift in the darkness of your experience. Trust is a necessary companion on the path. There is no situation so bad that you can't turn toward the three doors. As you become more familiar with entering and abiding in the inner refuge, you will begin to trust in its healing presence.

We all long for that inner connection, just as a lost child longs to reunite with his or her mother. When you connect with the inner refuge, you can rest in that space just as a child rests in his or her mother's loving arms, feeling protected, safe, secure, complete.

Beyond the Ego

There is a Tibetan joke about a yogi who leaves his hermitage to get supplies. Afraid of getting lost in a crowded marketplace, he ties a red ribbon around his leg. As long as the ribbon is there, he feels secure. But at one point he looks down and notices that the ribbon has fallen off. He frantically runs back and forth through the market, yelling, "I'm lost! I'm lost! Did anyone see me? I'm the one wearing the red ribbon around his leg."

His reaction may seem quite silly to us, but most of us react in a similar way. We lose our job, or an important relationship comes to an end, and we feel lost. *Who am I?* We forget where we put our cell phone, and we panic and feel disoriented.

Where am I?

We have all experienced losing the red ribbon. But the truth is, we are never lost.

Drawing attention to stillness, silence, and spaciousness shifts your focus from feeding the insecurity of the ego to connecting with pure being. Anytime you identify with a sense of "I" – "I feel something"; "I have lost something"; "I am lost" – you are identifying with the wrong person.

You are identifying with the ego, with your pain body, not with your true nature.

Being aware of the three doors is not work. In fact, the more effort you put into connecting with stillness, silence, and spaciousness, the more elusive the inner refuge seems. Connecting with the inner refuge is simply a matter of shifting your attention. If you are already still, be aware of stillness. When you are silent, hear the silence that is already there. Notice the spaciousness at the very center of your being. As you rest in awareness, you connect with your authentic self. The effort of seeking dissipates, and you *are* unbounded sacred space, infinite awareness, and genuine warmth – you *are* the inner refuge. The inner sacred space is so simple and close that if we search for it, we cannot find it. But it is always there for you, the source of all the elemental qualities you need. As the inner refuge, you are whole and complete in each moment.

(You can order your copy of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's new book, *The True Source of Healing: How the Ancient Tibetan Practice of Soul Retrieval Can Transform and Enrich Your Life*,
Hay House, July,

2015, from

[a's Tibet Shop](#)

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