



The Richness of Resting in Being

An Edited Excerpt from Oral Teachings Given by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, Spring 2021



We all understand one way or another how much we need to relax, don't we? We do various things, when we can, to try and relax. However, as human beings in general, and particularly here in modern Western culture, we don't give ourselves permission to just simply be. To enjoy, to rest, to be no one, to not be successful. Somehow we don't give ourselves permission to do that. Here in the West it seems that from childhood on, parents are continually placing expectations on their child, saying: *you need to be better; you need to do this thing better, you need to make your grades better, your performance better, you need to clean up better.* In some sense, then, no matter how well you do, it's as if you are not doing well enough. As a result we develop this sense of,

I'm not good enough. I have to be better. Who I am doesn't matter.□

We come to believe that what matters is what you accomplish, what certificates you get, and how you are perceived in society. That's the message that people are getting throughout their upbringing.

So as a result, at some point early on you begin to identify with what we call your weakness, or what we call your conditions. Your weakness and your conditions are what you begin identifying

with as a young person growing up, rather than your freedom, your strengths. And it's always accompanied by this effort of trying to do better or trying to become better, without acknowledging that what is, is probably good enough. This misses the fact that if more growth or more improvement is needed, it will always come from there, that place of *what is*, and not from the place of what you are

striving

to be.

For the last couple of years I've been emphasizing, and personally practicing and paying a lot of attention to sleep, and to just doing nothing. Say you're having a wonderful day, and you go outside and see the beautiful sun and sky and are there having a nice time with the family all together. Then you suddenly feel, *Oh I should be doing something! I should be working!* And when that feeling arises, you lose the connection to that moment. This disease of constantly needing to do something is coming from the place of

not full

. It's very different than your allowing full actions, with spontaneity, with joy, that all come from the place of

fullness

. You see, when you are operating from the place of

not full,

you'll exert a lot of effort, and it drains you and nothing gets done. But when you are coming from the place of

fullness,

then there's no effort, and you have so much fun and a lot of things get done. So which one of these would you prefer? I have to ask, because if the message is taken as,

relax and you'll get things done,

then the Western mind will make the effort to try and relax just so that it can get things done.

That should not be the intention. Simply relaxing is the intention.

Being

is the intention; not our always trying to achieve something or become something.

I remember very clearly an incident from a long time ago, when I was on a train ride in Italy. It was back when mobile phones were first becoming popular. There was an Italian gentleman sitting in front of me, and it was clear that he was so agitated and intense and just could not be still. And he expressed this inability to be still through the use of his phone. Okay, I understand that sometimes you need to call someone. If so, then make the call and take care of whatever it is that's important. But this gentleman seemed just to be scrolling through all the numbers in his directory, one after the other, thinking, *now who should I call*, because he could not just *be* with himself. He had to always be calling someone. He would make the first call—busy. Then he'd scroll to the next contact and click it—no answer. Then the third one—busy. Fourth one—no answer. He kept on that way for such a long time, and with no success.

It was clear that he really needed to have made a call to *himself*. That's the one who really needed a call, because that one was desperate. Desperate because nobody really wanted to hear from him. Could it have been that the universe was keeping all of the parties from answering, just for his sake? Was the universe communicating to him by having no one answer his calls so that at some point he might get the message:

Call yourself. Listen to yourself. Hear yourself. You're lonely, can you see? You're in pain, can you see?

And trying to call someone else who is not available to hear from you doesn't help. If you would like to be heard, you must listen to yourself. Slow down. And from the stillness listen to your pain, hear your pain. The moment that you hear your pain, and acknowledge the pain, then everyone will start returning your phone calls. This is the truth.

I've been saying this again and again so many times and in so many different ways, and I hope to find better and better ways of saying these things. The interior side of ourselves, the one who needs a call so badly, should be heard by you. When you can hear yourself in that way, then others will be sure to listen to you.

So in a sense it is always good to look inside oneself. From there you will find your best qualities and then do your best from there, and then *that's it*, that's enough! If you are around people who are always expecting more than you are capable of doing, then you should try to keep your distance from those people, because that's a kind of sickness. At the end of the day, we need to have balance in life.



There is a parable about a Native American man who was lying out in a hammock happily enjoying the afternoon sun on his face. A businessman who was going by saw him lying there and began a conversation, encouraging him to go get more work, and the Native American man asked, "Why?" "So that you can make more money," the businessman said. Again, the man in the hammock asked, "Why?" "So that you can become successful and get promoted," the

businessman urged. Again the reply was, “Why?” “So that you can become rich and retire!” he exclaimed. “Why?” replied the Native American. “Why?” the businessman replied. “So that you can enjoy life!” And the Native American man just smiled and said, “Why do I have to do all those crazy things and go through all that extra pain and suffering just to get to where I am already?”

You see, sometimes our pain identity's goals prevent our connection and our growth. The pain identity's goals always involve finding a situation and conflict where the pain identity can survive. It always needs a conflict.

One of the beautiful things that's occurred over this past year, because of my being home so much, is that I have really come to enjoy being out in nature. Twenty or thirty years ago my tendency was to say, *Oh I know you're enjoying nature, but you've got to be doing something or making something happen.* Now I feel completely different. While I am in nature I have this sense of, *this is IT! I have been hiking for eight hours now and . . . this is IT!*

Eight hours, imagine! (laughs) And I find a joy there that's comparable to a teenager's joy on their first trip to a big amusement park like Disney World! I do feel like an excited child as I start off on a hike. And I do not feel that I am wasting any time, because that space nourishes me so much. I may not have so many creative ideas at that moment, but I have one creative idea, *that one*, and it's the right one. And from there it all manifests, effortlessly.

So returning to the main point: give your mind a break, and from there, allow these qualities to spontaneously emerge. You can trust them when they come from that right place—far better than all the ideas that you'll effortfully create.