



## Advice Along the Path

### Excerpts from *Awakening the Luminous Mind* by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche



Changing your life is a matter of connecting with aces in yourself you may have never fully connected with, and understanding things you may never have fully understood or trusted. Do you recognize and honor the space of being, the truth of who you are, in the life in which you find yourself? This space within yourself is not a passive place where nothing happens. The whole universe arises, rests and dissolves in that single space. Everything in your body arises, rests and dissolves in that space. Surely we can trust that there is a deeper intelligence at work than the intelligence of ego with all its plans and proposals. Solutions will come naturally from the connection with the open space of being, which is boundless and infinitely full of potential.

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Many people find it difficult to become aware of the space of being itself rather than simply being aware of the sensations they are feeling, the inner dialogue they are having or the contents of the moving mind altogether. What kind of shift are we describing? First, it is necessary to open and simply experience your discomfort. Can you be fully open, as the sky is with the clouds? In this analogy, clouds can refer to your thoughts, feelings, sensations or memories. Does the sky have a problem with the clouds? Is the sky agitated? Does the sky say, “You have been here too long! Why are you still here? What does it mean that you are here?” No. The sky simply allows the presence of clouds, and when the clouds eventually dissipate, the sky does not comment. The sky is not lonely when the clouds leave. Can you be like that sky and host the clouds? If you are able to do that--to be with your pain directly--the pain heals itself: it self-liberates. As your pain or discomfort shifts, it is important to simply remain present and aware of the openness itself.

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Not many people stop for even a moment to discover stillness, few listen to the silence, and even fewer recognize the truth of emptiness or spaciousness. Yet how simple it is to recognize and benefit from the experience of the inner refuge. You don't need to read many books about emptiness or engage in philosophical discussions. You can just draw your attention inward. As you rest with your attention drawn inward, you may begin to hear many voices in your head. I need silence, you think. Okay, so don't talk back to the inner dialogue that seems to be running by itself. Begin to listen to the silence around and within those voices. Be aware of space. Perhaps you are having a very strong, active thought. I am not feeling any space! Stop. Don't think further. Feel the spaciousness around and within that very thought. The moment you connect with the space, the thought dissolves. The moment you hear the silence, the voice is gone. The moment you connect with stillness in your body, the tensions begin to release. You can feel that things are coming up within you. As sensations, thoughts, emotions or memories come into awareness, as you notice them arising within you, allow them all. Everything that comes eventually dissolves. Anything arising in open spaciousness dissolves in that spaciousness. That is why it is called inner refuge. Do you have to go anywhere? No. Do you have to take your laptop or cell phone or remember the address or number of the inner refuge? No. You have everything you need: your body, speech and mind are the doors to the inner refuge, accessed through the experiences of stillness, silence and spaciousness.

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