

EMBRACING THE JOY WITHIN

By Pierre Zimmerman

Buddhist meditative traditions present a direct path leading to the realization of our deepest nature and the potential of being conscious and awake. They are essential practices for refining attention, cultivating mindfulness, opening the heart, investigating the nature of waking states and probing the nature of awareness itself. They allow us to see for ourselves how they alleviate the afflictions of the mind and bring a greater sense of wellbeing and fulfillment.

Meditation is designed to collect and focus the mind through the cultivation of inner stillness, stability and clarity. This process of fine tuning our attention moves us towards a state of genuine happiness, rising from a healthy and balanced mind. I believe that all human beings are yearning for what Tibetan Lama Tsongkhapa called our eternal longing, a quality of wellbeing deeper than transient pleasure or entertainment. It is not stimulus driven but rises instead from the truth in our innermost nature.

This basic goodness arising from within is free of the effects of good fortune or adversity and is invested in dispelling the inner causes of suffering and discontent, so that we can emerge from the true causes of suffering. Then we will experience the innate bliss of consciousness, waiting to be discovered, untainted by the afflictions of the mind. The very essence of awareness itself in its natural state is present before it becomes conceptually structured, distorted and obscured. This awareness is not something to be developed or attained. It is vivid right now. We maintain it so that it will become clearer, and we rest in the path, which opens for us its inner resources on its own accord.

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