

Teah Strozer
Week Four, *Life Hurts: Responding with RAIN*
April 27, 2015
“No Self-Identification, No Separation”
©2015 Tricycle Magazine



And then a really magical thing happens—three magical things happen—so the first one is that these identities dissolve. They actually are gone. That in itself is amazing. The second thing that’s amazing is if you hold these difficult emotions by just allowing them to be—being willing to become whatever that emotion is; I often say you have to be it to see it. This is not a theoretical practice; this is a direct experience practice so you have to be whatever it is, anger or jealousy or, oh, I don’t know, whatever it is, you have to be it so you can study it, the holding, the allowing it to be there, the holding it in awareness. This is really interesting. This is unconditioned love from you to you and especially if you didn’t get it from your parents this is how you re-parent yourself.

You allow yourself to be either twisted, crooked, puffed up, however it comes you allow yourself to be that without manipulating it in any way even, especially, if it’s uncomfortable. That is unconditional acceptance, unconditional love, and this is even more magical, when we give ourselves unconditional love it’s the beginning of self-worth. If that didn’t happen when you were a kid, now is the time it can happen just by allowing yourself to be whoever you are. You basically love your demons to death, unconditional love and self-worth. And then the third magical thing that happens is when you really allow yourself to feel your pain, your deepest whatever it is; when you’re willing to allow yourself that ocean of grief then compassion arises because you’ve been compassionate to yourself in your pain.

You don’t want anybody else to feel pain, and if they are feeling pain, you can be with them without needing them to be fixed or better or anything because you can unconditionally be with them as they are. This is an extraordinary gift and it’s a great respect; you respect the other person’s, we say, karma; you respect the other person’s conditioning because you allow it to be there for them as you allowed it to be there for yourself. This is a wonderful thing. It’s a taste of the compassion that arises out of emptiness, right. It’s unconditional—or like Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva of listening to the cries of the world, bodhisattva, just willing to be in suffering with other beings; that is where it comes from.

So in a way as we’re talking about this it occurs to me this is really kind of both of those streams happening at once, the one stream where we can actually do something, we can release and be free of this old conditioning but with the understanding that all of this stuff is empty; all of this is dependently co-arisen.

That’s why we can say that there’s no mannequin there ‘cause we are completely—I would not be here doing this if there wasn’t such a thing as the *Tricycle* magazine or whoever it was that started putting out the *Tricycle* magazine or my parents or my parents’ parents or some person who was able to figure out the technology of this video machine that I’m talking into. There’s no separation anywhere to be found. It’s magic. So the end part is no identification. These are just

Teah Strozer
Week Four, *Life Hurts: Responding with RAIN*
April 27, 2015
“No Self-Identification, No Separation”
©2015 Tricycle Magazine



passing events. You don't have to claim them. This is not “I am angry.” This is just sensations passing through; it's an anger event passing through.

I guess I've said this before. I'm being a little bit redundant but the path really is about all this letting go over and over and over again, so this identification is don't build an identity on something that's just passing through. When we do that we are basically letting go of little pieces of our self and in a way that's why it's scary. The path can be kind of scary and at some point this little self or, sometimes, big self that we've created will put up resistance itself. This is a very strange way of talking about it, talking about something that's not even real, but there is this activity of the self, as it begins to really die away it gets a little nervous about it and puts up some resistance, but by that time we are gentle with ourselves and we can ease this resisting function of self; we can ease it away, let go, let go, let go.

I think that's clear. Is that clear? I think that's clear. So I wanted to talk about two things, almost done, that I think will be helpful going forward in practice and in the world as we relate to things.

I don't know how to talk about this exactly. I think I'll talk about this in terms of forgiveness. People are always, when they ask questions about the dharma and practice and so on, they're often coming from two very different points of view, and I think it's good to be clear about these two points of view. In Buddhism we say there are two truths and a mature practice can hold—matter of fact, a mature person can hold both of these truths at the same time because they're a paradox.

One truth is called the relative truth. The relative truth means that we live in a world that is dualistic, conceptual, good and bad, happy, sad, rose, daisy, white person, black person, cat, mouse, difference. This is a fabulous world of diversity and richness and I mean how wonderful is it that we're all completely different and that there'll never be another one of us ever. Difference is fabulous and yet when we do difference with judgment and a sense of separation it causes what we see in the world, hatred based on ideas of what's right and wrong, greed based on me, me, me, me and not so much feeling connected with other people. I think this is a definition of corruption. Getting for yourself is fine, getting for yourself at the expense of other people not so fine, and that's what we're dealing with, hatred, religious hatred and intolerance and greed, me, me, me, me at the expense of the earth. I mean how loony can this be? It's called delusion, crazy. That's the relative world, wonderful and disastrous, okay, relative world.

The other world is the ultimate world. Both are true and happening at the very same time and yet not separate. The ultimate world is the world where we experience and see everything as this one life. Where is the separation going to be? Down the block? It's just one whole thing with no separation anywhere, all dependently co-arisen, living this one infinitely dynamic wholeness, and

Teah Strozer
Week Four, *Life Hurts: Responding with RAIN*
April 27, 2015
“No Self-Identification, No Separation”
©2015 Tricycle Magazine



there is this mysterious knowing of it that we all are, this vast awareness. In that world there is no grasping; there is no aversion; there is no good and bad, happy, sad. So in terms of forgiveness—I wanted to mention this in terms of forgiveness. For example, let’s get back to that difficult example I gave in the beginning about if there’s abuse in a family.

If there’s abuse by a family—by a mother or father to a child, you take away that mother or father from that situation; that’s the relative world. Abusing a child is unwholesome, wrong; stop it. That’s the relative world, but the ultimate world informs how you do that. Because you know that 99 percent of the people who are abusers have themselves been abused. Their abusive behavior is dependently co-arisen from their family and their lineage and even the society. So you take the parent away but you take them away with understanding and kindness and offering them whatever we have in our society to help them. This is the way to live in the world, living in the relative world with the understanding of the ultimate, and I think it’s only in this way that we’ll be able to address the problems that we have with what’s happening to the earth or racial more than intolerance, right.

We need to face these things as a country and talk about them in the relative world but without blame. We need to care for the earth without greed. So these truths, these teachings in Buddhism, dependently co-arisen, ultimate world and the relative world, we need to understand them both and these are the insights that are possible in walking the path. So I encourage everyone who’s listening or watching to do the practice. It’s possible, difficult but possible, and I wish you the very best in your path, and I would like to of course dedicate whatever we have done here and whatever benefit that might happen for the well-being of all people. May there be peace in the world. May people who are unsafe feel safe; may they be healthy. May people who are not healthy be comforted, may they live in a world of ease, and may we all do our best so that we can live as the best of human beings.