

## WHEN IT ALL GOES EMPTY

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Every once in a while I run out of things you might be interested in, you know, whatever it is that makes up most of my blogs. This is always a little strange for me, but not entirely unwelcome. When these times come I am suddenly on my own which means I am pleasing only myself. And this is always by definition new territory and interesting for me although it can sometimes be just a wee bit scary. I have no one to please but me. Refreshing!

And it is not only my Facebook postings that reflect this state at these times. My whole life takes on this character for the moment or for days at a time. There is nothing that I really want to do or that comes to mind and I can't quite seem to get comfortable no matter how I twist and turn. Nothing seems right, and I guess that is the answer. "Nothing" seems right.

At these times I want to do nothing but rest the mind anywhere that is convenient. I might be just looking out the window or, worse yet, doing nothing at all but sitting here or there. My family gives me weird looks like "Shouldn't you be doing something?" But I don't want to do anything else but nothing and this means that I will feel uncomfortable doing anything but just letting my mind rest. Sometimes I even hold a book and pretend I am reading it so others will not worry. And I am holding very, very still. It helps to find some place to park myself, somewhere out of the way of whatever is going on around me.

When I try to feel normal or "good" and to do the things I normally do, try as I might, the only way I seem to find peace is by letting my mind just rest, as in: doing nothing. My normal activities don't seem desirable; the starch seems to have gone out of it all. And my regular business and interests have suddenly gone void, empty. At first this can make me uncomfortable. As mentioned, I often twist and turn until I give in and allow myself to just relax and do nothing but let the mind rest. I guess that's allowed. Aside from nothing, what do I like at these times?

It has always been the psyche and the mind (and how it works) that interests me. In particular, I marvel at how incredible the Tibetan forms of meditation and mind training are. I wish that I could share them more than I am able. From a personal view, I can't get over them and that is OK by me. For the most part I don't read regular books anymore, fiction or non-fiction. I have been there, done that, and too much. Instead, at these times I find myself returning again and again to what are called the 'pith' dharma texts, which are mostly Buddhists teachings with short quotes from great dharma practitioners pointing out the different qualities of the mind.

In most of these concise dharma texts (these pith texts) there are many short (sometimes longer) quotes from the great yogis or saints that try to put into words that which can't be put into words, ideas that are (as they say) beyond elaboration, beyond grasping with our conceptual mind. Since words cannot express these concepts, what these great lamas do is what is called "pointing out." They point out or toward (hint at) a realization that they have, one that we also eventually should be able to have too. What they point at is seldom what I expect and that is the beauty of it. They are pointing out how to modify my approach, how to set my sails differently, and achieve different results than I know how to get at the time.

An example of one of these quotes from the great adept Orgyenpa is "Know how to relax in a

state of non-distraction without meditating.” I would guess that this statement translates to something like: relax without being distracted and without any effort to meditate. In other words, “Don’t meditate” when you meditate. You get the idea.

I am in one of those quiet times these days. I have slipped through the cracks in the rush of time and am just here. Sure, I am getting some things done, but it is very, very quiet out there or in here.