

Dharma Poems

And other Writings



by
Michael Erlewine

Dharma Poems
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This book is dedicated
with love
to
Margaret

Published by:

Heart Center Publications
315 Marion Avenue
Big Rapids, Michigan

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ISBN 9781450522304

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Foreword

Poetry for me has been a way to record my inner changes and experiences. I don't write poetry that often, but when I do it always is in response to some realization or other, something I am going through that finally becomes clear to me.

And I don't just try to "write a poem." I use poetry as a way of clarifying my experiences, as a way to lock my emerging realization into a form that can serve to bring to mind again and again the actual experience I am trying to understand. If I can capture the experience in a poem, I know that I have realized something or other about myself and my life. And by carefully reciting the poem aloud to myself, by articulating each word with understanding, the idea the poem captures can live again and be present in the mind.

Whether others can read my poetry this way, whether the captured vision will be present in the minds of readers, I can't say. I only know it works for me and I write these poems for my own inner satisfaction. Nothing in this world is as satisfying to me than realization and a new poem. That being said, I hope those who read the poems in this book may enjoy them too.

I dedicate any merit of these works to all of the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Saints, and sincere practitioners of any faith that they may bring light and realization to all sentient beings.

Michael Erlewine,

January 9th, 2010, Big Rapids, Michigan

Dharma Poems

The Rest of the Mind

You cannot rest the mind,
But you can let the mind rest.
Just let go,
And don't mind the rest.

Beyond My Expectations

Looking at the mind,
It's not what I'd expect.

Expectations can't define,
And you can't expect to find.

That's the nature of the mind.

Karma Mirror

According to the Dharma:
 The world just as I see it is my reflection,
 A perfect mirror of the mind,
 Reflecting karma --
 My every thought and action.

Karma is pure result,
 The outer reflection,
 Of an inner reality,
 That once ripened,
 Cannot be altered,

No matter how carefully I choose my words,
 No matter how right I get my mind,
 No matter how close I hold my tongue,
 No matter how slyly I take a peek,
 I always only see myself peeking.

The world looks back whenever I look.

And clever as I am,
 Even I can't sneak up on a mirror.

Oct 11-12, 2009

Last is Best

When everything's forgot,
 That forgetting will allow,
 There is one thing,
 I'll always find again,
 And that's the truth,
 For it will last till then.

And truth lasts long,
 Much longer than the rest.
 When all is gone,
 Truth's last is best.

November 20, 2009

Time to Mind

Lost again in the swing of time,
I agree to forget,
What I find so hard to remember:
This moment.

Always later,
Urged awake by impermanence,
I am back again,
But farther down the road.

Time takes my mind,
In small and larger bites.

The little ones,
I reconnect and can remember,
But the larger gaps,
I can only leap across,
Guess at,
And hopefully learn,
To say more in silence,
Than in words.

Nov. 20, 2009

Where Do Thoughts Go?

My thought does not go anywhere,
But away.

Where am I?

Trying To

I am too tired from trying to try,
From practicing all that I know,
I just have to let go for the moment,
And sink back into the flow.

When I Stop to Think

I am always awakened,
I never wake up.
What I am good at is thinking,
I can do it without a thought.

Without even thinking,
I stop to think.
Without thinking "I'm thinking,"
I'm already thinking.

When I stop to think,
I stop thinking "I'm not-thinking."
But even when I think "I'm not thinking,"
I'm thinking.

Thinking nothing,
Is not the same as not-thinking.
And when I stop thinking,
Is not the same,
As when I stop to think.

I may not be able to stop thinking,
But I don't have to stop and think.

Here or There

When it comes to awakening,
One thing is very clear:

Before I'll ever get there,
I have to start right here.

The Four Thoughts That Turn the Mind

This precious life,
Impermanent and brief,
I know.
My actions keep on piling up,
And I can't quite get my ducks into a row.

Trungpa said to me,
So many years ago,
By grasping just one thought or two,
We'll never turn aside.

We must, he said, maintain all four,
And leave not one behind.

Four precious thoughts that touch the heart,
Only they can turn the mind.

In the Buddhist tradition, the four thoughts are:

- (1) The preciousness of human birth*
- (2) Impermanence*
- (3) The inevitability of karma*
- (4) The undependability of Samsara*

Second Thoughts

A sudden whiff of impermanence,
Makes me wince,
And breaks my train of thought.

What was I thinking?

Eyes open, here now again,
Contemplating the stream of my own karma.

Impermanence,
The smelling salts of the dharma.

Nothing is Something

Thank you, Rinpoche,
For pointing something out:
That there is nothing to be pointed out,
That nothing can be pointed out,
Including “Nothing.”

‘Nothing’ also cannot be pointed out.

To me:
That is really something.

Rest Home

My thoughts,
Like birds aboard a ship,
I let go free,
As they fly away with me.

No need to follow on,
And here's the perfect test:

There is no place to go,
All thoughts come back to rest.

Testing the Rest

Learning to rest the mind,
Really puts my practice to the test,
So sometimes I just need to take a break,
And simply get some rest.

Time for Nothing

Excuse me for the moment,
No matter the reasons why,
I just need more time to do nothing,
But gaze into clear empty sky.

From A Dream

I have gone to paint the sunrise in the sky,
To feel the cool of night warm into day,
The flowers from the ground call up to me,
The self I think I am is hard to see.

Never Known

If I know,
I don't know I know,
And I know I don't know I know.

I don't know what I would know,
If I did know.
That's how I know I don't know.

So, I don't know,
I know I don't know,
And I know I know I don't know.

I have never known.

Seek and Not Find

If you find yourself, then you are not looking.
You will never not-find-yourself, unless you look.

In other words:
If you don't look, you will find yourself,
If you look, you will not find yourself.

That is the nature of having no nature.

Looking At Looking At

I'm looking at "looking at."

I'm not looking at what "looking at" is looking at.
No, I'm just looking at "looking at."

That is: I'm Trying to.

You see:
When I'm looking at "looking at,"
It's not "looking at" I'm looking at,
Because:

What I'm looking at is also doing the looking at.

So:

Am I "looking at" or the looking at?

.

Just Poems

My Poems

Poems,
A home for my thoughts,
Dear thoughts,
The very best of me,
All that's precious and kind,
Now sealed in words,
Like insects in amber:

Prayer flags endlessly waving,
In the gentle chalice of the mind.

Where Can You Be?

A Poem for my daughter

Every sharp edge points out,
That you are not in now.
You have gone away in there,
And you don't want to play.

You won't be out today.

I can tell,
For the frowns and serious looks,
Are all that I can see.
They keep me from reaching you,
Keep you from reaching me.

The Age of Impermanence

Life is just too kind.
 It leads us from our prime,
 On down a set of gradual steps,
 Out toward the edge of time.

Each step is not a leap,
 Not near enough to jar,
 Much less awaken me,
 From age's fated sleep.

And so I drift away,
 Forget the youth that I once knew,
 Like yesterday,
 When you were watching me,
 Today I'm watching you!

And life is not quite perfect,
 It's every step not smooth,
 Sometimes I step too far,
 And somehow lose the groove.

I wake back up,
 From fast asleep,
 I peer and look around,
 And sense the loss,
 What's drained away,
 How far I have come down.

But these clear gaps,
 The moment's pause,
 A day or two at most,
 Just time enough,
 To put things right,
 And patch up all the holes.

I cling to what I can.

With each misstep,
 I'm left with less,
 With less I just make do.

You know me:
 Where would I go?
 I'll never cut and run.

For less is more than any,
 And any more than none.

November 23, 2009

Who You Are

If who you are,
Is who you will be,
And who you will be,
Will be,
Who you were,

Then:

Who you are,
Is not who you are,
Or who you will be.

So, who are you?

Imagine What I Don't Know

Imagining what I don't know,
And I don't know,
I imagine what I don't know.

I know what I imagine,
Is what I don't know,
And what I know,
Is not what I imagined.
That much I know.

I can only imagine what I don't know.

Something For Nothing

Expect nothing,
Except nothing.

Accept something.

Dreaming the Future

In the swim of time,
I push my dreams before me,
Like a swimmer pushes waves,
Always just out of reach.

I am good at dreaming my future,
At pushing things forward,
And putting my life off till then,
As if from time I could borrow.
When:

Considering my age,
Today IS tomorrow.

The Point of No Return

*A Poem for My Daughter Michael Anne
Feb 14, 2006 2-4 PM, Grand Sextile Helio*

The point of the “point of no return” is that:
When you have reached the point of no return,
From which there is no return,
The point is to turn and return.

That is the turning point.

Every life has a turning point,
Whether it’s in the echo of age,
Or in the very midst of life’s prime.

As we reach our point of no return,
We pause,
Then we turn.

And, in turning, we begin to reflect.

In our reflection,
And rising into view,
Perhaps for the very first time,
The Sun.

Where before it was we who were seen,
And others seeing,
Now we are the mirror in which they see themselves,
And we can see our self in them.

What we once saw shining before us, as youths,
That which we gladly embraced in our prime,
And what we now see etched in the mirror of
reflection,

Is our eternal Self, the Sun,
Ever burning in the darkness of our life.

That’s it.
I understand this.

What I find harder to understand,
Yet still believe is:

We didn’t know it then;
We don’t know it now.

We never knew it.
In truth,
It never was.

IT NEVER WAS;
It never will be.

It is not now,
And still, it is.

It still is:
This most brilliant illusion,
Shining in the mirror of the mind.

Short Timer

I am older now.
I have less time,
But more of it.

I finally have enough,
Of whatever I was saving for,
To make it to the end.

And as that end draws near,
What I need to get there,
Grows less with every year.

So I can take a break,
Even chance to look around,
To see how you are doing,
To know where you are bound.

We could even walk together,
But here is what is tough,
I am only going to the end,
And that is close enough.

Early Poems

Open

I am so round and such so.
A treading finally and letting go,
As spreading circles open so,
An even inward outward flow.

Parmenides

Each to each the sorrow tells:
Find another.

Alone is borne the pain,
Alone the sorrow,
Alone the joy,
Todays' tomorrow.

For Shakespeare

Look at yourself,
First yet first,
No better,
And yet not worse.

Now get yourself together in a bunch,
And call what carriage as ye may your hearse.

Poem to Robert Frost

It may be that there is as nothing to spare,
That what we hold is hardly there,
That what we share will just suffice,
That every heart will end in ice.

And then again,
It may not be.

No Name

My self surges down,
Still seeking sources not spoken of,
Grasping too late grips now past,
Still insistent on solid searches,
When:

With moments meaning only may we merge.

My Apology

Ah!
Who could let such a bargain pass,
As this poor century will allow.
On coming in,
I'm asked to leave,
And when asked to leave,
I bow.

Hard Truth

The pain I carry,
Hidden but for its edge,
Lies carefully holding my old whale heart.

The endless reach of being out,
Vanishes in my coming to know you,
And you bloom carefully in my heart,
As I flower this world.

No more poetry,
The truth is hard enough to take.

We are in an endless hell,
If I am and if I am not.

Mantra Poems

Poems, the careful reciting of
which cause the subject to appear
or vivify.

Outsetting Song

That song is sung,
 That singing,
 Sets inside itself
 Outsetting song
 That sings,
 And singing
 Sets itself
 In song.

Song that sang,
 Which sung,
 Is singing still.

Inner Ear

What will eager issue out,
 And into us would enter,
 So to stare, to stuff itself,
 To eat itself the center,
 Of what we wait to wither in on,
 After it is all.

It eats us out.
 It only is in every inward eaten,
 The echo of an endless ache that arches
 Hearts hard hearing,
 And opens up each inner enting,
 And enters it as out.

Force of Faith

The form of force enforcing form,
Finds freedom from that form in fact.

And in fact forced is freed,
A form of force with faith in form that finds in fact:
Faith itself a force.

Thus, force finds itself in form on faith.

And force enforcing faith in form,
And form informing faith of force,

Faith is that force in form.
Faith is our form of force.

Me, Myself, and I

I see myself,
To see my self,
To be:
Myself,
To see myself,
To be myself,
To see.

The Beginning of the End

The beginning of the end,
Which is the end of the beginning,
Begins at the end of the beginning,
And goes straight to the end.

In other words:
When beginning ends,
Ending begins.

The beginning is not close to the end,
But the beginning of the end,
Is closer to the end,
Than to the beginning.

At the beginning of the end,
The beginning of the beginning ends.

Since the beginning of the beginning ends,
Will the end of the end, begin?

Is ending also a beginning?

If so,
The beginning of the end,
Is closer to the beginning,
Than is the end of the beginning.

I'm counting on that.

Everlasting Life

What will in words not wake,
Clear sleeps,
And clear, sleeps on.

What wakes stands watch to see that sleep as sound.
What wakes will serve to set asleep,
Inset a sleep with standing words,
That wake, if ever, last.
And on that last, in overlay, our life.

Yes, to lay at the last a life that ever lives,
To ever last that "last" of life,
And in ever lasting life, everlasting,

We have a life that lives at last.

In and Out Poems

Here I Am

I am in it all the end,
And that's all,
And the ever it's coming to be,
And in me is out,
The shadow of doubt,
And the in that is out,
Well,
That's me!

Time Out

What if at every out I set an in.
I said:
What if at each out I set on in.

And in on in on in on in ...
And if on in,
I'm lost within?

Time is sure to see me out.

In or Out

In is not within the out,
And out without the in.

No,
In is without the out,
And out within the in.

Sept. 29, 1970

Nov. 5, 1969

Whether,
That which is within will out.
And when out, with all within,
Will out without, within.

And then within,
With all without,
Will out as in.

And In,
When out,
Without an in,

Is out when out,
And in when In.

Sense

All eyes invite entrance,
All ears hear.
All lips lie parted.

Who Cares

He went first,
With a willingness,
And only last learned,
To let his longings linger.

He cared,
And his care cut past the points of his person,
And peered searching at us all.

Father and Son

The son,
The ebb tide of the father,
Breaks on in the present,
Breaks out of the past,
Breaks, breaks,
And is broken forever.

Forever less,
And yet no more than the same is certain.

The son's service,
Is to stand certain of the father's sin.

Easter Sunday 1968

I've had enough of other's cheek!
And every edge aches over again,
Other rudeness',
Ear ridden.

Short Stuff

My wide eyes wear their worry.

Waves of shame worried the will,
And were winners.

The throb of fluid,
Forcing the issue to certainty.
Worse were the ones,
Who hardly felt fate's flair for forgetting.

This star's struggle stains,
And is stained,
And in every sadness,
Sees itself sold.

He built his house of Please,
In the palace of Pain.

He sold his loneliness very dearly.

We are happy when we remember,
The foolishness of being sad.

The hour's heartbreak conceals,
The whole of what we have not hated.

Endless birth from nature,
Nurtured by knowing,
Nameless his nature.

Finely wrought or overwrought.

I fight for the light to see the necessity of the night.

Every each only is in ending out.

His tale was told in telling,
And in telling it was tolled.

Old age moulds it's youth,
To play in single streams,
The source of life,
In single beams

What with wit,
Will wear and last,
Is lost later,
Letting fast.

Wind without with all within,
Letting loves long labor in.

He could but affirm it all,
That was the extent of his power.

All difference is disfigured same.

Hard monster that drives a hunger so.

Some Prose

Awakening

“All I remember is haze — red shifting to orange — as I strained under the infinite pressure of my past, like a baby being born, and then, through the strain of this labor (so intense that time slowed) in which somehow I was involved, and through that slowness like the head of a child in birth, I crowned, and for the first time came I, me, a glimpse of my eternal self — real awareness. I saw myself. I found myself.”

“Emerging right up through the top of my head, I was born as through a veil and vale of tears, surrounded on all sides by people living in eternal slowness. Tears stood in all our eyes, for I was them — huge catlike creatures, winking and blinking in the slowness of expanded time. We moved together in this, the rhythm of our birth, rising and falling like the cry of some great beast. Living was so slow that it took forever.

We were all, together, one, born out of suffering, born out of and beyond time itself, born through a veil of tears, itself an endless rain.”

“And I remember one white-hot-flash-like-electric blast that went dead in my mind. I could never have it happen twice. I “was” absolutely not (as if all stopped), and then it started again. And after, I wavered, awash like a flower on the sea — a lotus. And as I found faith in my new awareness, I rose above time in knowledge of myself, in this new awareness. And as I lost that faith, accidents of a deathly kind became very possible. It was not subtle.”

“There was I, born again and living, alive in a world that I never really knew and that knew me not at all. I was still in the world, but I was no longer of that world. Like a newborn child, I searched everywhere for those who would recognize me and welcome me alive. Mine was a back-room birth, enacted in a century that could no longer afford to act out a drama as old as time itself.”

Excerpt from the book:

Astrology of the Heart: Astro-Shamanism

Relieved

“To be relieved, finished, the one thing I had never expected. Maybe at life’s long end of eighty or ninety years, sure; it might make sense. But now, in the prime of my powers, in the middle of my life? To be relieved of duty? Are you kidding me?”

“No one ever told me about it. I heard no talk of it. I didn’t read about it anywhere. Am I the only one? Am I to remain silent? Who is even interested? No one seems to notice.”

“Relieved of duty in the middle of the war, I must be a traitor. I must have made some terrible mistake, to be relieved. I mean, I looked forward to a life long-filled with searching and suffering. And now this, this terrible guilt of non-involvement, of really not caring like I used to care, and I would rather die than not care. Caring did not mean love to me; it meant worry and suffering continued. To be carefree, this I never thought to ask for. I had lost my edge, my suffering.”

“It is like someone turned off the engine, as far as we personally are concerned. All at once, this great silence and sense of peace, and when you first begin to hear the silence, it terrifies. We can now see younger persons still driving and pushing their birth, yet we don’t feel that old drive as we once did.”

“There is the feeling that we are somehow washed up, finished. We have lost that old drive or “thing” which made us, ourselves. And all of this unspoken about, unmentioned in public conversation, simply ignored. As I can see, many just cannot accept this change, and wander stunned in a stupor and state of shock for years, or fill their lives with noise and activity — anything to drown the sense of silence and rest that they feel.”

“Lifted out of our life’s sorrow, we refuse to acknowledge the incredible and obvious lightness of being we now feel. Unburdened, enlightened, we feel no gravity or weight. Up until now, life beckoned and lured me running fast through time’s meanings. What does it mean? What does it all mean? Where is it all leading to? What exactly is the point? And then, this: Silence.”

Excerpt from the book:

Astrology of the Heart: Astro-Shamanism

It Came to Pass

“No matter what you think about me, about my person, I know in time you will learn to recognize me as yourself, and you will love me, as I have learned to love myself, as I have learned to love you, like it or not. My person has not changed. How could it, truly? For person is the product of time, and my person — like a freight train — rushes on at the future. It always has. Only I, stepping off my person, am with you now.”

“I am myself. I turned off time’s endless matter at thirty. I dropped my body or sense of gravity. It proceeds on without me or rather: with my perpetual care and love. But I am not only my person. I am, as well, one with the creator of my body, of any body.”

“My faith informs me. Each day’s passage frees and reveals my past, ‘presents’ my past, and clears it open. Where before was but an endless accumulation, layer on layer, is now removed with every passing day. And as the layers lift, it is clear to me that there is nothing there worth worrying. All the past lives I have are presently living, are become clear.

“Nothing to go back to, no place to hide, no cover.”

“I am born free, held awake by all that lives. Where before I could not keep my eyes open, so now I cannot shut or close them. No closure. From my subconscious pours my past. Cloudiness clearing, it is my present. My placenta is being born, turning out all of that which nourished me.”

“I can clearly see all that clouds this stream of consciousness is but a searching, is itself but a frowning, a looking to see, a pause, a hesitation that, caught and unfurled in the eddies of time, finding nothing, becomes clear and, laughing, I leave it go clear and turn from a darkening or dimming of my mind to light. And it came to pass, and I let it pass.”

Excerpt from the book:

Astrology of the Heart: Astro-Shamanism

A Clear Sleep is Soft

“The morning’s brightness lights the day. And when that day is gone, the quietness of evening here approaching settles to sleep this restless world. Hard can I hear the frantic rush, as I turn away from the edge out into floating rest am I. It is not my conscious direction doing this, but as a head down-turned all life now turns up a blossom to the night, the night of time urges me open, at last a flower too, open to life. Already the dawn.”

“Still, around me, urging caution, a retinue of persons set my spirit, like a jewel is set, in time. But where before my worry, now my rest. The tide rolls on beyond me. Ever changing, it rocks me now asleep. And in my sleep, awake am I, so clear a bell is ringing.”

“The smart of persons lash and crack to drive me at time’s edge. My personal ties are slipped, as floating out, I’m gently tugged. Too long have fought to force my thought, and not, at ease, arising like some cloud to pass. My work undone, yet done, I rise. Drifting through strains, I sieve, and pass myself, open out to nothing thoughts to touch back not once more.

“A clear sleep is soft, its ever blooming sound is silence. Now to find my way among the slips of time. And slip I will, now lost to striving, and lounge in this room of emptiness. To lie back in time, behind its edge, and ever look eternally. No way to pass this on. This is: passing on. Slamming against the walls of time, I shove off into eternity, and spread open a flower, so wide.”

Excerpt from the book:

Astrology of the Heart: Astro-Shamanism

Mind Practice

Not an option,
But a refuge,
Less painful than:
Anywhere else.

Feb. 14, 2010

Tibetan new Year of the Iron Tiger

Post Meditation

If I am practicing all the time,
When will I have time to practice?

Rinpoche

Just as in that dream of sleep you came,
 Urging me awake,
 So too, in this dream of life,
 You awaken me from the nightmares of ignorance.

On first meeting,
 At first glance,
 You showed me compassion,
 Introducing me to myself.

I wandered for days wrapped in your blessing.
 Yet, due to my weak practice,
 I could not hold that state for long.

Still,
 Having known such kindness,
 I no longer chase after imitations.
 You are the bright star in the night of my obscuration,
 Always showing me the way to the precious Dharma,
 Guiding me back to myself.
 You are indeed a precious one.

Rinpoche.

Meaning to Know

Feb. 7, 2010

Your words (or mine),
 Depend on what they mean.
 Meaning is only a reference,
 A simple referral,
 Like pointing toward:
 Somewhere else.

In other words,
 Meaning is only as good,
 As the sense it makes,
 As in:

Does it make sense?
 Meaning itself,
 Is not meaningful.
 It makes no sense.
 It is not like 'being'.

Only we can make sense.
 Meaning points to:
 Experience,
 But only if 'we' go.
 It is the only way to know.

Thoughts Make Sense

Thoughts come.
 If the thought is nonsense,
 I can't keep it in mind.
 Forget it.
 However,
 If a thought makes,
 Any kind of sense,
 Has any kind of meaning,
 I usually follow it.
 It's my train of thought.
 Yet 'meaning' in itself is,
 Nothing,
 A reference,
 Pointing toward or at,
 The sense a thought makes.
 Thoughts can only make sense.

And sense,
 Is an experience,
 That every thought will take me to,
 A journey I am always on,
 Mini-incarnations,
 The sum of which,
 Add up to a life,
 Of endless just not-knowing.
 The Dharma says:
 Realize the nature,
 Of the thought,
 Not the content.
 Seeing the true nature,
 Of any thought,
 Ends the thought right there,
 Breaks its link to the senses,
 Causes no karma to arise,
 And brings about awareness.
 This is why I meditate.

April 21, 2010

Water and the Well

The rare times,
When nothing moves me,
And I don't feel,
Like doing anything.
Perhaps this is some kind of,
Natural meditation,
An effortless detachment,
From my day-to-day world.
All that is missing,
From just being lazy,
Is this awareness,
Of my own condition.
I don't waste time,
Pretending to be busy,
But just sit there,
And for a long time.
Nothing is missing.

Watch a movie,
Read a book,
Sit, or not,
It makes no difference.
I am right here.
The mind is at rest,
The water back in the well.

*February 15, 2010,
New Moon,
New Year of the Iron Tiger*

TIME OUT

February 17, 2010

In the middle of time,
Without a thought,
It comes,(Not at life's end),
Like the tide coming in.

I had planned,
To get away from it all.

Too late,
Now,
For retreat;
Distance is close,
Far is now near.

Motions are going,
Every which way,
Striking me dumb.

I'll speak while I can.

The rest I am seeking,
Overtook me;

It's already here!

And it's:

Precious,
Precious:

Stillness in chaos,
Silence in sound.

Solitude

'Alone' is a simple mistake.
Like the disappearance of a sound,
Hearing cannot be heard,
And the finder never found.

September 15, 2010

Meditation is Nothing

The books say:
Seek a place of solitude,
And meditate,
But it's just the other way round.

When meditation,
Naturally occurs,
There is no place in the world,
That you feel comfortable,
Try as you might.

Not here or there,
Not doing this or doing that.

Only nothing feels right.

You just want to hold real still,
Let the mind rest,
And then park yourself,
Somewhere out of the way,
Like on a cushion,

Or

In a place of solitude,
Because:

Nothing is going on.

Sept. 13, 2010

Mandala

A good offering,
 Gathers together,
 Naturally,
 To a point,
 Of blooming,
 Like a perfect flower,
 And,
 Dissolving,
 Is gone.

Petals in the wind.

And then:
 Again.

The object,
 Of mandalas,
 Is offering,
 Endlessly.

It is all offering.

Sept. 11, 2010

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 Because:

Nothing is going on.

Sept. 13, 2010

Samsara

Not exhausted,
 Uncontrollable,
 Recurring activities,
 Animate my life,
 And keep me ever moving,
 Through a waste of time ...

All the things I like to do.

But every so often,
 I lose my appetite,
 And remain unmoved,
 Not interested,
 Already at the end,
 Of where I would be,
 If I did all that.

My time is taken up.

Empty of effort,
 And motion,
 With no direction,
 I lose my meaning,
 And just stop wandering.

I am so still.

I don't have to keep my edge,
 The edge keeps me.

At these times,
 I know,
 That rejecting this world,
 Will never work.

Given time,
 Even this world,
 Goes void,
 And effortlessly,
 Rejects itself.
 Wait for that.

May 30, 2010

Thoughts Make Sense

Thoughts come.

If the thought is nonsense,
I can't keep it in mind.
Forget it.

However,
If a thought makes,
Any kind of sense,
Has any kind of meaning,
I usually follow it.

It's my train of thought.

Yet 'meaning' in itself is,
Nothing,
A reference,
Pointing toward or at,
The sense a thought makes.

Thoughts can only make sense.

And sense,
Is an experience,
That every thought will take me to,
A journey I am always on,
Mini-incarnations,
The sum of which,
Add up to a life,
Of endless just not-knowing.

The Dharma says:

Realize the nature,
Of the thought,
Not the content.

Seeing the true nature,
Of any thought,
Ends the thought right there,
Breaks its link to the senses,
Causes no karma to arise,
And brings about awareness.

This is why I meditate.

April 21, 2010

Purely Seeing

Hard to see,
Purely,
When stained.

Like:
Looking through,
The Dark,
At yourself.

“Mother Nature,”
Always pure,
Is the cure.

November 10, 2010

Keep in Mind:

Someone,
Gets something.

Everyone,
Gets everything.

No one,
Gets nothing.

November 7, 2010

Me and You

The fact that,
I like 'me',
Does not mean,
I don't like,
You.

There is room,
For you,
In me.

And,
You can like,
You too.

You too,
Are,
Like me.

I like you too!

October 22, 2010

Empowerment

There are many,
Waiting,
To be known,
But few,
Who care,
Enough,
To know.

October 14, 2010

Mirror of Me

There is, then,
 One mirror,
 And someone,
 Looking to see.

Am I,
 Mirroring you?
 Or are you,
 Mirroring,
 Me?

It can't be both.

Someone blinks.
 And sees,
 That dread,
 Mirrored,
 Reflection.

Once reflected,
 Who can resist?

A matter of time,
 Until I look,
 And then,
 Again.

I can't escape,
 A mirror,
 No matter,
 How long,
 I wait.

It waits on me.

When finally,
 I do look,
 To see ...

Right there,
 I still,
 Will be:

Seen ...

And you know,
 By whom.

October 19, 2010

Samsara

The same world,
That early on,
Makes it difficult,
To meditate,
Later,
Makes it difficult,
Not to.

October 12, 2010

Heart Hearing

Although I won't,
Often listen,
My heart,
Always,
Wants to hear.

October 11, 2010

Lineage

There 'is' nothing,
 Transmitted,
 And,
 Nothing,
 Ever flows.

A connection,
 Simply opens,
 In which,
 Samaya grows.

And then:
 Mixing of minds ...

Extension,
 By recognition ...

Transmission,
 Through,
 Identification

In other words:
 Empowerment ...
 A simple blessing,
 Forever green,
 That,
 Mastering time,
 Makes sure that:

No less than,
 The same,
 Is certain.
 This is lineage.

October 11, 2010

Slow Learner

I don't take,
 Kindly to advice,
 Even if,
 You mean well,
 And it might be good for me.

I don't like,
 To be,
 Pushed.

I'll go,
 In my own time,
 Although it means,
 I may be late,
 Or,
 Never.

If I ask,
 And you tell me,
 I might just listen.
 Yet still not hear.

When every door,
 But one,
 Is closed,
 I may perhaps,
 Walk through it,
 Even though,
 There is,
 Nowhere else,
 To go.

October 10, 2010

Taking the Fall.

Each night's frost,
 Bites deeper,
 Into summer.
 And I am,
 This year,
 Just not ready,
 Willingly,
 To come in.

October 9, 2010

Paradox West

Find yourself,
 Express yourself,
 Enjoy yourself,
 Love yourself,
 And always,
 'Be' yourself.

Do have:
 Self-worth,
 Self-regard,
 Self-respect,
 Self-confidence,
 And,
 Self-esteem.

Yet,
 Whatever you do,
 Don't be:
 Self-centered,
 Self-serving
 Self-indulgent,
 Or in any way,
 Selfish.

Note: Perhaps not the best poem, but in a nutshell it is my answer to the question as to what moved me to study the psychology of the East and Buddhism and to gradually lose interest in traditional western psychology and philosophy. Think it through. This is the paradox that most of us have been given and brought up with.

October 7, 2010

Purity Is

Purity,
Is,
Being ...
Empty,
And,
Without a trace.

October 6, 2010

Kota

Old dog,
On your last legs,
Almost unable,
To stand.
So very sorry,
To see you like this.
It hurts.
And each day,
Thinner,
Not even eating,
Hardly anything.
You still look up,
When the door opens,
Hoping for,
That walk in the woods,
You love so much.
Today,
We took your collar off.

October 4, 2010

Om Ami Dewa Hri

The Edge of Death

Taking the edge off death ...
It's not that easy,
For death is sharp,
The ultimate reminder,
Perhaps,
That keeps me from,
Forgetting,
Just about everything,
Important.
There is no choice.

I can only,
Look forward,
To death,
Meet it head on,
Eyeball to eyeball,
Yet even I,
Can't stare death down.

In the end,
I am only free,
To finally,
Just go and see.

October 4, 2010

SOLITUDE

'Alone' is a simple mistake.
Like the disappearance of a sound.
Hearing cannot be heard,
And the finder never found.

September 15, 2010
Inspired by my Friend Teresa

It Can't Be

It can't be grasped by grasping,
Not thought by thinking,
Nor had by having,
Seen by seeing,
Heard by hearing,
Or felt by touching,

It is not there,
Nor here.
Yet,
Still,
It is.

September 10, 2010

Other Publications

Books by Michael Erlewine

Available in paperback through online sales.

Interface: Planetary Nodes

288 pages, 233 illustrations

Local space: Relocation Astrology

207 pages, 140 illustrations

Tibetan Earth Lords:**Tibetan Astrology and Geomancy**

223 pages, 156 illustrations

Astrology's Mirror: Full-Phase Aspects

191 pages, 145 illustrations

Our Pilgrimage to Tibet

260 pages, 112 photos

Burn Rate: Retrogrades in Astrology

1000 pages, 153 illustrations

Mother Moon: Astrology of 'The Lights'

447 pages, 304 illustrations

Interpret Astrology:**The 360 3-Way Combinations**

415 pages, 360 illustrations

Interpret Astrology:**The House Combinations**

332 pages, 276 illustrations

Interpret Astrology:**The Planetary Combinations**

850 pages, 765 illustrations

Astrology of the Heart: Astro-Shamanism

532 pages, 450 illustrations

The Astrology of Space

512 pages, 162 illustrations

StarTypes: Life-Path Partners

753 pages, 230 illustrations

How to Learn Astrology

1100 pages, 950 illustrations

The Art of Feng Shui

563 pages, 500 illustrations

Tibetan Astrology

827 pages, 579 illustrations

In addition, Michael Erlewine has authored/edited many books on music and film, not listed here. The author can be reached at Michael@Erlewine.net.

Also see:

ACTAstrology.com

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