

## 2018: Turn on the lights

[Revised & expanded edition of fb171230c on Facebook]

### NON-SENSE

For our early Buddhism FB page, this has been a good year. Thank you, friends, for inspiring and challenging me to write reflections from my heart and gut.

There's a lot of Dharma stuff here on our FB page. Many of them you may find meaningful years from now. Those who have not suffered much may think that I have written **non-sense**. How right they are: it does not make sense unless we have suffered life.

To suffer life means to love living and learning about yourself and others. Notice the darkness in it, wander and stumble in it. Maybe our eyes may get used to the dark, but it is still the dark. With better sight and feel of things, we are less likely to bump into things and stumble—these are our own views. Then, we need to get to the wall and feel or see the switch, and to turn on the lights.

### WE MUST CHANGE, NOT DHARMA

As the year ends, I invite you to look back from the beginning of 2017, if you like, and see how some of the reflections may sound differently now, and you see something new in yourself. All these reflections are inspired by the Buddha Dharma, and hope to inspire the Dharma in you.

Most of the reflections I took some time to write, and longer to post because I was concerned not to offend people. But those who are offendable always find something offensive about it anyway.

The best teachings often reveal the worst in us. This is what easily offended some of us; then, we unwittingly direct our offence to the writer. He is merely pointing out a speck of dust on our beautiful face. We only need to remove that dust and look better.

### TEACHING DHARMA

As a Dharma teacher most of my adult life, I have been moved by the truth and beauty of the Buddha's teaching. Such experiences only compel us to tell others about it: why not have and be the real Dharma instead of lugging along the fancies and fabrications of others which only hold us back. Only the Buddha Dharma brings us to the path; worldly teachings keep us in the world.

Buddhism is believing in the words of others; Buddha Dharma is seeing reality for ourselves. When we see the Dharma for ourselves, we truly see its truth and beauty, its peace and joy. When we convey this self-verified teaching, we become effective teachers. Our action, not our status, makes us true teachers.

"I have come to believe that a great teacher is a great artist and that there are as few as there are any other great artists. Teaching might even be the greatest of the arts since the medium is the human mind and spirit." (John Steinbeck)

FIND THE SWITCH, TURN ON THE LIGHT

As I write this, I was reflecting that Buddhism is like a dark room, and we are all unable to see anything. So we stumble here and there, and hold on to anything we can. Then, there are the teachers, also in the dark, who keep shouting to us to do this and that: they also stumble because they cannot see.

We all need to look for the switch and turn on the lights!

So this NEW YEAR 2018 (I love the ending 8): Find the switch, and turn the lights on.

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Turn on the lights and see reality for ourself.

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