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As It Is Vol. 1 (As It Is)



Synopsis

The teachings presented in *As It Is*, Volume I are primarily selected from talks given by the Dzogchen master, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche, in 1994 and 1995, during the last two years of his life. The unambiguous Buddhist perception of reality is transmitted in profound, simple language by one of the foremost masters in the Tibetan tradition. Dzogchen is to take the final result, the state of enlightenment itself, as path. This is the style of simply picking the ripened fruit or the fully bloomed flowers. Tulku Urgyen's way of communicating this wisdom was to awaken the individual to their potential and reveal the methods to acknowledge and stabilize that prospective. His distinctive teaching style was widely known for its unique directness in introducing students to the nature of mind in a way that allowed immediate experience. This book offers the direct oral instructions of a master who inspired admiration, delight in practice, and deep trust and confidence in the Buddhist way.

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Customer Reviews

In the same vein as his *Rainbow Painting: A Collection of Miscellaneous Aspects of Development and Completion*, Tulku Urgyen writes in a simple, straight-forward, easy-to-understand style. More importantly, he explains the purpose of several Tibetan Buddhist (Vajrayana) techniques which are otherwise alien to a Western mind. The many deities map onto Jungian Archetypes for example. Furthermore, he meticulously describes the technique of Dzogchen Trekcho and relates it to both the development and completion stage practices of Vajrayana. He also speaks to Yidam practice and one vs. a multiplicity of Yidams or deities. Thus, he eliminates many of the obstacles to Western understanding of Tibetan beliefs and practices. This book is well worth reading for students and

practitioners of Dzogchen, Mahamudra (referenced a number of times herein), and Vajrayana. I look forward to reading *As It Is*, Vol. 2.

Bottom Line: If you know the terms and tenets of Buddhism already, this book will be an excellent in-depth treatment of the philosophy. If you don't know the terms and tenets already, this book will be a very difficult read. NOTE: This review is NOT meant to start a philosophical argument. This review is simply about the book, and the contents of the book from a reader's (as opposed to a practitioner's) perspective. I do not closely follow Buddhist teachings; I knew a little bit about Buddhist philosophy, and I picked this book because I wanted to know more. As I started reading the book, I felt like I was entering a lecture hall where a famous and knowledgeable person was speaking eloquently on a subject he knew well, but that I didn't know anything about. At all. I am quite well-read, and I have a great vocabulary, but I found out rather quickly that my experiences thus far did not prepare me for the words and concepts I encountered in this in-depth treatment of one school of Buddhism, as practiced by one of the acknowledged masters of the philosophy. HOWEVER, I'm also stubborn by nature, so I regarded this as an opportunity to learn and to grow. After reading the book through once, I noted some connections and descriptions later in the book that helped me understand certain terms early in the book. SO, re-reading the book, and visiting Wikipedia a few times, has helped me illuminate what the author was saying in such a matter-of-fact way. On that note, one distinct positive aspect of the book is how kindly and lovingly the author and the translators treat the material. It is manifestly obvious this book was created out of an intense desire to share Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche's unique, rich, lived experiences with Buddhist thought and the Buddhist way of life. Even to a non-practitioner such as I, this effort was a smashing success. Overall, the book was a growth opportunity for me, and I'm glad for that. I do not know whether I'll buy Volume 2; I may re-read Volume 1 (again). I would suggest the potential reader consider whether he or she already DEEPLY understands terms like "Samsara," "Karma," "Nirvana," and the deeper tenets of Buddhism; you will encounter all of that stuff in this book, and it is treated as if you already know something about them. If you believe you might want to study up on those things first, I would recommend a Buddhism primer (which is NOT this book), or some online study first; then open this book, and prepare for a beautiful explication of what you have only started to learn.

...book on Dzogchen and Mahamudra that I know of. Tulku Urgyen is the man! If you don't get the message after this book, buy Vol.2! These books are full of blessing, they will never let you down! If

you are in a hurry to reach the highest heights, this is your manual.

I first bought, and read, Urgyen Rinpoche's *As It Is*, in 2009. And, honestly, I didn't get it. His instructions seemed a little too simple and yet often completely opaque. Six years later, after a lot of time practicing, it is clear that any opacity was on my side. Rinpoche's instructions are straightforward and incredibly helpful in guiding and supporting Dzogchen meditation and, critically, for understanding how one infuses Mahayana and Vajrayana practice with Dzogchen view. One caveat, these teachings are not likely to be helpful if you have not received pointing out instructions from an authentic master in the tradition. But if you have, and you are practicing diligently, these two volumes will be a valuable support.

Spiritual seekers - this is it. Out of my relatively large library of Classical and modern Tibetan Buddhist texts and writings by many highly regarded masters, this book and its companion volume provide the most explicit, clearly understandable and profound teachings on Mahamudra and Dzogchen, our 'original mind' in its natural, luminous state. Seeking out and finding our own buddhanature and discovering an unimaginable connection to all, well, words simply fail me. Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche comes as close as allowable to giving the "pointing out" instructions for Mahamudra, without stepping over the line. For that, you simply must have a lineaged personal guru (lama) willing to pass the transmission onto you. To be honest, although I do have a sangha and precious guru, the karmic opportunity to receive pointing out instructions may well not happen in this life. Getting as close to it as possible, has been my goal, rather like searching the world for the rarest seed, to let it fall into the prepared spot I've dug for it. This is the type of book for those who yearn for understanding the very deepest of mysteries within ourselves and our place in the universe as bodhisattvas and Buddhas. So, read a bit, relax, contemplate the words, then meditate on its meaning. Let it sink in so as to develop a thoroughly stable understanding. It's a treasure unlike any other. Sarva mangalam! __()__

Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche offers us the reminder that it is up to us to practice and we all know that practice makes perfect. Beautiful in its compassionate reminder to use this very moment every moment to break through our habits of distraction, this wonderful book of encouragement has found a permanent home with me.

Clear precise teachings by a master written in clear precise English. This builds a strong foundation

in the Dzogchen teachings of Buddhism. I highly recommend this master piece.

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