

At the end of the previous reading, Rinpoche speaks of the way in which we create a world through language, which “draws awareness into symbols.” The fundamental symbol is the self, “understood as the one who owns awareness, senses experience, and gives meaning.” The self and its world take form together, in “inescapable intimacy.”

At the beginning of the reading for this week, this theme of intimacy emerges again, this time with respect to the senses. The senses establish the realm of what is known, but “within their activity of establishing, original intimacy remains open for discovery and appreciation.”

How could we go about exploring this intimacy? What would we even look for? Let’s explore that a bit. Usually we think of intimacy as a kind of feeling, warm and close, related to love and friendship, deep and profound. The feeling of intimacy does not depend on the content: if I have intimate knowledge of someone or something, the intimacy is distinct from the quality or quantity of that knowledge. It offers something more than that.

As a way of looking into this intimacy in TSK terms, I did a search for the word “intimate” on the TSK CD. It turns out to be a major theme. The word in one of its forms is used 208 times. Here are a few examples, drawn from just three books:

Space in intimate connection with thought, sensation, etc.	TSK 4
All familiar things are intimately connected through Great Space	TSK 112
Intimacy is linked to a shift from a ‘thing’ perspective to space appreciation	TSK 153
. . . the celebratory statement, “Intimacy is.”	TSK 159
Intimacy involves neither a self nor an object.	TSK 163
In the ordinary view, we must attain intimacy	TSK 287
With no distance, intimacy of knowing becomes inseparable from love	LOK xlviii
The intensity and intimacy of seeing for the first time.	LOK 105
The intention of inquiry can express appreciation that deepens into intimacy.	LOK 308
Intimacy continues to operate, within distance, separation, and ownership.	LOK 388
The intimacy of the immediate intuitive instant.	LOK 409
The intimacy of all that manifests in the field	DTS 17
The intimate availability of formless openness as goal and path	DTS 28
The self–presence of knowledge offers its own intimacy	DTS 233
Wholly intimate with all that appears, sensing enters the space of no body	DTS 325

For this coming week, you may want to explore these evocations of intimacy in the TSK books. Our reading for this week pursues intimacy in terms of embodiment and knowledge, and that is a good place to look.

In the phone call, I suggested two practices. One is based on the very clear instructions in paragraphs 2 and 3 on p. 388. The other is more linked to the theme of intimacy, as its converse: to look at the way in which each of the senses, as the ‘agents of awareness’ (390) reveal a world intrinsically divided, intrinsically committed to existence. evocations of intimacy in the TSK books. Our reading for this week pursues intimacy in terms of embodiment and knowledge, and that is a good place to look.

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