

Blue Truth

A Spiritual Guide
to Life & Death
and Love & Sex

David Deida

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FOREWORD

by Lama Surya Das

How can I characterize *Blue Truth* and the spiritual teaching of David Deida?

David presents the kind of challenge that creative artists, spiritual awakeners, and innovators in the history of human beings have always posed. When faced with something new, original, and profound, language fails and the mind is humbled by the lack of a category to hang it on. I could compare David's work with the Tantric traditions that it certainly resembles in many respects-or Kashmir Shaivism... Or I could write of its similarities with my own Dzogchen lineage of Buddhism, for it certainly shares with our tradition deep insights into reality and what is.

But there are few categories I know of for an original like David; for his teachings there is no pigeonhole. He himself is carving out his own territory, like a pioneer, an explorer. Unlike much of what we find in the spiritual marketplace today, David does not merely mouth pale shadows of truths from other times, places, and people, but is in the dynamic living oral tradition of maverick spiritual teachers who, like free-jazz musicians, can riff

directly on Reality, outside of established forms. This is why I am attuned to his provocative, sacred music.

Naked awareness is the main practice in the Dzogchen tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. We take refuge in and rely on innate wakefulness and awareness practice to lay bare the nature of both the mind and all things; this is the ground, the path and the fruit of the tried and true Buddhist path of awakening. Awareness is the sovereign, all-powerful and all-accomplishing ruler, the source of all; awareness is the greatest protection; awareness is the way, the truth, and the light. Homage to naked awareness, the heart of the Buddhas of past, present and future. David's book, *Blue Truth*, is such an homage.

Samantabhadara--embodying bare truth, naked awareness unencumbered by concepts--is the source of the Dzogchen lineage. Dzogchen actually predates the advent of Buddhism in Tibet. Dzogchen is also the consummate teaching of the Tibetan tradition, a nondual mystical transmission providing direct access to ones own innate natural state, the Buddha within. This primordial Buddha within us embodies the possibility of realization in one instant.

Thus Dzogchen pith instructions tell us: "One moment of total awareness is one moment of perfect enlightenment." This is the direct path, cutting directly to the core and

touching truly upon the heart of the matter. This is what David Deida is transmitting and teaching. He comprehends these deep words. He practices these words by living them, and he teaches what he lives. He has an uncommon ability to render the most esoteric understandings at the core of the world's great spiritual wisdom in a form accessible and useful to the modern western mind.

David is a man with a mission; he is striving to transform the atmosphere of contemporary tantric teaching and practice in the world today. Although not a Buddhist or part of any pre-existing spiritual tradition, David Deida's fresh, original teaching lays bare the essence behind each moment's appearance. His is the exact form of on-the-spot insight, cutting through to the nature of reality, that traditions spring up in the wake of. But David is far more concerned with your authentic realization of openness and love than he is with creating more clothing for yet another spiritual outfit. His teaching serves to remove any cloaks your heart might be wearing, especially any garments knit of sexual confusion.

The true Buddha does not just sit above us all in the remote vastness of heavenly firmaments, but resides within the heart and mind of each and every one of us. What we seek, we are. It is all within. This is the naked truth, a veritable fact of life. David Deida understands

this. He speaks from that position. To him, nakedness is far more than mere nudity, and his kind of tantra reaches far beyond prurient interests, sensuality, and mere sex.

From the primordial state of infinite, pure and spontaneously accomplishing awareness arises infinite teachings and manifestations. Timeless truths reveal themselves in timely new forms, appropriate for today and tomorrow. In our ancient Nyingma tradition of Tibet, these are called *termas*, or rediscovered Dharma treasures, which can come in the form of spiritual revelations of breathtaking beauty and grandeur as well as more pragmatically in the form of spiritual teachings and transmissions, empowerments, exercises and practices. This is how the Tibetan tantric Vajrayana tradition continues to revitalize and continually propagate itself. I believe that David Deida is actually onto something like this, in his own inimitable way.

These are big words, but David is a big mind that can step into such yeti-sized shoes and tread such a nondual mystical path. A gifted and charismatic teacher, an erudite and wise person of integrity and heart, David is the one western teacher of tantra whose books I read and whom I send students to learn from.

He is a bridge-builder between East and West, between ancient and modern wisdom traditions regarding this

least understood of all spiritual teachings: the mystery of intimacy as a yoga of transformation, transcendence, and self-realization.

Buddha nature is the essence of every appearance and every moment of nowness. And *Blue Truth* points to the Buddha nature of now so artfully and so consistently, and in so many different areas of human life, that you can't help but have glimpses of the Dharmakaya, the Unborn and undying naked reality shining through your own experience, as you taste it via David's evocation of each moment's realization of what "is" in the very midst of what appears to be.

Blue Truth functions like the renowned Tibetan truth-method called Pointing-out Instructions, reminding us that phantasmagorical visible appearances are a magical, dream-like display of consciousness, energy and light; and that the only authentic choice is to recognize it Just As Is within love's fearless, accepting embrace.

Mark my words: in a future that I hope is not too far off, David Deida's original western Dharma will be widely known as one of the most sublime and accessible expressions of the essence of spiritual practice that is freely offered today. The results of true practice, in any tradition, are unmistakable; David Deida demonstrates them.

Truths are many, but truth is one. All the great traditions have this truth at the core. Dzogchen teaching expresses it without much cultural accouterment or baggage. Not a matter of mere intellection, it can't really be taught--but it can be caught. When you catch on, then it is truly transmitted and realized. We can truly awaken in this way.

Spiritual seekers can realize what masters and sages throughout the ages have always realized: the facticity of what is, clear vision of things as they are through naked denuded awareness--not fabricating anything, not constructing, not building anything up, far beyond contrivance and elaboration. This true teaching on the primordially pure and perfectly whole, complete and radiant nature of reality, mind and consciousness is as true today as it was thousands of years ago.

No one has a corner on the market of truth. It is free and belongs to everyone, to one and all. Truth belongs to those who cherish it and realize it. Though David doesn't call himself a Buddhist, I do know that he is deeply rooted in Buddha-nature. His teaching exposes that fact. I think we are all lucky to find these naked teachings here today, just as I count myself fortunate to have David as a Dharma friend.

Blue Truth is a fresh and original contribution to an unorthodox lineage tradition of unsullied new revelations. Much of the book helps us learn how to use our bare awareness and pure attention to reconnect and relax into the View of things as they are amidst daily life--with our kids, watching tv, at work and so forth. Beyond our time on the meditation cushion or yoga mat, spiritual awakening includes transcending our unfulfilling habitual conditioning, learning to love, and expressing our deepest heart in the midst of our everyday human lives. Sexuality in particular tends to hold people back from spiritual progress and development; the second half of this book is directed at transmuting this limitation into an opportunity, through skillful means of naked awareness practice and truth-method of self-realization.

So do me a favor. Let yourself rest loose, and read *Blue Truth* with the openness and freedom from preconceptions about Buddhism and religiosity that Zen masters call "beginners mind". When I read these oral teachings in written form, I like to remember the ancient Taoist philosopher Chuang Tzu's advice, who said: "I am going to speak some reckless words, and I want you to listen recklessly." In that spirit, I can guarantee you that these insightful teachings will deepen your experience of immanent Buddha-nature and shine a new light on your moment-to-moment practice.

Lest we take all this too seriously, I find it helpful to remember that Buddha is as Buddha does. This is up to you. *Blue Truth* is about naked awareness: not something to believe in, but something to try out for yourself. As the Buddha himself used to say, "Come and see."

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Lama Surya Das is one of the foremost Western Buddhist meditation teachers and scholars. He is a lama in the Kagyu and Nyingma lineages of Tibetan Buddhism. His teachers include the Sixteenth Gyalwa Karmapa, Kalu Rinpoche, Dudjom Rinpoche, Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, Nyoshul Khenpo Rinpoche and Neem Karoli Baba. He has spent over thirty years studying Zen, vipassana, yoga, and Tibetan Buddhism, and has twice completed the traditional three year meditation retreat at Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche's monastery in France. Surya Das is the founder of the Dzogchen Foundation in Massachusetts and California; founder of the Western Buddhist Teachers Network with the Dalai Lama; and is active in interfaith dialogue and social activism.

Lama Surya Das is also a poet, translator, chantmaster, and the author of the recently released *Awakening the Buddhist Heart: Integrating Love, Meaning and Connection into Every Part of Your Life*, the best-selling *Awakening the Buddha Within*, and *Awakening to the Sacred*. He writes an "Ask The Lama" column online at Beliefnet.com. More information can be found at www.surya.org.

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LIFE AND DEATH

1. LOVE FULLY AND DIE

Blue Truth: *Sooner or later, this present moment is going to be your last.*

You are alive, for now. Feel your heart beating in your chest. Soften your belly and relax your jaw. Feel your heart beating deep in your body, and feel your heart's rhythm radiating outward, pulsing in your hands and feet and neck. Feeling your heartbeat, relax open as if offering your heartbeat to the world.

While feeling your heartbeat as an offering to all, feel how you live your moments. What did you do today? What are your plans for tomorrow? Who do you love and how deeply?

No matter how much money or love you have made, one day your legs will become cold and numb, your heart will stop, your breath will cease, and all will disappear. In some now-moment as real as this present one, your life will end. Are you ready for your death? Are you ready for the death of your children, your parents, and your friends?

A picnic with your loved ones. Fried chicken and cold beer. A gentle breeze. Laughter. Suddenly your heart stops. A final glimpse. Fade to death.

Are you ready? Have you loved fully and given your deepest gifts?

A life lived well embraces death by feeling open, from heart to all, in every moment. Wide open, you can offer without holding back, you can receive without pushing away. Wide open, heart to all, you are openness, unseparate from this entire open moment. Every part of the moment comes and goes as openness.

Your daughter's smile: temporary, precious, already dissolving. Your lover's embrace: sweet, full, already loosening. Every moment is miraculous and disappearing. Every experience, profound and empty, both.

Life lived for the sake of experience is a half-life, tense, insecure, lonely, and unfulfilled. Your experience cannot fulfill you because as soon as it comes it is already gone, a thin wisp, the tail end of hope, receding out of reach.

Ungrasped, this moment of life burgeons free and bright. Surrendering wide, breathing deeply, offering your heart, you are birthed open as this moment. Death is permission to open freely as love.

2. FEEL BEFORE MEMORY

Blue Truth: *What is important today is forgotten tomorrow.*

When it's time to use the toilet, *really* time, all importance is reduced to the event.

In bed at *that* moment, orgasm is all.

Chased by a madman with a gun, there is *nothing* else; waking up from the dream, there is nothing else but *relief*.

A child finds her doll important. A father finds his finances important.

Riddled with cancer, an old man finds love important, as his eyes close one last time.

What do you find important, now, today? What did you find important ten years ago?

Remember back to your earliest childhood memory, the very first time you can remember anything at all. What was important to you then?

Still feeling your very first memory in life, feel *before* that. What happens when you try to feel earlier than your

first memory? Do you feel into blackness? Is there a sharp wall of time that stops you? Or can you feel an ineffable openness that seems to extend before your earliest childhood memory, an openness without clear bounds, an openness that is you even now?

Of every moment that has ever seemed important, all that remains is the openness who you are.

3. GIVE EVERYTHING NOW

Blue Truth: *You are either withholding your love in fear or giving your deepest gifts.*

Right now, and in every now-moment, you are either closing or opening. You are either stressfully waiting for something—more money, security, affection—or you are living from your deep heart, opening as the entire moment, and giving what you most deeply desire to give, without waiting.

If you are waiting for *anything* in order to live and love without holding back, then you suffer. Every moment is the most important moment of your life. No future time is better than now to let down your guard and love.

Everything you do right now ripples outward and affects everyone. Your posture can shine your heart or transmit anxiety. Your breath can radiate love or muddy the room in depression. Your glance can awaken joy. Your words can inspire freedom. Your every act can open hearts and minds.

Opening from heart to all, you live as a gift to all. In every moment, you are either opening or closing. Right now, you are choosing to open and give fully or you are waiting. How does your choice feel?