

# Buddhist Concept of Self\*

by Ram Dass and Paul Gorman

If we imagine that our mind is like the blue sky, and that across it pass thoughts as clouds, we can get a feel for that part of it which is other than our thoughts. The sky is always present; it contains the clouds and yet is not contained by them. So with our awareness. It is present and encompasses all our thoughts, feelings, and sensations; yet it is not the same as them. To recognize and acknowledge this awareness, with its spacious, peaceful quality, is to find a very useful resource within. We see that we need not identify with each thought just because it happens to occur. We can remain quiet and choose which thought we wish to attend to. And we can remain aware behind all these thoughts, in a state that offers an entirely new level of openness and insight.

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\*Excerpted from *How Can I Help; Stories and Reflections on Service*, by Ram Dass and Paul Gorman, Alfred A. Knopf, 1991, p. 102. Excerpt title was not part of original text.