

To teach, do not be a teacher.

To teach, do not be a teacher. A walker appears only when a person starts to walk: a teacher appears only when two people interact in a certain way. There is no 'teacher' as such, but when conditions are right, teaching (and learning) take place. The same, of course, is true for 'student'. To see oneself as a teacher is to create an imbalance in the world.

A person may sit in a room and talk about the most profound understandings and insights but there is no teaching (let alone a teacher) if there is no one else present (or no one is listening).

One has only what one experiences. As time passes and one accumulates more and more experience, there is a greater and greater tendency to see the person in front of you in terms of that experience. Assumptions and projections proliferate, and the results are both inevitable and predictable.

In each encounter, put aside everything you think you know. It won't go away: it will be there if and when you need it. But in forgetting about it, you create the conditions for seeing 'the direction of the present' and what is to unfold in each moment.

When people thank and praise you, what they say has nothing to do with you. This is just their way of expressing joy in their own experience. Remember this, too, when people blame or criticize you.

Rest deeply in your own experience: you will know, through your body and feelings, whether you responded to the direction of the present, or fell into projection and reaction.

Consider carefully the question "Why do I teach?" In the end, it must, in some way, be part of your path - that is, when you teach, you wake up in some way.

With best wishes,

[Ken McLeod](#)

Ken McLeod is a Buddhist meditation teacher, writer and scholar on teaching.