



Ligmincha Europe Magazine

13 – Summer 2014



Meet Ligmincha Slovenskà Republika

The Student – Teacher Relationship

The Six Lokas

New Ligmincha International Board



LIGMINCHA EUROPE MAGAZINE 2014/13 — CONTENTS

GREETINGS

- 3 Greetings and news from the editors

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

- 4 On the Outer and Inner Spiritual Master

GOING BEYOND

- 14 New 3 Doors Academies Begin in 2015
- 16 Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche Discusses Lishu Institute

THE SANGHA

- 18 Will Rinpoche Come to Slovakia?
- 21 What's Happened in Europe
- 26 Finding a Home: Ligmincha Retreat Center in Europe
- 29 News from the Ligmincha International Board

ART IN THE SANGHA

- 30 Prayersong

THE TEACHER AND THE DHARMA

- 31 The Six Realms of Cyclic Existence
- 36 Dzogchen: Spaces
- 40 Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's 2014 European Seminars and on-line Teachings

THE LIGMINCHA EUROPE MAGAZINE

is a joint venture of the community of European students of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. Ideas and contributions are welcome at magazine@ligmincha.eu. You can find this and the previous issues at www.ligmincha.eu, and you can find us on the Facebook page of [Ligmincha Europe](https://www.facebook.com/LigminchaEurope).

Chief editor: Ton Bisscheroux

Editor: Frits de Vries

Editorial assistance: Marcy Vaughn

Proofreaders: Bob Anger, Gerry Heikes and Thomas Danalloyd

Technical assistance: Lutz Dausend

Cover layout: Nathalie Arts



GREETINGS AND NEWS FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers, Dear Practitioners of Bon,

A lot is happening in our sangha: finding a new home for our sangha in Western Europe; there is a new Ligmincha International board; next year you can go to Lishu Institute to study a three year residential training program; you can apply for the new training at The 3 Doors Academies, or participate in the workshops they offer. And you can attend online webcasts by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, interactive online courses on the internet. In this Magazine we'll keep you informed.

You can also read a transcript of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's webcast on the Student-Teacher Relationship. For me that was a very important teaching. Why? Because Rinpoche explained why it is important to have a spiritual teacher, what a student can expect from a teacher and what he expects from his students. During the webcast I had the feeling that Rinpoche was talking to me personally all the time. And when you follow a spiritual path, one day you might ask yourself: "Am I looking for a teacher or a friend?" In the webcast Rinpoche talks also about his relationship to his teachers. So, I would like to share my experiences with my teachers here too.

Although I never met him personally, I consider Chögyam Trungpa as my first teacher. I read his books and was very inspired by his words.

At the end of my journey through China, Tibet, Nepal and India in 1987-1988 I did my first *vipasana* meditation retreat in Bodhgaya, India, with Christopher Titmuss. I still use his dedication after every meditation:

*May all sentient beings be released from suffering
May all sentient beings live in peace and happiness
May all sentient beings reach enlightenment.*

Back home, I discovered there was a Tibetan

Kagyu Institute, Yeunten Ling, with four resident lamas in Huy, Belgium, not far from where I live. I studied there for several years, and in 1990 when H.E. The Third Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche was there I took refuge.

In 1996 I found a school for psychotherapy, where the teacher and also founder of the school, Hans Knibbe, saw himself as a spiritual teacher. For him meditation was part of the therapy. He was inspired by Dzogchen teachings, and made that part of our study program. After finishing the education we kept practicing together as a group, and in that

group the Student-Teacher Relationship was a big issue. Several years we have investigated our relationship to the teacher, and at some point our teacher asked us to see him as our only spiritual teacher. I came to the conclusion that I trusted the teachings, but not the teacher. From my point of view, my teacher was not free of anger, and anger was also one of my issues. It was clear that it was not my task to tell him that he had a problem with anger, but I found it very difficult to deal with that issue.

What complicated this matter was that my teacher did not have a teacher to investigate his personal issues. In the end I was still prepared to investigate my part, but it was my teacher who sent me away. I still feel gratitude for what he taught me, but I had to move on.

At the end of that process I met Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche the first time. When I listened to him I didn't think that Rinpoche was perfect, but I did think he was amazing. After going to the seminars of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche for three years, I felt it was time to ask him if he wanted to be my teacher. Eight years after the first encounter I still think that Rinpoche is amazing.

In Bon,

Ton Bisscheroux, chief editor



ON THE OUTER AND INNER SPIRITUAL MASTER

During the live webcast on May 4, 2014, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche talked about the relation between student and teacher. Here you can read an edited transcript from this webcast.

[Guided meditation]

Imagine and feel the presence of a white luminous being in the sky in front of you, who is like Samantabhadra or Tathagatagarbha. This being embodies all the masters of the past, present, and future, all the masters from whom you have learned, are learning presently, or from whom you might learn in the future, all the masters that you have practiced with, and grown with their guidance and from whom you have received help, all the masters that you are presently following, and all the masters that you might follow in the future. This luminous being represents all those masters, everyone from whom you have learned, the ones

who have helped you, the ones who have shown you the path, who have guided you. Bring everyone in and connect. Let go of all the personal stories, doubts, conflicts, emotions, thoughts, and issues of distrust. In this moment, simply focus from your heart in a pure way towards all those who have guided and taught you. Connect with your open heart.

As you connect, feel a sense of unbounded space, which is the inner master. When you find that unbounded open space internally, it allows you, without doubt and with confidence, to connect with your outer master. Feel that connection; allow spontaneous gratitude and joy in that connection. From openness, feel the devotion, and through devotion connect with the master; allow that connection to deepen; feel supported to evolve and grow as a result of this deepening connection.

[Bell]



The Student-Teacher Relationship

4 May at 6:54 op Ligmincha



00:00:00 / 01:40:14

RECORDED LIVE

You can watch the recording here: [The Student-Teacher Relationship](#)



In the spotlight

page
4

I am happy that I am able to discuss some issues that are relevant and helpful for your practice and spiritual development. This time I will talk about the master and student relationship, and share some of my own experiences. The master and student relationship is important for the practitioner. When you have a deeper sense of openness or willingness to understand the teachings, you learn about *karma* and reincarnation as well as the ultimate goal of liberation, enlightenment, and Buddhahood, which is something that every individual can pursue. When you want to achieve ultimate liberation, this relationship is very important, because whatever deep level of development or realization you may have, liberation is a long journey that requires consistent and genuine support.

For example, if, when you examine your everyday life, you see that you have a lot of psychological issues, doubts, confusion, conflicting emotions, or are feeling down, a very good therapist can help you with these experiences. Why do you need a therapist? Because you need help. How can therapy actually help you? It can help when you trust and have respect for the therapist, respect the process of therapy, and have committed to follow through that process. If you don't have that trust and respect and commitment, there is no way that you can get real support from a therapist. In someone's life, this might involve one session or two years. The spiritual journey, however, is not a short journey. It is a very long journey. In the Tibetan tradition there are stories of teachers and students who have a lifetime relationship, and some have a relationship life after life. I don't want to convince everyone to believe in karma and reincarnation, but what I am trying to say is that if you understand there is something much higher to achieve, namely enlightenment or absolute freedom, then you should realize that it is a long journey, and you need real support. Therefore, the master is very important.

Sometimes people wonder if they really need a master. Generally speaking 99.9 percent of people need a master. There is a small chance that someone does not need a master. Most of us need a master. When I examine the question myself, I consider myself as someone from the larger group who needs a master.

So generally speaking, the relationship with a

master is very important because there is an incredible body of knowledge you need to learn, and there are an incredible amount of practices you need to learn and become adept with. In order to fully engage those practices, there are many challenges and outer, inner, and secret obstacles that you might face. You need some kind of mental support and guidance through those challenges. If the path is very important, if liberation is very important, the master is very important. So that is why one needs to have a master.



His Eminence Lopon Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche and Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche.

Then you might ask, "How do I find a master?" That is a very good question. During a Summer Retreat someone asked my teacher, Yongdzin Rinpoche, the same question. He answered: "First you have to look for your master. It is absolutely necessary to know you are looking and to look genuinely with dedication. Once you find someone, do not jump immediately into the relationship and exclaim, 'I found my master; I'm so excited.'" I myself have many experiences where people meet me for the first time and say: "You are great, your explanations are clear, and I feel a connection to you." And when I listen a little bit more to them, they complain about the master they had been following for ten years. They are totally critical about that master and are praising me like I am not even a human being. When I hear that, it is as if a red light blinks inside of me, signaling that I am the next target of this person. I don't get excited when people approach me in that way. I am more encouraged when people come to me saying, "I have been following someone for a long time; I have devotion and respect for my teacher, and I have learned much." Maybe that master passed away, maybe he moved away,





His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche.

or there is no longer closeness. “I am at a different stage in my life; I need to learn more, and I also feel some connection to you. Can I learn from you, and yet keep my principal master continuously in my heart?” To that, I think, “Wow. Yes, this is a good person.”

My teacher was very explicit: you don't jump right away to a decision. First, you analyze to see if the master has enough knowledge to offer you so you can grow. Do you feel a heart connection to that master? Do you feel a sense of trust? Some analysis is important, and there is nothing wrong with doing that. At the same time, listen to your heart. Do you genuinely feel a sense of openness, a sense of devotion and connection? When your heart says “yes” and your mind says “yes” then you can say, “This is my master.” Then you have to follow through. While finding a master is not exactly the same, it is a little similar to seeking a life partner, as when you look for a husband or wife. When you first fall in love with somebody, it is best that you do not make a decision overnight to get married. More wisely, you take time, you feel, you analyze, and when you are confident you are connected, you make a decision. Nor do you say, “This person is perfect and it should always be like it was when I first fell in love with this per-

son.” When you fall in love with a person you see such perfection in this person; you see everything that is wonderful in this person. When you expect to feel the same thing in a marriage of thirty years, probably all of us know that is not going to happen. The person you first see does not seem to have any problems or errors, and after ten years you see this person as a normal human being. It is the same person with whom you fell in love, but there is this problem and there are all kinds of issues. You have personal issues, and you always project them on somebody. I am sure if the Buddha appeared on this earth and moved into your neighborhood, and you didn't know that he or she is a Buddha, it is very likely that you are going to have some problems with that Buddha for whatever reason. Perhaps the Buddha parks the wrong car in the wrong place, or plays music too loudly!

So, once you make a clear decision, it is important that you work with it. With my teachers, His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche, Lopon Sangye Tenzin Rinpoche, Lopon Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, and Geshe Yungdrung Namgyal, sometimes it was not easy. There were challenging situations. Whenever there is a challenging situation, in my mind, I don't tell them they have to work on that situation, because they are not my students but are my teachers. I take those challenges as my work; it is my job to clear those obstacles. I chose these people as my teachers. When my own needs, expectations, and desires challenge our relationship, I work seriously on myself, rather than expecting my teachers to change. I am the student; I chose these people to learn from. I am not saying they don't make mistakes; I don't say they are fully enlightened, but for me they are, even though sometimes I see that something might not be correct. Still, I work on these issues in my own place. It is important to recognize that the student needs to work. And when a situation does not work out at all, it is of course better not to continue that relationship, and find the right person, like we would do in a marriage.

There are marriages that last forever, a lifetime, and there are master-student relationships that last forever, especially when the student has chosen the right person and is working in the right way within him or herself. From that deep relationship a lot of growth is possible. So going back



to the question of how do you choose, these are the criteria: examine intellectually and also know what your heart says, and when you feel somebody is right, then conclude: This is it. And then you seriously work on that relationship. Your commitment is important.

Make sure that you are not trying to follow a particular master because you want to be the head of the organization, or you want to be a close friend to the master, or you want to be the main person. It is not possible not to have ego, but make sure ego is not making the decisions. You want the influence of ego to be minimal in that relationship and your heart and clarity of mind to maximize the relationship. Follow that person and care for the spiritual relationship, and in so doing you grow, you learn, and you develop what you have learned as you pursue your own ultimate liberation. Liberation should be the primary goal, and you need to watch out for every other goal or reason; don't let anything else overtake the relationship. The spiritual goal should be clear and foremost.

I don't think any student-teacher relationship can be completely pure. As I mentioned before, His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche, Lopon Sangye Tenzin Rinpoche, and Lopon Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, are my principal teachers. I lived and grew up with Yongdzin Rinpoche, who lives in Nepal and frequently visits France [[Shenten Dargye Ling](#)], and I encourage my students to go there and feel his presence. I have had a relationship with him for forty years, and I know clearly this relationship has not only been in this lifetime, but many lifetimes, and if I am lucky enough it will continue into the next life. This relationship, of course, had changed over the years. When I was a ten year-old boy I did not have that much understanding and did not know how to relate to the master. It was more a father and son relationship. I remember clearly how he helped to feed me and clean my shirts as he guided me. Gradually our relationship changed to more learning, and every day we had classes. I felt close to him and comfortable with him and I could talk to him about anything.

In the West I sometimes see that I make people nervous. When people have to drive me they almost have accidents. I am not even saying anything, but they project things on me, although



Lopon Sangye Tenzin Rinpoche.

whatever they project on me has nothing to do with me. There I am totally normal, very casual, friendly, talking, sharing. Sometimes they are not able to talk, and I think that it is important that people should be able to talk clearly and share their thoughts and feelings. That is what I felt with Yongdzin Rinpoche. Once I finished my geshé degree we travelled together through Tibet, and when we came back I was like a child who had grown up, and I had to move on. After I came to the West, the relationship shifted and changed. Now I don't have the fortune to be with him all the time as we were, being together, eating together.

Also, for many years I went every year to visit His Holiness at Menri Monastery. Nothing has changed in our relationship, and every time I go, I go to him as a student and do whatever a student does. This relationship for me has been very enriching, and it is possible for everyone to have this kind of relationship. That's why I am sharing these personal stories.

What are the obstacles to this relationship so essential for liberation? What I have seen in the West is that sometimes people are not really looking for a teacher. It is very important to become aware of what you really seek. If you are looking for a friend, a teacher is the wrong place to look.



The teacher is not such a good friend, because the teacher will probably tell you what to do, and might give you orders that you have to learn to obey. Once you respect someone as a teacher, you will have to learn to obey that teacher. That is the role of a teacher. You always have the right to not consider someone as a teacher, because you don't trust that person, or that person does not know enough, or whatever. But once you trust and consider someone as your teacher, you will have to learn to obey that teacher. You don't have to obey your friend, so if one is looking for a friend, don't go to a teacher. The teacher can be a friend to some degree, but a teacher is not a friend.

If you are looking for a relationship, the teacher is not the right person to have a relationship with, because the teacher will still order you about in a relationship. You don't want somebody to order you about in a relationship. If you want to do business, the teacher is not a good person to do business with, because in business it is good to have an equal and open position with your partners. If you are looking for some sense of organizational power, a teacher is not a good place to look either. Sometimes when people come to me, I recognize that while they are interested in me and my teachings, they are more interested in organizational power, power that they do not find in themselves. I always teach that power is within. The inner refuge is the most powerful source, and you can connect with that. But when you are looking for organizational power, dharma groups are one of the worst places to find power, because everybody works as a volunteer, has too many opinions, and do not necessarily have the skills that are required, because everything is based on availability and free time. If you are seeking power, then run for a function in the government, or something like that.

The bottom line is: make sure of your motives for following a particular person. Is it truly that you want to follow Yungdrung Bon, to follow the dharma, the spiritual path, for your wellbeing in this lifetime, for the wellbeing of others, and to ultimately achieve liberation? Achieving liberation is the single most important reason why you follow a particular path or person. If that is the primary reason, then there is much more chance of success in the relationship in the long run. Many people work in the community because they believe



Volunteers prepared these tables for dinner during the Summer Retraet 2013 in Buchenau, Germany.

in service. I know many people who have time and want to do something meaningful in their lives and they contribute their time, skills, and funds toward something they really believe is worth investing in. Of course you can get involved in the sangha and support things. But when you do that, make sure that you hold yourself in a very humble place, in a minimum ego place, and that you always hold separate your relationship to the teacher and the teaching. In that way you keep that relationship very clean and very pure, and you remember the number one reason that you are with that person and teaching. If there is any issue in the relationship that develops because of your activities and roles in the community, then you drop everything else and remain true to that relationship. The reason why I say that is that I have many experiences where people gain much power in an organization or group. And when that relationship does not work out, they blame the teacher and other members of the organization. Then they blame the teachings, and then they disconnect. Not only do they separate themselves from the teacher and the sangha, but sometimes



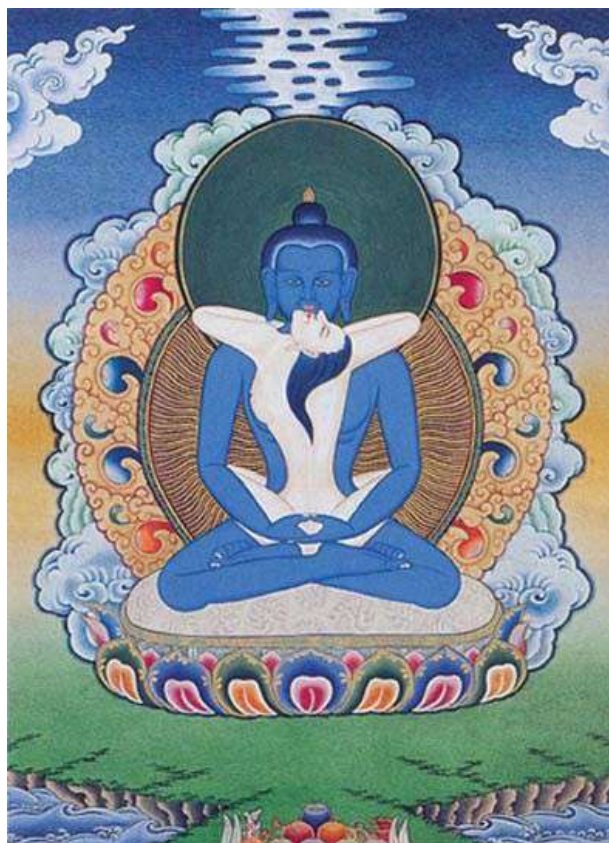
they also separate, unfortunately, with the teachings and their practice. It does not have to be like that. You can get rid of many things: you can get rid of all your organizational responsibilities — all the service tasks and the people you have conflicts with. Just let it all go; it is not important. Simply remain with your connection with the teacher and the teaching. That is how you initially began to follow. You don't have to work in the organization. If it does not work out, just follow the teacher, and hopefully it will work for you. If you have started in the right way, are relating in the right way, it will work for you. For some it will not work, because they have mixed it up too much: the organization, their own inner conflicts, the teachings, and the teacher. In some cases you also let go of the teacher. Forget about the organization, forget about those working positions, you can even let go of the teacher. But do not let go of the teachings and the practices your teacher taught you. You can start in the same tradition with another teacher and continue with the same practices. You can hold some sense of respect to that first teacher, but you don't have to follow that teacher from day to day, year to year. You can still continue some sense of relationship but not that closeness you previously had. So, I think there are many different ways it is possible to maintain these higher relationships for one's spiritual development.

[Guided meditation ~ Guru Yoga]

Sit comfortably. Bring your attention inward. In the sky in front of you, see the image of Taphritsa or Samantabhadra as a white luminous being embodying all the masters. Open your heart and feel spontaneous devotion. Feel the connection with yourself and all the masters. It is all one. Just continuously rest in that connection, in the connection with yourself and with the master.

[Bell]

When we talk about the master, we do not only mean the outer master. We know the outer or external refuge. The inner refuge that I emphasize is also known as the innermost secret refuge, but instead of making many divisions, I simply use the term inner refuge to refer to it. There is an important text called Yetri Thasel [ye krhi mtha' sel]. I will read from it in Tibetan and translate. It says: "The meaning of the master is the one who guides



Samantabhadra.

and protects, the one who shows and interprets." The master this text refers to is the inner refuge, our own inner essence, the nature of mind, *rigpa*, innate awareness. In the same text it says: "It [this nature of mind] knows everything and it shows everything. It is the one, the shower of showers. It is the one who shows everything that is to be shown. It knows everything; it shows everything. It is the one who shows whatever is needed to be shown." All this is referring to the inner master, which I have been emphasizing in the last couple of years as the inner refuge. So when you are still, silent, and spacious internally and connect with that source, that inner intelligence, that knowing knows what, when, and how to teach you, how to guide you, and how to protect you in any particular moment. I personally truly trust going to that space. All the advice and the guidance you need will come from that inner space. When one is able to go into that space, you will receive the most accurate, intelligent advice possible. Learn to go to that place when you experience any form of conflict in a relationship. Seek advice from this place instead of seeking advice from anyone else. We can have cultural differences and issues with teachers, in the relationship between teacher and student, and issues of trust, and experiences of



distrust. The West is different from the Tibetan culture. When this happens to you, you should not get in the mood of critically attacking others, but find the inner teacher within yourself. You will find guidance and solutions from that place this teaching praises.

[Questions and answers]

Question: What are the true characteristic qualities of the teacher?

Answer: Of course there are many different explanations. I will keep it simple. The true qualities of the teacher will be a teacher who represents the teachings. According to the ways I have been teaching, you would find a teacher who is open enough — a teacher who has qualities of the first refuge; a teacher who is aware enough — having qualities of the second refuge; a teacher whose loving and caring warmth is enough — qualities of the third refuge. The unbounded space is the quality of the first refuge. Having that quality means that the teacher is not egoistic; the ego is at a minimum. So there is lot of space and loving kindness is present. The teacher has, as I mentioned earlier, a body of knowledge. The West is an intellectual society, and I include myself in that group as well. We feel that we need to learn intellectually. Even when we do not practice what we know already, we have a desire to learn more. To respect that desire to learn, it is important that you have a teacher who has that knowledge, too. When you don't have so much intellectual hunger, you need a more experiential teacher, or a teacher with both qualities.

Question: How does one deal with a situation when a student is feeling resistance to the teaching itself?

Answer: My feeling is that sometimes in the West teachers try to teach too many topics and particularly the teachings that come from Tibet. There are many cultural elements in these teachings that are very important for Tibetans and may not be necessary in the Western world. Sometimes when there are specific teachings that you are not able to relate to, just make sure that you are not relating to them just because you are lazy. You might say, “I cannot relate to exercising at the gym,” and so you are not exercising. But that is laziness and has nothing to do with the gym. You have to work with your laziness. But when it is not about laziness, but is more about the teaching

that you cannot relate to, it is possible that a particular teaching may not be for you. I think it is important that you respect yourself and give space to yourself. You don't have to relate equally to every teaching. It is okay not to feel the same level of deep connection to every teaching. You work with the teachings with which you feel connection. And the teachings you don't feel connection with, you give yourself space not to do them. But that does not mean that there is something wrong with that teaching. It is important that you don't conclude that teaching is not important or valuable. It is simply not for you; and you respect yourself and respect the teaching as it is, and even help preserve the teaching, because it can be very beneficial for others.

Question: If the teachers' behavior is unethical and something is not acceptable, how should one continue?

Answer: Each person needs to reflect deeply, and see exactly what the situation is. If there is a situation that is clearly not right, and it is collectively agreed upon and different perspectives are taken into account, then one does not need to follow that teacher; one does not need to obey, and can let go completely. But if the conflict is of an interpersonal nature, then maybe there is something to work on; if not, one can let it go.



Video on YouTube: [Lama Chenno \(Calling the Perfect Master\) - Khenpo Pema Choephel Rinpoche](#).

Question: If we call the master from afar, does the master hear it?

Answer: Once I asked this question of Yongdzin Rinpoche. I told him that in my dreams I have long conversations with him, and I asked him “Are you really there?” He smiled. I don't know how to interpret that smile. Was he answering yes or no? But when a student asks me, no, I don't hear



them. But I don't think it is so important for me to hear when somebody is calling me. When I am having a good night's sleep and somebody is calling me from the other side of the world, I don't think it such a good idea that I would have to wake up! But when the connection is there, you don't need to call. Regarding deep meditation we say, "Don't listen to silence when you already hear it." So, when there is a connection, stop calling from far away, just go into the inner refuge.

Question: What is your expectation from the cyber student?

Answer: Usually student and teacher have close contact. Sometimes the time of the master and the student is not the same time. We can have wonderful transmissions and teachings from a master who lived five hundred years ago. We read and learn from them and deep inside we feel we follow that master, even though we never met him. It is similar with the cyber student. But to the cyber student I always say there is a great opportunity to relate is the cyber way, because we are bound by time and space. The internet era allows us to connect with each other, so I think it would be great to develop this relationship as we are doing today in this webcast. I know there are cyber groups among my students, and often when I go to different countries, one member comes up to me and brings to me this heartfelt and beautiful card with the name of each person who has been gathering and hearing these cyber teachings. I want to thank everyone for that.

Question: I want to be a good student, and what does it mean to obey and follow?

Answer: As far as I am concerned I personally don't tell people what to do or not to do. Sometimes you hear stories of strict masters giving a lot of rules, discipline, and guidance on what to do. I am not that person. Sometimes I would like to be a little more straightforward with certain things. Sometimes I would like to be able to say, without offending someone, that they seem to be egoistic. I don't remember ever saying that to anybody. But it would be good to have that freedom to say that, if I really truly feel to say that. When I say that, I have to have a student who is willing to take it, rather than saying: "I think you're egoistic too." Of course I have an ego, and maybe sometimes I am egoistic too, but in that relationship I wish they would not tell me that but listen and reflect, "Okay, you're showing me my ego. Thank you for

that, because I put you in the role of my teacher, and I am willing to work on it. It is not my job to show you your ego, because you have your teacher who can show you."

In my teachings I often talk about certain situations and issues in life, and people often tell me, "It seems that you have been talking all evening about me." Sometimes I might be strong in statements I make. If you take these statements as if "he is not talking to somebody, but he is talking to me, and I will take it to my heart," and if you listen in that way and obey that, I will consider that as obeying in the situation. Other than that I will not tell somebody what to do, like in the stories of Milarepa, where his master asked him to build something in the night and then he destroyed it during the day, giving him a hard time. In the Western world we would call that torture and abuse!



Marpa and Milarepa. You can read a summary of the story: [What was Marpa trying to teach Milarepa?](#)

Question: How does one approach the teacher or how does one achieve closer communication with the teacher?

Answer: Particularly the second question is very important. There are a lot of problems with that. I hear from students of other well known masters that they used to hang out with their master, and now they don't even get a five minute appointment with him. People get very disappointed about that, and sometimes people even get quite upset about it. So there are different degrees of problems with that situation. I think it is really im-



portant that this is the moment that you have to let go of that idea that you need to hang out with the master, that you need to have regular e-mails with the master, that you need to have regular phone calls with the master, or something like that. You absolutely have to let go of that idea.

From the age of ten until I was twenty-six I lived together with my master in the same house, ate three meals a day at the same place, and spent hours in classes and teachings with him. Even during the holidays we walked together. Things change, time changes, space changes. Now when I go to visit my teacher in Nepal or in France, I expect I will have very little time to talk with him. It is my ego who feels the need for time with my teacher. When I was in Nepal I went to visit him in the morning, and every five minutes somebody came in with a *khata* and offerings, asking for his blessings. At the time I thought “Can we just close the door for half an hour?” As I felt that I realized, that's my ego, my expectation. In my lifetime I probably had his time more than anybody, so I should be happy and satisfied now. If I didn't have another opportunity to see him even for a moment, I should be happy enough, because I feel such a strong connection with him. The connection is so strong that it fulfills my need for physical contact, a phone call or a conversation. It is not necessary, and practically speaking, it is not possible, and I have to respect that. When you begin to expect, you bring yourself and your master into a difficult position. The most important relationship between the master and the student is the teaching, which is always there, and the practice, which is always there. And it is especially here in new forms like this internet teaching. Right now many people are listening to me, and the connection is right here. As you hear me, as you see me, it should be the same as if I were sitting with you. There are no differences. I am talking to all of you, each one of you, individually. I am sharing whatever I feel is most important at this moment for my students' evolution of practice and spiritual development. I do my best to share that. If you would come as an individual to me to ask a question, I would have nothing more to share than what I share now. I always tell people, and I think the bottom line is this: closeness is right here. If for you an e-mail, a phone call, or physical presence is the only definition of closeness, then I think it is important to delete that, and to define the meaning of closeness in a different way. At



Video on YouTube: [Guru Yoga by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche](#).

this very moment we are close. When we did the practice of *Guru Yoga* together, you could not be closer to your inner teacher, your guide teacher. So cultivate that knowing and that quality of closeness.

Question: Can a student have more than one teacher from different spiritual lineages?

Answer: Yes, because the most important thing is about the student. It is you who are important, not the teacher. The teacher will always tell you what the general guidelines will be. I have students who follow different teachers, but they don't have a conflict because they embody both traditions. They practice different things in both traditions, and they don't mix the traditions. They understand their practices, the essential part of the teachings, meet in the same place. That core, that same meeting place, is what their practice is. For example, when you learn how to practice compassion you learn slightly different visualizations and different deities from one master to another. You learn slightly different instructions. With one master, you have three steps with one deity. With another master it might be two steps or no steps. But in the end, you know it is the practice of compassion. You can do three steps, you can do no steps, but you know each time you



are doing a practice of compassion. When you conclude like that, you have no conflict. The problem is that sometimes people say, "I am overwhelmed by all these differences. I am overwhelmed by too many practices. I am overwhelmed by following two teachers. I don't have the time and money to follow two teachers." Well, who told you to follow two teachers? Did somebody pressure you to follow? If that is really the story, then stop following two masters, and stop doing two practices. Focus, because focus is good. Do not get in the mood of shopping for teachers, shopping for dharma, shopping for practices. We do a lot of shopping in the West. Do you use everything you have purchased? No. When I am shopping I always think of getting the best. I look for what I will wear all the time. Many times when people buy something, they think something is nice when they first see it, and then they don't even wear it. So get the best, and wear it all the time. Find the right person and follow him or her all the time. That is my advice.

Question: When you are already relating to the second teacher, how do you follow the previous *samayas*?

Answer: That depends on your previous *samayas*. If the previous *samaya* is not to follow other teachers, then I think the previous *samaya* and the previous teacher will have a problem. I would never tell a student not to follow anybody else, but I would tell them to connect deeply with their own practice and their own teacher. Then you will feel full. Wandering around searching for too

many things is a sign of dissatisfaction, a sign of not enough connection, a sign of not knowing your connection, a sign of not enough depth in the connection. You do not fall in love with everyone you meet. If you do, you don't have a real connection with one person.

What if you have a previous *samaya* to a practice, and you don't have enough time to do both practices?

In that situation, whether you practice the current one or the past one, deep inside your heart you know the core principle of both practices is the same. If you know what that one thing is, then you don't break the *samaya* by simply doing another prayer or technique. If you are not doing any practice, or if you are disconnected from your practice, if you are completely against those precepts, then you are probably breaking the *samaya*. But practicing a different form with the

same essence is not breaking the *samaya*.

Question: What is the next good step to follow, if I want to follow these teachings?

Answer: If you are referring to these teachings as the Bon teachings, and are following me as your teacher, your question is the first step. When you keep that question in your mind, and the question is strong, alive, and activated within you all the time, I am sure your inner intelligence will give you the answer of what to do next and how to follow and listen to that inner voice.

Transcription by Ton Bisscheroux
Edited by Marcy Vaughn



Refugetree with Bon Lineage Teachers and the field of deities for the accumulation of merit.



NEW 3 DOORS ACADEMIES BEGIN IN 2015



The 3 Doors

The 3 Doors, www.the3doors.org, inspired by the vision of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, is a contemplative educational organization whose purpose is to offer simple and powerful meditation practices in contexts that support self-reflection, transformation, and the desire to benefit others. Headquartered in the United States, The 3 Doors is an international organization that currently offers classes and retreats throughout the United States, Latin America, and Europe.



[Jackson](#) and [Raven Lee](#).

U.S Academy email to
us-3coordinator@the3doors.org.

European Academy email to
eu-2coordinator@the3doors.org.

The 3 Doors Global

The 3 Doors Global keeps us connected to what is happening. Our newsletter is the voice for teachers, current trainees, and alumni. It is also where prospective trainees and all our friends can find out about upcoming Academies and other workshops and classes taught worldwide. Watch for classes and activities in your area!

SUBSCRIBE

The 3 Doors Introductory Presentations and Workshops

In our introductory presentations and workshops, we invite participants to engage in practices of meditation and reflection so that they may look within and discover the jewel that is hidden in ordinary experience. We call this jewel 'the inner refuge.' We connect to our inner refuge by bringing attention to the clear and open space of being which enables the warmth of transformation to arise and benefit ourselves and others. Join us for any of our weekend seminars presenting simple and profound meditation practices of body, speech, and mind as a means to connect with the power of being fully present and alive to the infinite possibilities in each moment of life. These workshops are appropriate for beginning and advanced meditation practitioners alike.

Transforming Lives Through Meditation

New 3 Doors Academies Begin in 2015

Applications are now being accepted for the next U.S. and European Academies at:
www.the3doors.org.

The U.S. Academy, beginning April 2015, meets at the Serenity Ridge Retreat Center in Shipman, Va., and is taught by [Marcy Vaughn](#) and [Gabriel Rocco](#).

The European Academy begins in June 2015 (location to be determined) and is taught by [John](#)





3PA Council Members and Advisors.

The Healing Power of the Inner Refuge explores how bringing attention to the stillness of the body, the silence within inner speech, and the spaciousness of mind provide access to the free and open space of being and the positive healing qualities that emerge.

Awakening the Sacred Body introduces the practices of the nine breathings and five *Tsa Lung* exercises as supports to clear obstacles and enter the healing space of the inner refuge.

Awakening Authentic Presence introduces the practice of the *Five Warrior Syllables*, a practice of sound and silence to clear obstacles and awaken positive qualities that transform one's life.

Awakening the Luminous Mind introduces the practice of the *Fivefold Teaching of Dawa Gyaltsen*, offering clear guidance on transforming confusion into wisdom.

Schedule of Introductory Presentations and Workshops

Please [subscribe](#) to The 3 Doors newsletter to learn about more events as they are scheduled around the world.

An Introduction to The 3 Doors: Transforming Lives through Meditation

An evening introductory presentation and guided meditation with Raven Lee in Hilversum, Netherlands on November 5, 2014. Contact: Tonny Maas, 3deurenederland@gmail.com.

Awakening the Sacred Body with John Jackson in Berlin, Germany during November 7-9, 2014. Contact: Anja Benesch, anja@the3doors.org.

An Introduction to The 3 Doors: Transforming Lives through Meditation

An evening introductory presentation and guided meditation with John Jackson and Raven Lee in Berlin, Germany on November 12, 2014.

Contact: Karolina Selteneim, info.europe@the3doors.org.

Awakening the Sacred Body with John Jackson in Frankfurt, Germany on November 15-16, 2014. Contact: George Ajhar, george@trust-the-void.de.

The 3 Doors Practitioners Association: Bringing Open Hearts into the World

Once you complete your Academy training, you are invited to join The 3 Doors Practitioners Association (3PA) and its worldwide network of teachers, mentors, and graduates. We are here to support your continued personal growth, creative expression, and service to others.

Who We Are

The 3 Doors Practitioners Association is an international community of The 3 Doors Academy graduates and teachers. We support our members to bring the life-enriching meditation practices of The 3 Doors into our own lives and into the world.

Our Mission

The 3 Doors Practitioners Association provides multiple avenues for members to connect with one another and to access continuing education for personal growth and service to others. From our collective energy come ideas, creative expressions, service projects, and leaders vibrant with Tenzin Wangyal's vision of social transformation.

3PA will have its own page on The 3 Doors website soon. In the interim, please contact one of these 3PA Council members for information:

Bea Ledyard (US), email: bealedyard@gmail.com

George Ajhar (Europe), email: george@trust-the-void.de

Katrin Schikora (Latin America), email: katrin.schikora@gmail.com.



TENZIN WANGYAL RINPOCHE DISCUSSES LISHU INSTITUTE

At a recent retreat this year in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, Floor van Orsouw asked Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche for an update on Lishu Institute.

Lishu Institute is preparing to host students in the near future and will offer a three year residential training program made up of two and a half month blocks. It can be taken at Lishu's campus in India, remotely on-line, or in a combination of both. The curriculum will be the *Nine Ways of Bon*, the *Mother Tantra* and the *Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyud*.

Rinpoche, how did the idea to create Lishu Institute arise?

During the time I have been teaching in the last twenty years in the West I have felt a very strong need to have a residential training program. Teaching a weekend here, a weekend there, the longest being three weeks in the summer does not provide enough. Also as far of preserving the knowledge of Yungdrung Bon in the West is concerned, more learning and practice is needed, both in a more dedicated way. That was the primary reason for building Lishu.

The reason why it is in India is because we already have a number of facilities in the West. These facilities become very expensive for students to attend. To run the logistics in that way is very costly for students. So we thought India is the best. There are more teachers and energetically India is where a lot of these teachings originated. So we thought it was very good to put effort here, and we found the land in Dehra Dun.

Could you tell us a little about Nyachen Lishu Taring after whom you named Lishu Institute?

Lishu Taring is one of the very important scholars from around the seventh and eight century in Tibet. Lishu Taring also has a connection to both the Buddhists and Bonpo's. He is a very important scholar and somehow one day the name just popped up and that's how I called it.

Why did you choose these three texts for the curriculum?

The reason why we chose the Nine Ways of Bon for the first year is that it provides an overview of



Siddha Nyachen Lishu Taring.

each vehicle and becomes like an introduction to Bon. We thought it's very important.

Then the last two years we will focus on Tantra and Dzogchen. When looking at all the different texts, teaching cycles on tantra, *Ma Gyud* seems most appropriate because all the teachings are contained in it. Many of these I have been teaching in the West. And also it's the principal practice of my main teacher Yongdzin Rinpoche.

As far as the Dzogchen is concerned *Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyud* is probably the most important Dzogchen text in the Bon tradition. Lopon Sangye Tenzin taught us that. I have been teaching pieces here and there for many years.

Probably we will not be able to finish everything in three years, but we will do as much as possible to finish in these three years. And we hope eventually we will be able to translate all these three books.

What qualities would be needed to become a student at Lishu Institute?

The most important quality is the commitment. So that people have full commitment. That they are willing to stay there, that they are willing to learn. There might be things to memorize. There might be a lot of things to learn and to practice. So the most important quality is the commitment.

Why did you choose to offer both possibilities of the residential and the online program?

First we did not choose the 'both' approach. We choose only the residential. And as time passed I



realized more that nowadays so many things are happening online.

Online is also a way to go because people have a job, family, and other commitments. It will be very difficult to take time off like that. It makes total sense to have an online program. But also people who have time to go and are doing the residential program, because the residential is much more preferable, can do both online and residential.



And so we are going to do over a hundred hours of recording for the program in June and July. And we are lining up many hundred more hours of recording.

So these recordings we perform permanently for training purposes. We want many people to go to this training, particularly all the people who are instructors of Ligmincha: they are required to go to these online trainings.

How will the Lishu training support the student in understanding and experience of these teachings in one's individual path?

You have a place that is environmentally very friendly. Books and supports are there. A number of teachers are there. So you have every day classes, every day access to the teacher. So I think it will be a great support for people who really want to learn. And it would also not be that many people. One main thing that we changed: instead of three years continuously, some people can do six months at a time. If one person chooses to do *Ma Gyud* six months they can do *Ma Gyud* six months. But of course somebody who wants to complete: the completion would be to do all three years.

How do you see the graduates of Lishu Institute being able to benefit the local sanghas, Ligmincha and Bon community as a whole?

Just finishing does not mean necessarily they will become teachers. There are quite a number of retreat requirements, practices and retreats. And also attitude, that is very important, because teachers need to have the right attitude. Not like universities where you finish the degree. You do a PHD, you publish a paper and after you published a paper you are more arrogant than ever before,

but you can still be a professor. We don't want people who are finishing like that. We want to test.

There will be a group of lamas, the main lamas who evaluate the personality of that individual, if that person can be a teacher or not. We have a clear, systematic way of doing it.

When they have finished then they would have learned more traditional ways, as much as possible. So they can study the texts, rather than a weekend here, a weekend there with me. That's not good enough. I value them much more than a weekend here, weekend there. So they would have much more to offer for sure for the sangha.

How can sangha members who don't study themselves at Lishu support and be involved?

That's a very good question. I think it's very important. I think maybe every country, sangha, among themselves, finds a person, like Erik for example in Holland to go to Lishu. So the Dutch sangha financially supports Erik to go. I am not saying he will go or not, but I am saying just an example. If people support that, I think in a way that community cares about proper training of somebody. And in this sense: "We want to support you to go and then you come back and tell us what happened". It would be great that each country, each community supports. Especially if some one is in financial need. We strongly recommend and encourage that.

You can watch the video of this interview at:
vimeo.com/Lishu.

Interview by Floor van Orsouw

Photos by Geertje Bloemers and from the Lishu website



WILL RINPOCHE COME TO SLOVAKIA?

We introduce the smallest, and one of the youngest Ligmincha sanghas, which is located in Slovakia. Ton Bisscheroux interviewed the three members of the sangha: Mirka Janošková, Daniel Konečný and Svetozár Košícký. Persons with different characters: earth, fire and silence.

When did you meet Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche the first time?

Mirka: The first time I met Rinpoche was during the *First International Lishu Retreat* in Dehradun, India, in 2009. My best friend Lidia Castellano, suggested to read books of Rinpoche, and later she asked me to come and meet him. Meeting Rinpoche the first time was very special to me, and I felt a strong connection with him. During that retreat I also had a chance to meet His Holiness in Menri Monastery and people from all over the world. When I read Rinpoche's books I had that true recognition of my lama, and when I saw him, I knew directly, and felt 'this is it.' Even before seeing him I felt a strong inner connection. In Lishu I also had the first connection with the deities through the teaching of Sherab Chamma, which was wonderful.

Daniel: Mirka brought me in 2013 in contact with Ligmincha and Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. When I

wanted to invite Geshe Gyatso Choekhortshang I asked Mirka to help me organize a *Thrul Khor* and *Tumo* teaching in 2013. That year Mirka invited me to go with her to the teachings of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche in Vienna, Austria, for the seminar of *Awakening the Luminous Mind*. In 2013 we also went to Poland for the inauguration of the *Gompa* in Wilga with his Eminence Lopon Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche.

When I was about fifteen years old I first encountered Buddhism. From that time on I read books, but did not practice much. In 2012 during the *Losar* celebration in Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, there was Khenpo Tsultrim Tenzin Rinpoche from Triten Norbutse Monastery. When I listened to him I thought, 'this is the best thing I have ever heard.' Till that moment there was always something interesting, but then there was everything, and I felt 'this is it.' After this public talk, I asked people about the teachings and I met Sveto, who did the translation. I asked him how to connect to Khenpo and Dzogchen. He said there will be a retreat with Khenpo. Because Khenpo was teachings parts of the *Zang Zhung Nyen Gyud* and giving transmissions, Sveto felt that he had to ask him if I could participate. Khenpo said: "You can come tomorrow when the teachings start." After one week of intense teachings I was sure that Dzog-



Geshe Gyatso taught *Trul Khor* in Bratislava in 2013.



chen is the best of the best. Then I began to read more books and began to practice.

Sveto: Many years ago I read the *Dream Yoga* book of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. Reading Rinpoche's book I was very happy, because for me that felt really complete and beautiful, and Rinpoche's way of explaining is amazing because of his simplicity and going direct to the core. But I had no possibility to connect to him physically, and then I met Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and started to follow him. But this year I met Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche in Vienna. First I did not want to go, because of financial issues, but Mirka and Daniel helped me.

I am also a student of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, and through him I connected to Dzogchen teachings. He is one of my root Lamas. I met him in France about two years after reading his book. I received transmission in 2006 and met him in 2008.

In 2009 I went to Nepal to Tritten Norbutse Monastery in Kathmandu where I had a opportunity to receive the teaching from the *A-tri* cycle from a great teacher Khenpo Tsultrim Tenzin Rinpoche. I had spend six months there. Before that, I practiced Zen Buddhism, so from then on I have practiced both the Buddhist as well as the Bon tradition. In 2012 Khenpo Tsultrim Tenzin Rinpoche kindly accepted my invitation, came to Bratislava and granted the teaching to eleven people and I did the translations.

Can you tell how it all started?

Daniel: When I talked to Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche in Vienna in 2013, I told him that we wanted to start a group in Bratislava, because we want to spread the Bon teachings in Slovakia. Rinpoche asked with how many people we are, and I answered that we are three. Maybe he expected I would say ten or twenty people, and after thinking a few moments he replied: "The amount of people is not important, and I like your fire, and I will help you to create it. Just do it." So we started to create Ligmincha Slovenská republika. This year, in March, we organized our first activity under the name of Ligmincha with Ryszard Adamiak from Poland. We met him in the

retreat center in Wilga in Poland in 2013. He taught *Tsa Lung* and *Sound Healing*. Before, it was Bon teachings and Bon teachers we presented to the public. In 2012 we invited Khenpo Tsultrim Tenzin Rinpoche, in 2013 we invited Geshe Gyatso Choekhortshang. About fifteen people came, and we want to organize every year a teaching.

With which countries in Europe do you have contacts?

Mirka: Attending the European 3 Doors Academy I got to know many people from Europe with who I am in very close relationship now. And we have good connection with Czech Republic, Poland and Austria. They are all very nice people, it always feels great being around them. We feel great support from them, they had already helped us in many ways and I feel there is a lot we can learn from them too.

Is there a chance that Rinpoche will come to Slovakia sometime in the future?

Mirka: I know that Rinpoche is very busy and we are very little for the moment, but yes, it is our greatest wish that one day Rinpoche will come to Bratislava. As the Austrian sangha is very close to us, it takes just one hour from Bratislava to Vienna, in the near future we would like to combine others Lamas teachings in Vienna with Bratislava. The public talk could be organized here and the teachings in Vienna, or the other way around.

Daniel: I always remember that at Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's first public teaching there were only two persons. As Rinpoche says, "The amount of people is not important, but the internal quality and enthusiastic case."

Can you tell how you are organized?

Daniel: I have the ideas, Mirka helps me to stabilize and finish it, and with Sveto it feels that we are a Sangha. We use the live webcast as much as possible to interest people here in the teachings. Mirka invites people for the webcasts, and most of the time we come together in her apartment to look to the webcast and to practice together. Last time six people came. At that time there was also a *Losar* celebration in Bratislava, so not many people came. Every time when we organize an event we send the money we collected to a Mon-



astery. Sveto is the responsible for the content, and I do the 'dharma marketing.' We promote all the events on the Ligmincha and my personal Facebook page. And every time I meet with friends I talk about my dharma activities, about Buddhism, Bon culture, Dzogchen teaching and Ligmincha of course, and tell them they are welcome. I also tell them if money is a problem, we will find a solution. Teachings, actually all Dharma activities should be more important than money!



Can you tell more about the teachings by Ryszard Adamiak?

Sveto: It was great. Ryszard is a wise man who explains very well, is very friendly, and everybody was happy.

Do the participants come back, or do they say 'it was nice, but I continue my old life'?

Mirka: There are three more people who come sometimes for the Sunday practice. They seem to enjoy the *Tsa Lung* and *The Five Warrior Syllables*. But from the most of people we don't hear or see much. We hope, in the future more people will come. Even when there is not much response, we will continue. We try to meet every Sunday to practice together.

Daniel: When I talk about the teachings, I say there is a source with information. Here you can find it. I can't explain it, but here is a book, you can watch videos and live webcasts or meet our great Masters personally.

Mirka, you participated in The 3 Doors Academy in Europe. Can you tell how you experienced the training?

Mirka: Yes, I would like to share few words, as it has changed my life in an incredible positive and wonderful way. It almost feels like I am living the

life of somebody else now. I just do not see the same person anymore. With such a great guidance of our Mentors and the tools (the practices) we were given by Rinpoche, there is no obstacle, no pain that cannot be reduced and finally dissolved. I still cannot believe, that one is able to change so much in such a short period of time. The most wonderful thing or realization is, that behind all that pain or suffering I always encountered enormous joy, the joy of life. Learning to

host the pain I got closer to my true essence, my true being and by strengthening the connection I found a deep peace within myself and great confidence in who I am. And the most wonderful thing about this training is, that it is not just about myself, but about others too. I have discovered new qualities, new potential in me, and this recognition is slowly manifesting out in benefiting others. Attending The 3 Doors Academy training was the most precious gift I could give to myself, my

family and all I am in touch with. I would like to express my deep Gratitude to Rinpoche, to our Mentors John Jackson and Raven Lee and of course to Kallon Basquin, Director of Operation of The 3 Doors Academy.

Do you have a message for the European sangha?

Mirka: We look forward to work together and deepen our connection with other sanghas in Europe and in the rest of the world.

Daniel: There are three jewels, the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, and I want to say about the Sangha that does not have to be twenty, fifty or one-hundred people, but connecting with other sangha members is a great help for me when I have doubts. I have many friends who do not follow the Dharma, but with them I can talk about many things, but not in a Dharma view. It is important for me to have Dharma friends. And I am also very excited about the new technologies, which we are using also for this interview, the conference Skype call. It is a wonderful way to connect, and it is very helpful. All of us are sitting at our homes and talking about Dharma.

Interview by Ton Bisscheroux

Photos: courtesy of Ligmincha Slovenská Republika



WHAT'S HAPPENED IN EUROPE

It is always exciting to read what happens in our sangha in Europe. Tenzin Wanyal Rinpoche visited the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, and gave internet teachings. Other lamas and teachers were invited. Here is an impression of these events.

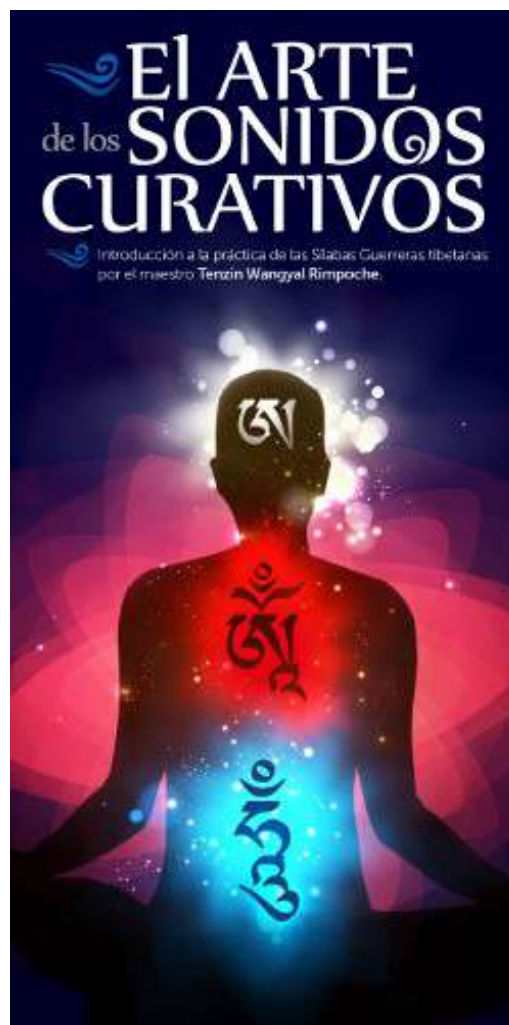
May 9 – 11: Tibetan Sound Healing seminar with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche in Málaga, Spain.

It started on Friday evening with a presentation of Rinpoche's last book published in Spain, *Awakening the Luminous Mind*. This was the first online broadcast from Spain. The teachings on Saturday and Sunday were simultaneously translated to Spanish and four more languages.

The teachings were held in a place next to the beach. The proximity of the sea allowed us to practice *Tsa Lung* and the *Nine Breathings of Purification* in the seashore guided by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche.

Rinpoche's teachings touched the heart of the participants and became a seed of healing and reconciliation.

For the Spanish sangha, and particularly for the new Málaga sangha, it was an honour and a great experience that helped us to grow and heal ourselves with the service to others, joined and with our heart put in the preparation and during the workshop. We feel very thankful for the generosity, warmth and wisdom of Rinpoche.



**May 22 – 25:
A-tri seminar part 2
in Amsterdam, the
Netherlands, with
Tenzin Wangyal
Rinpoche.**



On Thursday evening was the presentation of the translation of Rinpoche's book *Awakening the Luminous Mind*.

During the weekend the main practice was *zhiné*. The seminar was attended by about one-hundred-fifty people from several countries.





**May 29 – June 1:
Soul Retrieval semi-
nar with Tenzin
Wangyal Rinpoche
in Gruyères, Swit-
zerland.**

Rinpoche gave the lucky people gathered in Gruyères the wonderful gift of an evening public talk on the theme *Open heart*, followed by a three day *Soul Retrieval* teaching. The first event gathered around eighty people at the Tibet Museum in Gruyères, Switzerland, and was meant more specifically for new-comers. The latter gathered well over a hundred people in a very open, particularly warmhearted atmosphere. The participants were very enthusiastic and deeply moved by the teaching. So Rinpoche left us all with a rainbow of tears and smiles, and the promise to come back next year, which will also be the fifth time he grants us with his presence in the area of Bulle.



**May 16 – 18:
Awakening the Luminous Mind seminar with
Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche in Helsinki,
Finland.**

Around one-hundred-twenty people participated during this wonderful weekend teachings.



**July 15 – 20:
The Twenty-One Nails, Part 2 with Tenzin
Wangyal Rinpoche in
Wilga, Poland.**

Around one-hundred-eighty people came to receive second part of Dzogchen teachings of *The Twenty-One Nails*. We received beautiful teachings that everything is perfect in its nature. Everything is *Kuntu Zangpo* (all good).





Activities in Poland:

- In February Geshe Nyima Woser visited Cracow and taught *Healing Water of Sipe Gyalmo*.

- Nyima Dakpa Rinpoche spent around two months (April-June) in Poland. His Polish organization 'Śardza Ling' organized nine retreats, including *Trul Khor*, *Powa* and *Dzogchen* teachings.



Geshe Chaphur Rinpoche in Wilga, Poland.

- In June Geshe Chaphur Rinpoche taught *Takla Mebar* in Chamma Ling in Wilga.

- In August Alejandro Chaoul came to Poland for an evening talk in Warsaw about *Tibetan Yoga Trul Khor*. Next year he will teach five days *Trul Khor* in Chamma Ling (probably June or July 2015).



Activities in the Netherlands:

- Alejandro Chaoul was a special guest during the *A-tri* seminar in Amsterdam, and taught *Tsa Lung* and *Atri Trul Khor* the three days immediately after the seminar. Also people who did not attend the seminar registered.

- In June Ponlop Tsangpa Tendzin, the head of the study- and education program of the Triten Norbutse monastery, gave teachings on *The Four Wheels of Bon* in Midlaren, the Netherlands. He taught from the same text a week before in Paris, France. The weekend was organised by the Bon-Dzogchen meditation group from Groningen. Some twenty attendees were present: Ligmincha students and participants of Bon-Dzogchen meditation group that started last year in Groningen. Also several people from the direct environment were introduced for the first time with the Bon tradition. Although Ponlop was teaching in the West for the first time, he explained the traditional text direct and inspirational for Westerners. Ponlop will probably come back next year for an intensive retreat.





©Ya Noya



On invitation of Jitka Polanská the resident lama of Shenten Dargye Ling, Sangye Monlam, came July 11 – 13 to Prague, Czech Republic, and taught a group of about twenty-five people on the topics *Guru Yoga*, *Refuge* and *Boddhicitta*. The Ligmincha meditation group supported the event with their help and Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche sent his best wishes and affection. Afterwards, many of the participants of the retreat – who were in part bonpo and in part new to bon – expressed their appreciation of the thoughtful and inspiring way of teaching and equanimous conduct of lama Sangye who himself said he had had a very good time in Prague. Next teachings are being planned. People from other countries are welcome.



Alejandro Chaoul suggested to Anna-Kaisa Hirvanen to give *Tsa Lung Trul Khor* courses in Finland, including *Tsa Lung*, *The Nine Breathings of Purification*, *Jam Lung*, *Zhan Zhung Nyen Gyud Trul Khor* and *Ngöndro*

movement from A-tri. The purpose is to introduce *Tsa Lung Trul Khor* practice to everyone who is interested and to give preparatory teachings, so people can also continue to study with Alejandro Chaoul in Poland next summer, where Alejandro will be starting a *Tsa Lung Trul Khor* training.

Tsa Lung Trul Khor part 1 in was given in Helsinki March 14 – 16 with twenty-four participants, in Jyväskylä May 2 – 4 with seventeen participants and parts 1 and 2 in Kemiö July 9 – 13 with eighteen participants.

The next *Tsa Lung Trul Khor* in Helsinki will be October 24 – 26, 2014.



Free Live Webcast
 Live teachings from the Tibetan Bon Buddhist tradition

Shifting Your Pain Identity
 with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

June 8, 2014
 19.00–21:30 h. (C.E.T.)

 *Translations in multiple languages available*
www.ligmincha.org



You can watch the recording here:
[Shifting Your Pain Identity](#)

Free Live Webcast
 Live teachings from the Tibetan Bon Buddhist tradition

Breaking the Cycle of Family Pain
 with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

June 15, 2014
 19.00–21:30 h. (C.E.T.)

 *Translations in multiple languages available*
www.ligmincha.org



You can watch the recording here:
[Breaking the Cycle of Family Pain](#)

Free Live Webcast
 Live teachings from the Tibetan Bon Buddhist tradition

The 21 Nails: Guided Dzogchen Meditation
 with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Part 1 June 29, 2014 21.00 – 22.30 h C.E.T.
Part 2 July 6, 2014 21.00 – 22.30 h C.E.T.

 *Translations in multiple languages available*
www.ligmincha.org



You can watch the recordings here:
[Guided Dzogchen Meditation, The Twenty-One Nails, Part 1](#)
[Guided Dzogchen Meditation, The Twenty-One Nails, Part 2](#)



FINDING A HOME: LIGMINCHA RETREAT CENTER IN EUROPE

The Founders' Circle wants to update you on the progress of the Ligmincha Retreat Center in Europe.

We are happy to welcome you to our wonderful project of finding a home for the European sangha of our teacher Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. We feel that with this project, we support the further development of the European sangha and our teacher's vision to preserve the Bon tradition and its wisdom in the world, as the indigenous source of Tibetan culture.

Vision

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche:

"Last 20 years I've been coming to Europe. Many people in my teachings are much more stable now, much more grounded and now I feel all these people need a home for practice further and deepen their experiences."

All these practitioners need a center, where the teachings can happen, and where we also have the opportunity to invite other Bon lamas as well as lamas of other traditions to teach, connect and to stay.

This center is to be located in the center of Europe on a location, which is easy accessible for everybody.



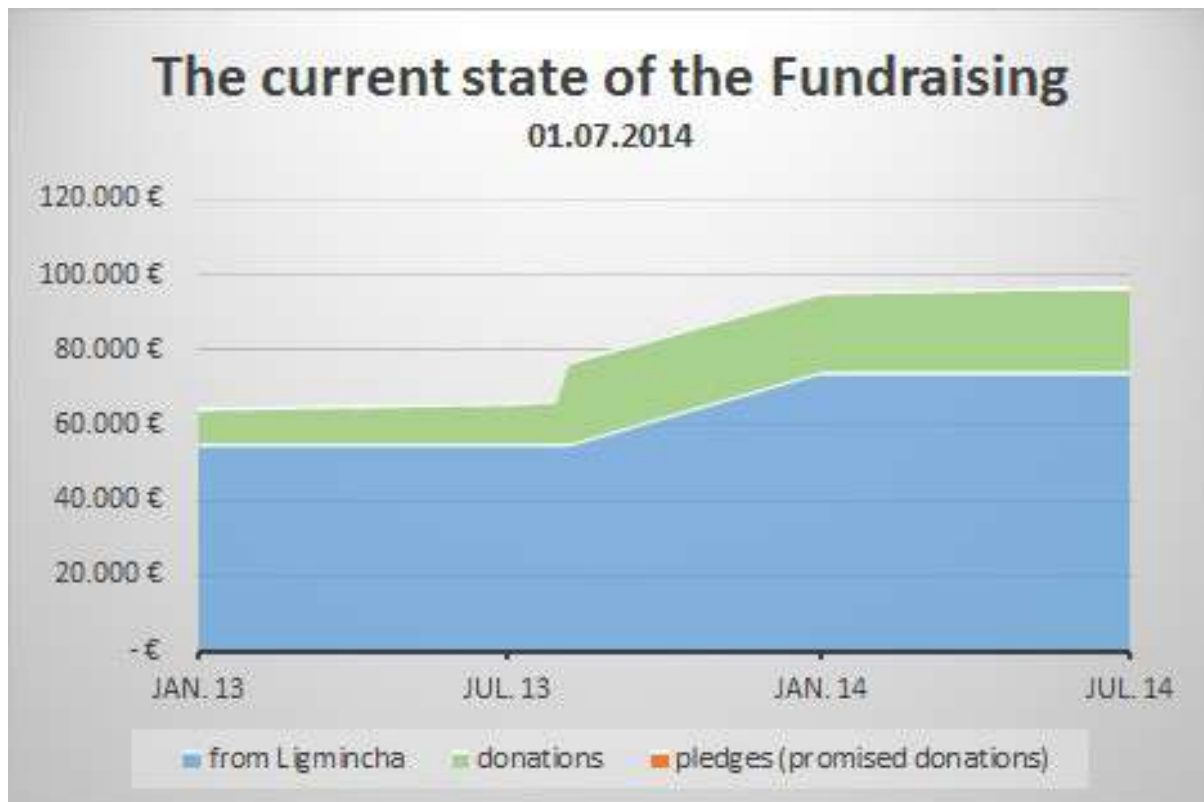
Photo by Rogelio Jaramillo Flores.

Support

Finding and sustaining a European Retreat Center, which offers a broad scope of opportunities to enhance the spiritual development of our sangha members, need a lot of potential and energy of the European sangha. A retreat center can only be created and maintained by practitioners, who like giving something such as their skills, energy, and support. And vice versa, the center will offer a big support for practitioners in their study, practice and their everyday life.

Do you have any ideas or suggestions? Please contact us by email or our [contact form](#) on the website.





Finance

In May 2014 Rinpoche and the Founders' Circle agreed after solid research on setting up an initial goal of raising € 1.000.000,-. We are convinced that having reached this initial goal will give us a solid basis for our next steps in this project.

If you feel like financially supporting our vision of a Ligmincha Retreat Center in Europe please send your donation to Ligmincha Deutschland e.V., which is hosting the funds until we have found an entity.

Ligmincha Deutschland e.V. is a nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible, since they are exclusively and directly for non-profit and charitable purposes in terms of §§ 51ff. AO under German law.

How to donate

Donation by bank transfer – single

Ligmincha Deutschland e.V.
 Frankfurter Sparkasse
 BLZ: 50050201
 Kto. Nr.: 200269283
 IBAN: DE09500502010200269283
 BIC/SWIFT: HELADEF1822

Address your donation with purpose:
 “Ligmincha Retreat Center in Europe.”

Donation by bank transfer by standing order – recurring (monthly, quarterly)

Please use the same information as mentioned above for the single donation by bank transfer.

Donation by Paypal (single or recurring)

After clicking on the icon you see “Ligmincha Deutschland e.V.” and the purpose of your donation “Ligmincha Retreat Center in Europe.”

You can choose between one-time or monthly payment.



For donations of 200 euros or more we'll send you a donation receipt. Please send us your address. For donations, the payment receipt or bank statement applies up to 200 euros as tax-deductible for submission.





Progress

For actual progress see: www.home.ligmincha.eu.

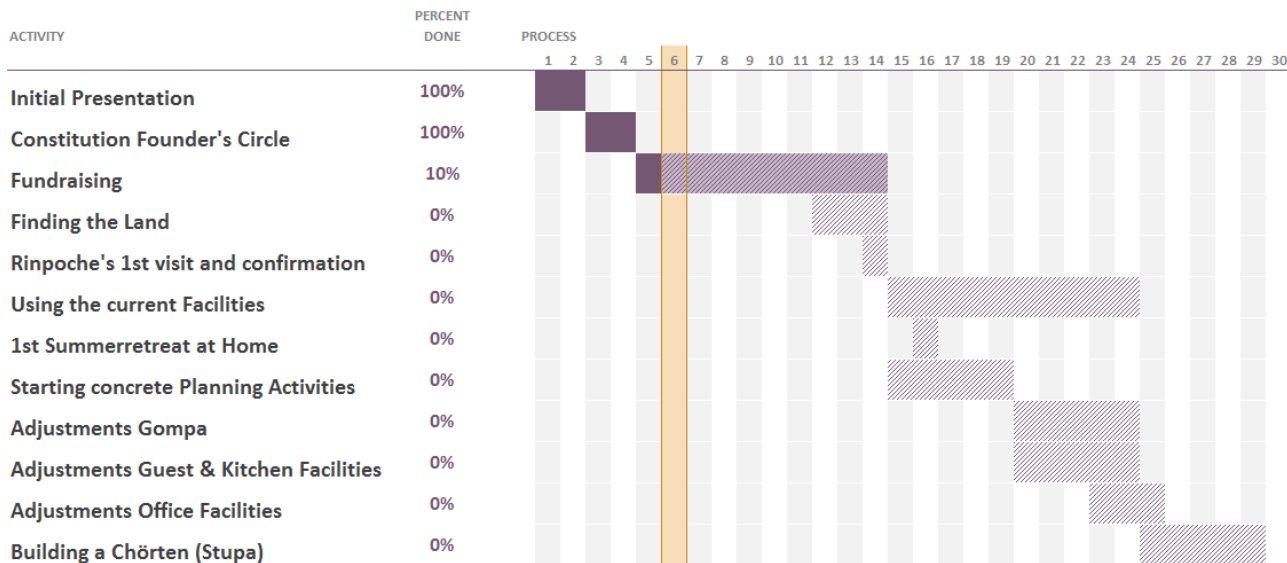
Ligmincha Retreat Center in Europe

Finding a Home - www.home.ligmincha.eu

Where are we now? 6

Planned Act. % done

15.06.2014



Founders' Circle

We are a network of national Ligmincha sanghas in Europe. Each country is invited to send a representative to our Founders' Circle. So far, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary and The Netherlands accepted the invitation of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. We meet on a regular basis to exchange and support each other regarding the development of the project.

The representatives in the Founders' Circle are:

Austria	Heide Mitsche
Belgium	Nicolas Gounaropoulos
Denmark	Birgit Bastholm
Finland	Anna-Kaisa Hirvannen
Germany	Oliver Wirtz
Hungary	Katalin Jakab
the Netherlands	Anneke Dekkers

Contact

You can contact us directly via email support@home.ligmincha.eu or visiting our website www.home.ligmincha.eu and use the contactform.

Find us on Facebook



and on the website:



NEWS FROM THE LIGMINCHA INTERNATIONAL BOARD

Ligmincha now has a new International Board of Directors, an important step in Ligmincha's movement toward becoming a truly international organization. New Board Chair Rob Patzig shares with us how the new board can support Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and Tibetan Bon Buddhism worldwide.

During the first week of summer retreat 2014, the new Board of Directors of Ligmincha International met at Serenity Ridge Retreat Center in the U.S., the headquarters of Ligmincha International. Accepting Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's invitation to join him on this new international board are Anneke Dekkers from the Netherlands, Nathalie Duchanois from France, Carlos Madero from Mexico, Rob Patzig from the U.S., Justyna Przondo from Poland, Pam Rodeheaver from the U.S. and Oliver Wirtz from Germany. Gabriel Rocco, who has served on the board of Ligmincha Institute for eighteen years, will continue to serve on the new International Board. While Nathalie and Oliver had to participate via Skype, all other members were able to come to retreat and participate in person. H.E. Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, who has been on the board of Ligmincha Institute since Ligmincha was founded, is now an emeritus member of the Ligmincha International Board of Directors.

The formation of the new board is only one of many steps in the process of Ligmincha's becoming a truly international organization. Over the last three years, a group of volunteers have worked with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche to write new bylaws. The bylaws describe the purpose of Ligmincha and, broadly, the organizational framework for accomplishing our mission. The mission is threefold: to preserve the traditions and teachings of Tonpa Shenrap and the lineage of Bon; to support the work of our Spiritual Director, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, in all ways; and to provide support and resources for practitioners and students of Tibetan Bon Buddhism.

Organizationally, Rinpoche is the center of an expanding mandala of (currently) 40 practice centers and communities around the world. The International Board's mission is to understand Rinpoche's vision for the community, as well as the needs of practitioners and centers, wherever they may be located, and to create a plan to ensure that the vision

can manifest and practitioners be supported.

There is far more work to be done than the board can accomplish on its own, and so two councils will provide support. One is the Mandala Council: a group of leaders (chosen by Rinpoche) from many different sanghas who will come together to share the successes, challenges, knowledge and needs of the communities they represent. The goal of the Mandala Council is to provide greater independence and more opportunities for growth for each center by supporting one another. Just as we come together to practice in part because we can find more support for our own progress by asking questions, sharing our experiences and supporting one another, so too can each center support and nurture the others. More details will be shared soon when this group is formally created.

The second council is the Ligmincha International Council. This will consist of sangha members selected by Rinpoche, nominated by the board or by regional sanghas because of their expertise and experience in particular areas. The purpose is to provide the skills, time and resources to ensure that Ligmincha International can meet its mission. The activities of this council will change over time based on the needs of the organization as a whole, but it will include activities as diverse as developing practice and educational materials, monitoring the financial status of Ligmincha, marketing and social media development, fundraising, etc.

Coming together to work and support Bon, our Spiritual Director and our international community of practitioners is an evolving process. As we continue to implement and refine this new structure, it is important that we hear from many different voices and consider different perspectives within our community. I look forward to working with each of you, to listening to your ideas, needs, concerns and advice, as we work to build an enduring home for Bon in the Western world under the guidance and direction of Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche.

Yours in Bon,
Rob Patzig, Chair
Ligmincha International Board of Directors



PRAYERSONG



Only on a Heavenly day.
Creatures long so much to play.
Different in an expressive way.
Oneness, in the place they stay.

Being on these Heavenly days.
Warmly in a sunny place.
Meet each other face to face.
Easily to feel the grace.

During all those Heavenly days.
Pain comes easy at the surface.
Holding in these golden rays.
It's melting deep in the traces.

Tonny Maas



THE SIX REALMS OF CYCLIC EXISTENCE

During the Summer Retreat 2014 in Buchenau, Germany, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche teaches the Six Lokas. We reprint the pages 34 to 40 from his book *The Tibetan Yogas of Dream and Sleep*.

“According to the teachings, there are six realms (*loka**) of existence* in which all deluded beings exist. These are the realms of gods, demigods, humans, animals, hungry ghosts, and hell-beings. Fundamentally, the realms are six dimensions of consciousness, six dimensions of possible experience. They manifest in us individually as the six negative emotions: anger, greed, ignorance, jealousy, pride, and pleasurable distraction. (Pleasurable distraction is the emotional state when the other five emotions are present in equal measure, harmoniously balanced.) The six realms are not, however, only categories of emotional experience but are also actual realms into which beings are born, just as we were born into the human realm or a lion is born into the animal realm.

Each realm can be thought of as a continuum of experience. The hell realm, for instance, ranges from the internal emotional experience of anger and hatred, to behaviors rooted in anger such as fighting and wars, to institutions, prejudices, and biases built on hatred such as armies, racial hatred, and intolerance, to the actual realm in which beings exist. A name for the entirety of this dimension of experience, from individual emotion to actual realm, is ‘hell.’

Like dreams, the realms are manifestations of karmic traces, but in the instance of the realms, the karmic traces are collective rather than individual. Because the karma is collective, the beings in each realm share similar experiences in a consensual world, as we share similar experiences with other humans. Collective karma creates bodies and

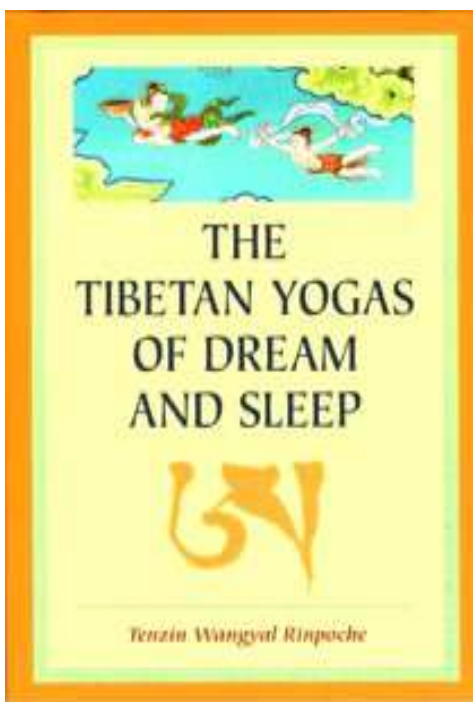
senses and mental capacities that allow individuals to participate in shared potentials and categories of experience while making other kinds of experience impossible. Dogs, for example, can collectively hear sounds that humans cannot, and humans experience language in a way that dogs cannot.

Although the realms appear to be distinct and solid, as our world seems to us, they are actually dreamy and insubstantial. They inter-penetrate one another and we are connected to each. We have the seeds of rebirth into the other realms in us, and when we experience different emotions we participate in some of the characteristic qualities

and suffering predominant in other realms. When we are caught up in self-centered pride or angry envy, for example, we experience something of the characteristic quality of experience of the demigod realm. Sometimes individuals have a predominance of one dimension in their makeup: more animal, or more hungry ghost, or more god nature, or more demigod. It stands out as the dominant trait of their character, and can be recognized in the way they talk, in their walk, and in their relationships. We may know people who always seem to be trapped in the hungry ghost realm: they can never get

enough, they are always hungry for more of everything – more from their friends, their environment, their life – but can never be satisfied. Or perhaps we know someone who seems like a hell being: angry, violent, raging, in turmoil. More commonly, people have aspects of all the dimensions in their individual make-ups.

As these dimensions of consciousness manifest in emotions, it becomes apparent how universal they are. For example, every culture knows jealousy. The appearance of jealousy may vary because emotional expression is a means of communication, a language of gesture, determined both



by biology and culture, and culture provides the variable. But the feeling of jealousy is the same everywhere. In Bön-Buddhism, this universality is explained by and correlated with the reality of the realms.

The six negative emotions are not meant to constitute an exhaustive list of emotions. It is pointless to argue about where sadness or fear fits into the realms. Fear can occur in any of the realms as can sadness or anger or jealousy or love. Although the negative emotions are affective experiences that we have, and are characteristic affective experiences of the realms, they are also keywords representing the entire dimension of experience, the continuum from individual emotional experience to actual realms. And those dimensions each encompass wide possibilities of experience, including diverse emotional experience.

The six qualities of consciousness are called paths because they lead somewhere: they take us to the places of our rebirth as well as into different realms of experience in this life. When a being identifies with, or is ensnared by, one of the negative emotions, certain results occur. This is the way karma actually works. For example, in order to be born as a human, we must have been heavily involved in moral disciplines in previous lifetimes. Even in popular culture this is expressed in the observation that it is not until love and concern for others matures that a person is considered to be ‘fully human.’

If we live a life characterized by the negative emotions of hatred or anger, we experience a different result: we are reborn in hell. This happens actually, that a being may be born in the hell realm, as well as psychologically. Connecting oneself to the dimension of hatred produces experiences that even in this life we call hellish.

Clearly this does not mean that all humans try to avoid these experiences. Karma may lead a person so strongly into a dimension of experience that the negative emotion becomes attractive. Think of all the ‘entertainment’ full of hatred, killing, and war. We can develop a taste for it. We say “War is hell,” yet many of us are drawn to war.

Our bias toward one or another of these dimensions can also be shaped by the culture. For in-

stance, in a society in which the angry warrior is considered heroic, we may be led in that direction. This is an example of the cultural ignorance described previously.

Although the realms may sound fanciful to people in the West, the manifestation of the six realms can be recognized in our own experience, in our dreams and waking lives, and in the lives of people near us. Sometimes, for example, we may feel lost. We know how to go about our daily routine, but the significance eludes us. The meaning is gone, not through liberation, but through lack of understanding. We have dreams of being in mud, or in a dark place, or on a street with no signs. We arrive in a room that has no exit, or feel confusion about which direction to take. This may be a manifestation of ignorance, the animal realm. (This ignorance is not the same as the innate ignorance. Instead it is a dullness, a lack of intelligence.)

We experience something of the god realm when we are lost in pleasurable distraction, enjoying hazy periods of pleasure and happiness. But these periods eventually come to an end. And while



Wheel of Life, with the six realms, painted on a wall in Drepung Monastery in Lhasa, Tibet.



they last, our awareness must be constricted. We must remain in a kind of superficiality and avoid looking too deeply into the situation around us, avoid becoming aware of the suffering around us. It is good to enjoy pleasant periods in our lives, but if we do not practice, do not continue to free ourselves of constricting and erroneous identities, eventually we will pass through the period of pleasantness and fall into a more difficult state, unprepared, where we are likely to be lost in some kind of suffering. At the end of a party or a very pleasant day there is often a kind of letdown or depression upon returning home. Or after a happy weekend we may feel disappointed when we return to work.

We all have periods during which we experience different realms: the happiness of the god realm, maybe while we're on vacation or on a walk with friends, the ache of greed when we see something we feel we must have, the shame of wounded pride, the pangs of jealousy, the hellishness of bitterness and hatred, the dullness and confusion of ignorance. We move from the experience of one realm to another easily and frequently. We have all had the experience of being in a happy mood, connected to the god realm; the sun is out, people appear beautiful, we feel good about ourselves. Then we receive bad news or a friend says something that hurts us. Suddenly the world itself appears to have changed. Laughter sounds hollow, the sky is cold and uncaring, we no longer find others attractive nor do we enjoy ourselves. We have changed dimensions of experience and the world seems to have changed with us. Just so, do beings in other realms remain connected to all the realms; both a cat and a demigod may experience anger, jealousy, emotional hunger, and so on.

During our dreaming lives, too, we experience the six realms. Just as the six negative emotions determine the quality of experience during the day, they shape the feeling and content of dreams. Dreams are of infinite variety but all karmic dreams are connected to one or more of the six dimensions.

Below is a brief description of the six realms. Traditionally, the realms are presented as descriptions of places and the beings that inhabit those places. The hells, for example, are eighteen in number, nine hot and nine cold hells. All the de-

tails in the traditional descriptions have meaning, but here we are focused on the experiences of the realms right now, in this life. We connect to each dimension of experience energetically through an energy center (*chakra**) in the body. The locations are listed below. The chakras are important in many different practices and play an important role in dream yoga.

Realm	Primary emotion	Chakra
God (Devas)	Pleasurable distraction	Crown
Demigod (Asuras)	Envy	Throat
Human	Jealousy	Heart
Animal	Ignorance	Navel
Hungry ghost (Pretas)	Greed	Sexual organs
Hell	Hatred	Soles of the feet

Hell Realm

Anger is the seed emotion of the hell realm. When the karmic traces of anger manifest, there are many possible expressions, such as aversion, tension, resentment, criticism, argument, and violence. Much of the destruction of wars is caused by anger, and many people die every day as a result of anger. Yet anger never resolves any problem. When anger overcomes us we lose control and self-awareness. When we are trapped or victimized by hatred, violence, and anger, we are participating in the hell realm.



The energetic center of anger is in the soles of the feet. The antidote for anger is pure unconditioned love, which arises from the unconditioned self.

Traditionally, the hells are said to be composed of



nine hot hells and nine cold hells. The beings who live there suffer immeasurably, being tortured to death and instantly returning to life, time after time.

Hungry Ghost Realm

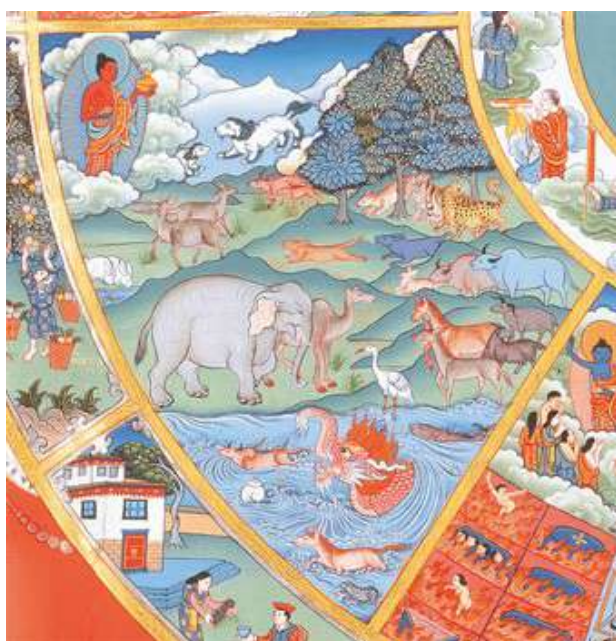
Greed is the seed emotion of the hungry ghost (*preta*) realm. Greed arises as a feeling of excessive need that cannot be fulfilled. The attempt to satisfy greed is like drinking salty water when thirsty. When lost in greed we look outward rather than inward for satisfaction, yet we never find enough to fill the emptiness we wish to escape. The real hunger we feel is for knowledge of our true nature.

Greed is associated with sexual desire; its energetic center in the body is the chakra behind the genitals. Generosity, the open giving of what others need, unties the hard knot of greed.

The pretas are traditionally represented as beings with huge, hungry bellies and tiny mouths and throats. Some inhabit parched lands where there is not even a mention of water for hundreds of years. Others may find food and drink, yet if they swallow even a little through their tiny mouths, the food bursts into flame in their stomachs and causes great pain. There are many kinds of suffering for pretas, but all result from stinginess and opposing the generosity of others.

Animal Realm

Ignorance is the seed of the animal realm. It is ex-



perienced as a feeling of being lost, dull, uncertain, or unaware. Many people experience a darkness and sadness rooted in this ignorance; they feel a need but do not even know what they want or what to do to satisfy themselves. In the West, people are often considered happy if they are continually busy, yet we can be lost in ignorance in the midst of our busyness when we do not know our true nature.

The chakra associated with ignorance is in the center of the body at the level of the navel. The wisdom found when we turn inward and come to know our true self is the antidote to ignorance.

Beings in the animal realm are dominated by the darkness of ignorance. Animals live in fear because of the constant threat from other animals and humans. Even large animals are tormented by insects that burrow into their skin and live on their flesh. Domesticated animals are milked, loaded down, castrated, pierced through the nose, and ridden, without being able to escape. Animals feel pain and pleasure, but they are dominated by the ignorance that prevents them from looking beneath the circumstances of their lives to find their true nature.

Human Realm

Jealousy is the root emotion of the human realm. When possessed by jealousy, we want to hold on to and draw to ourselves what we have: an idea, a possession, a relationship. We see the source of happiness as something external to us, which leads to greater attachment to the object of our desire.

Jealousy is related to the heart center in the body. The antidote to jealousy is great openness of the heart, the openness that arises when we connect to our true nature.

It is easy for us to observe the suffering of our own realm. We experience birth, sickness, old age, and death. We are plagued by loss due to constant change. When we attain the object of our desire, we struggle to keep it, but its eventual loss is certain. Rather than rejoicing in the happiness of others, we often fall prey to envy and jealousy. Even though human birth is considered the greatest of good fortune because humans have the chance to hear and practice the teachings, only a tiny minority of us ever find our way to,



and avail ourselves of, this great opportunity.

Demigod Realm

Pride is the principal affliction of the demigods (*asuras*). Pride is a feeling connected to accomplishment and is often territorial. One cause of war is the pride of individuals and nations that believe they have the solution to other people's problems. There is a hidden aspect of pride that manifests when we believe ourselves worse than others in a particular ability or trait, a negative self-centeredness that singles us out from others.

Pride is associated with the chakra in the throat. Pride is often manifested in wrathful action, and its antidote is the great peace and humility that arises when we rest in our true nature.

The asuras enjoy pleasure and abundance but they tend toward envy and wrath. They continually fight with one another, but their greatest suffering occurs when they declare war on the gods, who enjoy even greater abundance than the demigods. The gods are more powerful than asuras and very difficult to kill. They always win the wars, and the asuras suffer the emotional devastation of wounded pride and envy in which they feel diminished and which, in turn, drives them into futile wars again and again.

God Realm

Pleasurable distraction is the seed of the god realm. In the god realm, the five negative emotions are equally present, balanced like five harmonious voices in a chorus. The gods are lost in a heady sense of lazy joy and self-centered pleasure. They enjoy great wealth and comfort in lives that last as long as an eon. All needs seem to be fulfilled and all desires sated. Just as is true for some individuals and societies, the gods become trapped in pleasure and the pursuit of pleasure.



They have no sense of the reality beneath their experience. Lost in meaningless diversions and pleasures, they are distracted and do not turn to the path to liberation.

But the situation ultimately changes as the karmic causes for existence in the god realm are exhausted. As death finally approaches, the dying god is abandoned by friends and companions, who are unable to face the proof of their own mortality. The previously perfect body ages and deteriorates. The period of happiness is over. With divine eyes the god can see the conditions of the realm of suffering into which he or she is fated to be reborn, and even before death the suffering of that coming life begins.

The god realm is associated with the chakra at the crown of the head. The antidote to the selfish joy of the gods is encompassing compassion that arises spontaneously through awareness of the reality underlying self and world."

Glossary

chakra (Tib., *khor-lo*; Skt., *chakra*). Literally 'wheel' or 'circle.' Chakra is a Sanskrit word referring to energetic centers in the body. A chakra is a location at which a number of energetic channels (*tsa*) meet. Different meditation systems work with different chakras.

loka (Tib., *'jig rten*). Literally 'world' or 'world system.' Commonly used in English to refer to the six realms of cyclic existence, loka actually refers to the greater world systems, one of which is occupied by the six realms. (See six realms of cyclic existence.)

six realms of cyclic existence (Tib., *rigs drug*). Commonly referred to as 'the six realms' or 'six lokas.' The six realms refer to six classes of beings: gods, demi-gods, humans, animals, hungry-ghosts, and hell-beings. Beings in the six realms are subject to suffering. They are literal realms, in which beings take birth, and also broad experiential and affective bands of potential experience that shape and limit experience even in our current life.

Text selected by Ton Bisscheroux

Photos by Ton Bisscheroux and from the website www.rigpawiki.org



DZOGCHEN: SPACES

In the Dzogchen meditation we are often invited to connect to Unbounded Space. But what is this Space? Frits de Vries studied several books on this subject in the Bon and Nyingma tradition, and shares his understanding with us.

With the perception of the true nature of phenomena within basic space, wisdom arises continuously as the adornment of that space

Introduction

In the book *Wonders of the Natural Mind* Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche distinguishes three streams of Dzogchen in Bon. They correspond to Nyingma series. The second Bon stream corresponds to the *longde* series in Nyingma Dzogchen, connected with clarity and space (1, p. 54). According to the famous Nyingma teacher Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche, Buddha nature is said to resemble space. But he also comments: *"Can we say space exists? Can we say that it doesn't? We cannot, because space itself does not comply with any such ideas. Concepts made about space are merely concepts. Space, in itself, is beyond any ideas we can hold about it. Buddha nature is like this."* (2, p. 49)

When comparing the nine vehicles and employing the practices of *shamatha* and *vipashyana* (*zhiné* and contemplation) Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche comes to the conclusion: *"The special quality of Dzogchen is the view that is totally free from any ideas whatsoever. This view is called the view of fruition, meaning it is utterly devoid of any conceptual formulations."* (2, p. 35)

Elsewhere we find a more clear demarcation: *"Dzogpa Chenpo, on the other hand, solely maintains intrinsic awareness [the true nature of mind], and uses it as the path. It does not employ concepts, since concepts [are the province of] mind, and Dzogpa Chenpo involves meditation [on intrinsic awareness after] distinguishing mind from intrinsic awareness."* (3, p. xi). Concepts delineate the difference between *mind* and *nature of mind*.

A basic question of this contribution is: why do Dzogchen masters in their teachings make fre-

quent use of a concept like 'space' in the concept-free domain of Dzogchen? Is it an apparent contradiction (paradox)? Reminder: on basic Dzogchen terms and meanings we may fairly assume a complete harmony between Bon Dzogchen and Nyingma Dzogchen.

Example 1: Adding up three spaces?

Lets look at a first example on the meaning of 'space'. On the flourishing Ligmincha channel of YouTube (4) a very short Dzogchen teaching can be found. In approximately nine minutes each, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche teaches us three lessons from *Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyud*, called "The Unification of the Three Spaces." The three spaces referred to here are connected to Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's Inner Refuge and can be found by looking within. They are reached by the three doors called: stillness of the body, silence of the speech and the spaciousness of the mind. Opening one door is not enough, all three doors need to be opened for liberation.



The more we work with this inner refuge the more inner space we will experience. When we train for a long time, sooner or later a glimpse of the nature of mind will be experienced, the concept-free state of mind. In the long run, when you have more glimpses, there is less need for a concept like space, because you have found 'space.' It is like the proverbial raft from the *sutra's*, you can leave it behind when it has brought you on the other shore.

Example 2: Space, gaps and awareness

A more comprehensive example on the meaning of space can be found in an interview with His Eminence Lopon Tenzin Namdak. In 2007 two interesting interviews with Lopon Tenzin Namdak were published (5) and in the second interview





His Eminence Lopon Tenzin Namdak.

spaces were the central theme. Henry M. Vyner and Lopon Tenzin Namdak (Lopon) explore some experiences and definitions. They arrive at a mutual understanding, where space is related to awareness when meditating and long gaps appear in the stream of consciousness:

“Vyner: My experience has been that when a person first starts meditating, that many thoughts, a stream of thoughts, will appear in a person's mind. Is that correct?

Lopon: Sure. This is nature.

Vyner: And then after a person has been meditating for a while, thoughts begin to slow down.

Lopon: Yes.

Vyner: And sometimes they even disappear. Is that correct?

Lopon: Yes.

Vyner: Eventually, it seems that gaps will begin to appear in the stream of thoughts. Periods of time occur when there are no thoughts appearing. Sometimes those gaps will last for a very long time. In your experience, can that happen?

Lopon: Yes. What do you mean by gap?

Vyner: By gap I mean a period of time in which there are no inner appearances. Nothing appears.

Lopon: Then what is there?

Vyner: Nothing.

Lopon: Nothing?

Vyner: Well there is an awareness present.

Lopon: What is awareness?

Vyner: It's just awareness.

Lopon: What's it aware of? To be aware means seeing or knowing something. Otherwise there is no awareness.

Vyner: It is aware of space.”

What then follows is an exchange between Lopon Tenzin Namdak and Henry M. Vyner about the specific relation between awareness and space. Lopon seems to negate the relation between space and awareness, but here is Henry's conclusion:

“Vyner: There is only space, but it also definitely feels like there is an awareness present within the space, and my experience has also been that single inner

appearances can continue to arise within this space.

Lopon: Yes.

Vyner: The inner appearances continue, but they dissolve as soon as they appear.

Lopon: Yes they continue, but is something changing, or does the space go on?

Vyner: The way it seems to me is that the space goes on.

Lopon: Never changing.”

Kadag and lhundup

Then Henry M. Vyner starts to talk about his experiences of light when meditating. It seems as if Lopon is surprised Henry has experienced this already and he is prepared to teach more about these experiences of light in terms of central Dzogchen concepts of *kadag* and *lhundup*. He explains the difference between two kinds of spaces: normal space and a space with special power that can liberate consciousness.

“Lopon: So if you have experienced this much, this space itself, if you don't touch anything, this space is not normal space. It has special qualities.

Vyner: What do you mean by special qualities?

Lopon: I am going to tell you now. This is not normal space. Normal space is only space. It is a space because material things are not present in that space. Nothing is there. This other space is special because it liberates thoughts. It liberates consciousness. It looks like space. You have to use words to describe it. But it is not real space. This condition has special power. Everything, *nirvana*, *samsara*, happiness, sadness can spontaneously appear.



Vyner: Are you saying that everything takes its origin from this space?

Lopon: This space has special power. We call it *lhundhup*. There is nothing to point out in the space. But this nature is also completely and originally pure. You cannot take any negative actions in this space. Therefore this space is also called pure or *kadag*. And *kadag* and *lhundhup* spontaneously exist within this space. And if you don't care about staying in this condition, you won't need to check anything. There is no one to check. But it is there. You don't need to check something that is pure or that exists spontaneously. They are there.

Vyner: Everything that appears in that space is pure.

Lopon: Yes. Whatever appears, you don't have to do anything. Good things come. Bad things can come. Sometimes very bad emotions come up, sometimes good things come up.

Vyner: Do negative emotions change when they come into that space?

Lopon: If you are able to keep still without being disturbed, if whatever comes up you don't care, if you are remaining in that space without being disturbed, then you are ok. If you are able to do this, and if you are seriously and continuously practicing, gradually all of the negative things become weaker and weaker. Finally they disappear.

Vyner: Ok."

In a long concluding sentence Lopon sketches the final practices that lead to liberation. This is the end of this remarkable interview. Henry M. Vyner adds several clarifying annotations and footnotes. And so, for the use and meaning of the concept of 'space' in Dzogchen we conclude it is fully established. It has even some special qualities: *"This space has special power. We call it lhundhup,"* and *"Therefore this space is also called pure or kadag."* Your practices end in this special power space.

Back to the question: is there a paradox? No, as Lopon says: *"This other space is special because it liberates thoughts. It liberates consciousness. It looks like space. You have to use words to describe it. But it is not real space."*

Example 3: Space as a metaphor

A metaphor is a figure of speech that describes a 'subject' by asserting that it is, on some point of comparison, the same as another otherwise unrelated 'object' (see 6). The subject in the previous

example is 'this space with special power,' which Lopon is referring to when he says: *"You have to use words to describe it."* The object is then the use of the word 'space with special power' with the addition 'but it is not real space.' That is typical of a figure of speech, you do not take it literally. The space you are using as a metaphor is not real space. With the use of the concept 'space' we are approaching the unspeakable experience of the nature of mind, mind essence or *rigpa*.

The famous Dzogchen master Longchen Rabjam (Longchenpa) was the first one to know that Dzogchen teaching and transmission cannot be directly connected to concepts, but concepts can only be used temporarily and preliminary. So here is the answer found in the *Chöying Dzöd* of Longchenpa (3, p. 54) to the question from the introduction: How can we use a concept like 'space' in the concept-free domain of Dzogchen?:

"Space is a metaphor for awakened mind. Since that mind has no cause and is not an object that comes into being, it does not abide in any finite way, is inexpressible, and transcends the realm of the imagination. The phrase 'the realm: of space' is simply a way of illustrating it metaphorically."

When working with conceptual metaphors as Longchenpa does, there are three working-concepts to consider (see: 7):

the source domain; i.e. the conceptual domain from which we draw metaphorical expression, in this case: awakened mind is like *space*.

the target domain; i.e. the conceptual domain that we try to understand, in this case: *awakened mind* is like space.

the mapping; i.e. the systematic set of correspondences that exist between constituent elements of the source and the target domain.

Instances of mappings here are: space is endless like awakened mind, has no beginning or end, cannot be separated, etc. But the mapping between space and awakened mind is only partial, because space has no consciousness and also awakened mind is inexpressible like Longchenpa says.

After three examples we are back to the original questions of this contribution: why do Dzogchen masters in their teachings make frequent use of a concept like 'space' in the concept-free domain of Dzogchen? Is it an apparent contradiction (para-



dox)? The tentative answer is: they do use concepts like 'space' but only in the preliminary phase. In the main phase of Dzogchen teachings they use concepts as incomplete metaphors. Please note Padmasambhava (8, p. 52-53) warned us long ago of this incompleteness when comparing the nature of mind with the space or sky:

"This nature of mind, which is all-knowing, aware of everything, empty and radiant, Is established to be manifestly radiant and self-originating pristine cognition, [Present] from the beginning, just like the sky, As an indivisible [union] of emptiness and radiance. This itself is actual reality.

(...)

However, this example of the sky, though used to illustrate actual reality, Is merely a symbol, a partial and provisional illustration.

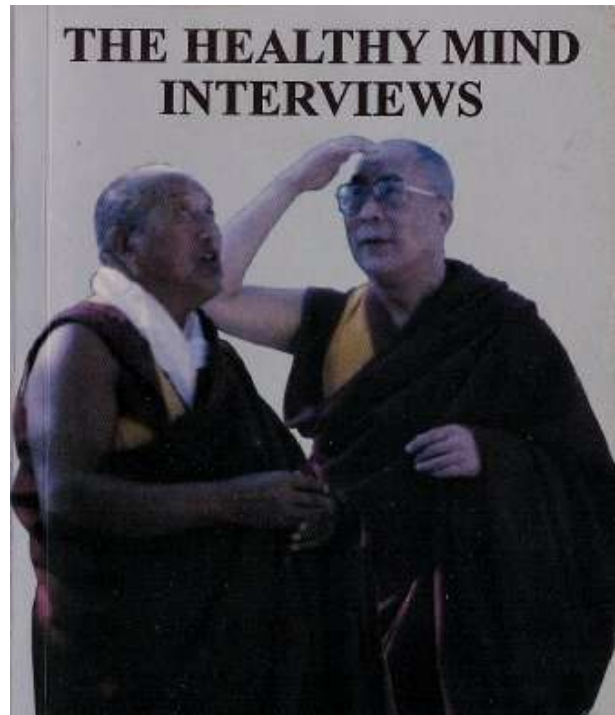
For the nature of mind is aware, empty, and radiant in all respects,

While the sky is without awareness, empty, inanimate and void.

*Therefore, the true understanding of the nature of mind is **not** illustrated by [the metaphor of] the sky."*



Padmasambhava.



Notes

Epigraph: The *Self Liberation Interview* with H.E. Lopon Tenzin Namdak has this same epigraph, it was taken from Longchenpa (3, p. 23)

(1) *Wonders of the Natural Mind*, The Essence of Dzogchen in the Native Bon Tradition of Tibet, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, 2000, Snow Lion Publications.

(2) *Rainbow Painting*, A collection of Miscellaneous Aspects of Development and Completion, Tulku Ugyen Rinpoche, Rangjung Yeshe Publications, 2009.

(3) *A Treasure Trove of Scriptural Transmission*, A commentary on The Precious Treasury of the Basic Space of Phenomena, Longchen Rabjam (Longchenpa) 2001, Padma Publishing, CA.

(4) www.youtube.com/user/ligmincha

part 1: www.youtube.com/part one

part 2: www.youtube.com/part two

part 3: www.youtube.com/part three

(5) *The Healthy Mind Interviews*, volume IV, 2007, Henry M. Vyner, M.D., Published by Vajra publications. The *Self Liberation Interview* with Lopon Tenzin Namdak.

(6) wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaphor

(7) wikipedia.org/wiki/Conceptual_metaphor

(8) *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, Composed by Padmasambhava, First complete translation, Intr. comm. by HH the Dalai Lama, Viking Pub., 2005.

Text by Frits de Vries



TENZIN WANGYAL RINPOCHE'S 2014 EUROPEAN SEMINARS AND ON-LINE TEACHINGS

When	Where	What	More information
August 30	Your computer	Free Live Webcast: Clearing Your Negative Emotions: Transforming Your World Through the Six Lokas Practice	www.ligmincha.org
September 5 – 7	Grenoble, France	Weekend seminar: Awakening the Luminous Mind	www.cebgrenoble.fr
September 12 – 14	Moscow, Russia	Weekend seminar: The Practice of the Six Lamps, Part 2	www.garuda-bon.ru
September 20 – October 12	Your computer	Interactive online course: Tibetan Sound Healing: The Five Sacred Seed Syllables	www.glidewing.com
September 27	Your computer	Guided Meditation: Purifying Your Karma Through Mantra	www.ligmincha.org
October 11	Your computer	Free Live Webcast: The Healing Power of Primordial Awareness	www.ligmincha.org
October 13 – November 23	Your computer	Online meditation instruction: The Five Elements, Healing with Form Energy and Light	www.ligminchalearning.com
October 14 – 19	Maria Alm, Austria	The Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung, Part 5	www.ligmincha.at
October 24 – 26	Brussels, Belgium	Weekend seminar: Dream Yoga	www.bongaruda.be
November 8	Your computer	Free Live Webcast: Topic to be announced	www.ligmincha.org
November 8 – December 7	Your computer	Interactive online course: Tibetan Dream Yoga	www.glidewing.com
December 28	Your computer	Free Live Webcast: Topic to be announced	www.ligmincha.org

You can also watch on your computer 24 hours a day, and 7 days a week:

Free internet teachings and videos on [YouTube](#) and [Ustream](#)

