



Ligmincha Europe Magazine

27 – Winter 2017-2018



The 34th Menri Abbot

Meditating with kids

Can you reduce pain online?

The Sacred Silence in Sounds



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THE LIGMINCHA EUROPE MAGAZINE

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GREETINGS AND NEWS FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers, Dear Practitioners of Bon,

In the past six months, two events have had a great impact on the Bon community: the passing away of His Holiness the 33rd Menri Trizin and the election and enthronement of the 34th Menri Trizin as Abbot of the Menri Monastery in India. In September 2017 we lost the great Sun (the name of the 33rd His Holiness, Nyima means sun); and since January 2018 the Moon has risen to dispel all the outer, inner and secret obstacles, and to preserve the Yungdrung Bon tradition (the name of the new Menri Abbot, Dawa Dargye means waxing moon).



It was wonderful that we were all invited to go to India in person for these ceremonies, and those who didn't make it, were informed on the internet. In this edition, Yangri Sangmo reports on the history of the Menri lineage, the important role His Holiness the 33rd Menri Trizin played in preserving the Bon tradition, and how the 34th Menri Trizin was selected. We also publish the Long Life Prayer for His Holiness Lungtok Dawa Dargye Rinpoche.

In his teachings this year Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche has been singing one of the three Heart Mantras, the *Sa Le Ö Mantra*. It is the mantra of awareness of space, and it helps us to open, clear, and connect. Rinpoche advised us to listen to and/or sing the mantra before we go to sleep. There are several versions on the inter-

net: in this [video](#) you can read the text of the mantra, and in another [video](#) Raman Maharjan plays on a flute. [Here](#) you can find the explanation of the mantra. Finally, you can see this mantra carved into stone on the cover of this magazine.

From the online workshop offered in summer 2016 by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and Glide-Wing, featuring Bon Buddhist teachings and meditation practices for reducing physical and emotional pain, a research study was conducted



to determine the effects of the workshop. You can read the whole report in this issue.

Since we have now interviewed all the Ligmincha sanghas around the world, we will not introduce a sangha this time. Instead, the sangha in Malaga, Spain, shares a story about how they implemented meditation for parents and children at school. You can read a poem; an article earlier published in the *Voice of Clear Light*; a text from a Bardo guide book; an excerpt from an article in *Buddhadharma*. Further, we bring news from Europe; the first 3 Doors International Retreat in Mexico, and the program of Lishu Institute.

In Bon,
Ton Bisscheroux, chief editor



THE 34TH MENRI ABBOT: HIS HOLINESS LUNG TOK DAWA DARGYE RINPOCHE

The enthronement ceremony of the 34th Menri Abbot took place at Menri Monastery in Dolanji (India) recently. On the auspicious day of the birthday of Nyamme Sherab Gyaltsen the great founder of Menri Monastery, February 20th 2018, all the Bonpos of the world wide were invited to join the Menri monastic community. Before the enthronement ceremony, the selection of the new Abbot was performed. Yangri Sangmo gives us some background information on this process.

Menri lineage

The lineage of the Menri enthronement holders started with Nyamme Sherab Gyaltsen (1356-1415) in the early 15th century. He founded the first Menri Monastery in 1405 in the place named Thobgyal, in the Tsang province in Tibet, after the Yeru Wen Sa Kha Monastery was destroyed by the flood. Yeru Wen Sa Kha had been the main centre

of Yungdrung Bon studies. He preserved and resurrected the tradition of Yeru Wen Sa Kha. At that time, the Bon lineages were held by several Masters, because of the persecutions of the Bon tradition taking place through Tibet's history. Though he performed numerous enlightened activities, one of his main activities was to unify all the streams of outer, inner and secret lineages of the Yungdrung Bon tradition. This is illustrated on the refuge tree thangka where those lineages converge at Nyamme Sherab Gyaltsen's image. The teaching system established by Nyamme Sherab Gyaltsen has been followed by other Bon monasteries. This is why he is called the second Buddha in Bon. All the transmissions, teachings and empowerments of these three vehicles have been held unbroken by the successive enthronement holders of Menri Monastery and over the time, the Abbot of Menri came to be considered as the head of the Bon tradition. In general, the role of all the Menri enthronement holders is to preserve the lineage and tradition of Menri Monastery. Menri Monastery is the mother Bon monastery.



His Holiness Menri Trizin 34th, with his retinue on the steps of Menri Monastery, on the day of his enthronement.





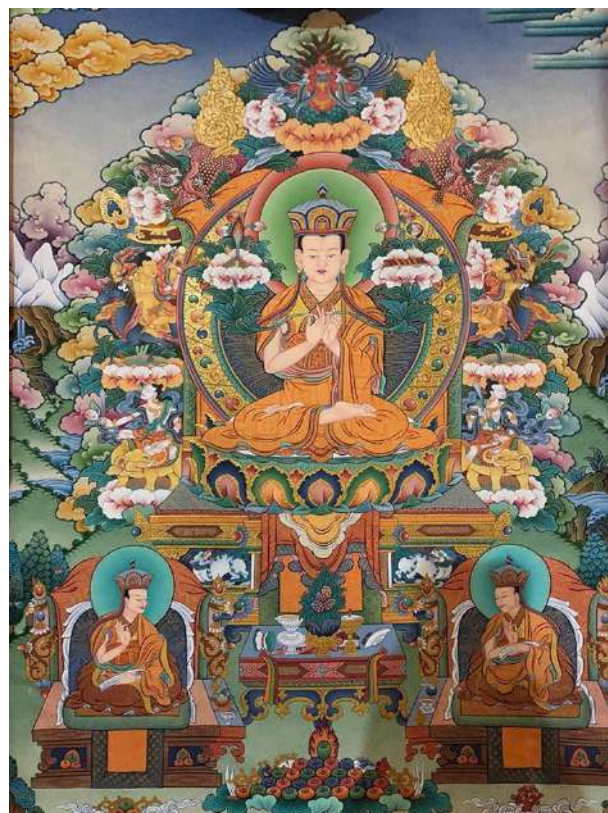
His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche.

The crucial role of the 33rd Menri enthronement holder, His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche

During the cultural revolution that started in 1959, Menri Monastery in Tibet was destroyed. His Holiness the 33rd Menri enthronement holder Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche, together with His Eminence Yongdzin Rinpoche founded and built a new Menri Monastery in Dolanji, India, and revived all the streams of the Yungdrung Bon teachings by establishing a Bon dialectic school. Thus preserving the heritage of the Bon tradition. Up to now, 133 monks have received the Geshe degree from Menri Monastery in Dolanji, and many of them are teaching in different parts of the world to benefit others.

In 2001, the 33rd Menri enthronement holder H.H. Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche founded the Ratna Menling nunnery near Menri Monastery. Together with H.E. Yongdzin Rinpoche, he revived the full fledged nun vows and bestowed the *Drang Song Ma Vows* to five nuns. Two of them have been pursuing the studies at the dialectic school with other senior nuns from Tibet and the

Himalayan region. They will become the first Bon Geshe-ma of this era. Moreover, His Holiness and His Eminence have given the opportunity not only to the nuns but also to the girls to have the same education as the boys.



Nyamme Sherab Gyaltsen.

Selection process

When Nyamme Sherab Gyaltsen was 60 years old, he appointed his heart disciple Gyal tsab Rinchen Gyaltsen as his successor as Abbot of Menri Monastery and told him how to proceed with the selection of future Menri Abbots. He addressed his disciple in this way: *"You are the great blessed son of the Rigdzins, take care of my throne and be my regent. Prevail the Yungdrung Bon teachings, after you, who so ever becomes a Geshe in this Monastery, do ritual prayers to the Protectors and perform Tag Dril. Who so ever is selected, appoint him on my throne. With the great blessings of the wisdom Deity, Mawe Senghe, he will be able to serve the Yungdrung Bon teachings and all sentient beings."* This way of selecting the Abbot is unique and specific to the Bon tradition.

The Tag Dril

Tag means showing signs, *Dril* means stirring; so the complete meaning is, the Protectors showing the signs of the chosen Abbot. This process was



also performed to select the 34th Menri Abbot and is explained in detail in the autobiography of Khen chen Nyma Tenzin, the 23rd Menri throne holder. As well, the *Tag Dril* ritual is described in the teaching of Buddha Tonpa Shenrab Miwo, the founder of Yungdrung Bon. The text (*tsa gyud nyi zer dronma*) describes how the names of the 1022 Buddhas were written on a special material and were put in a vase made of precious gems. After the names were stirred, the first 9 names that were drawn from the vase were the names of the first 9 Buddhas. Buddha Tonpa Shenrab Miwo was the 8th Buddha and the 9th Buddha will manifest when the era of Buddha Tonpa Shenrab Miwo's teaching (Enlightened Body, Speech and Mind) is completed.



The names of the candidates.

For the selection of the 34th Menri Abbot, *geshes* from both Menri Monastery in India and Tritten Norbutse Monastery in Nepal were selected as candidates. Before the selection process, all the eligible *geshes* received a letter from Menri Monastery. If one who did not wish to be in the lot he had the possibility of withdrawing his name. The name of each candidate was written on a paper and rolled in a ball of dough containing precious *Mendrub* (medicinal powder). The balls were dried then sealed in a vase with a wax. Afterwards, the balls were put into two special vases which were kept on the altar of the Protectors Temple of Menri Monastery for several weeks while the monastic community performed rituals. Following the rituals, the vases were shaken until one ball came out of each. The two balls that came out were again put in one vase for the final selection. At the completion of these rituals, on 1st of January 2018, in the presence of all the monastic community and the lay people, the name of the new Abbot was revealed and Geshe Drangsong Dawa Dargye became the new Abbot of Menri Monastery. He is from the Amdo region in Tibet. In a short video H.E. Yongdzin



His Holiness Menri Trizin 34th, Drangsong Dawa Dargye.

Rinpoche explains this selection process where he emphasizes that it was the protectors who select and appoint the Menri Abbot.

Enthronement ceremony

Enthronement means taking the responsibility and full authority as the Menri Abbot to lead the Bon tradition. This is confirmed by sitting on the throne of the previous Abbot in the main temple in Menri Monastery. Traditionally, the throne of Nyamme Sherab Gyaltsen, has been successively occupied by all the Menri throne holders. Even the 33rd His Holiness, who was outside Tibet when he was selected went to sit on this precious throne of Nyamme Sherab Gyaltsen. It is an auspicious act to sit on this special throne and to oversee the enlightened heritage of Nyamme Sherab Gyaltsen. Similarly, sitting on the throne of the 33rd Abbot of Menri Monastery in Dolanji is preserving Yungdrung Bon through a difficult time. As well the newly selected 34th Abbot was enthroned on this throne. During this enthronement ceremony on the 20th of February, the birthday of Nyamme Sherab Gyaltsen, *Mandala Offering Prayers from Namdak Gyurmed* and the *Five Precious Offerings to the Lama* were performed. Then all the devotees paid respect and homage to the new Abbot by making offerings with a *khatta* (white scarf).





ཡུང་རྩུང་བོན་ལྷན་ཁྲིམས་སྤྱོད་ལྷན་ཚོགས།

YUNG DRUNG BON MONASTIC CENTRE SOCIETY

(Registered under The Himachal Pradesh Societies Act, 2006)

Dear Bönpo Followers,

Dated 21st December, 2017

We hope you are doing well. I'm sure many of you are eagerly waiting for news about the appointment for the great successor, 34th Abbot of Menri Monastery. Since the passing of the 33rd Menri Trizin into paranirvana, the highest spiritual leaders of Yungdrung Bön have been deeply engaged in discussion concerning this selection. After much deliberation, we have finally reached a decision.

At this moment we are selecting geshe from Menri Monastery in India and also from Triten Norbutse Monastery in Nepal. We have decided to only include those geshe who are residing outside of Tibet due to present situation. There are about 60 geshe on this list. On the 19th of December each name was put inside a special pill made of tsampa, and blessed medicinal substances and then dried in the sun. On the 21st of December, the monks of Menri started the ritual for cleansing obstacles in the selection of the 34th Menri Abbot. On the 22nd we started the main rituals which will take 6 days. During these days prayers will take place in the Protector Temple, where two special vases will be placed with all of the candidates names sealed in wax. There, high lamas and monks will pray in the Protector Temple until the 27th of December. Prayers will be made to the Protectors and Deities, for help in choosing the most qualified geshe from the vase. During this time the majority of Menri Monastery's monks will pray in the main temple and offer 100.000 tsok offerings to Syipe Gyalmo. Concurrent to this, prayers will be offered in the Menri Abbot's residence to the main yidam of Menri Abbot: Purbha.

On the morning on the 27th, H.E Menri Ponlop Rinpoche will shake the two vases. After shaking the first vase the name of the first candidate will spring forth, and after shaking the second vase the name of second candidate will similarly jump from its vase. After the selection of those two names they will be put together in one vase. The high lamas will then pray for another 5 days.

On the 1st of January 2018 the vase with the two names will be shaken in the main temple in front of the statue of Buddha Tonpa Shenrab Miwo in the presence of the public. When the pill arises from the vase, everyone will be able to receive its blessings, and also have the opportunity to make their commitment, give their respects and seal their trust in the new Menri Abbot, who has been chosen by the Protectors and Deities. This is a most rare and special way for selecting an Abbot.

Please during this time, wherever you are, join in the prayers to support the selection of the best Geshe for the 34th Menri Trizin.

Mustug Marro
General Secretary
Geshe Dawa Dhargyal
Yungdrung Bon Monastic Center Society



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On Facebook everybody could follow the procedure of the election of the 34th Menri Abbot. Here is a letter where the procedure is described.



Afterwards, as per the tradition of Menri monastery in which each of the throne holders sit on each of the thrones of Nyamme Sherab Gyaltsen. The new Abbot sat on all the thrones where the previous Abbots sat (Protectors temple, Yogi temple, Nunnery Gumpa, Labrang, Library, Medical Institute, Smoke Offering Place, Dialectic School Hall, Bon Children Home). In the autobiography of the 23rd Menri Abbot Khenchon Nyima Tenzin he related that due to lack of time, he did not sit on all the thrones, and he described this as not very auspicious.

Although on the 14th of September 2017, Yungdrung Bon lost the great Sun* (Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche), leaving all Bonpos with deep sadness, it is with the great blessings of the Protectors and the prayers of all Bon devotees, that now the Moon** (Lungtok Dawa Dargye Rinpoche) is rising to dispel all the outer, inner and secret obstacles, and to preserve the Yungdrung Bon tradition.

* This refers to the name of the 33rd His Holiness, Nyima which means sun.

** This refers to the name of the new Menri Abbot, Dawa Dargye which means waxing moon.

Text by Yangri Sangmo



His Holiness Menri Trizin 34th, Drangsong Dawa Dargye.



Ceremony at Menri Monastery.



LONG LIFE PRAYER FOR HIS HOLINESS LUNGTOK DAWA DARGYE RINPOCHE

ཨ་མ་རྟོ།
གྱེར་བསྟན་རིན་ཆེན་མཆོན་ཡང་ཕྱག་པའི་ཞིང་།
ལྷུང་རྟོགས་པ་དེ་མའི་དགའ་ཆོལ་བཞད་པའི་མགོན།
འཕྲིན་ལས་རྟ་བདུན་སྣང་བ་གཤེགས་པའི་རྗེས།
ཆ་རྗེགས་སྐྱབ་པའི་མགོན་ལ་གསོལ་བ་འདེབས།

E MA HO
GYER TEN RINCHEN TSEN YANG DHOG PE ZHING
LUNGTOK PEME GA TSAL ZHED PI GON
THINLEY TA DUN NANG WA SHEG PI JE
CHA ZOG DAWE GON LA SOL WA DEB

*Marvellous,
In a land where even the name of the precious teaching of Bon did not exist,
A saviour, the Sun, who blossomed the delightful garden of lotuses of enlightened
teaching and realization.
After the dissolution of the great Sun, with the completion of its enlightened activities,
I pray to the master who embodies the quality of a perfect Moon.*

མཆོག་གསུམ་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྒྲིབ་བལ་སྟུན་ལྷན་གྱིས།
རྒྱལ་བའི་འཕྲིན་ལས་སྐྱོང་བའི་མགོན་བསྐྱོས་པ།
གང་འདིའི་གསང་གསུམ་བཞེད་དོན་ལྷན་གྲུབ་པའི།
བྱགས་མཆོག་གཡེལ་མེད་དམ་པར་མཛད་དུ་གསོལ།

CHOG SUM YESHE DRIB DRAL CHEN DEN GYI
GYAL WE THINLEY KYONG WE GON KOE PA
GANG DI SANG SUM ZHED DHON LHUN DRUB PI
THUG CHOG YEL MED DAM PAR ZED DU SOL

*Through their unobscured wisdom eyes, the triple gems
Appointed a saviour to preserve the enlightened activities of the Buddhas
May all the enlightened beings and the protectors, unceasingly protect and
spontaneously accomplish
All His outer, inner and secret wishes.*

Prayer by H.E. Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche
Translated by Dr. Yangri Sangmo



CAN YOU REDUCE PAIN ONLINE?

In summer 2016, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and GlideWing Online Workshops offered a three-week online workshop featuring Bon Buddhist teachings and meditation practices for reducing physical and emotional pain. A formal research study was conducted to determine the effects of the workshop. Here you can read the report on this subject, published on www.ligmincha.org.

Measuring the Effectiveness Of an online Bön Buddhist Workshop for Healing Physical and Emotional Pain

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, Barbara Stefik, Mark Stefik, Alejandro Chaoul, Claire Clark & Yue Teng

Abstract

In the summer of 2016, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche offered a three-week online workshop together with GlideWing Online Workshops. It offered Bön Buddhist teachings and practices for reducing physical and emotional pain. A research study was conducted to determine the effects of the workshop. The findings showed that the participants' physical and emotional pain was reduced by more

than a third after three weeks and that the effects persisted after the workshop. There was a very strong correlation between worst daily levels of pain and levels of draining or wasted energy for participants on the days of the workshop. The research also investigated the relative and combined effectiveness of the teachings and practices offered at the workshop.

Overview of the Workshop and Study

An online workshop is a convenient and low-cost way to provide teachings. But does it provide healing benefits, such as a reduction in physical and emotional pain?

In the fall of 2015, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche together with GlideWing Online Workshops offered a three-week online workshop of Bön Buddhist teachings for reducing physical and emotional pain. With the permission of 19 workshop participants, an exploratory research study investigated whether the online course was effective in reducing pain.

The results were sufficiently promising that Tenzin Rinpoche suggested offering a much larger workshop with GlideWing in the summer of 2016 and carrying out a more comprehensive research study. This article is about that “Main” study and

gives a preliminary report of its findings.

Figure 1 gives an overview of the workshop. Twice a week throughout the workshop, a new session of videos, including teachings and supportive guided meditations, was made available for participants to work with according to their own schedules. Participants were encouraged to allocate about 20

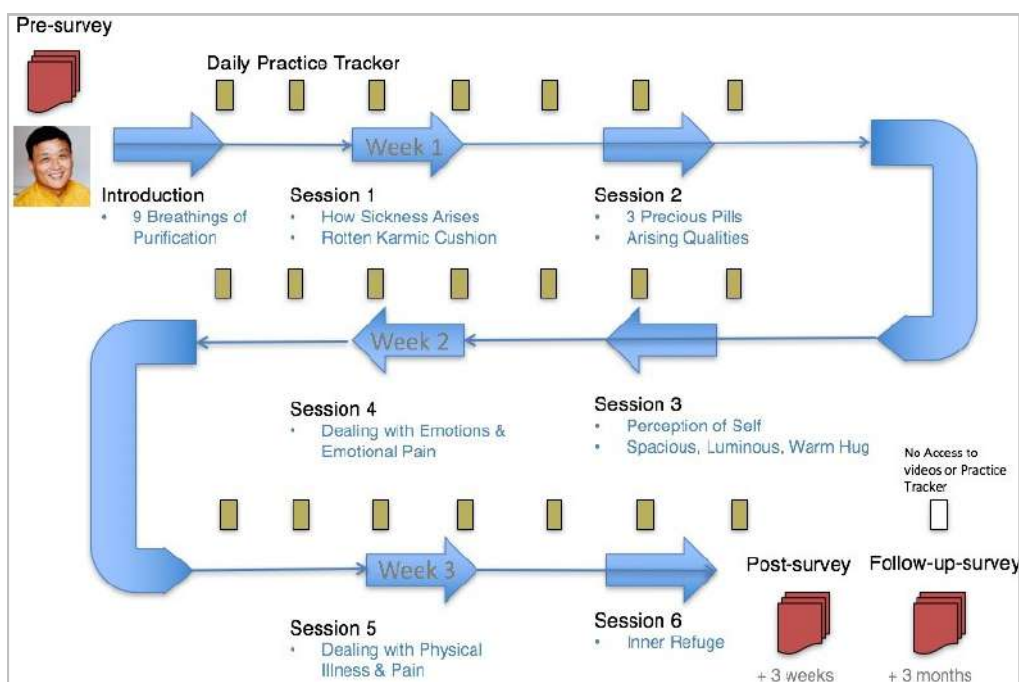


Figure 1. Overview of the 3-week online workshop and study.



minutes twice a day for the formal meditation practices as well as 20-50 minutes twice a week for watching the teaching videos. The overall daily time requirement for participants was to

- Do the formal meditation sessions (40-50 minutes)
- Do informal meditation practices 5 times throughout the day (5-10 minutes)
- Check in with the Daily Practice Tracker (5 minutes)
- Review the teaching videos as needed

Data were collected using three anonymous online surveys. A pre-survey was given ahead of the workshop. A post-survey was given immediately after the workshop. A follow-up survey was given three months after the end of the workshop. The surveys included two validated scales: the Global Pain Scale (GPS) and the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS). The Global Pain Scale is a valid and comprehensive assessment of pain evaluating pain, emotions, clinical outcomes, and daily activities by Dr. Ronald Melzack and Dr. Warren Torgerson. The Self-Compassion Scale is a valid and theoretically coherent measure of Self-Compassion by Dr. Kristin D. Neff. In addition, some teaching-inspired scales were administered.

In addition to the longer surveys, participants were given access to a “Daily Practice Tracker” app that ran on iPhones, androids, and a web browser as shown in Figure 2. It was suggested that participants check in every day to answer questions about which teachings and practices they did that day as well as provide an assessment of their physical and emotional pain and events of the day.



Figure 2. Daily Practice Tracker.

Of the 1,200 who registered, 198 people fully participated by taking the pre-, post-, and follow-up surveys and using the Daily Practice Tracker at least 15 times. The findings reported below are based on these participants, for whom we have the most complete data.

Unless otherwise stated, all reported findings have less than .1 percent chance of being the null hypothesis that is, being the result of chance.

Assessing Physical and Emotional Pain

A primary question that we wanted to investigate was whether participants would experience a reduction in physical and emotional pain. To assess this, we used a validated 20-question scale. The Global Pain Scale has four five-question parts: physical pain, feelings (emotional pain), clinical outcomes and interference with normal activities.

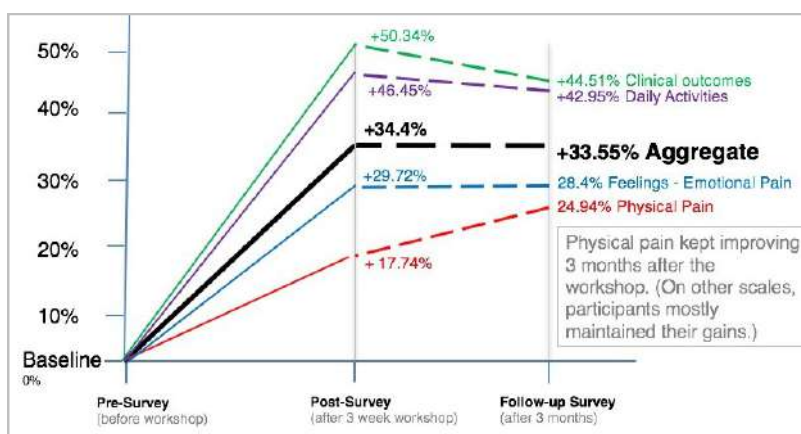


Figure 3. Improvements measured using the Global Pain Scale.

Figure 3 graphs the assessments for the four factors, and an “aggregate” score combines them. The baseline is the assessment at the pre-survey. As shown in the figure, participants improved in all four factors, with a reduction in aggregate pain of 34.4 percent in three weeks as measured by the post-survey. Three months later the scale showed that participants mainly maintained their gains. Physical pain kept improving three months after the workshop was finished.

One hypothesis for the main study was that improvements in pain might correlate with improvements in self-compassion. To test this the three surveys included an assessment of self-compassion. The findings showed that participants did improve in self-compassion by 12.83 percent by the post-survey rising to 16.63 percent in the follow-up survey three months later. So, participants had more self-compassion and less



pain after the workshop. A question is whether their improvements in self-compassion strongly related to their improvements in pain.

Figure 4 graphs the correlation of improvement in self-compassion and improvement in global pain. The correlation coefficient $R=0.46$ indicates a moderate but not strong relation. In usual statistical practice, a correlation of 0.70 is considered strong. This finding of a *moderate correlation* suggests that there must be other factors besides an increase in self-compassion that are contributing to the reduction in pain.

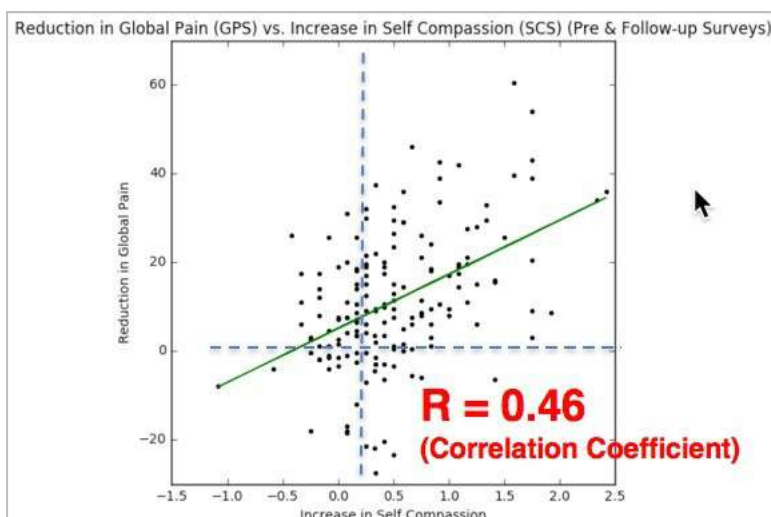


Figure 4. Correlating improvements in self-compassion with improvements in the Global Pain Scale.

Relationship to Draining: “More Drain = More Pain”

In addition to the findings from the validated and teaching-inspired scales, the research included data collected from the Daily Practice Tracker. One of the main teachings of the workshop concerned draining, defined as the “habitual wasting of energy.” Participants using the daily practice tracker assessed their daily worst level of draining every time they used the tracker and also their daily worst level of physical and emotional pain.

Figure 5 graphs the correlation of the daily-worst level of draining with the daily-worst level of physical pain. It shows that there was a very strong correlation between their level of draining

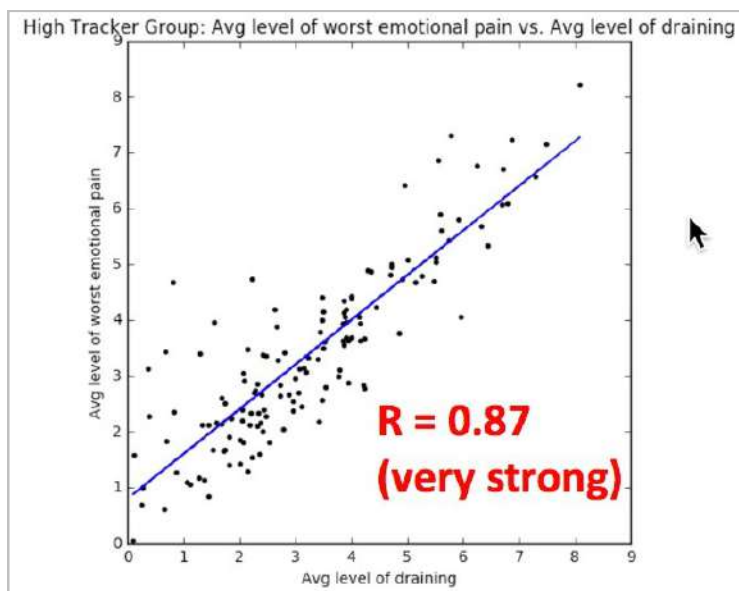


Figure 5. Correlating Average Daily-Worst Level of Draining with Average Daily-Worst Level of Physical Pain.

and their level of physical pain. A similar correlation was computed for level of emotional pain yielding a high correlation of 0.65. These correlations are strong enough to reliably predict a level of pain from a level of drain.

These results were consistent with the teachings in the workshop, which said that the energy saved by reducing draining goes toward healing, and that improvements in healing lead to reductions in pain.

The data from the Daily Practice Tracker enabled us to take a more detailed look at movements between levels of draining and levels of pain, on a daily basis. Figure 6 divides the population of participants into quartiles. The upper “quartile” shows a sample graph for a representative participant where the correlation was 0.70 or greater, as was true for 35 percent of the participants. For this participant and others in the quartile, the drain and pain assessments essentially move in lockstep every single day. The second quadrant shows a representative participant where the correlation was between 0.50 and 0.70. Again, the nearly lockstep movement is evident over the days of the workshop. The lockstep phenomenon was less evident in the lower two quadrants. In summary, this very tight correlated movement of level of draining and level of pain held for 60 percent of the participants.



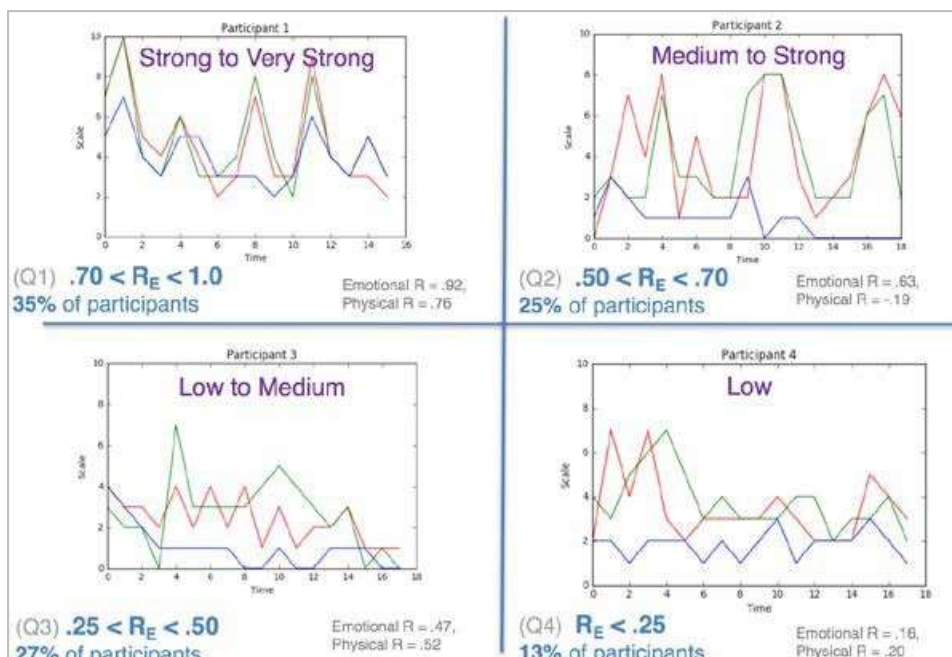


Figure 6. Daily Movement and Correlations by Quartile for Physical and Emotional Levels of Pain with Draining. Red lines show level of Draining. Green lines show Emotional Pain, and Blue lines show Physical Pain.

Teachings and Practices for Behaviors that Reduce Draining

What teachings and practices from the workshop are intended to reduce draining? Figure 7 shows nine teaching-inspired questions from the scales that relate in some way to draining. They are organized in the figure in four groups. One question is an assessment of draining itself, as asked in the pre- and post- surveys. The next group of three questions correspond to the Three Doors – Stillness, Silence, and Spaciousness. Another



Figure 7. Teachings that relate to draining.

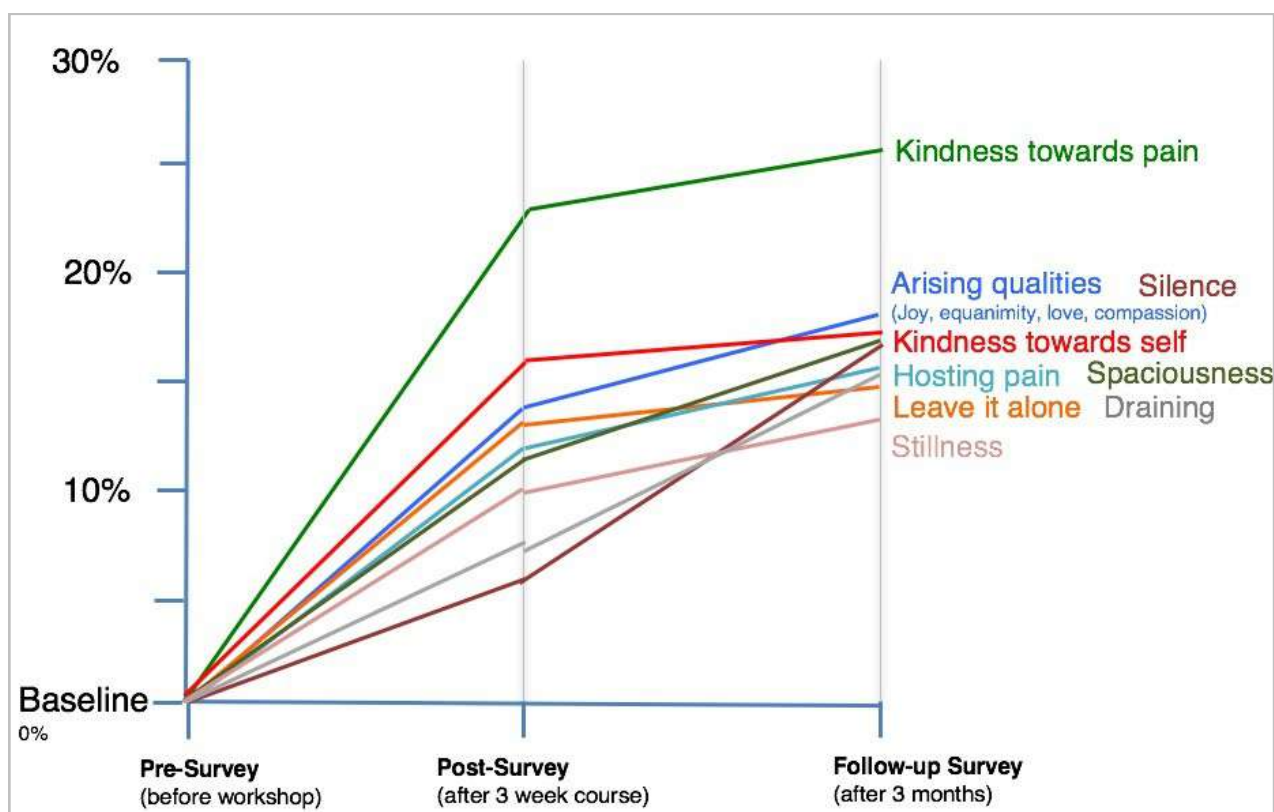


Figure 8. Improvements in Draining Behaviors related to Physical Pain.

group of two questions relates to kindness toward self and kindness toward pain. The last group assesses participants' relationship to pain – hosting it, leaving it alone, or noticing arising qualities.

Figure 8 shows that by and large participants' behaviors for the nine teachings led to increases in the corresponding behaviors for physical pain. In most cases, participants experienced a 12 percent to 20 percent increase in the behaviors advocated by the teachings. Kindness toward physical pain stood out as having about a 25 percent improvement three weeks after the workshop. A similar set of findings was found for behaviors related to emotional pain.

In summary so far, these graphs illustrate that the workshop taught about behaviors that could reduce draining, and that participants improved in these behaviors.

The question arises about which of these behavior improvements strongly and individually relate to reductions in pain. Figure 9 shows how these behavior improvements correlate to improvements in emotional and physical pain as measured by the Global Pain Scale.

The top behavioral correlates for reduction in emotional pain were behaviors for kindness toward self, stillness, draining itself, and kindness toward pain. The top correlations for reduction in physical pain were behaviors for spaciousness and draining. The individual correlation coefficients themselves were similar to those for self-compassion; that is, they are moderate but not strong correlations.

An interpretation of these findings is that no teaching or single behavioral change by itself

Emotional Pain Correlation Coefficients	Physical Pain Correlation Coefficients
R=0.40 Kindness towards self	R=0.40 Spaciousness
R=0.38 Stillness	R=0.35 Draining
R=0.32 Draining	
R=0.32 Kindness towards pain	
R=0.24 Silence	R=0.29 Silence
R=0.22 Leave it alone	R=0.25 Stillness
R=0.21 Hosting Pain	R=0.22 Kindness towards self
R=0.21 Arising Qualities	R=0.22 Kindness towards pain
R=0.17 Spaciousness	
	R=0.11 Arising Qualities
	R=0.05 Hosting Pain
	R=0.02 Leave it alone

Figure 9. Teaching-Inspired Questions and their correlation to Draining.



seems to drive the improvement in pain. Multiple teachings and practices from the course seem to work in combination to yield the behavior changes, reductions in draining, and improvements in physical and emotional pain.

The correlation coefficients for the “draining questions” on the teaching inspired survey scale were only 0.35 as compared to 0.86 in the analysis of practiced tracker data. The two instruments measure significantly different things.

- The Practice Tracker question asks about the worst daily level of *any* source of draining. The survey question asks about the level of effort (draining) in dealing with pain.
- The Practice Tracker collects data every day. The survey instrument collects data only three times, and relies more memory and subjective aggregation of experience.
- The Practice Tracker reviews worst level of daily physical and emotional pain during the day. The survey instrument uses the GPS (Global Pain Scale) aggregate pain assessment.

Summary and Open Questions

In summary, here are the main findings from our research study.

- GPS *aggregate pain* improved by about a third over the workshop.
- This improvement was mostly maintained three months later.
- Participants' ability to *be with their pain* also improved by about a third (survey data).
- Self-compassion (SCS scale) improved by 16 percent and has a moderate correlation with improvement in pain.
- The **average worst-daily-level of draining** strongly correlates with the **average worst-daily-level of emotional pain** (.87) and **physical pain** (.65).
- For most participants, Daily Practice Tracker data shows that *draining* typically goes **up and down** every day (in lockstep) with emotional pain (not just up and down on average for participants over the workshop).
- This study identifies nine teachings that are intended to foster behavioral changes that can reduce draining. The top two to four correlates of reported behavioral change had *moderate correlations* with improvements in pain as measured by the Global Pain scale (GPS). This suggests that the improvements measured by the instruments are the result of either

synergistic influences or possibly that different behavior changes work better for different individuals.

Research typically sheds light on some questions and introduces more questions for further research. The following research questions are on our minds at the end of this study.

- Would participant's reductions in pain continue to improve if the workshop ran longer (e.g., six weeks or several months)?
- It was encouraging that reducing draining seems to quickly affect level of pain as per the lockstep nature of results from the Practice Tracker. This suggests that physiological measurements might be practical, relating the draining practices to physiological evidence. What physiological mechanisms correlating to draining could be identified? Which of these would be practical to use in a study that combined self-reporting with physiological measurements?
- What practices alone or in combination have the greatest power for reducing draining?

Acknowledgments

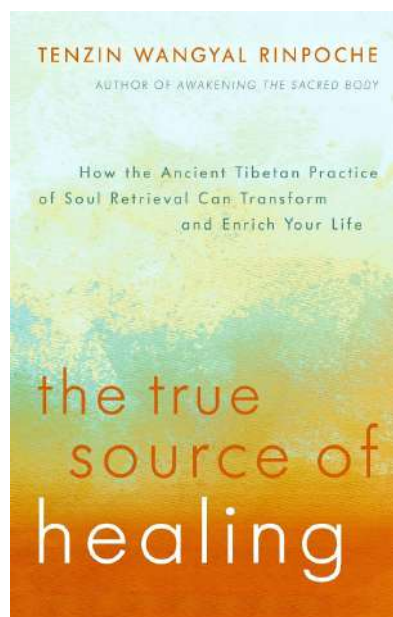
Special thanks to ...

Bob and Marina Felix (GlideWing Online Workshops)

Polly Turner (Ligmincha International)

Ryan Viglizzo, M.A. (Designer at Mount Sinai Hospital)

And the 1,200 participants in the online workshop.



THE 3 DOORS PROGRAM NEWS

In this update, we share highlights from The 3 Doors, including upcoming programs and community news.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

The Next North American 3 Doors Academy

"The 3 Doors Academy is a program that helps you unleash your full potential and truly transform your being. As you transform, you can see the impact on others – your family, coworkers, friends, relatives, and society." Frank Jeri

Applications are now being accepted for the fifth North American Academy that begins on October 3-9, 2018 at the Serenity Ridge Retreat Center in Shipman, Virginia. Taught by 3 Doors Senior Teachers Marcy Vaughn and Gabriel Rocco, this two and a half year program is built around six in-person group retreats and interactive online support. The Academy is a journey of personal discovery where participants are asked to make an active commitment to daily meditation and self-reflection. A great strength of the Academy program is that it draws upon the collective power of the group for support in transforming personal limitations and leading to actions that benefit others.

After graduation, participants join an active network of practitioners from more than 20 countries, who support each other in maintaining an ongoing commitment to their meditation practice and serving the wellbeing of others.

[Learn more, view welcome videos from the teachers, and apply](#)



Gabriel Rocco and Marcy Vaughn at Serenity Ridge.



The Joy of Embodied Presence

"Laura's clear warmth comes through in a way that allows participants to discover their own. To discover that afresh each Saturday morning in my living room speaks to the power of practice and the new possibilities that are available when a teacher knows how to guide with a presence gentle enough to allow an exploration and awareness of one's subtle energies." Phil Tonne

Led by 3 Doors Senior Teacher Laura Shekerjian, this online meditation program explores the body as a powerful doorway into open awareness and the vibrancy of direct experience. The next four-week session will take place on Saturdays April 21 and 28, and May 5 and 12, 2018.

- Use shifts in posture to open the body, connect with stillness and increase inner stability.
- Use breath to slow the moving mind and deepen relaxation.
- Refine attention to bodily sensation to increase attunement to the present moment.
- Recognize how the immediacy of bodily experience, when grounded in the space of being, increases joy and deep well-being.

Simultaneous Spanish translation will be available for this course via the internet radio app [Mixlr](#), and will be audible only to those who wish to use it. Everyone else will hear the program in English only.

[Learn more and register](#)



Laura Shekerjian.



Walking the Healing Path

Based on The 3 Doors Tibetan meditation practices and led by Senior Teacher Raven Lee, PhD, there are two opportunities coming up for those called to a subtle energy healing path:

A residential retreat at Pauenhof Retreat Center, Germany from June 16-19, 2018. [Learn more and Register.](#)

A 3-month interactive online program from September-November 2018. [Learn more and Register.](#)



Raven Lee.

The 3 Doors International Retreat

The 3 Doors hosted its first International Retreat for Academy graduates, current students, and senior teachers in Merida, Mexico from January 4-9, 2018. The themes underlying the days of practice and conversation included collective wisdom, service to others, and growing connections within The 3 Doors community.

These words by Phil Tonne, selected from his reflections, represent his perspective on the experience: *"The weather was amazing, and Rinpoche talked about our organization and offered fresh direction for the future of The 3 Doors without abandoning any of its foundation. In the moist warm air, he shared his vision, accompanied by birdsong, colorful butterflies, flowers and hummingbirds, the whimsical song of grackles carried from large fig trees, ornaments to his voice. (...)*

For an extended period of time, we sat in an arc around Rinpoche, moved by his presence, his open heart and his vulnerability, the trust and warmth opening each of the three doors. There was a sense that we could each participate more fully and come alive within this collective journey that was only possible because of the journey to the West by a young man who kept Dawa Gyaltsen's 5-fold teachings in his pocket as his support. (...)

There was a word that emerged that captured the

experience of being held by trees, warm moist air, and an amazing collection of individuals and beings – Apapacho, a warm collective hug much like the gumpa hugs we send to each other in celebration and support."



Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche spent 3 days with the group, offering practices, guidance, and inspiration to carry The 3 Doors into the future.



Seventy participants from 10 countries (Austria, Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Mexico, The Netherlands, Peru and United States) attended The 3 Doors International Retreat.



The Hacienda grounds in Merida, Mexico provided a sunny and warm respite for those coming from winter climates.



NEWS FROM LISHU INSTITUTE

The retreat on the *Six Lamps* and eight chapters of a sacred instruction in Lishu Institute were successfully completed on March 22, 2018. During this trimester the students and teachers had also the great fortune to be part of the enthronement of His Holiness 34th Menri Trizin Rinpoche and the Geshe graduation ceremonies in Menri Monastery. The teaching and practice of *The 21 Nails* will start on April 9th to June 15th, 2018. Here are some photo impressions from Lishu Institute and the visit to Menri Monastery.





Program September 2018 – June 2019 at Lishu Institute

Lishu Institute is launching a new program with a full curriculum study starting in September 2018. This is a great opportunity for long-term, in-depth study of the Bön tradition, and for deepening one's practice in the special environment of Lishu retreat center near Dehradun, India.

The proposed curriculum for this offering, including long (8 to 10 weeks) and short (2 weeks) retreats, is as follows:

- **3rd September 2018 to 9th November 2018** — Bon Lam Rim (path of enlightenment) and Ngöndro practice retreat
- **12th November 2018 to 25th November 2018** — Yeshe Walmo rituals
- **7th January 2019 to 1st March 2019** — Tummo and Dream Yoga from the Mother Tantra
- **4th March to 17th March 2019** — Atri Phowa
- **1st April to 8th June 2019** — Dzogchen Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyud: 12 Small Tantras

For more information, contact
yangrisangmo@gmail.com

www.lishu.org



OPEN FOR THE PRESENCE OF KIDS DURING MEDITATION

In Málaga, Spain, students of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche started a practice group at a primary school for the parents. The children are free to walk around while their parents are meditating. Here is their story, as told by Jose Ignacio Garcia Acosta.

This is our story about families. My name is Jose Ignacio. My wife Laura and I have been following Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche since 2008, when he visited Spain for the first time. We are the parents of two lovely kids, Gael age 6 and Leo age 3. They study at Maria Montessori's International Center, an American School in Málaga. The school applies the original Montessori system, characterized by respect and individualization in the learning process, particularly by taking care of the individual curiosity of each child as a basis for spontaneous learning.

Some parents knew about our *Tsa Lung* practice group and suggested starting a group at the school. As parents, we feel the benefits of our spiritual practice and face the challenge of bringing our children up with awareness. The parents at the school asked for a creative solution to this; a place where they and their children could practice. Because we already had some good experiences practicing with the *Tsa Lung* group in nature, we thought of a practice group for adults that was open to the presence of children.



Meditación abierta
Un taller para madres y padres abierto a la presencia de niños@s

Cada jueves de 18h a 18:45h en el CIMM abrimos un espacio para meditar que concilia la crianza con la búsqueda de una vida plena, en calma y consciente. Meditación Bön y Yoga Tibetano—Tsa Lung—, según las enseñanzas de Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, para conectar con ese lugar más profundo en el que reside nuestra naturaleza esencial, llena de posibilidades creativas y beneficios para nosotr@s y nuestr@s hij@s. Es un taller de meditación para adultos abierto a la presencia de nuestr@s hij@s.

Si quieres saber más, te esperamos el próximo: jueves 5 de octubre a las 18h en la charla de presentación donde os contaremos con más detalle en que consiste la práctica y tendremos una sencilla meditación introductoria.

Abierto a tod@s, tanto a quien quiera dar sus primeros pasos en la meditación como a practicantes avanzad@s. La actividad tendrá lugar durante el presente trimestre.



Imparte:
Dr. José Ignacio García Acosta.
Médico. Psicoterapeuta.
Instructor de meditación de Ligmicha Málaga

We realized we needed to prepare a space for the children, with activities that could be done in relative silence, and in an appropriate place. And, we had to accept that the kids would need a learning process of months to establish a good relationship with silence. We thought it could work, as the Montessori method works in that direction. We



Practice Group at Maria Montessori's International Center in Málaga, Spain.





Presentation with video of the HECAT School Project in Torreón, México.

began this free group knowing that the “noise” in our own heads is mostly stronger than the noise our kids make. We need to find silence in the middle of the daily life noise of bringing up children. This could be our little contribution to increase our awareness while raising kids, and to help others in their difficult moments. That's the origin of the group's name, “Open Meditation” meaning open to the presence of kids. Everybody who comes knows how the group works, and some find it a way to support future change in the global conscience, a gift we offer to the children.

When we were thinking of how to organize this, Alejandro Torrealba told me about the HECAT (Hermandad Educativa CAT A.C.) School Project in Torreón, México and Guillermo Vera sent us some information. [For more information on HECAT see [Ligmincha Europe Magazine # 23](#)]. I found the video on the internet of a visit by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche to the Project where children share their experiences with meditation. When we presented our plan at the Montessori school we showed this video to the teachers and parents.

We created a group with the parents and their children, with each parent in charge of his/her kids. Attending to their needs is the priority and also helps create good conditions for practice. Sometimes one or two parents take charge of all the kids, and the next week others take that task. We try to help the kids make contact with the silence with patience and awareness. Sometimes we have the experience of a wonderful spontaneous shared silence, which becomes a very special moment with the kids. The sessions are short, about 30 minutes of practice in a 45-minute period. At the end we share our experiences and

talk about the practice, our doubts, and answer questions. During the practice, the kids sometimes come sit beside us (or on us), connect, and, a few minutes later they continue with their activities (drawing, coloring mandalas, making puzzles, reading books, modeling, making origami. It is a beautiful spontaneous effortless connection.

An important reason we choose this setup is the conviction that if the children see us while we

practice it will have a positive effect on them, now and in the future. For them, meditation and silence becomes part of their daily routine. As a kid, I saw my father helping with the domestic work and that helped me to learn that it is something both men and women do.

We began at the end of September 2017, and since then we've practiced every Thursday. In December I prepared a short introduction to *Tsa Lung*, explaining some basic points from the book *Awakening the Sacred Body*, and strongly encouraging everyone to read it. The participants of the group are mainly families, but some single people accepted the challenge too. After all, it is open to everyone.



Up until now we continue, from one beginning to another, sharing with other families our quest and the desire of keeping this alive. It has not always been easy, particularly in the beginning, where only a few people had some experience in meditation. Step by step we grow in commitment and perseverance.

Text and photos by Jose Ignacio Garcia Acosta



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN EUROPE

Here is our report of what's been happening in the European sanghas. Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche visited Europe, teaching in person and on the internet. Some *sanghas* invited *Geshes* and other teachers.



February 23 – 25:

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche taught in Amsterdam, The Netherlands the *A-tri Essentials*. There were about 150 participants.



March 3 – 4:

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche taught in Grenoble (Montbonnot St-Martin), France, *Dream Yoga and The Clear Light*.





January 5 – 7:

Geshe Choekhortshang Rinpoche taught *Tummo* part 2 in Budapest, Hungary. Over 200 people participated.



January 13 – 14:

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche had been teaching on *A-tri* for 5 years in The Netherlands. This sangha-weekend in Biezenmortel was for some a repetition of the *A-tri* practices, for others it was an introduction.



March 24 – 25:

In Vienna, Austria, during the sangha-weekend with Wolfgang Krebs the 21 Nails were practiced as taught by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche during the Summer Retreat in Buchenau, Germany.





January and February 2018:

Geshe Mönlam Wangyal from Triten Norbutse Monastery visited Finland from mid January until the end of February. During his stay Geshe Mönlam gave teachings on the Tibetan *Bardo* and on *Tsa Lung* and Meditation. These weekend retreats were organized jointly by the Finnish Yungdrung Bon Association, Dechen Ritro and Ligmincha Finland as well as the two week's Mandala-painting course by Geshe

Mönlam. The chair of Dechen Ritro, Anne Brunila invited Geshe la to Finland and sponsored the rare and very beautiful *thangka* exhibition on the Great Masters of Bon that Geshe-la has painted. The exhibition was held at the Helinä Rautavaara Museum.



November 2017:

Khenpo Gelek Jinpa gave a teaching on *Gyalwa Chaktri* in Finland. About 40 people attended.



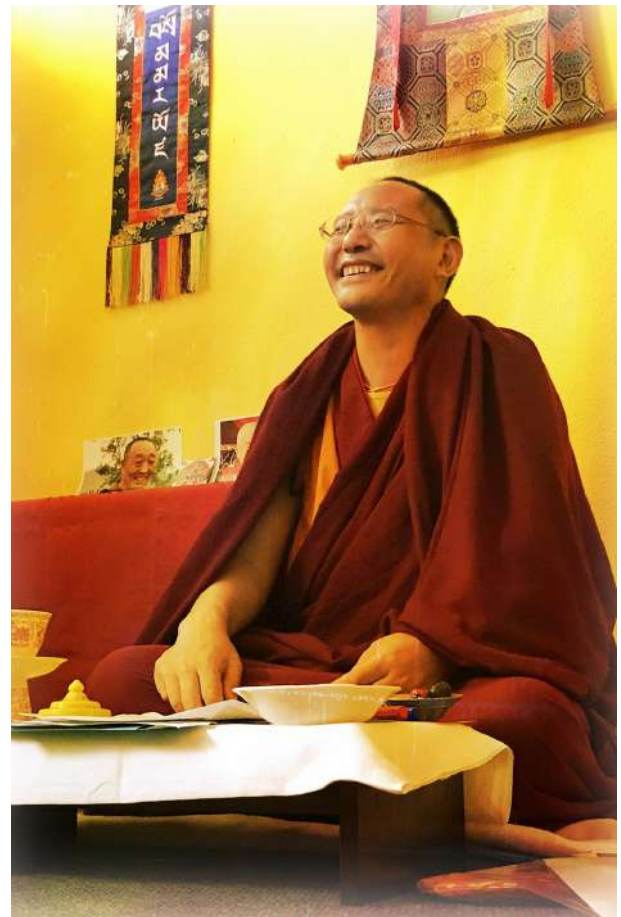
November and December 2017:

Anna-Kaisa Hirvanen gave courses on *Trul Khor* in Tampere and Oulu, Finland.





January 18 – 24:
 Drubdra Khenpo Tsultrim Tenzin Rinpoche taught in a place near near Bratislava, Slovakia. He gave a truly wonderful explanation from the *Mother Tantra* focused on *Trul Khor* and *Tummo* and as well on the practice of *A-tri*. The focus during the retreat was on meditation practice and many people had great benefit from that. After these teachings our weekly meditation group has grown, which is a truly wonderful result.





March 9 – 11:

In Berlin the 21 Nails were practiced with Wolfgang Krebs as taught by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche during the Summer Retreat 2017 in Buchenau, Germany.



November 17 – 19, 2017:

Marcy Vaughn taught the *Mother of Wisdom and Love, Sherap Chamma* in Berlin, Germany.




March 9 – 14:

Marcy Vaughn guided in the Pauenhof, Germany, the practices of *Sherap Chamma* and *Sipé Gyalmo*.



FREE FACEBOOK LIVE BROADCAST



Collective Prayer Session

Prayer to Nyamé Sherap Gyaltzen
Invocation of Yeshe Walmo
Dedication

December 30, 2017
11 a.m.-12 noon N.Y. Time

Prayers guided by
Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche
and Ligmincha Resident Lamas

Coinciding with the process to select
the next spiritual head of the Yungdrung Bön tradition


View live at
www.facebook.com/tenzinwangyalrinpoche

Real-time translation available in as many as 16 languages
Learn more at: www.ligmincha.org

You can watch the recording here:
[Collective Prayer Session: Selection of the 34th Menri Trizin](#)

www.facebook.com/tenzinwangyalrinpoche

Common Ground Among Six Spiritual Traditions of Tibet



A Conversation with esteemed teachers

- * Chakung Jigme Wangdrak Rinpoche
- * Khen Rinpoche Jampa
- * Yangten Rinpoche
- * Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche
- * Sogan Rinpoche
- * Jonang Gyaltsab Rinpoche
- * Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

FREE FACEBOOK LIVE BROADCAST

Wednesday, January 3, 12:00 noon NY Time
10:30 p.m. New Delhi Time / 10:45 p.m. Kathmandu Time

Live at: www.facebook.com/tenzinwangyalrinpoche

TWR LIVE Bringing Ancient Wisdom Teachings to Life

Learn more at: www.ligminchalearning.com/conversations-live

You can watch the recording here:
[Common Ground Among Six Spiritual Traditions of Tibet / English translation](#)

The Healing Power of Dynamic Energy
Perspectives from Tibetan Medicine on Balancing Your Vital Winds

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche
in Conversation with
Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo
and
Dr. Kungda Wangdue



FREE FACEBOOK LIVE BROADCAST

Tuesday, January 2, 1-2:30 p.m. NY Time
Live at: www.facebook.com/tenzinwangyalrinpoche

Learn more at: www.ligminchalearning.com/conversations-live

You can watch the recording here:
[The Healing Power of Dynamic Energy: Perspectives from Tibetan Medicine on Balancing Your Vital Winds](#)

Awakening the Wisdom of the Collective

A guided meditation broadcast live from
The 3 Doors International Retreat
Sunday, January 7, 10-11 a.m. New York Time

TENZIN WANGYAL RINPOCHE - FREE & LIVE ON FACEBOOK

View live at www.facebook.com/tenzinwangyalrinpoche
Learn more about TWR LIVE at www.ligminchalearning.com/twr-live
Learn more about The 3 Doors at www.the3doors.org

You can watch the recording here:
[Awakening the Wisdom of the Collective](#)



Prayers and Practice on the Tibetan New Year

Losar Greetings from
Ligmincha Resident Teachers

February 17, 2018
10 a.m. New York time

TENZIN WANGYAL RINPOCHE - FREE & LIVE ON FACEBOOK

View live at
www.facebook.com/ligminchainternational

You can watch the recording here:
[Prayers and Practice on the Tibetan New Year](#)



Mantra of Light (Sa Le Ö Mantra)

March 15, 2018 2:38:24 PM

You can watch the recording here:
[Mantra of Light \(Sa Le Ö Mantra\)](#)





You can watch the recordings here:

Discovering the Dance of Stillness
January 18

Finding the Melody in Silence
January 27

Embracing the Warmth of Spaciousness
January 29

The Greatest Gift of Life (Part 1)
February 22

The Greatest Gift of Life (Part 2)
February 22

**The Power of Awareness: To succeed in life,
connect with the light of awareness**
March 1

**Between Past and Future, the Treasure That Is
Now**
March 8

**The Four Lamps, Part 1: The first lamp, the
physical eye, clears worldly darkness —
allowing us to see**
March 21

**The Four Lamps, Part 2. The second lamp —
the clear vision of sound, light, and rays —
removes the view of nihilism**
March 28

**The Four Lamps, Part 3: Clearing the Darkness
of Ignorance**
April 4

**The Four Lamps, Part 3 (continued): Clearing
the Darkness of Ignorance**
April 6



TWR LIVE is an innovative way to connect with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, the ancient Tibetan teachings, and fellow students around the world through regular live broadcasts that can be easily viewed on Rinpoche's Facebook page. All broadcasts are free and open to all — you don't need a Facebook account to view them.

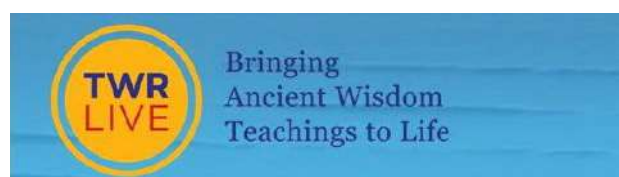
[Introductory video](#)

To access the viewing screen, visit [Rinpoche's Facebook page](#) at the time of the broadcast. If the screen doesn't appear right away, the broadcast may not have begun yet, so try reloading the page. If you have a Facebook account, you'll have an opportunity to submit questions and receive answers from Rinpoche. Be sure to like his page and click "Follow" to receive a notification each time Rinpoche goes live — that way you won't miss one of his spontaneous broadcasts between scheduled sessions. All broadcasts are recorded: [2018 archive](#) / [2016-7 archive](#)

Every few days Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche will broadcast live discussions of his books, [interviews with experts](#) in the fields of science and spirituality, pith wisdom teachings from the Tibetan Bon Buddhist tradition and much more. Through TWR LIVE you can broaden your knowledge and deepen your connection to the ancient wisdom traditions of Tibetan Bon Buddhism. You can also learn meditation practices and cultivate awareness for greater social and personal transformation.

Real-time translation: Through the generosity of volunteer translators, real-time translation of these broadcasts is available in as many as 18 languages. If a given translation isn't available live, it may be accessible later as a recording. [Access translations here](#)

Join the discussion! In the new TWR LIVE discussion group, Facebook members can share experiences of these meditation practices and learn from the experiences of others. It's recommended that you view TWR LIVE before joining. [Join now](#)



TEACHINGS IN WILGA, POLAND

The Polish sangha invite several lamas and teachers in Chamma Ling Poland in Wilga (near Warsaw). The teachings will be in English and translated into Polish.



May 31 – June 3:

John Jackson will teach *Six Lokas*. More information and registration: www.ligmincha.pl



June 21 – 24:

Dzogchen teachings by Ponlob Tsangpa Tenzin Rinpoche. More information and registration: www.ligmincha.pl



July 9 – 15:

Powa retreat with Nyima Woser Rinpoche. More information and registration: www.ligmincha.pl



August 14 – 19:

A retreat with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. The topic is *The Essential Teachings of Great Master Tapihritsa*. More information and registration: www.ligmincha.pl



September 13 – 16:

Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche teaches *Heart drops of dharmakaya*. More information and registration: www.ligmincha.pl



A DREAM IN THE DREAM, IN THE DREAM...

Being all together in bliss and harmony,
being all together we are fully free.
Dreams come, dreams go,
some as light, some as shadow.

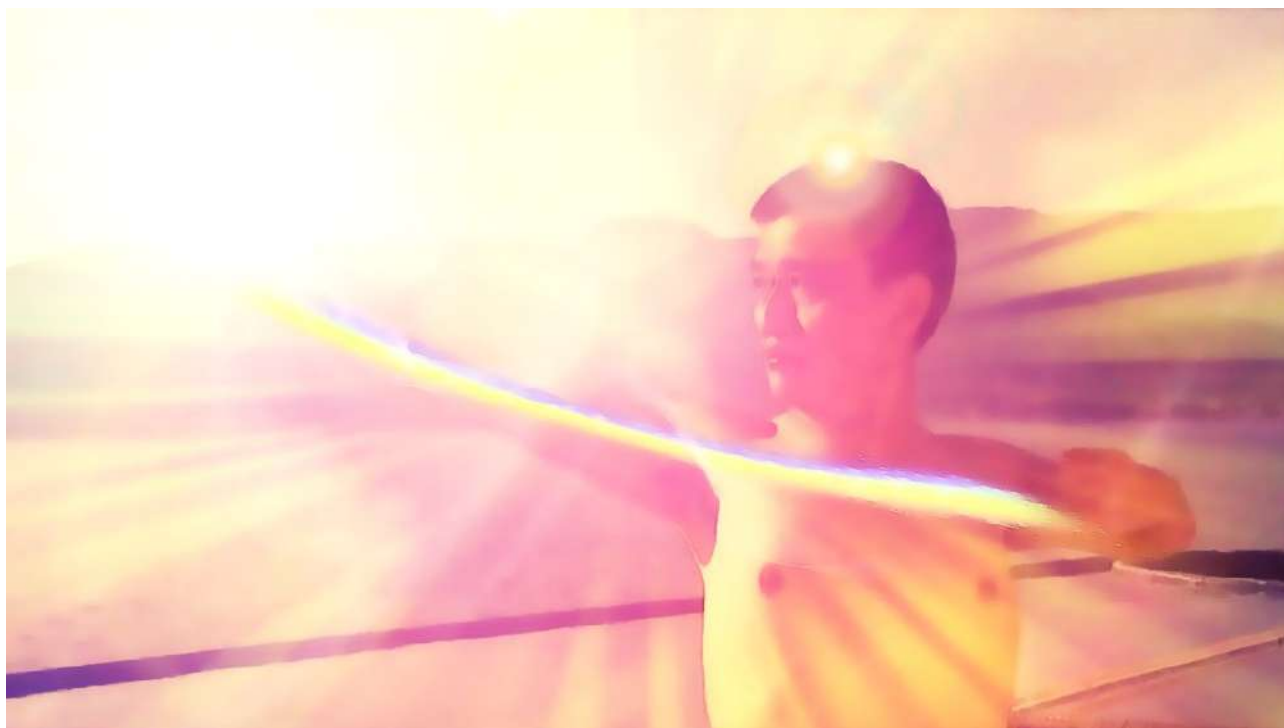
We are all connected in this space,
in this mysterious realm without a face
You are speaking to me – to us – to all
in this enlightened, golden hall.

The poet heard this rhyme while sleeping,
recognized it, and while writing
He realized: If I'm still abiding
without me worrying – I am creating.

Rita Rickenbacher



TENZIN WANGYAL RINPOCHE



Painted by Andréa Sechini

HOW TO DIE

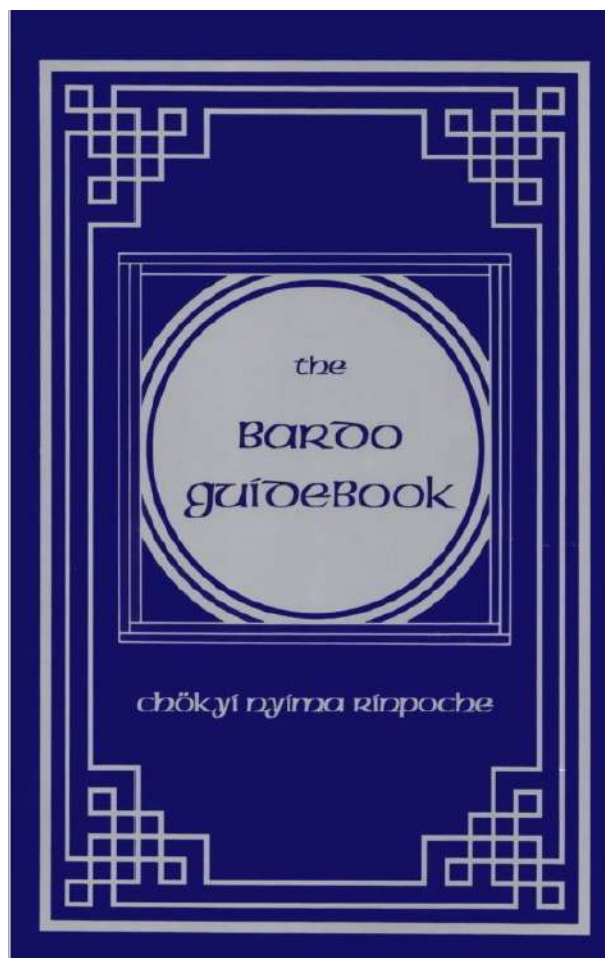
The Bardo Guidebook by Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche is a practical guidebook and easily applicable. This book covers the first three bardos: the bardo of this life, the bardo of dying, and the bardo of dharmata. The book also gives instructions on preparing to die. We reprint the pages 95 – 99 from the chapter *How to Die*.

We must acknowledge the impermanence of all conditioned things and especially that human life is fleeting. By doing so, we understand that it is crucial to prepare ourselves for death. What is it that dies at the moment of dying? It is our body and speech that die; the mind can never die. It is our mind that continues to wander through samsaric existences. Not our present body or voice. Only that which benefits our state of mind can be of help at the time of death. To concentrate on what is truly valuable when dying is considered intelligent, whereas to only worry about physical comfort is quite foolish. By all means, make some preparation for the moment when your life has come to an end.

The worst misfortune is to know how to take advantage of one's present situation but fail to do so. We all know that there is an end to this life, but no one knows the exact moment when it will happen. The time of death arrives without warning. Of course, to have a guaranteed life-span of seventy years would be very convenient. We could plan to spend a certain number of years on mundane projects, thinking, "After that I will focus on Dharma practice and everything will work out very nicely." But we do not know when death will come. The time of death can catch up with us at any moment.

Usually we think that only old people with a lot of wrinkles and grey hair are close to death, while youngsters with sparkling eyes and radiant complexions will not die soon. There is actually no such guarantee. Sometimes just the opposite happens: people who are already old remain for a long time while young people suddenly die.

What is of real value when we arrive at the



moment of death? It is personal experience in Dharma practice: the practices of purifying obscurations, gathering the two accumulations, and especially our insight into egolessness and emptiness, our training in the view free from mental constructs. Other than that, whatever benefits we acquire such as money, fame and worldly accomplishments, or anything else that is greatly valued during this lifetime is totally useless at the moment of death. The chief support is our understanding of egolessness.

We should ask ourselves, "What will help me when I die?" When we have difficulties now, we can turn for help to family and friends. When we are sick we can consult a doctor. But at the moment of death who can we see? Who can we turn to for help? We should ask ourselves these questions. When we honestly think about this it becomes clear only the results of our Dharma practice will help at that time. We should immediately prepare for the moment of death.



We can spend years studying whatever religion or school of thought is of interest to us. Even within Buddhism different philosophies and different levels of teachings exist. But simply studying these teachings, thinking about them and clarifying them in our mind, is not enough to be of true value at the moment of death. Only the application of teachings in personal experience through meditation practice will help; words and theories have no great value when facing death. Give thought to that now and know that only practical understanding and real meditation experience can help you at the time of death.



A small child does not make long-term plans or look very far ahead. If his immediate needs are attended to, then the child is happy and content. The attempt to avoid seeing what will come is childish. But many grownups act in this way, concentrating only on fulfilling immediate needs, fickle-mindedly running after whatever is in front of their noses and giving no thought to preparing for death. Then death arrives suddenly and it is too late.

Even while engaging in so-called Dharma practice there are many ways in which we can deceive ourselves. We can fool ourselves by spending our whole life gaining an intellectual comprehension of the structure of the Dharma teachings, memorizing all the stages of the path, the bodhisattva bhūmis and the different levels of meditation experience. We can become very learned in the details of the Four Tantras, such as the complete

structure of the tantric approach and all the rituals. However, this type of intellectual understanding is of little value at the time of death. Furthermore, we may become very skilled in debate if we have a sharp mind and a good tongue. We can excel at challenging the different arguments, refuting objections to the teachings and so forth. But that kind of competence is also useless when it comes to dying. What is really important now is to practice in order to realize egolessness. Just being able to talk about egolessness without practical experience is to fool yourself.

Religious people might be very successful in gathering followers, building temples and representations of the enlightened body, speech and mind, taking care of many disciples and giving teachings. But if they lack personal conviction about the state of nonconceptual wakefulness, the very essence of Dharma practice, then at the moment of death they will still have doubts, regrets, grasping and attachment. Do not let that happen to you.

When death approaches, abandon all attachment to spouse, children and parents, friends and relatives, possessions and property. To ensure liberation, completely cut all ties of clinging to these things. That does not mean that we should cut off love for other people such as close relatives. Love





is genuine when it is compassionate kindness embraced by bodhichitta and not strangled by attachment. Ordinary love that is mixed with attachment, anger and delusion is a cause for further entanglements and binds us to samsaric existence, whereas the love embraced by the great passion that is wisdom and compassion inseparable is a cause for liberation and enlightenment. This type of love is a million times more precious than ordinary affection for others. Ordinary love and affection is quite fickle, whereas the love that is embraced by bodhichitta and insight into emptiness is unchanging.



It does not matter what the object of attachment is. It can be attachment to ordinary things, even one's shoes; or attachment to one's body and life, country and home, or to gold and silver. Even attachment to religious objects such as one's statues and texts is still attachment. The main point here is to leave no object of attachment for your mind to fixate on at the time of death. It is better to give away whatever you have, either to poor people, friends, relatives or to your teacher. Make sure no material thing remains to which your mind can be attached. We should be without possessions when we know that the time of death is near. It is best to give away everything. That will

make it much easier at the time of death as one of the main obstacles to resting in the composure of meditation will have been cleared away.

At the time of death we should have exhausted all plans, whether virtuous or evil. For example, although we may not have succeeded in getting ahead of our competitors, we should not worry about that at the time of death. We should also give up any idea of seeing a particular relative or a close friend one last time. Maybe there is an enemy we would like to see in order to have the last word; we should completely abandon such aims. There are stories of people who could not let go and die because they wanted to witness one last attack on their enemy. Even half dead, they still would not let themselves die out of anger, spite or a grudge. They wanted a last chance to take revenge. Only after hearing that the other party had died could they finally relax and pass away. We should not be like that. Let absolutely nothing unfinished capture your thoughts.

(...)

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Text selected by Ton Bisscheroux



THE SACRED SILENCE IN SOUNDS

We reprint an interview with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, and an edited excerpt from an oral teaching given by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, that was published in *The Voice of Clear Light*, April 2004.

THE HEALING POWER OF SOUND

This interview with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche was conducted at Serenity Ridge on December 29, 2003 by Helen Gatling-Austin.

Sound is important in many spiritual traditions – but, you point out, it can also be used in healing. How is sound used in healing in the Tibetan tradition?

We know that in healing practices such as acupuncture, when a needle is placed in a part of the body, it sends a vibration or message to another part or to an organ, which causes balance and healing. In a similar way, the vibration of sound as it reverberates on the lips, in the head, and in the chest, can affect the body and organs in a very healing way.

How does one know what sounds to use?

This is a very ancient system and is described in a number of Tibetan texts. I'm teaching primarily from the Bon Mother Tantra (*Ma Gyud*). The Mother Tantra describes specific sound practices to treat physical ailments such as headaches, chest pain, and other problems. Ancient yogis who lived in the wilderness far from medical care used these and other yogic techniques to maintain their health. The right sounds can create balance between the five elements of earth, water, fire, air, and space. These elements, that are present in nature, are also present in each one of us. Our own particular balance of the elements strongly affects our mental and physical state – so maintaining this balance is essential to good health.

There are practices of chanting certain sounds, certain syllables, which activate or pacify each of the elements. These have a subtle but potent effect on our organs, and on our mental and spiritual states.

So these sounds work on all levels – the physical,

mental, and spiritual?

There are different levels of sound practice. As the health is affected, so the higher forms of consciousness – emotions, mind, spiritual practice – are also affected. If you are chanting the syllable RAM for the fire element, for example, that vibration is going to open particular channels and chakras, which will affect certain organs, in turn giving a particular experience of higher consciousness.

Mantras, strings of sacred syllables, are very important in the spiritual practices of Tibet, India, and other parts of Asia. Can you say anything about the origins of mantras?

Historically, there were enlightened individuals who themselves awakened in those sounds, who realized the power of those mantras, and saw how they could benefit sentient beings. They then developed whole cycles of teachings and practices related to those mantras.

In essence, though, it is much deeper. Energetically, each individual sound is produced by its own root, which is beyond time and space. This is beyond historical concept. It says in the teaching that when the sound and innate awareness merge, it produces speech – enlightened speech and samsaric speech. So clearly, whenever we speak, if our speech is connected with awareness, it will be aware speech, very pure.

I will give an example of what I call “primordial sound.” In Bon dzogchen (Great Perfection) the three most important seed syllables are AH, OM, and HUNG. These can be written in Tibetan letters, but the real AH, OM, HUNG are the sounds themselves. And these sounds can have a profound effect on the person chanting them.

When someone produces the sound AH, it clearly opens their heart center in a very spacious way. This unblocks energetic, emotional, and psycho-



AH OM HUNG

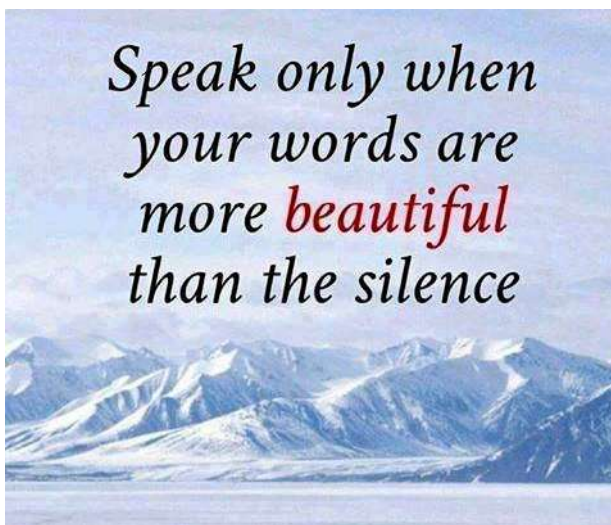
logical blocks. Then, through chanting OM, one can reconnect with missing elements or qualities within oneself. Let's say that someone has a sadness that blocks her whole existence.

With AH you open the channels, then with OM



you try to connect with a sense of joy that has been hidden, and with HUNG you try to bring it into manifestation. So to use this as a practice, once connecting with the joy, we would continuously sound HUNG and feel more and more joy. It's like charging up a potential. When the soul is finally charged with that joy, when you open your mouth, so many beautiful words come out. You want to write letters, you want to do things for others, you want to have joy and fun in your life. Using sound in this way can be a very healing practice on many levels.

It sounds like these practices are very relevant for modern people, not just for the ancient yogis. Very relevant. In this modern time, with the many stresses we face, we need to develop ways to balance and harmonize our energy. This is important of course for health. But, most important, it can support our spiritual growth. That is my purpose in teaching these very ancient Bon practices – to help support people in their spiritual growth. That is the most important reason for me.



THE SOUND OF SILENCE

An edited excerpt from oral teachings given by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche during the Bardo Retreat at Serenity Ridge, April, 2003.

When you find a moment of silence, you can see it in two ways. One way is to see what is not there. You may say, “The beautiful music is not there anymore” or, “Someone I love to talk to is not talking anymore.” You see it here as an absence rather than recognizing what silence itself is. However, you can also look at silence in a different

way. When you find a silent moment, don't think of it as the absence of all those sounds but rather, realize that the silence itself is an open space where pure sound, knowledge, teaching, or anything can appear. You recognize the silence in this way as complete, clear and open. You recognize silence as the potential for manifesting all the speech of enlightened beings, and not only enlightened beings, all beings. You recognize silence as full of power. You recognize it as full of joy.

When you open that door to what silence itself is, you feel more and more of the joy and power in it. It's a very opening experience. Silence is not the absence of something. It's not dead. It's full of energy and it's full of joy.

When you walk into a room and there is a sign: “Silence Please” that is not what we are talking about here. That sign just means “Hush up!” or “Don't make noise!” That sign implies that in that room we are bothered by sound and we would enjoy an absence of sound. It doesn't foster an insight or recognition of the silence itself. It is not saying that there is a great thing inside the silence, nor is it encouraging you to discover that. This difference in perspective is as huge a difference as that of earth and sky. Or, probably like the difference between sutra and dzogchen. One who is practicing sutra may try to avoid sound by going up into the mountains. But a dzogchenpa might go up into the mountains and visit the same silent place not to avoid sound, but rather to discover the inside of silence, the life in silence, the recognition in the silence. I don't mean that sutra will not do that, but the original intention is very different.

A little later, Rinpoche emphasized: There is a very important distinction between one's being aware of the silence and just being silent. Silence is always there. The nature of mind is always there. When you're awake, it's there; when you're asleep it's there; when you're confused, it's there; when you're happy, excited, jumping, it's there. It is always there. We are not talking about whether the presence of your awareness is there or not, we are talking about your awareness of that presence. Right? Being aware of what it is is more important than knowing something is there.

Text selected by Jantien Spindler



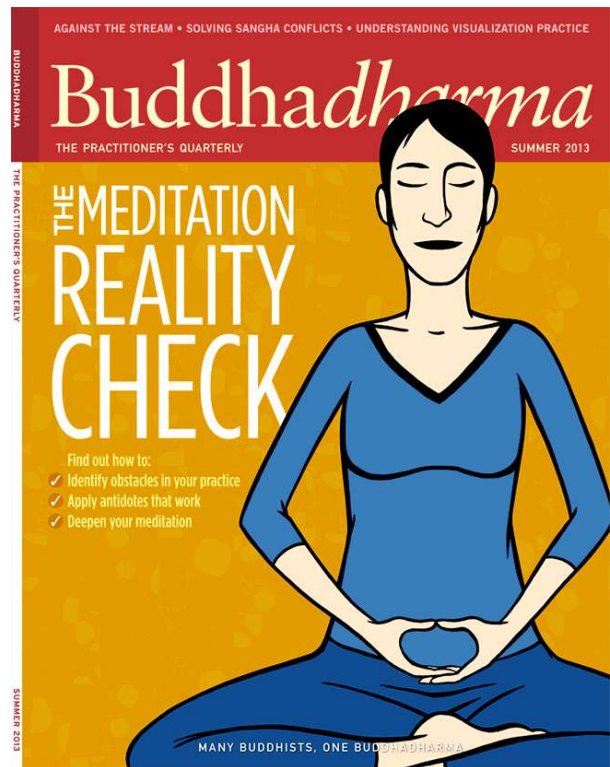
START WITH YOUR BODY

In the 2009 Fall issue of *Buddhadharma* was a panel discussion about meditation and body awareness with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and other Buddhist teachers. We reprint the answers by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, and start with the introduction by Anne Carolyn Klein. You can read the complete article on www.lionsroar.com.

Anne Carolyn Klein: When we hear words like “meditation,” “mind-fulness,” or “mind training,” we often assume we’re working with our minds alone. But nothing could be further from the way it really is. Meditation, mindfulness, and mind training are full-being enterprises. They involve our whole body and our body’s energies, including how speech expresses those energies, and how mind rides on them.

It’s not surprising that we think about mind training in this way. Since Descartes, Western culture has articulated a chasm-like divide between mind and body, and an analogous one between reason and emotion. But emotions are experienced so strongly through the body that when we leave it out of our meditation equation, we are likely to leave feelings aside as well. And when meditation does not encompass feelings, it is difficult for practice to reorient our lives as deeply as we intend it to do and need it to do.

The discussion here illuminates the body’s importance in several ways. As Phillip Moffitt and Reggie Ray point out, observation of the body helps us overcome the sense of solidity we have superimposed on it. In this way, the body gives us access to our conditioned nature, a teaching central to Buddhist teachings. The more dualistic our sense of mind and body, the more we objectify the body and see it as a tool for our use. This, in turn, reinforces our mistaken sense of the body as a thing. As all students of Buddhism know, moving past the illusion of solidity is vital for removing the further delusion that we are, or have, a self-enclosed independent self. We are not such a self, and we don’t have such a self. Never did.



The panelists note that by beginning with “the part of our minds we call the body,” we find easier access to stabilizing our awareness. As Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche points out, if we work with the body, we can avoid forcing the mind to be quiet. The mind will quiet naturally, because body and mind profoundly affect one another. Focused on the body, our mind is less likely to wander off into our own story lines.

Moreover, through understanding the way coarse and subtle energies move through the body, we can appreciate that our posture directly affects our minds, just as the state of our mind will also affect our body. This is the significance of the different postures and movements of Tibetan and Indian yogic practices.

Through an experience of the conditioned nature of the body, we also begin to approach the unconditioned. The body can bring us to the ultimate in two ways.

First, as noted, we can see through the illusions of permanence, solidity, or independence that we superimpose on our body and everything else, especially our sense of self. Unless we stop to



reflect, even our own mind appears to us in that guise: "I'm always angry. I can't change this."

Second, the state of enlightenment itself is expressed in what are known as the three bodies, or dimensions. These are purified analogues of our own body. Our "buddha-fied" physical body becomes the emanation body (*nirmanakaya*), our energy becomes the resplendent body (*sambhogakaya*), and our genuine mind becomes the truth body (*dharmakaya*). There is much to understand here at a refined level. At the very least, it is clear we must open deeply to the subtle reality of our own body, speech-energy, and mind-nature to manifest their enlightened potential.

Viewed in these ways, the body is not just something associated with our individual manifestation in the world. When we feel into it more subtly, we can experience what Cyndi Lee calls "the energetic circuitry" that connects people. This is a palpable force in practice, and an important reason why all Buddhist traditions encourage us to practice together, in the same room, or in imagined synchronicity, so that the dedication of our full minds and bodies can support us in the unfolding of practice. As Nagarjuna famously said, through paying attention to the conventional, the conditioned, we will recognize the ultimate, the unconditioned. We recognize it not as some abstract truth, but as our own intimate nature, the ground of the entire mind-body system.

Buddhadharma: In Western culture, meditation is most often thought of as a mental or psychological practice. In what way is it also a body practice? (...)

Buddhadharma: You [Phillip Moffitt] spoke of the Buddha's formulation of "awareness of the body in the body." What do you take this to mean? (...)

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche: In our tradition, we often talk about practice from the perspective of the body, the flow of the wind (*prana*), and the arising awareness of the mind. The average person can deal with the body much more easily than working immediately with the flow of wind, or energy, or the subtleties of awareness of the mind. So it's good to start with posture, with a good sitting position, such as the five-point or seven-point posture. The moment somebody is

sitting in one of those positions, all the channels and the chakras align, which supports good flow of the wind, which supports awareness. Mind requires much less effort to be in the state of awareness. The role of the body, then, is to help the prana, and the prana helps the mind. If someone wanted to bypass the body and the wind, and try to directly force the mind into achieving sudden awareness, that would be almost impossible.

We also practice a physical yoga, *trulkhor*, with movements designed to open particular chakras and channels, because in those chakras and channels, there are particular forms of prana, which are the direct cause of specific kinds of awareness. Whenever they are open and the winds are flowing better there, it's easier for the mind to be aware. Working with the body can avoid trying to force the mind to be quiet. When you try to tell the mind to sit quiet, it often does the opposite. If you're trying to tell mind what to do, mind never listens. But if you create the right causes and conditions, mind will follow.



Buddhadharma: Isn't *trulkhor* a relatively advanced practice?

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche: Some kinds of *trulkhor* are quite subtle, but the overall point of the physical yoga is that it can be easier to work with the body as a support for awareness than to work directly on the mind. Why are so many people interested in yoga? Because it's easy to follow. Of course, it's not necessarily easy to do, but it's much easier than dealing with a lot of complicated stages of mind practices. The popularity of yoga in the West is a wonderful thing because it can become a door to dharma. It can start as an interest in fitness, well-being, and health, and gradually it can become the door to higher understanding. Unfortunately, it can also be just a physical fitness regimen, and its original purpose of supporting awareness is lost. (...)



Buddhadharma: How is something as rarified as the sambhogakaya and the dharmakaya still “body” in the sense that we understand body, as the thing with ears and nose and toes?

(...)

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche: In my tradition, we work with body, speech, and mind as three doors. The body is a doorway into the nirmanakaya, speech into the sambhogakaya, and mind into the dharmakaya. If we engage these well, they become gateways to enlightenment, to buddhahood. If we leave them aside, we will not develop the kayas, the enlightened manifestation. If you don't work at all with the body, for example, you are going to miss the nirmanakaya aspect. I have been teaching about sound and speech as healing, which works with the sambhogakaya aspect.

(...)

Buddhadharma: There can be a lot of pain, discomfort, and loss of ability associated with the body that can make practice difficult, and many people have been known to just give up practice. What kinds of instructions can be helpful for people who are experiencing diminished function?

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche: I often hear of people who have had an injury, perhaps even a brain injury, and their ability to meditate is not what it was before. But just because your body has become weaker doesn't mean the mind is unable to practice. In some sense, the mind has the



ability to do its own practice regardless of the conditions of the body. That must be understood. In the end, mind is totally free. It does not depend on the body. We may think, even deep in our consciousness, that if our body is not working well, we are no longer able to practice. We think the body is getting old, so the mind is getting old. Mind is ageless, beyond birth and death. Thinking that whatever happens to body happens to mind, to me, is the biggest problem we have. It's one of the biggest sources of suffering.

(...)

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche: Illness and adverse physical conditions affect what we call the moving mind, the thinking mind, the mind that can guide awareness in various directions. But in the end we'll have to give up the thinking mind. It dissolves into space along with everything else, and we're left with pure awareness. Nothing affects pure awareness.

(...)

Text selected by Ton Bisscheroux



TENZIN WANGYAL RINPOCHE'S 2018 EUROPEAN SEMINARS AND ONLINE TEACHINGS

When	Where	What	More information
Flexible dates and times	Your computer or other device	TWR LIVE	ligminchalearning.com
May 4 – 6	Berlin, Germany	Weekend seminar: The Seven Mirrors of Dzogchen, Part 2	www.ligmincha.de
May 8 – 9	Berlin, Germany	Public talks: Meditation – The Impact of Gross and Subtle Energies on the Mind	Bodhicharya Deutschland
May 11 – 13	Vienna, Austria	Weekend seminar: The Five Wisdoms	www.ligmincha.at
May 12 – June 10	Your computer or other device	Interactive online course: Tibetan Dream Yoga	www.glidewing.com
May 19 – 21	Bulle, Switzerland	Weekend seminar: The Practice of the Heart — The Heart of the Practice	www.twr-bulle.ch
May 25 – 27	Paris, France	Weekend seminar: A-tri, Part 1	www.ligmincha.fr
June 30 – July 22	Your computer or other device	Interactive online course: Healing From the Source	www.glidewing.com
August 10 – 12	Helsinki, Finland	Weekend seminar: The True Source of Healing	www.ligmincha.fi
August 11 – September 2	Your computer or other device	Interactive online course: Tibetan Sound Healing	www.glidewing.com
August 14 – 19	Wilga, Poland	Retreat: Dzogchen Teachings of Tapihritsa	www.ligmincha.pl
August 21 – 26	Buchenau, Germany	Retreat: Twenty-One Nails, Part 4	www.ligmincha.de
September 7 – 9	Budapest, Hungary	Weekend seminar: The Practice of the Six Lokas	www.ligmincha.hu
September 29 – October 28	Your computer or other device	Interactive online course: Awakening the Sacred Arts	www.glidewing.com

You can also view free recorded Internet teachings from your computer or other device, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Access them on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com), www.ligmincha.org, www.ligminchalearning.com/twr-live-video-archive and www.oceanofwisdom.org

