

pema mandala

MAGAZINE



Fall/Winter 2005



pema mandala MAGAZINE

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Message *from the* Editor

Dear friends,

At a public talk in 2002, the Venerable Khenpos gave a public talk in Nashville. We asked them to speak on how to deal with crisis from a Buddhist perspective – “Heart Advice for Troubled Times.” Several hundred people gathered, waiting with poignant anticipation. I’m not sure what I expected – perhaps a practice on increasing compassion through adversity or a talk on equanimity and mindfulness of emotions.

Rinpoches began speaking and soon cut right to the heart of the matter — that in the midst of change, trouble, and death, we can rely on that which doesn’t change, is free from trouble, and is beyond birth and death. And they gave a tender introduction to our true nature, which is indestructible, vast and luminous. No matter what the circumstances, we can find our equilibrium there. And we can remember that everyone who suffers also has that diamondlike nature. Even though their suffering is great, they inherited a nature that is absolutely indestructible. From the space of that awareness, we can keep from being overwhelmed and lost in our own feelings of hopelessness, and we can offer true compassion and help in time of need.

At this time, may we be centered in that centerless nature, radiating true compassion, generosity, and actions to benefit others.

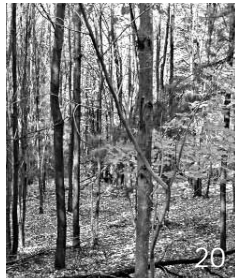
Yours in the Dharma,
Rita Frizzell (*Pema Ting’ dzin*)

PARTICIPATE IN THE NEXT ISSUE

Calling All Hints & Tips

The next issue of Pema Mandala will have a page of hints and tips from our family of practitioners. You are invited to participate by sharing some of the ideas you’ve developed that are helpful in your dharma practice, whether it’s keeping your place in the sadhana or counting prostrations, or off-the-cushion routines that help you remain mindful.

Submissions can be very short – just a sentence or a paragraph. If you don’t think you’re a good writer, just write down the facts and we’ll edit it for you. Please submit by February 1, 2006, to rita@dakinigraphics.com or the Pema Mandala address at left. Remember to include your name, dharma name, and location.

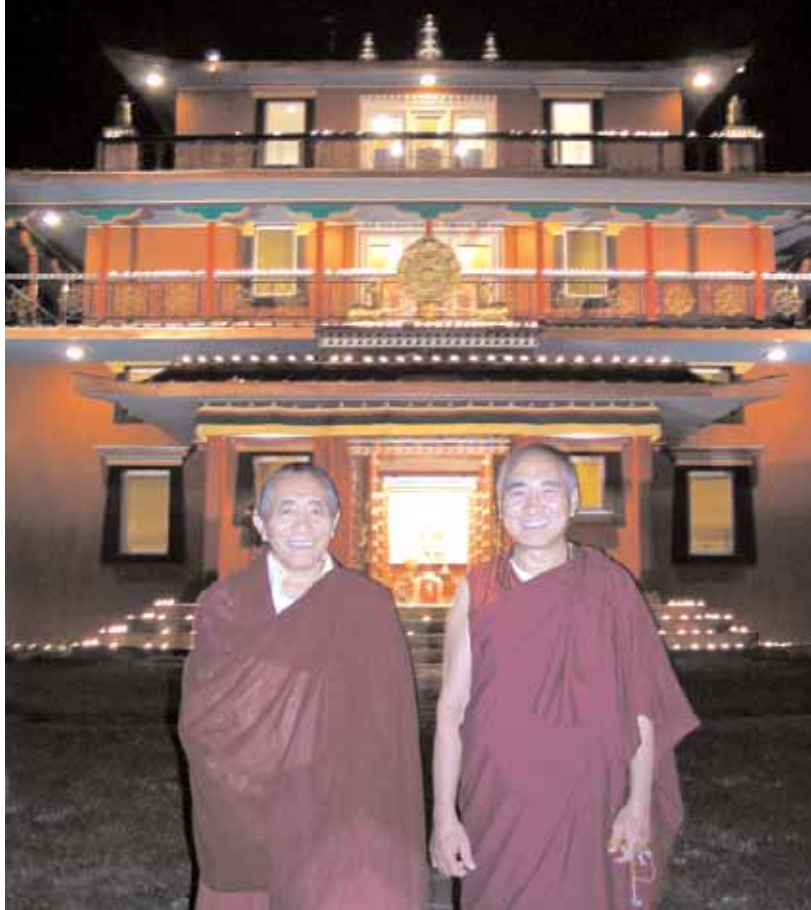


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Cover photo concept by Ani Lorraine. Photography by Rita Frizzell.
Special thanks to the sangha members who helped place and light candles in a grand lamp offering made September 1, 2005.

Kindly note: This magazine contains sacred images and should not be disposed of in the trash. It should either be burned or shredded with the remainder going into clean recycling.



Padma Samye Ling, 2005

Dear Sangha Friends,

This fall, we are happy to reflect upon the many sangha members and friends who have come together to explore the dharma. Whether during a retreat at Padma Samye Ling or in your own hometown, we rejoice in your practice and your aspiration to grow in love, compassion, and wisdom. We also appreciate the generosity of those who have supported our dharma activities here and abroad.

While so many beautiful things are happening, at the same time there are also countless individuals who are experiencing extreme difficulty. We extend our heartfelt sympathy and prayers for all those who have suffered such great loss in the recent disaster in the Gulf Coast states, and for those throughout the world who are suffering. We encourage everyone to continue praying, giving, and assisting others to overcome adversity.

May we all experience joy and peace.

Yours in the Dharma,

Venerable Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche
Venerable Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche

The Three Kayas

A TEACHING BY KHENCHEN PALDEN SHERAB RINPOCHE & KHENPO TSEWANG DONGYAL RINPOCHE

EDITED BY CRAIG BIALICK (PEMA SHUGCHANG), SUMMERTOWN, TN

Reality can be understood in terms of three modes of existence which are called the three kayas. Penetrating the meaning of the kayas helps one understand not only one's own nature, but the nature of reality itself. In this teaching, given December 9, 1989, at Camp Discovery, Tennessee, the Venerable Khenpos provide a succinct overview of the three kayas.

THE THREE KAYAS ARE ACTUALLY ASPECTS OF ENLIGHTENED BEING. They are the Buddha reflected in three different ways in order to help sentient beings.

The meaning of the Sanskrit word Buddha is awakened or fully realized one. What is realized? The original nature is realized perfectly as it is, with nothing changed or exaggerated but as it is at both the relative and absolute levels or as relative and absolute truth. One who is awake to this understanding is a Buddha. This realization involves the complete transcendence of obscurations. We haven't fully awakened to our true nature because of these obscurations whereas Buddha Shakyamuni realized the original nature perfectly because he was purified of obscurations.

The word "buddha" refers to all realized beings. It is not that only one particular enlightened being is known as Buddha. Those who realized their true nature in the past are

known as Buddhas, those who realize it now may be called Buddhas and those who come to this realization in the future will be known as Buddhas. "Buddha" is a general term which does not merely refer to a single individual but to every realized being.

The whole purpose of enlightened beings is to benefit sentient beings. In order to do this, they appear in many different forms or bodies. The principle emanations are known as the three kayas: Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, and Nirmanakaya. There are even four and five kayas, divided further to qualify other manifestations of enlightened being, but it is all one Buddha. "Kaya" is a Sanskrit word which means body in the sense of many qualities gathered together, joined and united as one. Kaya here refers to the embodiments of loving-kindness, compassion, wisdom, and skillful means which appear in the world to help sentient beings.

DHARMAKAYA

The Sanskrit word “dharma” means phenomena, both external and internal, subjective and objective. Dharmakaya refers to the primordial or true nature of phenomena, which is beyond conception or dualistic thought. It is not partial. It does not discriminate. It is Great Equanimity. This embodiment of wisdom is known as Dharmakaya.

We are all aware of a great variety of phenomena. There are many things which we know and feel. However, they all can be summarized into two categories: subjective phenomena and objective phenomena. Both develop through the interaction of the elements. If we look carefully at the elements, each of them are aggregations of many subunits. Every element is composed of individual atoms and these consist of many subatomic particles bound together as the atomic structure of that element. None of these particles are independent things. Each is dependent upon others for its existence. If we look deeply and carefully into any single element, we will find our investigation in terms of subject and object ultimately dissolves in the intuition of Great Emptiness. This is the ultimate examination we can make. To go further is beyond our dualistic conceptions. Understand the real nature of the external world to be no other than Great Emptiness.

If we look at subjective phenomena, we find that they are similar to the elements. Mind can be conceptually divided into eight categories or many more, but it functions as a single aggregate. If we search for where our present thought comes from, we will not find an exact source. If we look to where it goes, we cannot know its destination. We cannot even find the spot where it exists. In this way, we can see that mind, the subject, is arising in Great Emptiness, inexpressible by mundane conceptions or speech.

Both the internal and external are based in one primordial nature. Outer or inner, there is no distinction; all are one Emptiness beyond dualistic thought, beyond existence and nonexistence, both and neither. It goes far beyond the conventional notion of emptiness or vacuity. It is not some “thing” to which we can cling. It is always here, never increasing or decreasing, but remaining as it is, as it was, and how it will be all the time. Circumstances cannot change the primordial nature. Perfect realization of this nature is realization of Dharmakaya.

SAMBHOGAKAYA

Great Emptiness is our primordial nature. This Emptiness is not like a black hole or a state of nothingness. Emptiness is more like a state of fullness. By means of the primordial nature, everything is arising without effort, without thought, spontaneously appearing with clarity. That is the sign of Emptiness. If there were no Emptiness or primordial truth, everything would be blocked, nothing could move, nothing could develop, and nothing could manifest. This spontaneous radiance of unceasing clarity is the meaning of the Sanskrit term, “Sambhogakaya.”

“Sam” means perfect, “bhoga” means enjoyment, and “kaya” is roughly translated as body. Thus, “the body of perfect enjoyment” is the radiant wisdom aspect of our original nature. The Sambhogakaya is displayed as the Five Wisdoms. The first of these is Dharmadhatu Wisdom. The second is known as Mirrorlike Wisdom. The third is the Wisdom of Equality. The fourth is Discriminating Awareness Wisdom. The fifth is known as All-Accomplishing Wisdom. These Five Wisdoms are the clarity aspect of our true nature.

While we are in the world of samsara or as long as we are not realized, these wisdoms are known as the eight consciousnesses. When you purify the obscurations, these eight are transformed into the Five Wisdoms. Therefore, the nature of our present consciousness is based upon these Five Wisdoms.

The Eight Consciousnesses

Here we will name the eight consciousnesses for people who don't know them. The first five are the eye consciousness, ear consciousness, tongue, nose, and body consciousnesses. These five consciousnesses function through the organs to perceive the five external objects of sense. In themselves, these five are very partial and limited. The eye consciousness is only for form. It cannot taste or hear sounds or smell. Similarly, the ear is only for sound, not for seeing, tasting, and so forth. Now how can these scattered consciousnesses be brought together into one united state? That is the function of the sixth consciousness, which is like the driver or a judge who makes decisions. It receives and organizes the input of the five external consciousnesses and gives meaning to our experience. The sixth combines and integrates the sense consciousnesses into one. It is known as mind consciousness.

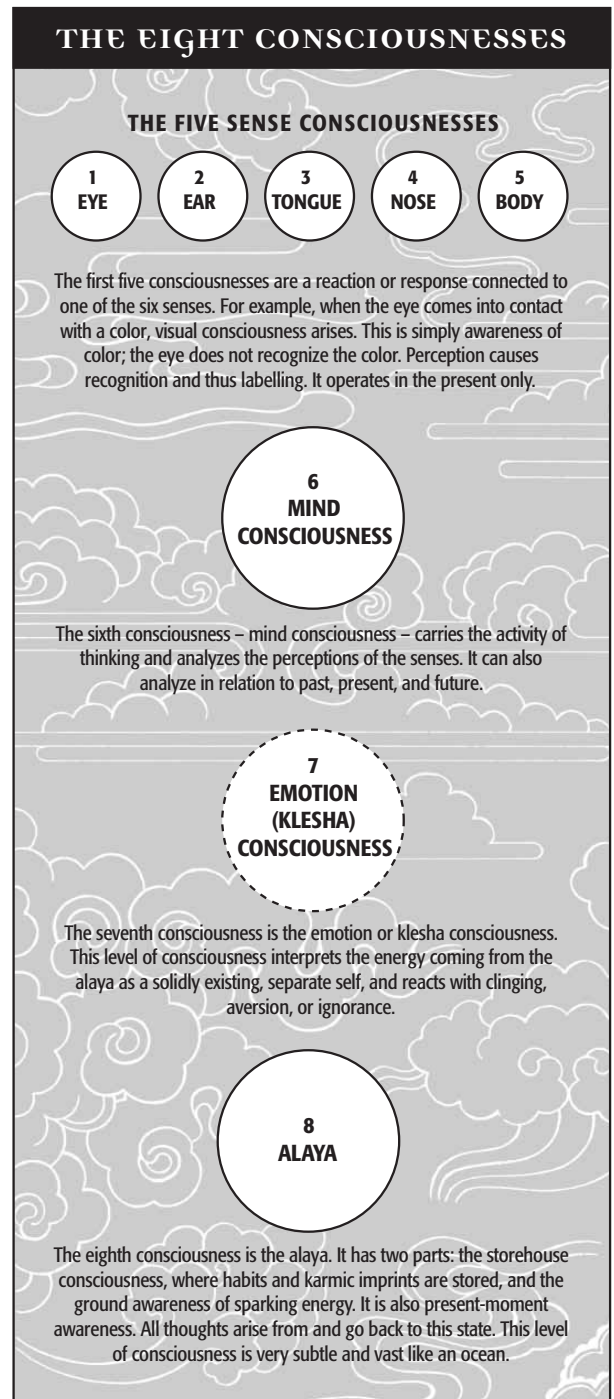
The first five consciousnesses are very immediate. They have no continuity. They only refer to the present. They cannot sense the past or the future. They only communicate directly with the present. They are very exclusive and one-sided. The sixth consciousness not only unites these five, it can also refer to the events and activities of the past and future. It is actually structuring our sense of time.

A closer look reveals that the mind has two sides. One, which we have called the sixth consciousness, is dealing with the business of the past, present, and future; it is making decisions based on the information received from the first five consciousnesses. It is very neutral and rational. There is another side to this mind, the seventh consciousness, which is basically very emotional and gives rise to ego-clinging. On the basis of ego-clinging, ignorance, anger, attachment, jealousy, pride, and doubt develop. All this arises in that singular aggregate we call the mind.

All seven of these minds are based upon an eighth consciousness which is known as a “kungzhi” in Tibetan, the ground of mind. It is sometimes translated as “subconscious storehouse.” In Sanskrit, it is called “alaya.” The nature of the eighth consciousness is neither positive nor negative; it is neutral. Alaya retains every basic habit pattern of individuals. Everything is stored there; our good karma, bad karma, and neutral karma. All kinds of habits and whatever actions we perform during our lifetimes are registered there. This is why it is known as a “storehouse.” Alaya is a consciousness, but it is very subtle.

When these eight consciousnesses are transmuted or transformed, they become the Five Wisdoms. The Five Wisdoms are symbolized by the five Dhyani Buddhas. They are the radiant spectrum of clarity qualifying the Dharmakaya. The central Buddha of Dharmadhatu Wisdom is Vairocana. The eastern Buddha of Mirrorlike Wisdom is Akshobya. The Wisdom of Equality is embodied in the Buddha of the southern direction, Ratnasambhava. The western Buddha of Discriminating Awareness Wisdom is Amitabha and the northern Buddha of All-Accomplishing Wisdom is known as Amoghasiddhi. These are the principle Buddhas of the Sambhogakaya.

(Continued, page 22)





the smile of sun and moon

Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche's groundbreaking new commentary on Tara is now available. *The Smile of Sun and Moon: A Commentary on The Praise to the Twenty-One Taras* was written spontaneously during a retreat on the Twenty-One Taras at the Padmasambhava Buddhist Center in West Palm Beach, Florida. The commentary clarifies each word of The Praise according to the four levels of meaning: outer, inner, secret, and ultimate. We are pleased to share an excerpt of the text in this article.

TARA, THE FEMALE BUDDHA OF COMPASSION, is the embodiment of the enlightened activity of all the Buddhas. She is well known by all practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism, yet the full depth of her meaning may not be immediately apparent. A new book by Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche plumbs the vast depths of the twenty-one emanations of Tara, bringing forth new insights to a familiar practice.

Tara started out as a regular person, just like all of us. Many years ago, during the time of Buddha Ngadra, a great king gave birth to a daughter named Yeshe Dawa. As she grew, she felt deep compassion for the people, yet she saw that in spite of all she did for them, it was not enough. She could not help them overcome their suffering in a fundamental way. One day the Buddha visited the palace and she asked him what she could do. He taught her bodhichitta: the mind of enlightened love and compassion. She vowed to reach enlightenment as a woman, in the form she was currently in, with the wish that she would be able to help all beings, whether with their spiritual needs or mundane concerns. She practiced diligently and attained enlightenment in that very lifetime.

And so she became known as “Tara, the Lady Who Liberates,” a fully enlightened buddha who is swift to help all sentient beings. She emanates countless manifestations from one single state. At the dharmakaya level, she is Samantabhadri, the mother of all the buddhas, the primordial-ly enlightened state of mind. At the sambhogakaya level, she is Vajrayogini, taking an energetic role in bringing sentient beings to enlightenment. At the nirmanakaya level, she emanates as many human manifestations in order to actively assist beings. In addition, there are numerous emanations, such as the Twenty-One Taras, to help guide beings on the path to enlightenment.

Tara is not just a buddha of the past; she is also a buddha for this present time. Along with Guru Rinpoche, she is known as the Buddha of this degenerate time. Practicing on Tara helps one realize one's true nature of boundless love and compassion, reducing ego clinging, anger, and attachment.

One of the most widespread and beloved practices of Tara is called *The Praise to the Twenty-One Taras*. It was memorized and recited by almost all Tibetans and treasured in every school of Tibetan Buddhism. However, according to translator Anna Orlova, “it was usually practiced in the style of outer tantras; *The Praise* was hardly ever regarded to be an Anuyoga or Dzogchen text. The importance and unique character of Khenchen Palden Sherab's commentary is in presenting all four levels of its meaning. It illustrates one of the principles of the ability to reach to the minds of people with different capabilities, sometimes in the same words and at the same time.”

Khenchen Rinpoche wrote this commentary spontaneously in 1997 as he and Venerable Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche taught the annual winter retreat at the Padmasambhava Buddhist Center in West Palm Beach, Florida. One chapter is dedicated to each of the Tara emanations, and the text is illuminated in view of the Longchen Nyingthig terma teaching. It has four levels of meaning: the outer, inner, secret, and the ultimate meaning, explained according to Prajnaparamita, Maha, Anu, and Atiyoga. Included are newly commissioned color images of the Twenty-One Taras by Anna Zhuranskaya, courtesy of Joan Kaye. The profound instructions of a living master, this commentary gives us an insight into our true nature – the originally enlightened state, the essence of the Noble Lady Tara.

excerpt from the commentary

From the Introduction by Khen Rinpoche

THE QUEEN OF DAKINIS, Yeshe Tsogyal, bestowed on the twenty-five disciples, king and subjects, as well as others, a complete cycle of oral instructions, upheld in Nyingma, the Early Translation School, as three great doctrinal sections: the long lineage of *kama*, the short lineage of *terma*, and the profound pure vision lineage. This particular teaching is a part of this tradition.

The omniscient Jigme Lingpa was the wisdom emanation of Dharma King Trison Detsen. In central Tibet, from the Lake *Drak Da* where Yeshe Tsogyal was born, he obtained the pith instructions on the outer, inner and secret practice of the wisdom dakini – the legacy of guru yabyum, passed down through the mind lineage. By hearing the sweet song of a bee – the sign language of the dakinis of the symbolic lineage of Vidyadharas – the knot of Jigme Lingpa's throat channel released, and he opened the gate of the most profound *terma* teaching. This profound instruction of the aural lineage, explaining the literal meaning of the tantras of Noble Tara, is independent of the others. It is the blazing display of the wisdom that perceives all phenomena, transforming all appearances into melodious vajra speech.

The entire meaning of the praise to the Noble Lady Tara Homage to the Twenty-One Taras – the spontaneous vajra speech, independent of training, diligence and effort – was never explained in the past by any Tibetan scholar. Wishing to elucidate it, I relied mainly on Jigme Lingpa's amazing extraordinary teaching, *The Inner Sadhana of the Queen of Great Bliss, the Twenty-One Taras Together with Benefits*, and also on the commentaries by Taranatha and others, which added the hidden meaning.

Chapter One: Noble Lady Tara Nyurma Pamo, Swift Heroine Who Increases Bodhicitta, the Root of Fame, and Overpowers All Appearances.

***Homage, Tara, quick one,
Heroine whose eyes flash like lightening,
Born from the opening corolla of the lotus face
Of the lord of the triple world.***

First: the literal meaning.

Homage. Who is the object of homage? Liberating from the temporary and ultimate suffering of samsara and its cause, you are the Liberator or **Tara**, the very embodiment of activity of all the Victorious Ones. By non-conceptual great compassion, accomplishing benefit and happiness for all the beings pervading space, not distracted even for an instant, you are the **quick one**. Destroying by appropriate means the negative forces, taming those afflicted by disturbing emotions,

and protecting from all fears with unimpeded power and ability, you are the **heroine**. Your supreme **eyes** of great wisdom, knowing all aspects, **instantly, like lightening**, perceive without hindrance all that is knowable over the ten directions and the three times.

The protector of the triple world – the gods above, the *nagas* below, and the humans on the earth – is Noble Avalokiteshvara, the lord of the four immeasurables: compassion, loving kindness, joy, and equanimity. From his eyes, which are like the center of the **lotus** flower of his beautiful **face**, appeared two tears of strong compassion for all sentient beings. From the tear of his right eye appeared white Tara and from the tear of his left eye appeared green Tara.

I pay homage to you, Noble Lady Tara, with devotion, from my heart.



Green Tara and the Twenty-One Taras from the shrine at Padma Samye Ling

Second: the general meaning, the instructions for visualization according to the development stage of Mahayoga.

First, purify the mind by wholeheartedly praying to all the lineage masters, going for refuge, and meditating on the four immeasurables. Then meditate in this way: From emptiness, on a throne of lotus and moon appears Noble Lady Tara Nyurma Pamo. She is red in color, wrathful, smiling and passionate. She sits in the dismounting posture. She has one face and two arms. Her right hand is in the mudra of supreme charity. Her left hand is in the protection mudra, also called the Three Jewels mudra. With this mudra she holds an utpala flower with her thumb and ring finger. In the center of its wide petals is a white conch shell, curling clockwise. The glorious sound of relative and absolute bodhicitta pervades the entire world, including the gods realm. Meditate that it fills everything with peace, benefit and happiness. You can either visualize yourself as dakini Yeshe Tsogyal with Tara in your heart center or you can visualize Tara in front of you, whichever is more comfortable. Here mantra recitation is the essential point.

Third: the hidden meaning according to Anuyoga, the completion stage with attributes.

It is explained according to the tantras of definitive meaning and by condensing the speech of the second Buddha, Padmasambhava, the great pandita Vimalamitra, omniscient Longchenpa and others.

The lotus face of the lord of the triple world...

From the millions of subtle channels of the vajra body, the principal ones are the three channels existing in the manner of pillars. Inside they appear as the form of the three clear syllables OM AH HUM. The three channels are the basis of the outer aspect: an ordinary body, speech and mind; the inner aspect: desire, anger and ignorance; and the secret aspect: an awakened state of body, speech and mind. In the center there is a light blue ground channel, *avadhuti*. On the right there is a white *roma* and on the left there is a red *changma*. These two, from below the navel up to the crown of the head, coil around the central channel, in a manner of a chain, forming twenty-one knots.

***Homage, Tara, quick one,
Heroine whose eyes flash like lightening.***

A yogi practicing the path of skillful means takes as a founda-

tion devotion and faith in the natural abiding state of vajra body. He examines the scriptures with bodhicitta and effort. Never closing **the eyes** of method and wisdom, he generates the four joys, first successively and then in reverse order, in the four chakras. By dissolving the changing karmic wind and the subtle fluids of male and female energy into the unchanging *avadhuti*, the twenty-one channel knots are **quickly** and easily untied. Having traversed the ten bhumis and five paths instantly like a **flash of lightening**, one meets the twenty-one Taras of stainless coemergent wisdom, and awakens to the nature of the great mother Prajnaparamita, Samantabhadri.

Omniscient Longchenpa states:

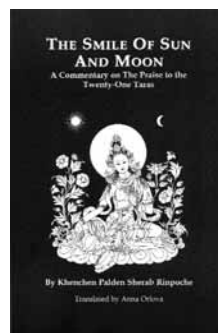
While traversing the ten bhumis, there are twenty-one knots Of *avadhuti*, right and left channels.

Untying them in pairs, on the twentieth you attain the tenth bhumi.

Releasing the last one, at the crown of a head, you reach the peak – the supreme state.

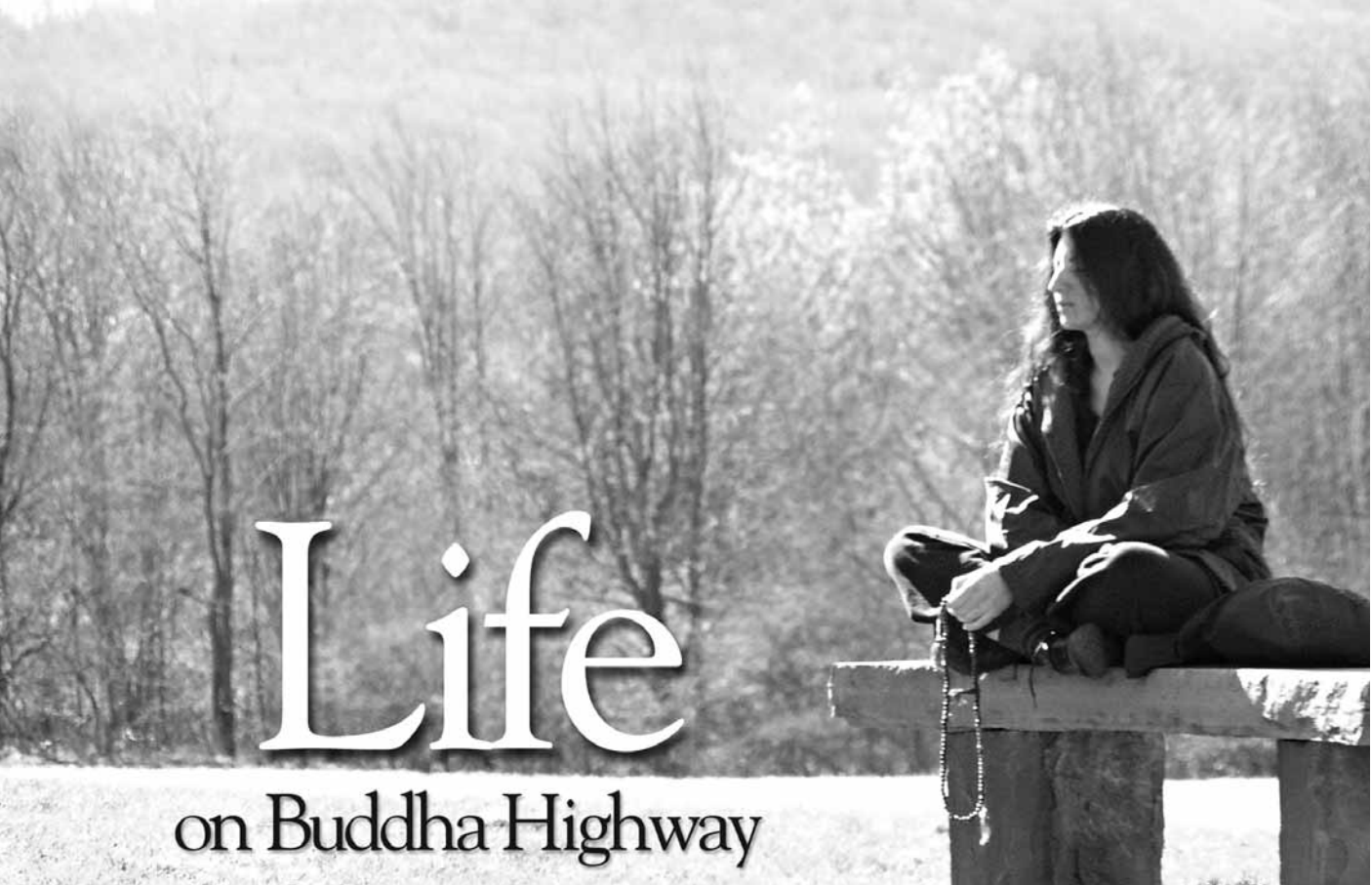
Fourth: the ultimate meaning according to Atiyoga, the completion stage without attributes.

All possible phenomenal appearances: samsara, nirvana and the path are united and complete in the state of one's only natural face, self-arisen rigpa – the unimpeded, originally pure union of awareness and emptiness. This awareness manifests as wisdom, compassion and power. The essence is the emptiness of dharmakaya. The nature is the clarity of sambhogakaya. The compassion is the all-pervading nirmanakaya. The essence of the three kayas is the primordially enlightened state of Noble Lady Tara. Therefore, **I pay homage to Tara, quick one, heroine whose eyes flash like lightening.** ■



The Smile of Sun and Moon: A Commentary on The Praise to the Twenty-One Taras, by Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche, translated by Anna Orlova, may be ordered from:

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Life

on Buddha Highway

REFLECTIONS FROM THE WORK STUDY PROGRAM AT PADMA SAMYE LING

BY BERNICE DAVIDSON (PEMA LHAMO), SUMMERTOWN, TN

Imagine taking a few months out of your regular life to live, work, and practice in a dedicated dharma environment, right at the center of the teachers' mandala. The work study program at Padma Samye Ling offers this opportunity to help uplift and develop our teachers' sacred land, making an offering that will benefit others for years to come. Bernice Davidson, a fine artist and Tennessee sangha member, has spent five summers at Padma Samye Ling – painting, cooking, practicing, celebrating, and making memories to last a lifetime.

I've heard people say that they came to the Dharma because they encountered some type of crisis in their lives. This was certainly true for me. After almost 18 years of a happy marriage and a beautiful family life, I found myself suddenly facing divorce and an empty nest. As I moved through the stages of grieving, I found that the only time I felt good was during meditation. I decided to search for some role models to lead me further down this path.

Because of my profound need and some good friends, I was led to meet the Venerable Khenpos in June 1997. As I attended my first teaching, a Tara empowerment, I felt as if my entire being was getting a massage. I felt profound caring and tenderness

coming from both of the teachers. One thing they said during those teachings really completed my healing. The message was how not to feel lonely. "Every single person needs love and support," they said. "If you don't know what to do with yourself, find some being, any being, and start giving them the support and care that everyone needs." This sounded like the perfect way to deal with being alone. In the ensuing months, I put this practice to the test in every way possible. What resulted was a level of happiness I never thought I could feel in my new situation.

The Ngöndro practice became my ground wire. Prostrations gave me a chance to forget myself in effort and wear myself out doing them. As the practice deepened, I knew that I wanted to

spend more time with the Khenpos and see firsthand what it felt like to be close up to this profound source of healing in my life.

As a college professor I have a generous break of almost four months in the summertime. I was lucky enough to spend a good part of the past five summers at Padma Samye Ling, living close to my teachers and the other sangha members.

So many wonderful experiences and important teachings came to me during that time that it is daunting to try to distill the really wonderful times from all the wonderful times. I will start by saying that the theme to my summers was if I just said yes to the Khenpos' requests, the energy needed for the job would appear and work its magic. I found very soon that I was able to accomplish things that I had originally thought were quite impossible.

The magic started the day before I was to leave New York City for the Western Catskills. A beloved sangha member whom I had never met called to ask me if I would join her for a food-shopping spree for the upcoming retreat, since I had a big empty car and was planning to attend.

She told me to meet her at a busy street corner but neglected to tell me what she looked like. I noticed one lone woman who looked very bright. Sure enough, Cathy Allen hopped in my car and we started our treasure hunt, which took us to five different stores all over the city. Something I noticed was that the complicated task of buying a large amount of food in different locations in New York City was done with grace and ease. Every time we landed in front of a store, a parking space would automatically open up, and by the end of the day we were howling with laughter at the synchronicity!

The next night as we were unpacking the food at the retreat center, Cathy asked me if I knew how to make beans for 60. I had lived on a commune for many years where once a week I was in charge of the kitchen that fed 500. Cathy had found her girl.

That summer and the next summer I cooked about 30 meals each season, and the weird part was that it was incredibly fun. The spirit of volunteerism was alive and well in that kitchen. Most of us were so grateful to take part in the magic of what was

being built that we sang, talked, and shared the stories of our Dharma paths with one another. The work was incidental.

On one of my first nights that summer, I got a real demonstration of that earlier teaching about caring for other beings. It was late at night; I had just finished the prep for the next day's main meal and I was heading back to my tent to sleep. I heard Khenpo Tsewang's voice coming from behind a truck in the parking lot. He was speaking very softly in Tibetan. His voice was so kind and caring I wondered who the lucky person was that was receiving this sweetness. When I walked past, I saw that he had placed his little dog Tsemo on the truck bed and was speaking to her. We both smiled as I walked by. Tsemo had been quite ill that summer and I'm sure Khenpo was encouraging her in her healing process.



Khen Rinpoche with Bernice during a break in painting

The other high point of my first summer was getting to be around Lama Chimed, our Khenpos' amazing father. At five am every morning, Lama would walk past my tent saying prayers. It had a fantastic effect on me. It can only be described as a profound sense of well being which would wash over me like a wave as he walked by. I began to wake myself just before daylight so that I could wait for his voice and follow his prayer as he rounded the bend then disappeared on his journey. During the day I would see him in his jogging pants on yet another prayerful walk. I became very linked to him and considered

myself blessed to hear this special wake-up call.

At the end of the summer, the Khenpos and Ani Lorraine had a few of us over for dinner. Lama Chimed was at the head of the table. When his lips weren't chewing, they were moving in prayers. I was told he was almost always in prayer. He even wore a groove in the wooden floor of his dwelling just by the friction of repeated prostrations. I was starting to have some real relativity about what a dedicated life looks like.

The most difficult times for me about life on Buddha Hwy were always at the end of summer when I would have to leave. The feeling of community and unlimited possibility was hard to tear myself away from. One summer I had said my goodbyes to my dear teachers and close sangha members and was driving

down Buddha Hwy to go home to Tennessee. I saw Lama Chimed and decided to stop him to say good bye. He was out for one of his fast walks with his mala. Disturbing Lama during his walks was not something that we Sangha members did very often. He spoke very little English and he did not suffer idle chatter gladly. As I got out of the car Lama saw a very teary eyed woman heading his way. He stopped and looked at me. By the time I got to him I was in a full blown sob. I did something very strange that I had never done before, which was I knelt down and placed my cheek on his running shoe. He kindly bent down and pulled me up and held me for a moment. Then he wiped my tears with a smile and asked me in English what my name was. "Ah, Bernicey," he said, which was the name little kids call me. We both laughed and I rolled out the gate feeling wonderful.

By the third summer, work was going full-speed ahead on the gonpa mural project. I was asked to train up my skills to paint for this enormous and gorgeous endeavor. There are somewhere near 5,000 square feet of sublime thangka painting on the wall, of more than 250 figures and scenes that depict many of the lineage masters and illustrate the stories of the Vajrayana teachings. My training consisted of painting an elaborate design on the door of another building. I was told by the head painter that one of the things that makes a good thangka is that there are no raised areas of paint. One should be able to look close up at the piece and not see one brush stroke or any layers of paint. Therefore, no mistakes! It took 72 hours of concentrated energy to get the job done properly; however, I was rewarded with an invitation to work with a crew of about 12 or so other folks on the most intense art project that I had ever experienced in my 25 years of being a mural painter and public-works artist.

This was the beginning of three summers of being a helper on this project. Each different job I was given stretched me to the max; in fact, I started each task thinking it was far beyond my capabilities. I asked the Khenpos about this and they said just say a little prayer to Sarasvati, the dakini of the arts. I found a thangka with her image and had many a little talk with her. One of my first jobs was to paint very long straight lines with no

ruler or straight edge. It was like walking a tight rope all day. I'd take a deep breath and hold it until the line was complete and then start the next line. By the end of the day my attention was so sharp I felt as if I was in an altered state.

Once again the rewards for all this effort were rich. Khenchen Palden would make us Tibetan bread some days and Ani Lorraine would bring tea and we would gather on the lawn or just sit around in the gonpa and eat delicious snacks while Khenchen would tell fascinating stories of the adventures of their lives. Surely each tale pointed to the fact that none of this was an accident. We were all there working to bring the Dharma safely to the West and each one of us were a part of the work.



Painting of His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche from the wall murals at Padma Samye Ling

One day Khenpo Tsewang asked me to work on the portrait of His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche. Not being a very strong portrait painter, I was unwilling to take on the task. I had been working on some gold leafing way up on the top of the wall. Being a bit afraid of heights, the work at this point was very challenging for me. I felt like I had as much as I could deal with. That night as I dove into bed, I did the dream yoga exercises we had just been taught. Before I knew it I was in my dream body, back in the gonpa looking at the wall. Suddenly all the gold leaf started falling off the

wall, floating down to the floor in big flakes. I became frantic and tried to catch the pieces as they came down. At this point I heard a voice say, "This is not a disaster, this is a blessing." The next day I commenced working on His Holiness' portrait. I learned, just as I had with all the other challenges, that saying yes was all it took. The work went up effortlessly.

Another aspect about Life on Buddha Highway was the opportunity to study and learn from the Khenpos. I found them to be very generous with their time. Each summer I would pick a theme of study and immerse myself in one area of the Dharma. One summer it was the vows of the Bodhisattva. I would scour the books in the library and around the sangha house finding and copying the lists of vows. By the end of the summer, I had many questions about the different vows. Khenpos sat with me for a long time one day patiently answering all of my questions.

They told me not to worry too much about each different vow because I am only a baby Buddha and babies make a lot of mistakes. I remember running back to the kitchen bounding over the grass thinking “Yeay! I’m a baby Buddha, how grand!”

In the five summers I spent at PSL, there were some sad times mixed in with the joy. The loss of our beloved Sangha member Bill Hinman right after the holy celebration of the opening of the gonpa comes to mind. As the Khenpos guided us through the news of this profound loss, I learned, by exam-

ple, how to take in the grief in a very dignified and balanced way. Every joy and sadness was met with profound equanimity.

Now as I write this little memoir, so much has changed in my life and so many of my prayers have been answered. My empty life has become very full and I know that my spirit will always be tied to the beauty of the lessons learned on the Highway of the Buddha.

Bernice Davidson is a fine artist and art professor at Martin Methodist College in Pulaski, TN.



Work Study at Padma Samye Ling

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to live, work and practice in a dedicated dharma environment, while contributing to something that makes a lasting difference in the world? The work study program at Padma Samye Ling offers this opportunity, with scholarships ranging from a few months to year-round. Several openings are available on an ongoing basis, with activities ranging from gardening to cooking, administration to academics, carpentry to maintenance, and more. It’s the opportunity of a lifetime to help uplift and develop the mandala of Padma Samye Ling, making an offering that will benefit others for years to come.

Rinpoches are enthusiastic about completing the murals, decorative work, and other varied painting projects for the gonpa at Padma Samye Ling. In order to fulfill the wishes of our beloved teachers and PBC sangha members, those with skills to share are welcome to help manifest this vision of the mandala.

For more details, we invite you to contact Laia at Padma Samye Ling, 618 Buddha Hwy, Sidney Center, NY 13839, (607) 865-8068, jowozegyal@catskill.net. Let us know if you have particular skills.



THE LIGHT OF
**fearless
wisdom**

P B C S H E D R A P R O G R A M

kind one, the beams of light of your supreme wisdom have completely cleared the gloom of my mind's ignorance. grant the profound understanding of the teachings and knowledge in its entirety, the light of fearless wisdom.

—From *The Praise Called The Glorious Excellent Qualities of Wisdom*,
chanted before each session during Shedra.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF REALITY? This is the question that is studied, pondered, debated, and meditated upon during PBC's Shedra.

The Tibetan word *shedra* literally means a "center for teaching." In traditional monastic centers, the shedra is the school where monks and nuns study the most important Buddhist scriptures. This scholastic training is the counterpart to the retreat center, or *drupdra*, where long-term retreats are undertaken. The shedra and the drupdra are two of the most vital parts of a monastery, preserving the living lineage of the dharma through the twin pursuits of study and practice.

At Padma Samye Ling, the Venerable Khenpos are making scholastic training available to westerners, both householders and ordained sangha members alike. The third year of studying the four

schools of Buddhist philosophy has just been completed, with the beginning of study of the great Middle Way school.

During shedra, students attend classes twice a day and spend the evening in individual or group study. Meal time is often discussion time and, of course, practice is blended with scholarship throughout the day. It is total immersion in contemplating our true nature through the means of logic, then meditating upon what one has studied.

One of the most lively and enlightening times during shedra is the question and answer session with Rinpoches each afternoon. Here we present a glimpse of one such session during last year's study on the Mind-Only school of Buddhism.

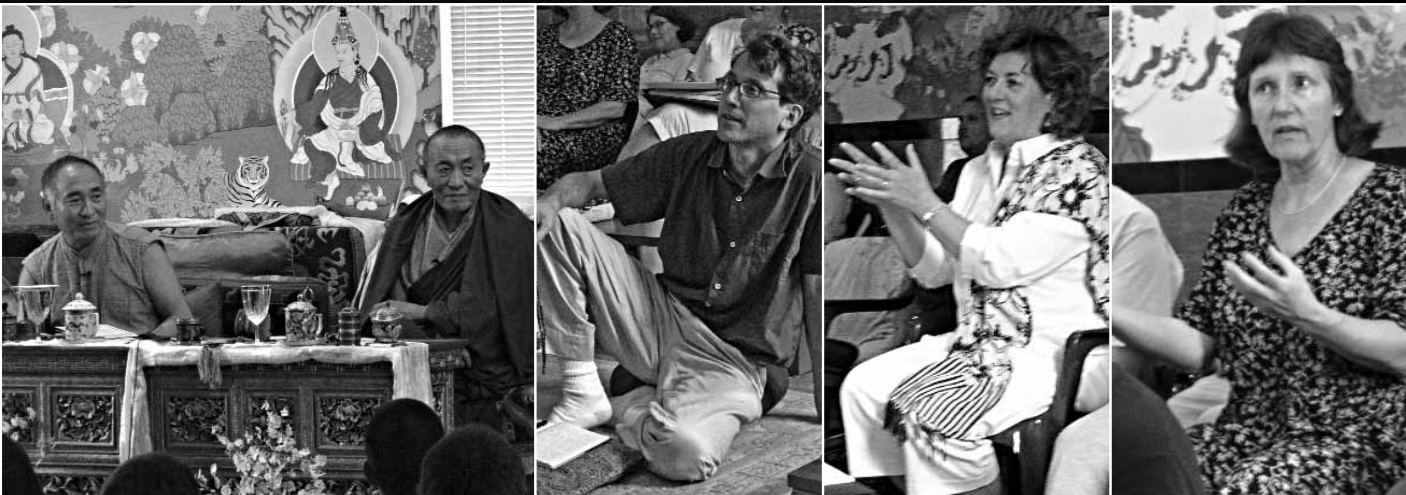
(Editor's Note: For more on the alaya and the consciousnesses, see the article in this issue called "The Three Kayas.")

Question: Does "habituation" mean that you begin to see everything in the same way where you keep on doing the same thing over and over again?

Answer: In Tibetan, habitual patterns are called *bak chak*. Habitual patterns have two aspects: action and intention. Intention always comes first. The second is an action based on an intention. Habitual patterns are when you do something repeatedly, such as thinking and then doing something based on that thought.

Habitual patterns are not always bad. For example, when you learn and study at an early age you don't know anything. You cannot even read letters such as A, B, C, D. But a teacher will teach you. You will say "A, B, C," "A, B, C," again and again, and it becomes more imprinted in the alaya. Eventually you begin to say these things naturally. Everyone learns in this way. Knowledge is largely created by habitual patterns. In this way, habitual patterns are understood as developing and learning by becoming familiar something.

Question: Is the alaya sort of like sunglasses and as you do more and more bad things they get darker and darker



and so the world looks darker and darker? Or is it like a box that's continually shooting out little things which are bad?

Answer: I think the alaya can be understood according to both of these analogies. It is as like sunglasses that make things appear darker and darker or lighter and lighter. And then also the alaya is like a storage box. Sometimes it is translated into English as subconscious storehouse. One side of the storehouse has so many things coming inward and at the other side so much is going out. So it is like big warehouse where many imports are come and many exports go.

For example, we can look at memories. Our discussion earlier this morning is not our present discussion. This present is not this morning. According to the Mind Only school, what we remember now is all registered in the alaya. Between this morning and now, trillions of instants have passed. And that means the instants have completely changed. But still there is the continuation of recollecting. Where does this come from? What is said and heard is all imprinted every moment. This moment of discussion happening right now is being registered in the alaya. At the same time we are exploring what

we previously registered in the alaya storehouse. We are bringing these imprints out and registering more. In a way we are filing through our individual alayas and reading the files in the present moment. We are investigating imprints that have already been filed and at the same time we are creating new imprints based on these old files. All of this is happening instantly at the same time.

Question: Is the seventh consciousness what clings to an individual self or ego? Does it then interpret what is coming from the alaya as belonging to a separate self?

Answer: Yes. In philosophical teachings the seventh consciousness is generally considered as a subdivision of the sixth consciousness. There is no big difference between the sixth consciousness and the seventh consciousness. But they call it a different consciousness because the emotions are very distinctive and strong. The mind can project itself externally due to strong emotions. For this reason the seventh consciousness is sometimes called the emotion consciousness.

In the Thirty Stanzas, Vasubandhu says that the seventh consciousness is a combination of nine different mental states that come together. First among those

nine is the conception or idea of the ego, such as "I." This is the root. One focuses on the "I" and believes in it. Secondly, one grasps and clings onto the "I." Thirdly, there is a feeling of self-importance or pride that one feels about the "I." Then one continually thinks about the "I." Sometimes this is called egomania. These are the four mental states that are specifically related to the ego. Then there are five other retinues that are common to all the sense consciousnesses. These are feeling, conception, touch, thinking, and then rethinking. Rethinking is like going over an idea repeatedly. The ego is held together by these nine mental states all of the time, whether this is very obvious or very subtle. The seventh consciousness always functions in this way.

Question: What happens to the alaya upon attaining buddhahood?

Answer: It is said that the alaya transforms or changes and becomes the dharmadhatu wisdom. This includes whatever we register in the alaya up until enlightenment – all the aspirations, prayers, good thoughts. When we reach enlightenment all of this transforms into the dharmadhatu wisdom. The other wisdoms and the three kayas carry this on.



Question: *If the alaya transforms into dharmadhātu wisdom when we become enlightened, does this mean that the alaya is only relatively individual and that once we attain Buddhahood the the dharmadhātu wisdom pervades everything?*

Answer: Dharmadhātu wisdom is pervasive emptiness. However, we cannot say that the dharmadhātu wisdom of Buddha Shakyamuni is the same as the dharmadhātu wisdom of Vajrasattva. Even though dharmadhātu wisdom is open emptiness, this wisdom aspect is very individual and personal to each buddha.

Similarly, our alaya is emptiness. Our alaya is pervasive. Yet this doesn't mean that we are all one thing or that we all share one alaya. Mahayana Buddhists do not believe this. The alaya carries its own identity and qualities in a unique way.

Question: *So would you say that the uniqueness of the alaya remains when one achieves enlightenment, but that there is no sense of being an individual?*

Answer: Yes. Even though it's emptiness, it's unique. On the relative level, each and every buddha's wisdom and their aspirations and their fulfillment are quite

unique or different from any other buddhas'. But the nature is the same. All of the buddhas and all sentient beings have the same nature of emptiness. But there is a difference when the nature begins radiating and reflecting externally on the relative level. For an enlightened being, the radiating, arising energy of the wisdom of the union of relative and absolute truth shines distinctively, carrying out activities as they are needed. This happens even though everything is empty.

Question: *So are you saying then that on the ultimate level there is just the expanse of emptiness, but then on the relative level it manifests in unique beings or unique ways?*

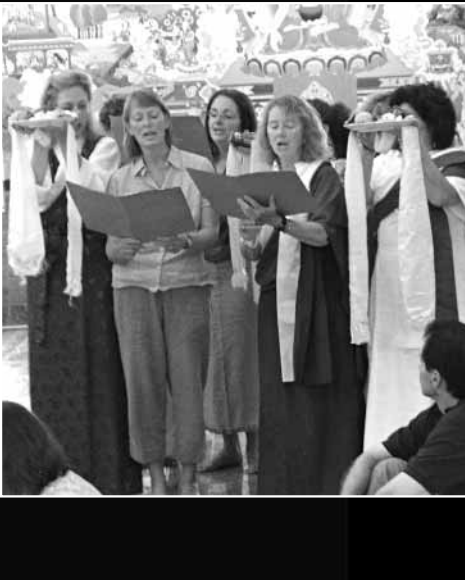
Answer: On the absolute level, everything is emptiness. We can't say it is one or it is many. But the absolute truth of emptiness is free from all complexities and all extremes. It is free from labeling and free from conceptions. This means that it is free from the one and free from the many. At this level there is nothing on which you could base any kind of analysis. But on the relative level, when this same nature arises, every individual appears in his or her own unique way.

Question: *According to sutra Mahayana and tantra Mahayana, how does the alaya, which is vague and impartial, relate to wisdom mind, which seems to be clear and impartial?*

Answer: Firstly, there is no big difference between how sutra Mahayana and tantra Mahayana explain the alaya. From the Mind Only school all the way through to Dzogchen, the mind is pretty much considered in the same way. Of course in tantra Mahayana it becomes more clear and more bright. The Madhyamaka school's explanation about the mind is more subtle, and in the Vajrayana teachings it becomes even deeper and clearer. Otherwise they are the same.

But why is the alaya blocked or obscured? Simply put, even though the alaya is impartial, it cannot perceive the past or the future. It cannot go any further than what is happening right in front of it in the present moment. Because of this it is said to be obscured.

The alaya is impartial because it doesn't discriminate between good, bad, or neutral habits. Whatever you do, it will register. The alaya does not accept or reject anything since it registers everything.



Question: How is the intellectual mind (sem) related to the alaya?

Answer: The sixth consciousness or the mind consciousness comes from the alaya. It is one of the waves or the tides of the ocean of alaya.

Question: Does the alaya continue when we die?

Answer: When we die the five consciousnesses will definitely merge into the sixth consciousness. The sixth consciousness – including the emotion or *klesha* consciousness – will then mostly merge to the alaya. According to the Buddha's teachings, certain situations and circumstances can cause the sixth consciousness and emotion consciousness to come up even after we die physically. So sometimes these three consciousnesses – the sixth, seventh and eighth – seem to function as one. Many times the bardo experience is a reflection of the mind consciousness. Teachings on the bardos say that all of our experiences come from the alaya. Only then do we begin to experience anything. This is also true of dreaming.

Students who wish to join Shedra in the fourth year may contact PSL for information on catching up. Email jowozegyal@catskill.net.



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Erratum: The beautiful stained-glass Medicine Buddha featured in the Spring issue was incorrectly attributed. This particular piece was actually the work of Mary Lou Bialick from Summertown, Tennessee. Mary Lou specializes in stained-glass seed syllables and buddhas and welcomes inquiries for custom orders. Contact her at Working Glass Heroes, (931) 964-2219.

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Dorjes in the sand

Let it be known,
The Great Conqueror set foot in this tropical island long ago,
unseen,
unheard,
unfelt,

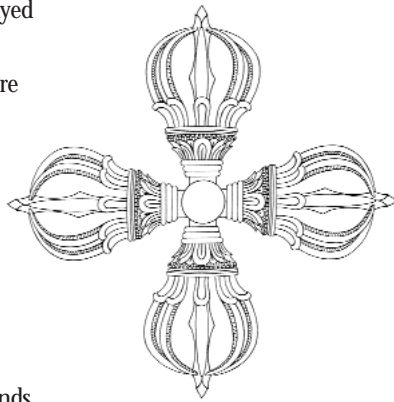
He bathed joyously
in the virgin water streams that sprayed
the ancient Caribbean sea rocks,
and blessed all the creatures that were
unseen,
unheard,
unfelt.

He laughed blissfully,
his roaring giggles
sounded like a thunderous mantra
summoning universal harmony,
penetrating with its vibration all minds
unseen,
unheard,
unfelt.

You see,
I have found gilded dorjes buried in the sands.
I have seen endless rainbows when least expected.
I have observed victory banners unfurled in the deep rain forests.
I have heard long lost birds singing Om Ah Hung.
He must have been here, surely, before my people were born.

You see,
He still roams freely through the tropical pathways barefooted,
trident in hand,
radiating indestructible truths,
all pervading kindness,
ever shining wisdom.
In awareness, now seen, now heard... deeply felt.

– Héctor L. Urrutia, Pema Gatob, Puerto Rico



Diary of a Summer Retreat

July 17
Poisoned arrow strikes.
Born. Death inevitable.
Doctor! Where are you?

July 18
Omens ignored, so...
Borders breached! Cities crumble!
"I" now defenseless.

July 19
Retreat to the Spring,
Indestructible refuge.
Wish-fulfilling Jewel!

July 20
Recognize rigpa's
Irrepressible bursting.
Royal ease joyride.

July 21
"My phenomena."
Who grasps the unconditioned?
Have no agenda.

July 22
Prisoners escape.
Omniscience!, so natural.
King without subjects.

July 23
The Guru confides,
Hosts, feeds, empowers, blesses.
Who devotes to whom?

July 24
Inconceivable!
Devotion wisdom sparkles
Well beyond within.

— Marcos Polanco, Pema Rabjor, Puerto Rico

For the Guru

You are the ground meeting my awkward steps in your stalwart grace
the breath animating potential with your pure perception
You are the flame burning through our doubt and confusion
the rain cooling desire and washing away ignorance
You are the lion's steady gaze supporting us all
You are the lotus expressing the perfections with your beauty
the sun nurturing our courage commitment and compassion
the moon reflecting the truth bright and alone
You are the Guru appearing before me
in this happy coincidence of your compassion and my longing
You are the deities' rainbow light
all we encounter
You are the mantra
reverberating
each heartbeat filling the word with joyous sound
You are awareness
pure and infinite
— Traci Black, Pema Gamo, Knoxville, TN

The Rainbow Connection

Emaho! How Wondrous!
All the people
All the dreams
Infinite possibility
What is defined as finite is relative
Determined by choice
Conscious or not
So
If one rejects nothing
Illusory perfection displays
And if one rejects anything
Illusory perfection displays
Its wondrous nature
The five wisdoms

— Traci Black, Pema Gamo, Knoxville, TN

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The Three Kayas *Continued from page 5*

NIRMANAKAYA

All Buddhas are emanations of one Buddha. The different levels, aspects, or kayas of Buddha exist only for the purpose of benefiting sentient beings. Each Buddha can appear in any of these three kayas. Dharmakaya Buddhas such as Samantabhadra appear only to highly realized beings, such as tenth-bhumi Bodhisattvas who can also receive teachings from the five Dhyani Buddhas. Beginning practitioners, or those with dualistic thoughts and conceptions, would have difficulty perceiving and receiving teachings from Sambhogakaya and Dharmakaya Buddhas.

The third Buddha is known as the Nirmanakaya Buddha. “Nirmana” is a Sanskrit term which means to manifest in form. Not just in one style or form but in all kinds of ways, in order to benefit all sentient beings whether they are highly realized, beginners, or even heavily obscured. The Nirmanakaya Buddha is for everyone. The Nirmanakaya can be divided into four groups:

1. Supreme emanations
2. Birth emanations
3. Artisan emanations
4. Emanations of various things

The Supreme emanation takes birth in the world as a unique person. Buddha Shakyamuni and Guru Padmasambhava are examples of this kind. They have special forms of body, speech, and mind. The special qualities of the body are known as the thirty-two major marks and the eighty minor marks. For instance, their bodies have a radiant glow and are free from old age and sickness. They also have a subtle blue light going up from the crown chakra and merging into the sky as well as special patterns of the wheel of Dharma on their palms.


They have sixty qualities of speech which most people do not have. For example, when Buddha gave teachings, as soon as his voice was heard, it would give a soothing, relaxed, peaceful feeling. At the same time, whatever words he spoke could be heard at once in many different languages. Students from other lands would hear the Buddha’s voice in their native tongues. Also, his speech was not affected by distance. An

audience of hundreds or thousands had no problem hearing, even though they were very far away. Buddha’s voice could reach to ten thousand students as clearly as to those sitting right in front of him.

The mind of realization has the three qualities of love, compassion, and wisdom, as well as the ten powers and eight kinds of fearlessness. Altogether there are thirty-two qualities of mind. A Buddha has no obstruction to seeing the past, present, or future. Everything is clear to the eye of wisdom. A Buddha’s speech and body qualities are somewhat more obvious, but many people doubt such wisdom. They think it cannot be exactly as stated in the sutras. Even in Shakyamuni Buddha’s time they investigated this. They closely examined whether Buddha was totally enlightened and perfectly clear in relation to objects or not.

Buddha renounced his father’s kingdom and went to the jungle where he did six years of ascetic practice. Upon becoming enlightened, he turned the wheel of the Dharma many times for many students and so became very famous in India. After awhile, his family invited him to come back to his homeland to teach. Buddha said he would not come to the palace, but that he would stay outside the main city. So the Buddha’s father and a local ruler named Zangdon who was under his dominion, had a special retreat dwelling built for the Buddha and his students. Buddha came and stayed there and began giving regular teachings.

Buddha was already known as “The Omniscient One”, being knowledgeable about every aspect of the past, present, and future. But King Zangdon had his doubts about that. In order to test him, Zangdon collected one grain of rice from each of two thousand five-hundred families. Each grain was wrapped individually, numbered, and put into a common basket which was brought before the Buddha. King Zangdon wanted to see if the Buddha could tell him which grain came from which family. So one by one, the Buddha examined the grains and told him which households they had come from. The king observed his list of numbers and names and saw that the Buddha’s answers were all correct. There were no mistakes. He bowed respectfully to the Buddha and declared, “Now, I know you are omniscient. You are obviously enlightened.” Finally, Zangdon became very devoted. This is just an example of the qualities of the mind of a supreme emanation.



The second Nirmanakaya or birth emanation incarnates even in the animal and nonvisible realms, using different names and forms, male or female, as they are needed. There are many Jataka stories of Buddha taking birth in animal worlds as a fish, a turtle, a bird, a monkey, a bear and a lion, as well as among humans and even in the god realms. These are all birth emanations or tulkus. They may or may not appear in the traditional way, wearing robes and all. Tulkus may not even necessarily be recognized as Buddhas but in every case, they are born to remove obstacles and dualistic conceptions, to free sentient beings from ignorance, and bring about the perfect understanding of primordial wisdom.

The third Nirmanakaya is called the artisan emanation. These appear as objects of art and the artists who make them for the benefit of sentient beings. Thangkas, statues, and even music are some of the forms these emanations take. Beautiful, inspired works of art which bring clarity, peace, joy, and something special which seems to touch the heart center, are all known as artisan emanations.

There was a famous musician called Rlanga who felt that he was the supreme guitarist. And he was a very special musician, but he was also proud and arrogant. He thought he was incomparable to anybody in the world. He was always playing his music and never had any opportunity to see Buddha or receive teachings. He appreciated the Dharma but he was attached to playing music and felt he should spend his time practicing. He really thought he was the greatest.

Rlanga heard the Buddha was going to enter Mahaparinirvana and thought that he should visit him soon to receive teachings and have some contact. But he was still very involved in music and maintaining his pride. So right before he entered Mahaparinirvana, the Buddha thought, "Now what is it I still have to give sentient beings with this body? Who may I serve? Who is left?" Through his wisdom he saw Rlanga in his

present condition. So Buddha emanated as one very special musician and went to the door of Rlanga with a thousand-stringed mandolin. When Buddha started to play and the famous musician heard that music, he began to listen closely and thought, "Who could that be?" He had to come outside and bring his mandolin. Soon, he noticed that Buddha hardly even moved his fingers. Plucking one string resonated all the others. Rlanga was unable to do this. The vibration of the music seemed to separate out the whole of space into many different voices of the Dharma which were of real benefit to this famous musician. He thought, "So there is someone more accomplished than myself! I am not the best..." At that moment his arrogance and pride dissolved. He felt very grateful to hear the Dharma through that mandolin.

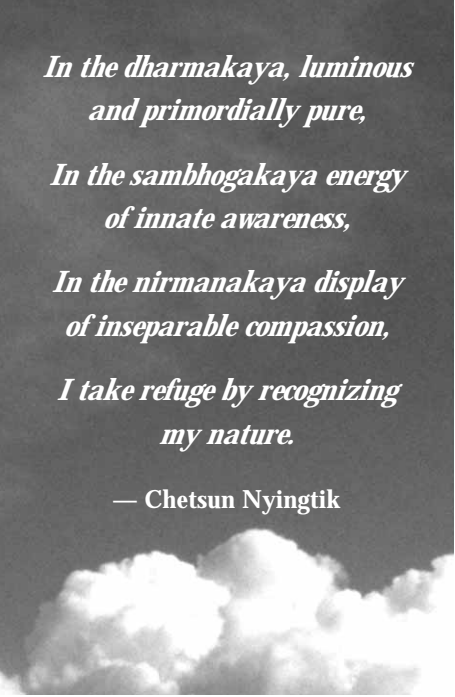
Any kind of art which provides temporary or ultimate help for sentient beings by awakening love and compassion is known as an artisan emanation.

The emanations of various things manifest in a variety of ways. These can appear as rain, fire, or wind. During times when sentient beings are troubled with diseases, they may come in the form of special herbs and medicines for healing or perhaps when beings are in danger of losing their

lives, suddenly something miraculous occurs and saves them. All of these things are various forms of the Nirmanakaya.

There is really just one Buddha. Every person who becomes enlightened has the ability to transform or emanate in these three kaya states. So basically again, Buddha means one who has fully developed love, compassion, wisdom and skillful means, one whose obscurations and habitual patterns have been purified, one who has realized a totally free, devotional state. That sentient being, that person, that individual is known as an enlightened being or a Buddha.

This is the teaching of the Three Kayas. ■



*In the dharmakaya, luminous
and primordially pure,*

*In the sambhogakaya energy
of innate awareness,*

*In the nirmanakaya display
of inseparable compassion,*

*I take refuge by recognizing
my nature.*

— Chetsun Nyungtik

glimpses of wisdom

When we receive insight from our teachers, it can make a profound difference in our lives. This is a regular column for students to share “aha moments” they receive from our teachers, whether from a teaching, advice or observation. If you have a “glimpse” to share that others might benefit from, please send it to rita@dakinigraphics.com.

Gratitude

The words of my perfect teacher, Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal, echo in my mind and heart often these days: “The karmic connection with your parents is very old, very complicated, and strong. Do whatever you can to help them. It is so important to offer whatever kindness you are able, however small. This is your practice now.” Months ago he spoke these words to me with a firmness that sung through my being. I had no idea then of their prophetic significance.

As I watched my dad progress through a terminal illness, Rinpoche’s instructions come back to me. The vast and profound wisdom of his words continues to open doors to a deeper understanding of the teachings, not as merely thoughts, but as realizations in my heart. I am reminded that it is not just my dad I serve. Instead, it is all beings that have at some time been my parents. It is all beings I serve because their essential nature is the purity of a Buddha. I am learning more deeply to offer kindness that is not based on how my dad responds towards me, not on my approval of his words or actions, but rather because to do so is my practice of bodhicitta, it is the manifestation of my very essence, of my Buddha nature. In a more immediate sense, this human being cared for me and loved me for many years so that I could reach adulthood safely. He spent years of never-ending selflessness and generosity, a sacrifice for which I am forever grateful. How can I ever repay that! I understand more deeply too that my practice is to radiate the warmth of loving-kindness without discrimination on all whom I encounter, regardless of my personal relationship with them. The personal is based on this life. Who knows what we were to each other in prior lives? The personal is based in duality and usually responds with attachment or aversion, both of which are so much dirt on the mirror of awareness that will

obscure the reflection our true nature.

I know that my dad and I are joined by a karmic past. It has not always been an easy relationship. That alone is an indication of the obscurations I need to dissolve. I see, too, that this is the perfect opportunity to do so and for true compassion to develop. Otherwise, my gestures of kindness may simply be the response of ego, of a self that is kind in response to kindness offered, or when it feels loved. This would be living according to worldly dharmas, nothing more. What a precious opportunity to purify karma and deepen realizations.

So I am grateful to my dad for helping me on this path. The work in this one aspect of my life overflows to the rest of my life. It is revealing the pith instructions for my practice. And I am eternally grateful to my teachers for their boundless kindness and compassion, for revealing the Dharma in its glorious truth. Beyond any doubt, I believe they are the wish-fulfilling jewels that will lead me to freedom. When I struggle with this situation, when transforming it is essential, I take refuge in my teachers’ words. I take refuge in my true nature that, through their words and their blessings, I will come to know. I take refuge in the ultimate wisdom, the understanding of the true nature of all phenomena as emptiness. In so doing, I understand in a deeply visceral way that there is no other response to life but a fully open and loving heart to all beings as each is suffering in their own way. In truth, there is no father or daughter, only primordial purity, only the suchness that is, as it is. May I fully realize this truth. May I respond to life every moment, abiding in this truth. May I live life with the one taste of wisdom mind.

I take refuge in my Lamas with my dad...with all my parents...and with all beings by my side for as long as it shall



take. The sun shines intensely and fully with such warmth on us all. OM AH HUNG

— Mary Ann Doychak, Pema Shiwa, Fairview Park, Ohio

Editor's Note: Mary Ann's father, Andrew Doychak, passed away on May 22nd, shortly after she wrote this article. She was by his side and grateful to be there to pray. Even more so she wishes to express her deepest gratitude to Rinpoches, who were able to begin prayers for phowa from Russia shortly after and to the many sangha members who also offered their loving support and prayers for him. "My father is now connected to the Dharma, to our precious Lamas and to all of you through your kindness and compassion. Thank you."

Just practice.

When I first started doing Guru Yoga, I explained to my teachers that I was having difficulty with the visualization. I was especially disheartened because I feel DEEP devotion to Guru Rinpoche.

Khenpo Rinpoche explained my questions to Khenchen Rinpoche, and they together responded basically that I was getting myself worked up over nothing. Say the prayers with devotion, visualize what I can, and let go. It's more important to practice with mindfulness than to perfectly visualize the deity and then be running grocery lists in your head as you pray because you aren't being mindful.

In my experience sometimes you feel like you are not moving swiftly when you are just focused on accumulation of ngondro, but hopefully as you practice you recognize that a single Vajra Guru mantra recited with devotion has incredible merit and has the power to liberate sentient beings.

For me, I sometimes become discouraged that my meditation isn't very accomplished, or I don't have the visualizations perfect, or my pronunciation of the Sanskrit or Tibetan isn't perfect. Khenpo Rinpoche told me – "Just practice. Everything else will come in time." I'm still practicing.

We have been so blessed. We have the opportunity to have a lama, to receive dharma teachings. We have taken precious human birth. If we had been born as a cat or a dog or a hawk or an ant we wouldn't have these precious opportunities.

Our karma is going to fling us in one direction or another at the moment of our deaths. Our practice could liberate us from suffering. It could liberate all sentient beings.



In loving memory of Randolph E. (Raven) Clayton, Pema Ledrub, Zirconia, NC, July 29, 2005. Taken from his e-group posts. Shown at left taking refuge at Padma Gochen Ling, June 2003.

fall / winter 2005/06

SCHEDULE OF TEACHINGS

SEPTEMBER 19 & 20

SANTA MONICA, CA

Sept. 19, 7-9 pm – Teachings on Padmasambhava

Sept. 20, 7-9 pm – Compassion and Loving Kindness in Our Time

The Khenpos will offer Refuge immediately following the teaching on September 20. When making a reservation, please indicate if you wish to take refuge vows.

Due to limited seating call for reservations at (310) 434-1995 ext. 11 or email to events@onthepath.com. Location: On The Path · 1418 Second Street.

For more information, contact Margaret Dunham, (310) 702-5333, dunham7982@aol.com.

SEPTEMBER 21 & 22

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

Teaching and transmission of Songs to the Twenty-Five Disciples of Guru Rinpoche from the Lama Gongdu of Terton Sangye Lingpa. Location: Gygyen Dorje Den, Alameda

For information contact: Bay Area PBC; David Ridnell, Coordinator: dridnell@mofo.com, (415) 640-3055, (510) 412-3579

SEPTEMBER 23-25

PORTLAND, OREGON

Sept. 23, 7 pm – Lecture on Compassion, New Renaissance Bookstore (NW 23rd and Pettygrove). \$12.

Sept. 24, 10-4 pm – Teachings on Dzogchen, Northwest Tibetan Cultural Association, 6225 NE Stanton, \$60.

Sept. 25, 2 pm – Empowerment of Padmasambhava as Medicine Buddha, Unity Church, 4525 SE Stark. \$20.

Contact: Portland PBC, Paul Levy, Coordinator: paul@awakeninthedream.com, (503) 234-6480, 503-230-4841

OCTOBER 1 & 2

BEND, OREGON

Ngondro Teachings

Contact: Natural Mind Dharma Center; Michael Stevens, mtdharma@inet.com, (541) 388-3352

OCTOBER 8-10

PADMA SAMYE LING, NEW YORK

Nyungne Retreat

The Nyungne practice of Avalokiteshvara (Chenrezig), the Buddha of compassion, is a purification achieved through silence and fasting. This profound teaching on eleven-faced Avalokiteshvara was transmitted through the stainless lineage of a great accomplished

female master, Gelongma Palmo. Practicing it with great devotion will increase peace, happiness and fortune and fulfill all wishes in this life. In the next life it will bring rebirth in Dewachen, enjoying the glory of bliss and pleasure.

Suggested Donation: PBC members \$123; \$43/day. Non-members \$151; \$50/day.

OCTOBER 8-10

WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA

Nyungne Retreat with Ani Lorraine

Contact: West Palm Beach PBC, Mary Shaw coordinator, (561) 547-4711

OCTOBER 15 & 16

222 BOWERY, NEW YORK CITY

Transmission, Teaching, and Practice of Golden Manjushri

Saturday 1-5pm; Sunday 10am-1pm

Manjushri is the embodiment of the primordial wisdom of all the Buddhas. He emanates in countless forms for the benefit of limitless sentient beings. In each of the nine yantras, Buddha gave instruction regarding this great being. Guru Padmasambhava brought these profound instructions to Tibet as one of the Eight Heruka sadhanas. When he taught it, many beings attained highest realization. They continued the transmission and it remains an unbroken lineage to this day. During this special practice week-end Rinpoches will give transmission and teachings for a Manjushri practice revealed by Mipham Rinpoche, who is himself renowned as an emanation of Manjushri.

Contact: New York City PBC; Cathy Allen, Coordinator, (212) 683-4958.

Suggested Donation: PBC members \$52; \$30/day. Non-members \$65; \$35/day.

OCTOBER 22 & 23

NASHVILLE AND

PADMA GOCHEN LING, TENNESSEE

Oct. 22, Nashville: On the occasion of the annual Nashville Buddhist Festival, Venerable Khenpo Rinpoches will give teachings on Vajrayana.

Oct. 22 (7:30 pm) and Oct. 23, Padma Gochen Ling: Bodhisattva vows.

Contact: PBC Tennessee; Dolly Carlisle, Coordinator: dollycarlisle@comcast.net, (615) 385-4438.

OCTOBER 25 & 26

ORLANDO, FLORIDA

Contact: Orlando PBC, Janie Floren, Coordinator, (407) 830-4458.

OCTOBER 29 & 30

WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA
Empowerment and Teachings on
1,000 Arm Chenrezig

Chenrezig is the buddha of compassion and love. Practicing on this will dispel anger, hatred, and violence while revealing the innate goodness qualities of all human beings.

Contact: West Palm Beach PBC, Mary Shaw, Coordinator, (561) 547-4711

NOVEMBER 5 & 6

222 BOWERY, NEW YORK CITY

Empowerment and Teachings on Tara
Saturday 1-5pm; Sunday 10am-1pm

Tara is the female Buddha of compassion and the embodiment of the enlightened activity of all the Buddhas. Practicing on Tara helps one realize their own true nature of love and compassion, reducing ego clinging, anger and attachment.

Contact: New York City PBC; Cathy Allen, Coordinator, (212) 683-4958

Suggested Donation: PBC members \$52; \$30/day. Non-members \$65; \$35/day.

NOVEMBER 24

PADMA SAMYE LING, NEW YORK

Thanksgiving Retreat and Celebration

You are invited to join us for the Thanksgiving holiday at Padma Samye Ling. On Thursday, November 24, we will have practice together in the late morning, a restful afternoon, and then a potluck Thanksgiving dinner. The late morning practice will focus on Buddha Akshobya, the buddha who purifies the karmic obscurations and sufferings of beings. Come for the day or stay for the full week-end.

For more information call (607) 865-8068

DECEMBER 30 - JANUARY 1

222 BOWERY, NEW YORK CITY

Morning Vajrasattva Fire Puja &
Afternoon Vajrakilaya Practice
9am-12pm • 1-5pm

Let us begin the new year's practice with Vajrasattva and Vajrakilaya! The ceremony of the Jin Tsik is one of the rarest ways to begin the new year. For many years this is one of the very special practices that we have been able to do in New York City through the open kindness of John Giorno. Jin Tsik is considered a very powerful skilful means practice of the Vajrayana as fire is one of the five powerful elements. This Vajrasattva practice mainly focuses on pacifying negativities and obstacles while increasing prosperity, joy, longevity, peace, and realization. Vajrakilaya is the embodiment of all the buddhas' activities and is one of the most famous practices of the Nyingma School. Practicing on Vajrakilaya removes our obstacles, eases the flow of Dharma activity, and reveals the Buddha nature. Daily practice of Vajrakilaya is suggested as it is very powerful. Practice on special occasions is also very beneficial. Transmission and instruction for both practices will be given.

Contact New York City PBC: Cathy Allen,
Coordinator, (212) 683-4958

Suggested Donation: PBC members \$78; \$38/day
Non-members \$98; \$51/day

JAN. 14 - JAN. 21, 2006
WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA
WINTER DZOGCHEN RETREAT

Empowerment of Yamantaka and
Dzogchen Instruction with Teachings
from Padampa Sangye

When Guru Padmasambhava came to Tibet in the eighth century, one of his first teachings to the nine heart students was on the Eight Herukas, one of which was Yamantaka. Yamantaka is the wrathful emanation of Manjushri and the embodiment of all the Buddhas' body, speech and mind. He dispels the fear of death. This terma was revealed by the famous tertön, Tsasum Lingpa, who was a renowned emanation of Sangye Yeshe. Sangye Yeshe was one of the nine heart-like students who practiced on Yamantaka and achieved his enlightenment through this practice. Guru Padmasambhava gave specific, special instructions on this practice to Sangye Yeshe, and that teaching continues through Tsasum Lingpa's terma, entitled "Blazing Fiery Poisonous Mountain."

The week will feature Dzogchen instructions with teachings from Padampa Sangye, who was one of the great Indian masters who visited Tibet. He gave profound instructions on the nature of the mind as well as how to perceive daily activity as dharma. Padampa Sangye was the founder of "The Lineage that Pacifies Suffering." In the summer 2005, Rinpoche gave the teachings of Machig Labdrön. Padampa Sangye (whose name means father) was the teacher of Machig Labdrön (whose name means mother), so they are like the father and mother of the lineage.

Teachings at Unity in the Pines – Summit Blvd. in West Palm Beach, FL, and at PBC at The Palm Beach Dharma Center, Lake Worth, FL

Contact: West Palm Beach PBC, Mary Shaw,
Coordinator, (561) 547-4711

FEBRUARY 3-5, 2006
SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO
15TH ANNIVERSARY

Special ceremonies celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of Guru Padmasambhava's teachings arriving on the island.

Contact: Puerto Rico PBC, Fernando Gonzalez,
Coordinator: (787) 755-2816; padmasambhavapr-
@prw.net

FEBRUARY 27-28
VAJRAKILAYA & LOSAR

Tibetan New Year 2133 – Fire Dog
The day before New Years, February 27, is a day of purification and practice on Vajrakilaya. February 28 is the Tibetan New Year. Losar celebrations will occur at Padma Samye Ling and at centers throughout PBC. Contact your nearest center for information.

MARCH 2006
PADMA SAMYE LING, NEW YORK
TWO-WEEK INTENSIVE DZOGCHEN
MEDITATION RETREAT
Dzogchen Teachings
of Trekchö and Togal

In the ancient Nyingma school, Dzogchen – the "great perfection" – represents the pinnacle of the Buddhist path and the ultimate and final teaching of the Buddha. Dzogchen is the direct method for swiftly realizing the ultimate nature of the mind and attaining Buddhahood in the Rainbow Light Body. This is accomplished through two Dzogchen practices called *kadak trekchö* (direct introduction through cutting thoroughly) and *lhundrub togal* (spontaneously leaping over). Through *trekchö* practice, one becomes familiar with the empty nature of reality. Through *togal*, one practices on luminosity, coming to realize through direct perception the spontaneous self-perfection of everything.

Following in the footsteps of the ancient lineage of Nyingmas we will put these rare and precious teachings into practice with joy and devotion. Held in noble silence, this retreat is arranged to provide space to receive the pith instructions and deepen personal Dzogchen meditation with the guidance of our beloved Khenpos. Students are required to pre-register at the earliest convenience as space is limited and other preparations need to be made so that we all may enjoy a harmonious and restful retreat.

Date and suggested donation to be determined. Further information will be announced at our website and through email as soon as it is available. To join our email list, write to jowozegyal@catskill.net.

padma samyel ling

Accommodations are available on a first come, first served basis as deposits are received. A deposit of 25% of the retreat fee is required to hold a place. Please bring towels and bedding. Local lodging is available; call or e-mail for details.

2005 ACCOMMODATIONS RATES

Dormitory: \$25 /night

Single Rooms: \$32 /night

Patrons Deluxe Apartments (if available):

Single \$45 /night

Double \$80 /night

Triple \$110/night

MEALS Vegetarian Meals are available.

PRE-REGISTRATION In order to facilitate planning and preparations, pre-registration is requested for all events at Padma Samye Ling. A 10% discount for retreat contributions will be applied to all deposits received one month prior to events. When possible, please send a 25% deposit to:

Padma Samye Ling
618 Buddha Hwy.
Sidney Center, NY 13839
ATTN: Retreat Coordinators
(607) 865-8068
e-mail jowozegyal@catskill.net

PRE-REGISTRATION involves letting us know the following:

- 1) Your name
- 2) Are you currently an active PBC member?*
- 3) Date of arrival
- 4) Date of departure
- 5) Accommodations request (Spaces are reserved on a first-come basis as deposits are received.)
- 6) A 25% deposit. Thank you!

*MEMBER DISCOUNT Please note that the member donation applies to those who have committed to monthly or yearly membership at any of the Padmasambhava Buddhist Centers. Membership is essential to the functioning of the centers and PBC International. Suggested membership is a minimum of \$25 per month; this enables us to maintain and improve the monastery as well as send information and newsletters regarding the programs. We encourage all to join as members to support the growth of the Buddhadharmas and the Ven. Rinpoche's work.

WORK SCHOLARSHIPS A limited number of long-term work study programs are available on a residential basis. Contact us for more information, and let us know if you have particular skills, such as cooking, carpentry, maintenance, gardening, fine art painting, etc. For more details, contact Laia at (607) 865-8068 or jowozegyal@catskill.net.

TRAVEL PSL is located in Delaware County in upstate New York. The closest airports are Binghamton (one hour) and Albany (two hours). From the airport, transportation is by rental car, taxi or bus.

www.padmasambhava.org





pbc news

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Lighting the Mandala

A light offering to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha is one of the most meritorious activities in which one may participate. In Bodhgaya, hundreds of thousands of butter lamps are lit every day as offerings to help dispel ignorance and increase loving kindness and compassion throughout the world.

At Palden Padma Samye Ling, the Venerable Rinpoches very much wish to replicate these powerful offerings and bring more light into the open heart of our glorious lotus land mandala.

One way we can help actualize this dream is by illuminating the pathways into the center of PSL. Our butter lamps will be magnified and transformed into parkway lamps along King Trisong Deutsen & Noble Lady Tara Roads, and into bollards encircling the Khora path. Pathway lamps will display the magnificent stairway that is the gate to the Glorious Padma Samye Ling Monastery Temple of Three Kayas. Of course, everything will be interconnected with conduit and wiring.

You can participate by helping to sponsor the approximately 30 lamps that will be purchased and installed in this bright offering, a total that includes five tall parkway lamps. Choose from the Lamp Sponsorship list and contribute only what you are capable of giving. Whether the sponsorship is in your name, or given in the memory of another, great merit is gathered through this



Temporary solar footpath lights help illuminate the khora path around the Gonpa at Padma Samye Ling.

act of generosity that brightens the path of devoted students and pilgrims. Almost one quarter of the needed funds have been donated this summer, so the goal is well in sight.

Help illuminate the mandala of Palden Padma Samye Ling.

LAMP SPONSORSHIPS

Type	Price Level
Tall Parkway Lamps	\$1000
Medium Parkway Lamps	\$850
Bollard Lamps	\$320
Spots and Footpath Lamps	\$150
Open Donations for Lights and/or Maintenance	

For more information on the Lighting the Mandala project, contact Elizabeth Guyton at Padma Samye Ling, (607) 865-8068. Donations may be sent to the address above.

Lama Stories

Many students of the Venerable Khenpos knew their father, Lama Chimed Namgyal. A collection of stories are being compiled about Lama — what we remember about him, how he touched our lives, and the experiences we had with him. If you would like to submit a story, please send it to Maya Malay at mayamalay@aol.com. Please list “Lama Story” in the subject line so it will be flagged for attention, and include your name and phone number in the email.

Accomplishing the Benefit of Others

The Venerable Khenpos work tirelessly throughout the year with an unwavering commitment to spread the dharma. When one looks at the overall sweep of their activity, it is truly inspirational. This year, the Venerable Khenpos gave teachings and shepherded projects on three continents. In addition to their travel and teaching schedule, they spend time writing, practicing, counseling students, and overseeing their centers in the U.S. and abroad. Join us in celebrating this year's accomplishments.

January

- 8-day annual winter Dzogchen retreat in West Palm Beach, Florida.

February

- Trip to India. First phase of Nunnery Project completed. Teachings at PBC's monastery in Sarnath. Visit Miracle Stupa in Shravasti and plan landscaping. *Feb.-March 2005.*

March

- One-month intensive Dzogchen retreat at PSL: Chetsun Nyingtik. *March-April 2005.*

April

- Extensive tour of PBC's centers in Russia, Latvia, and Kalmykia. Consecrated stupa at the first Nyingma monastery in Russian history.

May

- Wind Horse Retreat at Padma Same Ling with teachings and empowerment of Dzambhala.

June

- Public talk in Nashville and retreat at PBC's Padma Gochen Ling retreat center in Tennessee.
- Dakini empowerment and teachings in Puerto Rico.

July

- Tsa Tsa Workshop.
- Ten-day Dzogchen retreat on Machig Labdron with empowerments of three lineages of Chod.
- Week-long Dzogchen retreat on Guru Rinpoche's *Seeing with Naked Awareness.*

August

- Tibetan Language course.
- Third year of Shedra completed with studies on Madhyamaka.

September

- Calm Abiding Retreat at PSL with shamatha meditation instructions.
- Teachings in Santa Monica and San Francisco.
- Empowerments and teachings in Portland and Bend, Oregon.

October

- Nyungne Retreat at PSL.
- Keynote speakers at the annual Nashville Buddhist Festival.
- Retreat at Padma Gochen Ling, Tennessee. Bodhisattva vows and teachings on Maitreya.
- Teachings in Orlando and West Palm Beach, Florida.
- New York City weekend events in both October (Golden Manjushri) and November (Tara).

November

- Trip to India – begin second phase of Nunnery.

December

- Annual three-day New Years practice in New York City, with Riwo Sangcho and Vajrasattva Puja.



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Matched Set of the Three Roots:
Guru Rinpoche & Tara 8"
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Special Price of
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All our readers are encouraged to subscribe in order to support the sounding forth of the Buddhadharma and our Rinpoches' work. Those who become Patrons or Sponsors of Pema Mandala help us expand with more pages and color printing.

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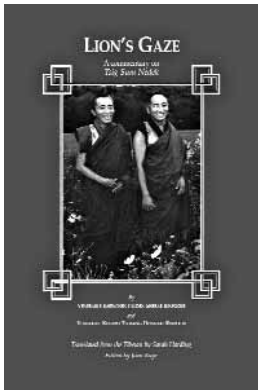
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- INDIA** **Padma Samye Chokhor Ling** Nyingma Buddhist Monastery, SA-IO/9-KA, Sarnath, Varanasi, U.P. 221007, 011-91-542-259-5296
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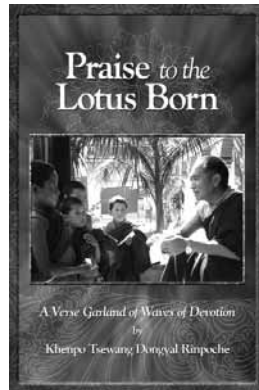
Lion's Gaze: A Commentary on Tsig Sum Nedek

Dzogchen teachings. A Commentary on *The Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious Sovereign* by Patrul Rinpoche and *The Three Words that Strike the Crucial Point* by Vidyadhara Garab Dorje. \$20



Door to Inconceivable Wisdom & Compassion

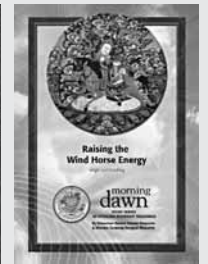
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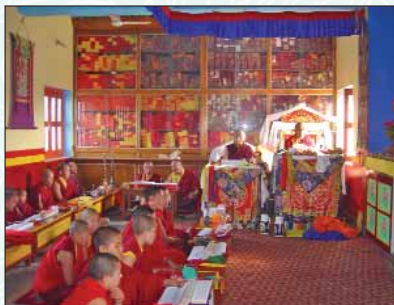
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Padmasambhava Buddhist Center spreads the teachings of Buddhism according to the Nyingma school of Tibetan Buddhism. The Center was established in New York in 1989 by Venerable Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Venerable Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche. PBC includes over twenty centers in the U.S., Puerto Rico, and Russia, as well as monastic institutions in the U.S. and India.



Padma Samye Ling Monastery and Retreat Center



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PADMA SAMYE LING MONASTERY AND RETREAT CENTER is located in Delaware County, New York, on 500 beautiful acres in the foothills of the Catskills. It includes a large, formal temple – complete with traditional murals, a large scholastic library, museum, and study room – as well as a dormitory and Sangha House with kitchen and dining facilities. Space is available for private retreat, long or short term.

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ORGYEN SAMYE CHÖKHÖR LING NUNNERY is the first Buddhist nunnery at historic Deer Park in Sarnath, just a short walk from the monastery. Opened March 2003, it reflects

the Rinpoches' commitment to provide equal educational opportunities for females and males.

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The Great Miracle Stupa, Padma Samye Jetavan

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