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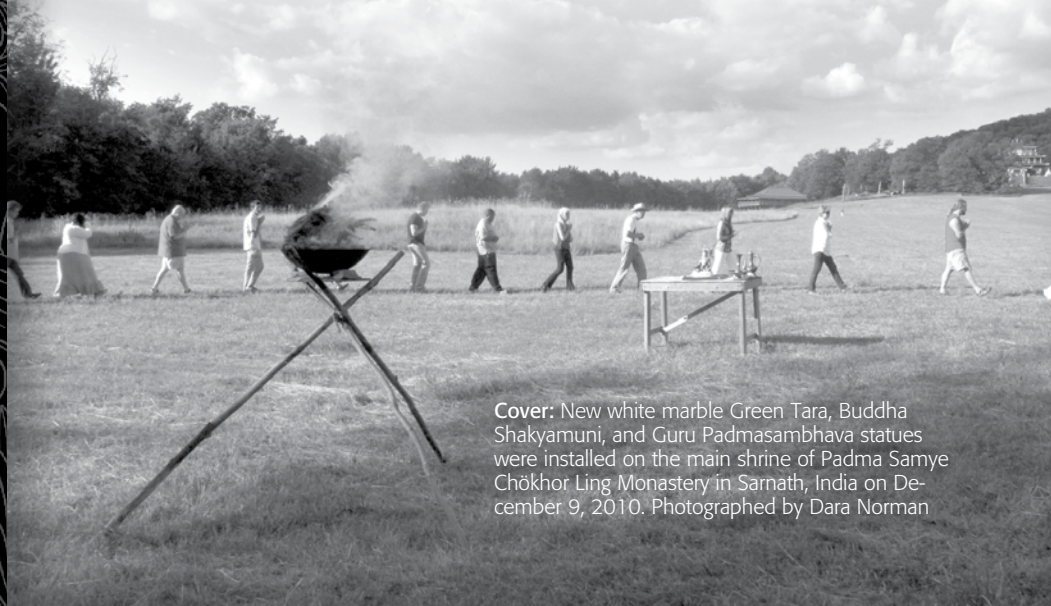
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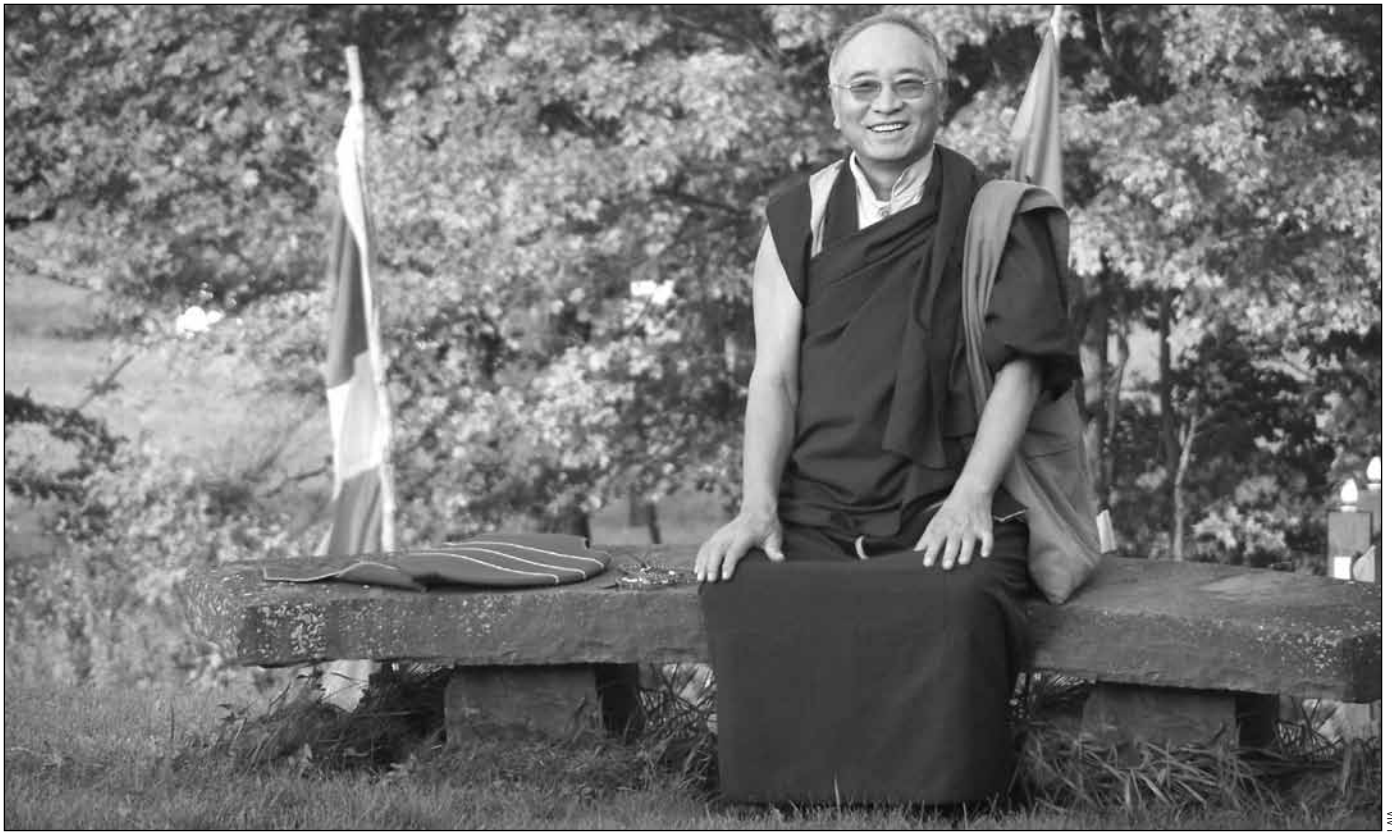
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Cover: New white marble Green Tara, Buddha Shakyamuni, and Guru Padmasambhava statues were installed on the main shrine of Padma Samye Chökhör Ling Monastery in Samath, India on December 9, 2010. Photographed by Dara Norman



Dear Sangha and Friends,

It is with great pleasure that I extend my gratitude and appreciation to you all. This past year has been very productive and promising, even as challenges increasingly surround us in the world.

Each day is a remarkable opportunity to appreciate all the bounty in our lives, including our friends and family, as well as the precious Dharma we hold in our hearts. By deepening our appreciation of ourselves and others, we become more gentle and calm, more clear and virtuous, empowered to courageously face our life with a good, honest heart and mind. This is the very root of practice, and the essential meaning of being a Dharma practitioner. As we continue to explore the many goodness qualities in ourselves and others, profound realization will naturally arise. This will make our life truly meaningful and of great benefit to everyone.

The path is not always easy, but by restrengthening our courage and commitment, joy and appreciation, and our connection to the lineage and the teachings, all the difficulties we face will become special ornaments of our realization.

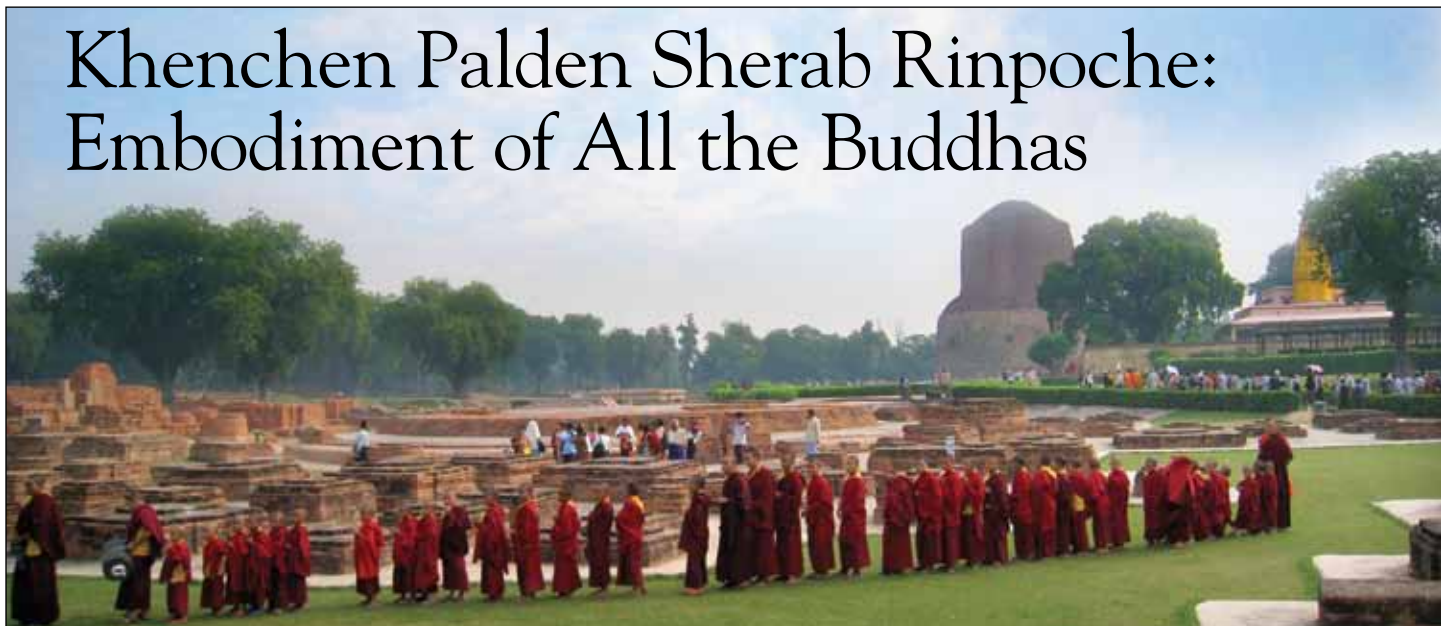
In recognition of all that we have achieved together and individually, it is important to acknowledge the qualities and vision that give us strength. My brother Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and I have found support in all of our sangha, and we have held every gesture of compassion and kindness extended to us in the highest esteem.

I sincerely thank each and every one of you, and I hope that your path is smooth, fruitful, and prosperous. With best wishes for the holiday seasons, and with prayers for increasing peace and harmony,

Venerable Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche

Following in the Footsteps of the Glorious Noble One

Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche: Embodiment of All the Buddhas



JOMO LORRANE



PEMA DRAGPA

BY PEMA DRAGPA

Precious Father Lama,
Please hear our cries of longing devotion.
Remember us, your wandering children.
Reglorify your enlightened intent to return to us again.

As a way of honoring your awakened mind,
And creating auspicious conditions for disciples to receive your blessings continuously,
Venerable Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche led a pilgrimage to the holy land of India,
Mingling the blessings of your relics with those of Lord Buddha,
Following the footsteps of his twelve incomparable deeds.

First returning to your monastery and nunnery in Sarnath,
Amidst a beautiful reception of devoted sangha jewels,
Your relics were installed as the crown jewel of Padma and Orgyen viharas.
We praise your deed of establishing many Dharma centers
To nurture your fortunate lotus children.

In every tiny face and smile and prayer,
In the early morning birds, ringing Dharma bells, and drifting mist,
Your sweet splendor shines clearly.
We sincerely pray to Orgyen Rinpoche,
To again appear as our precious teacher.
Glorious Noble One, please bless us with your mighty presence.

From Deer Park your relics were held high with your father's,
In a caravan through miles of fields and lives and soft memories
Of ancient times somehow now.
We follow the Buddha and his two Tibetan sons,
Almost as if seeing through their eyes,
The beauty of loving one another,
Of supporting goodness and virtue,
And the importance of being the Dharma—
Quiet, constant, deep strength moving forward.



DARA NORMAN



In Vaishali, a hidden, humble place of thatched homes, monkeys, and elephants,
 Where the Buddha first revealed the Vajrayana,
 At the base of King Ashoka's towering pillar,
 We began spreading your relics throughout India,
 Along with your father's, and hair collected from devoted pilgrims.
 Reciting Vajrasattva mantras, circumambulating your legacy,
 And sounding aspirations for all beings' benefit,
 We prayed to our precious vajra master,
 The Lord of Dharma,
 To look upon us with compassion.

We then moved south to Nalanda,
 Where your seven vajra lines are still victorious.
 How impressive and humbling to actually be
 Where so many masters and scholars have turned the Dharma Wheel.
 How amazing to reconnect with your enlightened speech,
 Echoing through centuries of empowerments, transmissions, and instructions.
 We praise your complete mastery of study, reflection, and meditation.

In the evening at Vulture's Peak,
 Step-by-step Khenpo Rinpoche led us to the summit of the Prajnaparamita.
 Up there, gazing out to the sky, into the nature of our own minds,
 Dusk held the Heart Sutra in clouds of incense offerings.
 It was as if the Buddha spoke your name there,
 Through the cliffs and light and open sky.
 It was as if you spoke through us:
 "It is all one great magical display."

Then moving towards the Vajra Throne,
 Ever closer to the center of complete awakening,
 Dim lights of cars and bikes streamed through shadows.
 How could this be other than a dream?
 How could this pilgrimage really be happening?
 Rinpoche's blessings filled everything.

At night, Bodhgaya's temple stood golden, seen from everywhere.
 At dawn, hundreds sat knee-to-knee, just a few feet from Buddha's enlightenment
 Beneath the bodhi tree.
 In the morning, Khenchen Rinpoche's relics touched nearly everything,
 Even the Buddha's seat.
 At the end of purification and dedication ceremonies,
 A small Buddha head was unearthed from where we sat together.
 Continuously blessing your followers,
 Always reappearing for the sake of sentient beings,
 We prostrate to the Victorious Ones—
 We request them to return again and again.

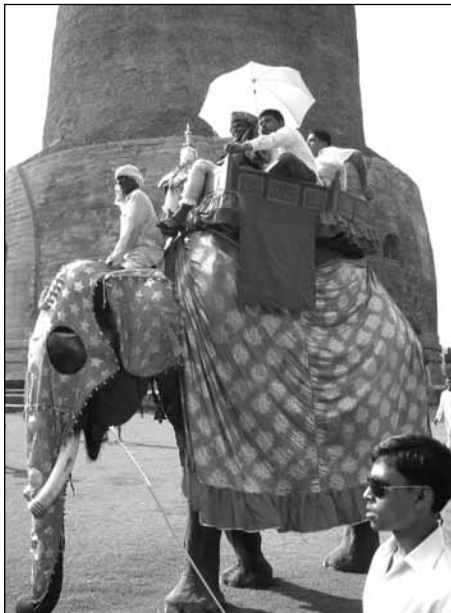
We then returned to our Samath home,
 The thriving, pulsing, sacred treasure centers
 Of living, breathing Dharma.
 How wonderful to see our growing Dharma family.
 In even just a few days, it became apparent
 The special role they have
 Of carrying the lineage in this holy land—
 Of being the way for the Dharma to continue into the future.



Following in the Footsteps of the Glorious Noble One



KIRBY SHELSTAD



AMANDA LEWIS

On the auspicious anniversary of the Buddha's first turning of the wheel,
His relics circumambulated Sarnath on royal elephants
And returned to where he first taught.
Khenpo Rinpoche again turned the wheel of Dharma there,
Where he and Khenchen Rinpoche had lived for seventeen years and taught for decades.
Afterwards, the entire sangha presented Khenpo Rinpoche with a mandala offering of gifts
In honor of his wisdom body, speech, mind, qualities, and activities,
Requesting his long and healthy life,
The flourishing of his activities as the heart son
Of the Buddha, Guru Padmasambhava, and Khenchen Rinpoche,
And that he continue turning the wheel of Dharma for the benefit of all beings.

Soon we drove north to Shravasti,
Where the Buddha resided for twenty-five rainy season retreats.
Even the air and earth of Jetavan were profoundly different—
Remarkably sweet and soothing.
They seemed to somehow invisibly, stably support and uplift everything.

From the original Miracle Stupa,
The PBC stupa stood glowing white,
And at night was showered with garlands of light offerings.
The Khenpo Rinpoches' incomparably dedicated Dharma sister, Jomo Lorraine,
Held a dana for the local Three Yana sanghas
Of Sri Lanka, Korea, and Tibet.

Later we entered Jetavan Grove amid ongoing bushels of flower offerings
Spread across the Buddha's retreat cabin.
Khenchen Rinpoche's relics circled the land through hundreds of international pilgrims
and their prayers.
We sat with Rinpoche in practice and silent meditation.
We sat where the Buddha had meditated for so long.
We prayed to our great teacher.



KHENPO RINPOCHE



AMANDA LEWIS

In the very early morning,
We traveled southeast to Kushinigar,
Where the Buddha demonstrated the impermanence of all conditioned things.
Here, the mahaparinirvana of Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche
Was even more pronounced where the Buddha finally laid and was cremated.
We quietly listened to Khenpo Rinpoche retell the final days and teachings of the Buddha.
All things change.
Duality is suffering.
The nature of everything is emptiness.
Work diligently to realize final, perfect peace beyond coming and going.
We spread Khenchen Rinpoche's relics exactly where the Buddha's relics
Began ceaselessly blessing the universe.



DARA NORMAN



PEMA DRAGPA

After returning to Deer Park,
 Three life-sized white marble statues
 Of Buddha Shakyamuni, Guru Rinpoche, and Tara
 Were installed on the main shrine of Padma Samye Chökhör Ling Monastery.
 They had been delicately hand-crafted for over four years in Varanasi
 Under the Khenpo Rinpoches' continual guidance.

Shortly afterwards, Khenpo Rinpoche consecrated the nunnery land
 Where Eight Great Stupas and a thirty-foot tall Enlightenment Stupa are being built
 To house Khenchen Rinpoche's relics, sacred objects, Dharma texts,
 And the relics and teachings of numerous other great masters and scholars,
 Along with sacred substances from many pilgrimage spots.
 Khenpo Rinpoche then offered refuge to all the gathered sangha,
 Gave new robes to the monks and nuns,
 And bestowed the text empowerment of Khenchen Rinpoche's entire collected works.



PEMA DRAGPA

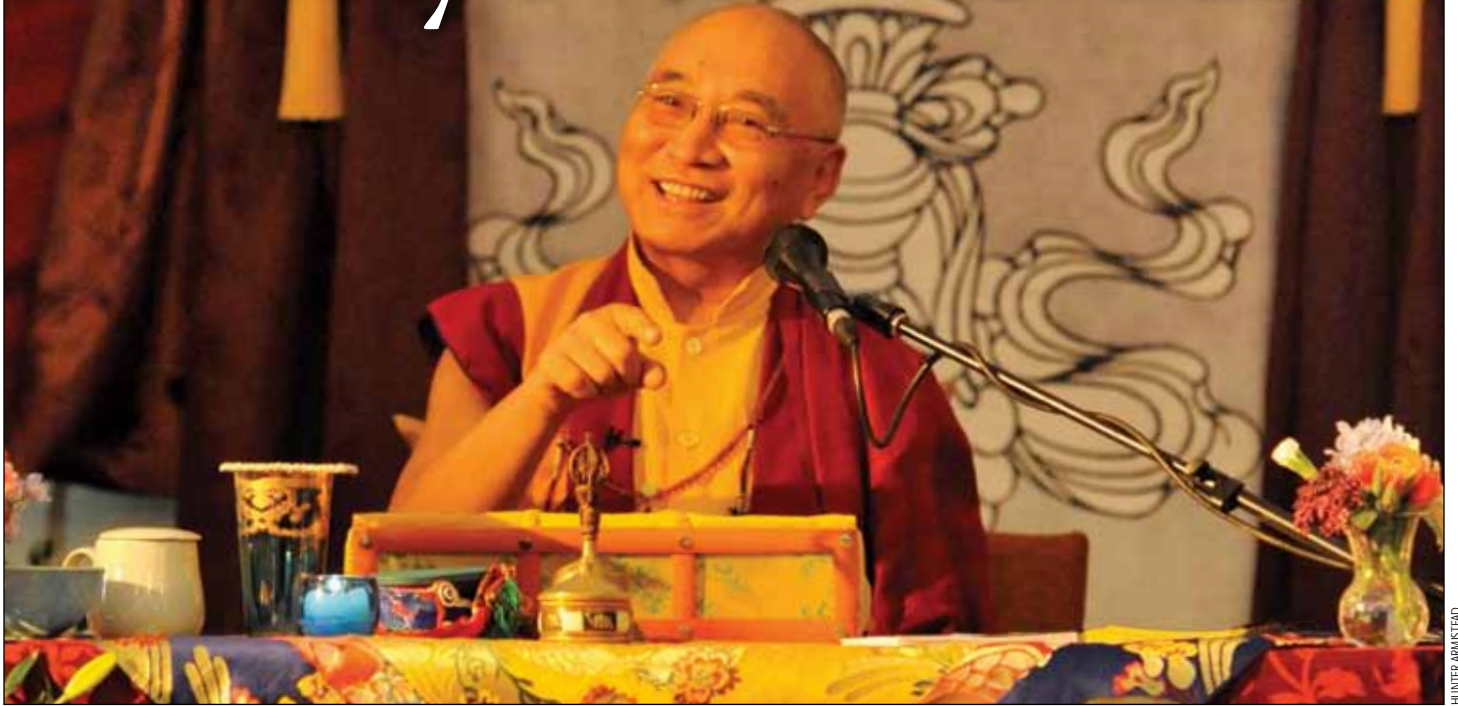
Having retraced the steps of the Buddha's Four Turnings,
 From Rinpoches' Vajrayana monastery and nunnery,
 Through Vaishali, Vulture's Peak, and Deer Park,
 Remembering and honoring the Buddha's twelve deeds,
 And Khenchen Rinpoche as their perfect embodiment,
 We celebrated the fulfillment of the pilgrimage.
 Returning our teacher's relics to the holy places of the Buddha
 Was completed without any obstacles or delays.
 The sangha was overjoyed.

In incredible India, among stupas and potholes,
 Rich colors and poverty,
 Smoky smells and sudden bursts of firecrackers and loud speakers,
 Neon sequined sweaters, clouds of dust, and ongoing tea,
 Neon sequined sweaters, clouds of dust, and ongoing tea,
 Kind eyes, simple lifestyles, electric outages,
 Criss-crossing cars and cows and dogs and carts,
 Filled with horns but without anger,
 The Buddha is unmistakably there.
 Almost as if he is still there, just slightly out of view.
 You can feel him walking barefoot on the ground.
 His soft, steady gaze almost looks at you through everything.
 And here, waiting, praying, following him and his teachings,
 We can almost see him looking out through our own eyes.
 How beautiful and magnificent we all are.
 How special and fortunate and thoroughly meaningful.
 How wonderful it will be when Khenchen Rinpoche returns.
 How unspeakably amazing to find him in Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche.
 How beautiful that their minds have mingled into one:
 The Buddha as Guru Rinpoche and his two heart sons.
 How truly incredible.
 How thoroughly blessed.
 How wonderful to follow in their footsteps. ❁



KIRBY SHELESTAD

Rays of the Sun



Venerable Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche

This Ngondro interview was conducted by Pema Dragpa at Padma Samye Ling on April 26, 2011.
EDITED BY ANDREW COOK

Khenpo Rinpoche, would you please talk about when you began to practice Ngondro?

Khenpo Rinpoche: I began Ngondro in Tibet when I was very young, while my father was practicing. He particularly encouraged me to practice the Guru Yoga of Guru Padmasambhava. That was when I really first began to practice and accumulate mantras. He told me that I should feel the presence of Guru Rinpoche and recite his mantra at least two or three malas every day. Father said that when I finally finished the mantra accumulations—he actually mentioned *millions* of repetitions, not just 100,000—I would begin to see Guru Padmasambhava.

He told me all kinds of stories about how Guru Padmasambhava is so important, for example, that he would arrive every morning and evening on the rays of the sun, and that if looked toward the sunlight with semi-closed eyes I would see his beautiful and colorful clothes. In a way, father was kind of tricking me by talking about Guru Rinpoche's clothes, because there weren't many colorful things to wear in our village; we always wore the same kind of standard cloth, so colorful clothes were exciting and interesting. Therefore, father said that if I practiced looking toward the sunlight with semi-closed eyes, I could see the patterns on Guru Padmasambhava's robes. I was quite young at the time, but I

liked to practice; so father told me these things and I chanted the mantra and prayers of Guru Padmasambhava. However, I formally began Ngondro when I was in Darjeeling in 1974 or around then. I would practice along with my father. That is my brief story about how I started Ngondro.

Around the area of Jowo Zegyal where I grew up, there were so many hermitages occupied by really good practitioners. They were very low-key and humble, spending a lot of time in caves on the rocky mountains. Many of them were completely vegetarian, refusing even to wear sheepskin clothes—they only wore clothes made out of spun wool. Father told me he started practicing with them when he was still very young, receiving teachings from them and engaging in the Ngondro practices.

Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche began to practice Ngondro and Guru Yoga around the same time that he started to read and study various philosophical texts, when he was around seven or ten years old. In particular, he went to spend some time in a renowned cave of Guru Padmasambhava with one lama in our area, practicing under his guidance near Jowo Zegyal Mountain. This monk was a very good teacher, and he spent a lot of time in hermitage. His name was Lama Jangchub Gyamtso, and our mother and aunt always did a lot of Nyungne and Avalokitesvara practice with him. Lama Jangchub Gyamtso would help,

support, and encourage many village people in our area to do the Nyungne practice. In fact, he himself often led these retreats, so our mother and aunt, as well as many others participated in quite a few Nyungne retreats with him.

Also His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche finished three Ngondros: first from the *Longchen Nyingtik*, then according to Dudjom Lingpa's instructions, and finally a Black Troma Ngondro. He had the opportunity to practice with many of Dudjom Lingpa's disciples; they would chant the *Heart Sutra* at the end of every session, followed by Dzogchen meditation.

What basic advice would you give to someone who is having a hard time beginning or continuing their Ngondro practice?

Khenpo Rinpoche: In general, the teachings say that the most important thing we can do when we are a little tired, discouraged, or distracted from practice, is to reactivate our devotion and feel the preciousness of the human situation and circumstances we presently experience. We need to continually restrengthen our courage and commitment. In Tibet there is a prayer that reads, "May I have the piece of bone in my heart." This line indicates that we must have a very strong heart, supported by "bone"—otherwise, our courage and commitment may not be strong enough. So, we need a strong heart combined with joy, inspiration, and determination.

Of course, Ngondro practice is a little big, especially when we are busy and have to take care of many worldly activities, like engaging in the normal activities of our living situation. When we find ourselves in these circumstances, we need to be practical and make a suitable timetable for our practice. We can set aside some time in the morning or evening, and really keep up our practice at that time. It is very helpful to maintain a schedule like this and stick to it. Many great masters and practitioners have said that 100,000 of each section of Ngondro is a big number, so it is helpful to begin by finishing the "stepping stones" of preliminary practice, which is 10,000 of each. At that point, we have completed the first level of Ngondro, and we have made quite a good start toward the final number of 100,000 for all sections. This is one way to inspire and activate our practice as we continue to engage in the teachings.

Again, Ngondro is the most important foundation of our practice, the embodiment of all the teachings of the Buddha. So, we are touching base with this strong and reliable foundation. What this really means is that we are connecting with the inner nature of our mind—our love, joy, appreciation, courage, commitment, and inspiration, along with mindfulness, alertness, and all other beautiful qualities. We are revealing our truly precious innate treasures. By completing Ngondro practice, we have engaged in all the different levels of the Buddha's teaching. And, on an inner level, we are developing quite well with strength and confidence as we move forward on our spiritual path and inner journey.

What is one of the most effective ways to bring the Dzogchen view into our practices?

Khenpo Rinpoche: The Dzogchen teachings are related with the nature of mind, and so are the Ngondro practices; therefore, Ngondro really includes Dzogchen practice within it. In Dzogpa Chenpo, the true nature is always described as having two qualities

or aspects. One is called the "pure from the beginning" aspect of the nature, while the other is called the "spontaneously inherent richness" aspect of the nature. When we practice Ngondro, we are cultivating and working with bodhichitta, loving-kindness, compassion, devotion, joy, appreciation, and various richness qualities. As we feel and connect with these qualities, we are simultaneously engaging with the spontaneously inherent richness nature described in the Dzogchen teachings, and we are revealing the treasures of the richness qualities of the nature.

Next, the Ngondro practices include meditation on the absolute, natural state of the mind. At the end of each section of practice, we receive the blessings of all the objects of refuge and dissolve these wisdom beings into the natural state of our own mind. We then meditate beyond any reference or focal point, resting in the present moment. This is the pure from the beginning aspect of the nature described in the Dzogchen teachings.

Hence, when we practice Ngondro, we are combining both aspects of the Dzogchen nature into a single state with no divisions. All existing phenomena of samsara and nirvana merge in the state of the nature of awareness. As many of you know, the nature of our present awareness is beyond any and all reference points—it is totally in the absolute state of great emptiness and freedom. That is Dzogchen. So, Ngondro is really the gateway to discovering the beautiful nature and qualities of the world we are actually surrounded by right now. Dzogchen is expanding, Dzogchen is merging, and everything is always within the Dzogchen status. We are touching base with this beautiful nature during our practice of Ngondro.

Some students might feel like they don't need to do Ngondro because Dzogchen is already perfect and everything is complete. What kind of advice would you give to these students?

Khenpo Rinpoche: The teachings explain that there are many different levels and categories of Dzogchen practitioners. Some are very highly advanced, meaning they have already done a lot of practice in past lives—perhaps they have finished hundreds or thousands of Ngondro practices already, so they are highly capable students now. Such individuals may instantly achieve realization, without needing to engage in Ngondro at all. Because they are already in the enlightened status due to their past accumulation of merit, it may not be necessary for these highest-capability practitioners to complete Ngondro.

But it is important to remember that Buddha Shakyamuni himself was an extremely high-capability practitioner, yet he engaged in ascetic practice for six years before attaining enlightenment. And Guru Padmasambhava, who the teachings describe as a direct emanation of Buddha Amitabha and the reincarnation of Buddha Shakyamuni, pursued many different kinds of spiritual practice in charnel grounds and other places for quite a long time. Then there is Garab Dorje, renowned among all Dzogchen practitioners as one who achieved realization immediately upon receiving the teachings—even he meditated in a cave for 25 years. That's a quarter of a century! Kunkhyen Longchenpa himself spent three years in retreat on the mountain of Gangri Tokar.

In more recent times, everybody talks about Jigme Lingpa, the First Khyentse, the First Kongtrul, and other renowned Dzogchen masters. All of these great, holy beings practiced so many teachings for so many years. Now, if someone comes along who is more

Rays of the Sun

advanced than them, that's great! Maybe they really don't need to do Ngondro practice! Otherwise, I think Ngondro is very, very important. So many renowned masters finished Ngondro quite a few times—they always did these practices. The teachings often describe the kind of thinking that, "Oh, this is Dzogchen and I don't need to do Ngondro practice" as "rainbow mouth." In this case, rainbows are only shining around the mouth area, not the rest of the body. Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche once said, "Rainbow mouth won't help too much unless we achieve the rainbow body. And Ngondro practice is really good for achieving the rainbow body."

Is there any particular advice you could give for someone who wants to do Ngondro but feels like it's too heavy or too much?

Khenpo Rinpoche: When a person has some anxiety or feels bad about not finishing or continuing with the Ngondro practices, in one sense it is good that they are facing the reality of their present situation and what is happening with them. But it is not helpful to hold on to that thought or recognition when it makes them depressed or further postpones their practice. When we see these things, we need to realize that the solution is not going to come from outside or from external things. However, knowing this is only the first step: we must restrengthen and cultivate courage and commitment, in addition to creating some kind of practice timetable.

Even though we may not exactly find time for practice right now, we can say to ourselves, "I am going to devote some time to practice next week or next month." Then keep to the schedule you have set, and do Ngondro every day for one week, five days, or even three days. Start with that. You may not be able to complete a lot of practice in that time, but that's okay. Just begin with something you feel more connected to, such as taking refuge, cultivating bodhichitta, engaging in Vajrasattva meditation, or practicing Guru Yoga. Do as much of that as you can, and it will really help to reactivate and rekindle your motivation. Your strength and courage will gradually develop. So, I will say that someone who is experiencing the difficulty you described can start by making some kind of practical plan with a good heart, joy, devotion, and bodhichitta.

Is Ngondro found in all nine yanas of the Nyingma school?

Khenpo Rinpoche: Yes, definitely. It is the embodiment of all the teachings given by Buddha Shakyamuni. For example, the first four renunciation thoughts are related with the Four Noble Truths, particularly the truth of suffering and the truth of the cause of suffering. The renunciation thoughts are thus very much connected with the first turning of the wheel of Dharma. Next, taking refuge is a central teaching of basic Buddhism included in the Shravakayana

and Pratyekabuddhayana, the foundation of the remaining seven yanas. Moving into the Mahayana, the bodhichitta practices are essential to every aspect of the Great Vehicle, which extends from the Bodhisattvayana up to Atiyoga.

Now, mandala offerings begin with the tantric teachings of Buddhism, such as Kriyatantra and the other Outer Tantras, and continue in the Inner Tantras. Vajrasattva practice includes both the Outer and Inner Tantras, but the aspect of visualizing the deity in the sky in front of us and making offerings to him or her as an enlightened being—while we remain in our ordinary samsaric forms—incorporates central elements of the Outer Tantras. Through this practice, the wisdom body and compassion of the buddhas cleanses and purifies our obscurations. Finally, Guru Yoga entails transforming or transmuting our ordinary perceptions into the wisdom mind of the buddhas. So, we begin by visualizing ourselves as Vajrayogini or Yeshe Tsogyal with Guru Padmasambhava in the space in front of us, perceiving the entire universe as the pure mandala or buddhafield of Guru Rinpoche. This is just some context of the Inner Tantra and Dzogchen teachings, which encompasses all the Buddha's nine yana teachings.



Khenpo Rinpoche shares a quiet moment with his father, Lama Chimed Namgyal first time

What are the principal benefits of doing Ngondro?

Khenpo Rinpoche: There are many benefits to Ngondro practice, but some of the principal ones include purifying our obscurations, reconnecting with the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and seeing the nature of samsaric situations and circumstances for what they really are. Everything about samsara is impermanent, and right now we have a precious human body that we can use to cross to the far shore of nirvana. In general, samsara is characterized by countless troubles, difficulties, and suffering. Ngondro reminds us of the law of karma, which explains that everything has

causes and conditions that manifest through dependent origination or the system of interdependent coordination. Thus, nothing is unrelated. Recognizing this brings forth a wider knowledge of samsaric circumstances, so we are not just looking at one side or one narrow corner and holding on to that.

During Ngondro practice, we are seeing the whole system of samsara and strongly connecting to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, while developing great love and compassion for all sentient beings. Through this, we accumulate merit and purify our negativities, obscurations, and obstacles. In other words, we are getting a higher understanding and discovering our buddha-nature more deeply. We are thereby realizing the innate Dzogchen nature as it is and becoming a better and more beautiful person. This leads not only to more contentment and happiness for ourselves, but it also allows us to share some degree of happiness and kindness with others. The Buddha's teachings call this "fulfilling the two purposes," which are the two jewels of fulfillment for ourselves and others, both now and in the future.

This is a brief description of the benefits that come from Ngondro practice. Ultimately, the preliminary practices lead to the complete discovery of buddha-nature, so they are truly very special, bringing the lasting rewards of fulfillment, joy, and satisfaction that allow us to be happy all the time. ❀



Khenpo Rinpoche and the sangha see the stupas for the first time



Puja to consecrate the grounds of the Stupa Garden

Building the Nunnery Stupa Garden

Thanks to the ongoing devotion and generosity of numerous sangha members, and the incredible generosity of the Hinman Foundation and Chris Rothman, in November 2012, in the holy land of Deer Park at Orgyen Samye Chökhör Ling, on the same location where Buddha Shakyamuni proclaimed the coming of Maitreya, the fifth buddha of this Fortunate Aeon, the Great Stupas will be blessed and dedicated by Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche to the memory, legacy, and swift return of our precious teacher, Venerable Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche. ❁



Consecration ceremony with the PBC nuns and monks



Rinpoche designing the stupas



Making many tsa tsas and mantra rolls to put inside the stupas

Essence of Visualization Practice: A Teaching on the Three Samadhis



AMANDA LEWIS

Venerable Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche gave this teaching at PSL during the summer Dzogchen Retreat on July 22, 2010. It is excerpted from of the *Essential Journey of Life and Death, Vol. 1*, scheduled for publication in spring 2012.

EDITED BY AMANDA LEWIS AND PEMA DRAGPA

The three samadhis are the essence of visualization. In a way, they are the life-force or central column of all creation stage practices. Without them, our visualization practice is incomplete. At the beginning, when we visualize the deity, some construction or imagination is involved. But in reality, we're already in that enlightened state right now—we *are* that—and we're instantly discovering what we are. To do this, we begin with the three samadhis: (1) the suchness, or true nature samadhi, (2) the compassion, or all-arising samadhi, and (3) the causal, or seed syllable samadhi. These three samadhis have different names, but they're not actually three different or separate things. They are always inseparably united.

We begin with the suchness, or true nature samadhi, which is the foundation practice. In Tibetan this is known as *debzhin nyi chi tingedzin*. This suchness nature is also known as the original Great Mother basic luminosity or clarity. This samadhi connects us to the inherited luminosity qualities of our own original nature and pacifies the experience of death.

Many of you may already be familiar with *bardo* practices. The word 'bardo' is often translated as "intermediate state." In a way, a bardo is like a dream state. Bardo practices are divided into four principal categories, or four dream states: (1) the bardo of death, (2) the bardo of after-death, (3) the bardo of birth, and (4) the bardo of living. The bardos are nothing other than a dream. Everything is a dream. And we're not just watching the dream or dreaming ourselves—we are a dream too. Each individual, including ourselves, is a dream being. Together we're the dream team!

Everyone goes through these four different dreams, and the suchness true nature samadhi specifically purifies the habitual pattern associated with the bardo of death and reconnects us to our original, intrinsic nature. When you have a good realization of this true nature samadhi, you're not really scared of death. The

habitual pattern of death is not a truly existing package that you're trying to release—it's just another dream. When you have a true realization of this suchness samadhi, death is really a piece of cake. Many great masters, such as Longchenpa, have given us evidence of this. They weren't just making a fancy statement or bragging about something—they truly witnessed that death is nothing other than a dream state. When we purify the habitual pattern of death, we're not scared, afraid, or hesitant because death is just another transition and journey.

The teachings say that as you practice the suchness samadhi, you are also purifying the formless realms. There are three major realms within samsara: (1) the form, (2) formless, and (3) desire realms. These groups share the dream, but each experiences it in slightly different ways. This true nature samadhi purifies the habitual patterns of the formless realms, which will connect us to the original nature of clear luminosity. Among the three enlightened states, we are connecting to the dharmakaya. So when we're meditating in this true nature samadhi, in that moment we're invoking the ever-present qualities of the dharmakaya, and are one with the dharmakaya buddhas. That is what the suchness samadhi is all about, and it is the foundation of visualization.

We begin with this samadhi because we don't want our visualization to involve too much grasping or clinging, and thus develop more ideas and regimented conceptions. Those are all unreal; they're obstacles. Even though we're using our imagination or focusing, this imagination leads us beyond imagination, beyond grasping and clinging.

If we have time, we should stay a few seconds or even a few minutes in that natural state, relaxing the mind, without following all the different thoughts. Just sit, abiding and experiencing the inner spaciousness, enjoying the vastness. It is so soothing, so calm and peaceful. Just really relax. This is the most relaxing

place we can rest without being disturbed by any turbulence. It's very rejuvenating. Stay in that state for as long as you have time. Then it is from that suchness that the second samadhi develops.

In Tibetan, the second samadhi is known as *kuntu nangwai tingedzin*, which can be translated as "all-arising samadhi" or "appearance samadhi." It is compassion, which means that the suchness samadhi from which it arises is not a state of negation. This is often referred to as "great emptiness," but it's not the kind of emptiness we might imagine with dualistic mind. That's not great emptiness at all. Emptiness means beyond duality; it is full of opportunity, energy, and vitality. It is compassion that arises magically, like a soothing, calming breeze. The energy of compassion moves through space without any restrictions, without any partiality, spreading out instantly touching every single living being of the six realms. Focus on the compassion—not on individual beings. That powerful energy spread out without any restrictions is known as the all-arising samadhi.

The all-arising samadhi and the suchness samadhi are never separate. Both are in one single identical state. There's no separation, but in the all-arising samadhi, we're more actively concentrating on that energy known as "compassion without focus," compassion that has no partiality, which means there is nothing in particular to focus on. Just spread vast compassion throughout all of space, completely filling the entire universe, and then relax the mind in that compassionate state. That great compassion is the essence of enlightenment. The suchness samadhi combined together with the all-arising samadhi is also known as the "union of wisdom and compassion."

The all-arising samadhi purifies the habitual patterns or hindrances that we experience in the bardo of the after-death state. When we die, our journey doesn't end. Dreams continue to unfold. These unfolding experiences are known as the "bardo of after-death," or the "bardo of the true nature." The environment of the whole universe begins at that time. For so long, we've been grasping and clinging onto notions of subject and object, rejecting and accepting. Just as we play that game in our lifetime, we carry that habitual package, trying to apply those habitual tools to the experiences of the bardo after-death. As the visions change, we get caught in so many experiences of ups and downs. But when we have the realization of this magic-like display, that turbulence after death is instantly pacified. It's no longer a confused and unstable experience—everything is recognized as a dream display of our own nature. Therefore, this all-arising, or magic-like samadhi will purify the habit patterns of after-death. Furthermore, when we have good realization of the compassion samadhi, the teachings say that we will also purify the habitual patterns of the form realms, and then begin to actualize the clear realization of the sambhogakaya state.

The third samadhi is known in Tibetan as *gyu yi tingedzin* and can be translated as "seed samadhi" or "causal samadhi." It is the union of the suchness and all-arising samadhis and appears in a more active, tangible form that we can hold onto with dualistic mind. This form is known as the seed syllable, or skillful means and wisdom combined together. In Tibetan, the teachings call this *lung sem*; it is the combination of the most subtle wind energy together with our awareness. In the suchness and all-arising samadhis, our awareness as it is, is in a very pervasive state of infinite vastness. Even though our awareness hasn't really changed, with this samadhi, we're now gathering or focusing in a little more localized or centralized way. This is the essence, the most subtle, finest state of our conscious-

ness that appears in the form of syllables. The syllable is nothing other than wind and consciousness, or self-awareness. It is skillful means and wisdom, or compassion and emptiness together in one single state.

The syllable can be any size, but generally we visualize it as small, and it appears instantly like a rainbow in the sky. Even though it's very subtle consciousness and wind energy, it appears instantly in your mind as rainbow lights in the sky. It is the most powerful nucleus of your enlightenment that is now going to blow up all the mountains of your habitual patterns—and it begins right in your own heart and mind.

If you have time, meditate in that state for a few seconds or minutes. Generally, we shouldn't even be considering time; if we're trying to develop good concentration and meditation, this is where we should start. This is not an extra practice that we're doing or some kind of detour. We're going directly to the heart or root—the very base of meditation. This is the practice. If we really spend some time on this, it's the most powerful way of building up our concentration and stabilizing our meditation of Shamatha and Vipashyana.

This practice purifies the habitual patterns of birth and becoming. Birth is the way we begin the whole cycle again. According to the teachings, this cycle goes on and on as an unending spiral until we reach enlightenment. Even when we reach enlightenment, it continuously moves. Birth is just the beginning of another chapter of our whole universe. When we can purify the very beginning of the cycle, it takes care of all the other unfolding motions. That is why this visualization on the seed syllable samadhi is so important.

Concentrate on the seed syllable for as long as you can, and then spring into action. You're no longer an ordinary individual—you are in the enlightened state! You have been lifted up to buddhahood. Whichever deity you're practicing—Guru Padmasambhava, Vajrasattva, Buddha Shakyamuni, or Tara—you *are* that deity. Therefore, the Vajrayana teachings often say that in order to do visualization practices, we need to have courage and fearlessness. To fully embrace this beautiful, special view that has never arisen in our heart or mind before, the view that will completely smash our ego—this is a big job! Therefore we need courage and we need fearlessness. These are so important.

On a larger scope, this seed syllable samadhi purifies the habitual patterns of the desire realm. Among the three realms, the desire realm is the most gross and tangible. This is the realm we're in now. The form realm actually consists of more semi-forms; it's like a twilight zone between the desire realm and formless realm. The formless realm is entirely without form. If we apply this understanding to our physical body, which is like a miniature version of the outer world, we could say that our body represents the desire realm since it's the most tangible. Our speech or voice represents the form realm because it's a semi-form—it has some form, but it's not as tangible as our body. And then our mind is the formless realm.

By purifying the habitual patterns of birth, it will become a magical birth. All the great masters are conceived with awareness, born with awareness, do their work with awareness, and leave this world with awareness. They don't make any presumptions, nor do they have doubts or expectations, but they're not in a blank state either. Everything they do is with awareness. They come into the world with knowledge and wisdom, live their lives with knowledge and wisdom, and leave with knowledge and wisdom. ❀

The Five Strengths of a Dharma Practitioner

Venerable Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche gave heart advice on how to tame the mind with the “Five Strengths” to the PBC Tampa Bay sangha on March 13, 2011.

EDITED BY JANE GILBERT

Our gracious, kind, and compassionate teacher Lord Buddha gave many different practice instructions. Among them were teachings on the five strengths: (1) devotion, (2) joyful effort, (3) mindfulness, (4) concentration, and (5) wisdom. With these five ingredients, we can keep our practice alive, and maintain, increase, and eventually cause our inner beauty to fully bloom.

1 The first strength, devotion, is most important for practicing the Dharma. It is a combination of joy and appreciation for the Dharma, for oneself, and for our situation and circumstances, which did not come together accidentally. All of these conditions are special, beautiful, and seldom occur. Devotion is the only way that we can open our hearts and motivate ourselves to practice.

Without devotion everything becomes very common, and we feel dull, useless, and depressed. We may even blame ourselves or the situation and circumstances, which eventually leads us to become victims of these emotions. Buddha Shakyamuni spoke many times about the importance of devotion. He said that devotion is like a door for light to come in, and a wheel with which to move to the enlightened state. Devotion increases all other good things.

Our situation and circumstances are precious, which means that time is also precious. Time is running like the Mississippi River: even though we can't see it, the water is never standing still. Similarly, even though we can't see time, it's moving constantly. We should take full advantage of our existence to help ourselves and others. We can't fool around too much, playing games, experimenting, and missing opportunities. If we do that, we may end up leaving this



Venerable Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche bestowing empowerment in New Mexico, 1991

world with some degree of regret, guilt, and self-blame. Instead, we should take off from here with joy, happiness, gratitude, and a sense of fulfillment. It's in our hands to leave the world in this way.

2 Together with devotion we need joyful effort, which is the next strength. Effort is necessary because our laziness is crawling along behind us, very sneakily and quietly, so that sometimes we don't even see it until after it's already pulling us down. Laziness doesn't come forcefully. It's like the undercurrents in the ocean—strong and very persistent, undermining our goals and vision. We need uplifted, joyful effort to prevent laziness, but it shouldn't be effort that feels like a burden. To keep our effort joyful we should frequently think about the importance of our practice and our spiritual journey.

The Buddha pointed out three types of laziness:

1. general laziness,
2. habitual laziness, and
3. self-blaming laziness.

With general laziness we're just not motivated. We feel heavy and dull and don't even want to move from our soft cushion except to push the TV remote control or get some popcorn and yummy drinks! We don't feel like doing anything; we just want to sit like a “refrigerator watching television!” This general laziness interferes with everything and we make no progress.

When general laziness happens, nobody is doing this to us—we're doing it on our own. Whenever we see ourselves in this situation, we should bring up devotion and joyful effort. We should think:

“I’m falling into that ditch again. I’m wasting my time, my energy, and my circumstances.” We should encourage ourselves and immediately lift ourselves up. If someone else tells us this, even if it’s correct, we’ll get upset. Therefore the Buddha said we should become teachers to ourselves.

With the second kind of laziness, habitual pattern laziness, we’re distracted by our old habitual pattern activities even if we’re motivated to practice. We become obsessed with these habitual activities and don’t practice or do good things that we want to do deep down in our hearts. We say, “I want to practice, but I have to clean the yard or watch a movie.” Of course, we should do some things that we want to do, but spending too much time on them will not bring the result we’re looking for. We have to be balanced and thoughtful.

The third laziness is self-blaming laziness, when we push ourselves down. Sometimes we make excuses for not doing what we want to do by saying, “I can’t do that; I’m not good at it.” Of course by using these excuses we can avoid practicing, and in the end they push us down and we become losers. Therefore, instead of self-blame we have to bring up courage and determination, joy and devotion, and say, “Yes, I can do it, I should do it, and I’m going to do it,” and then make the effort.

Joyful effort supports the four other strengths, as well as the five other paramitas. It’s like the wind that moves them. We have so many strong and pervasive habitual patterns that distract us from our principal purpose, so whatever our situation and circumstances—not just during sitting meditation—we should ignite joyful effort and devotion. If we have joyful effort throughout the day, we’ll keep the Dharma continually in motion.



DEBI HARBIN

Venerable Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche relaxing with his students

3 The third strength is mindfulness, which means thoughtfulness. It is intelligence or wisdom, opening and turning our radar in every direction. It is not a narrow state since it allows us to see all of our surroundings. Mindfulness is like a teacher, reminding us whenever we need it. It doesn’t bother us like someone standing around saying we should do this and not do that. It’s our inner intelligence, beautifully and gently giving us instructions, reminding us right when we need it, and then going back to the sidelines and standing on duty.

Mindfulness also means remembering the instructions and teachings we’ve received from our teachers and read in books. We’ve gained a lot of knowledge, but if we don’t have mindfulness we become absent-minded and forgetful. The knowledge printed in our alaya, or subconscious storehouse, sinks, almost as if it’s gone. Without mindfulness, even if we have received teachings, the nugget instructions that are important to our practice and day-to-day lives are disabled. If we have more mindfulness, everything will come quite easily and nicely—and not just for us! Our family, friends, and everybody else will also be happier and more comfortable. Mindfulness is even important for our health. On the practice level, mindfulness is like a wish-fulfilling jewel. It is the strength and the power of the practice.

4 The next strength is concentration, which is another word for meditation. Up until now, devotion, joyful effort, and mindfulness have all been more outwardly oriented, keeping up the instructions and practices. But concentration deals directly with the mind itself. The mind is powerful—it rules our view, thoughts, speech, body, and environment.

Usually the mind rules through the brain, which has become its big office or headquarters. Yet many of us are so distracted by our anxieties, emotions, and discursive thoughts arising one after another, that there’s no leader guiding us in an organized way. We wake up in the morning with our mind jumping in different directions, and the whole day is spent like that until finally we go to bed. We may even sleep like that! That’s why it’s called “monkey mind;” a monkey’s mind is not very organized. They jump in every direction, up, down, back and forth.

Concentration brings all those wandering anxieties and discursive thoughts into a more balanced order. The Buddha gave many different techniques for concentration, but they can be summarized into two types: Shamatha and Vipashyana. The type of concentration I’m talking about here is Shamatha meditation. Shamatha is a Sanskrit word that means “calmly abiding.” We’re going to bring all those wandering discursive thoughts into a single state.

There are many different ways to practice Shamatha. If we’re dealing with anger, we meditate on loving-kindness. When we have arrogance, we meditate on the six different elements—earth, water, fire, wind, space, and thoughts or conceptions. Because arrogance generally means feeling superior, meditating on the six elements shows us that we are all equal since we are made of the same six elements. If we have trouble with attachment, we should examine what we are attached to, dividing it into its component parts until we can rest our minds in the emptiness that we discover. Likewise, when we have problems with ignorance or dullness, we should bring up our knowledge of interdependent coordination—everything is related and nothing exists by itself. If we have ongoing discursive thoughts, we should meditate on our breathing by counting the breath, such as from one to ten.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22



WINTER/SPRING 2012
SCHEDULE OF TEACHINGS & RETREATS
 Padmasambhava Buddhist Center



December 31, 2011 & January 1, 2012
Vajrasattva Fire Puja & Vajrakilaya Practice
 222 BOWERY, NEW YORK CITY

Morning Vajrasattva fire puja practice: 9am to 12 noon;
 Afternoon Vajrakilaya and Dhamapala practice with
 tsok: 2pm to 5pm.

January 14 - 21, 2012
Annual Winter Dzogchen Retreat
Empowerment of 1,000-Armed
Chenrezig

WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA

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 the terma cycle the *Great Compassionate One Who*
Overpowers Samsara and Nirvana revealed by
 Terchen Tsasum Lingpa.

Palm Beach Dharma Center: www.pbdc.net,
 (561) 547-4711



January 12, 2012
Anniversary of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche
 ALL PBC CENTERS

February 10, 2012
Anniversary of Longchenpa
 ALL PBC CENTERS

February 18 - 20, 2012
Gutor Practice
 PADMA SAMYE LING

Purify and renew for the new year with Tsasum Lingpa's Vajrakilaya practice, and evening White Umbrella and *Heart Sutra* meditation.

February 22, 2012
LOSAR: Year of the Water Dragon
Tibetan Royal Year: 2139
 ALL PBC CENTERS

March 31 - April 28, 2012
One-Month Dzogchen Retreat
The Union of Mahamudra and
Dzogchen by Karma Chagme
 PADMA SAMYE LING

Receive Dzogchen pith instructions and deepen your meditation during this silent retreat under the guidance of Venerable Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche.

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SUMMER/FALL 2012 AT PADMA SAMYE LING

May 26 - 28, 2012
Raising Wind Horse Retreat

MAY 28 - JUNE 3, 2012
Kriya Yoga Work Week

June 30 - July 2, 2012
**Sapphire Light Medicine Buddha
Revitalization Retreat**

July 14 - 22, 2012
**Annual Summer Dzogchen
Retreat**

July 23 - 29, 2012
**Self Development Dzogchen
Retreat**

July 30 - August 5, 2012
Tibetan Language Class

August 22 - 24, 2012
**Practicing Vajrayana Ritual
Ceremonies**

August 25 - 30, 2012
PSL Shedra Philosophy Retreat

August 31 - September 4, 2012
**Developing Natural Vitality with
Calm Abiding and Yoga**

October 6 - 8, 2012
Nyungne Practice
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www.padmasambhava.org/youtube

PBC MEMBERSHIP

Membership is essential to the functioning of all PBC Centers, and it enables us to maintain and improve PBC and send out newsletters and announcements regarding upcoming programs. We encourage everyone to join as members to support the growth of the Buddhadharma and the Venerable Khenpo Rinpoches' Dharma activities. Members of all PBC Centers receive discounts to all teachings and retreats.

For more information:
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For full schedule
details, updates, and
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Splendid Feast of Dharma Treasures in Russia & Kalmykia

SERGEI KRASNODAR



Consecrating a stupa in Iki-Boorool, Kalmykia

JOMO LORRAINE

BY SERGEI KRASNODAR

Venerable Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche arrived in Russia on May 5, 2011 with Lama Jomo Lorraine. The next day, the teachings on the very basis of the Buddhadharma, the Four Immeasurables, were given at the Business Center in the center of Moscow. Rinpoche highlighted the importance of joyfulness as the ambiance for our efforts, gave guidelines on how to encourage ourselves on the path, and showed how loving-kindness and compassion would grow lively with the support of it. On May 8, Rinpoche bestowed the empowerment of Dakini Yeshe Tsogyal surrounded by the other embodied human dakinis that supported the particular activities of Guru Padmasambhava, as revealed by the incarnation of the great tertön Tsasum Lingpa.

The next day, May 9, was Victory Day in Russia. On this day in 1945, Nazi Germany capitulated and the Great Patriotic War (1941–1945) was finished. It is one of the most appreciated state holidays for many of us. Rinpoche was able to look at the city of Moscow decorated for this event.

From May 10th through 13th, we had a *Guhya garbha Tantra* course at Kunpenling, a beautiful retreat center in the vicinity of Moscow. My guess is there were more than 200 participants. There are different approaches to relate these teachings, and as we had



Consecrating land for new Nyingma temples



Celebrating together

a shortage of time, Khenpo Rinpoche relied not on a particular commentary but on the pith instructions he'd received from his precious masters. During this time, Rinpoche gave an empowerment of Vajrasattva according to Terdag Lingpa's teachings on *Gyutrul Drawa*, and at the end of the retreat the text empowerment of Tsasum Lingpa's terma teachings was given.

On May 15th, Rinpoche and Jomo Lorraine arrived at Elista, Kalmuk Republic—a native Buddhist republic in the south of Russia. In Iki-Boorool, there is a "Hoorool" (a temple or monastery) of the Tsasum Lingpa lineage. The lama there is Padma Sherab, who is now the Secretary of the Central Spiritual Board of Buddhists of Russia, the legal authority of Buddhism of the Russian government. Lama Dawa Tsering from Rinpoche's monastery in Sarnath now resides in Iki-Boorool Hoorool. In Elista, Padma Sherab and his wife erected the temple where the empowerments and teachings took place. Rinpoche kindly bestowed on us the empowerments of the Three Roots (Guru Pema Thragtung, Yidam Vajrakilaya, and Dakini Yeshe Tsogyal) as they are practiced in the Tsasum Lingpa tradition. In particular, during the Vajrakilaya empowerment dark clouds started to gather and beginning with the dedication part of the ceremony, the sky exploded with thunderbolts and a heavy

fall of rain burst upon the city. The area where we stayed was only sprinkled by a few, smooth drops.

Then we approached the teachings on *Yeshe Lama*. In 2007, Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche kindly bestowed on us the teachings on the first part of this text. This time, as there were a number of new people attending these teachings, Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche started from the beginning and gave the complete overview of the whole path of Dzogchen as it was presented in the *Yeshe Lama* of Jigme Lingpa, according to the tradition of Khunu Lama. When we concluded with the text and went outside the temple after the last session, we found a clear circular rainbow around the sun that lasted for several hours and was seen from other areas of Kalmuk. Many people here still remember the spectacular sight of the multitude of rainbows and rainbow clouds around the sun and in the four directions during the ceremony performed during Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche's last visit to Iki-Boorool in 2007.

Venerable Rinpoche also visited the other Nyingma Hoorool in Troitskoe, where he consecrated two spots for the building of the new general Hoorool and the special Ngakpa Hoorool.

Before returning to Moscow, Khenpo Rinpoche performed the consecration of the new temple built by Lama Padma Sherab's wife Larisa in Elista, and bestowed the text empowerment of a multitude of texts, including *Terbum* of Tsasum Lingpa, *Rinchen Terdzo*, the Nyingma Kama, the *Sungbum* of Lochen Dharma Shri, and several other sacred Dharma texts. Throughout his time in Russia, Khenpo Rinpoche also gave numerous reading transmissions, including the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*, *Kunzang Monlam*, *Daka Yeshe Do*, the root tantra of Vajrakilaya, a Tummo commentary by Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche, prayers for the swift rebirth of Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Lama Chimed Namgyal, Mipham Rinpoche's Manjushri and related *Mo* text, the Kurukulla practice of Pema Lingpa, sadhanas of the peaceful and wrathful Pema Thragtung, Vajrakilaya, Yeshe Tsogyal, a naga puja, brief fire purification by Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Thaye to repair mistakes in mantra recitation, general prayers to the Dharma protectors, and a dakini practice from the Dudjom Tersar.

So was the Dharma Feast we celebrated with Venerable Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche and Lama Jomo Lorraine, which was dedicated to the living memory and soon rebirth of our unestimatedly dear precious teacher, Venerable Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche. LHA GYAL LO!!! ❀



Yeshe Lama empowerment in Elista, Kalmykia

**"By the truth of the Three Jewels,
The blessings of all the buddhas and bodhisattvas,
The great power of completing the two accumulations,
And the power of the inconceivable and completely pure dharmadhatu,
May everything be accomplished exactly as we wish."**

Glorious Padma Samye Ling

JOHN ROBINSON



Sangha adorns the Five Dhyani Buddhas around the gonpa



Arriving for fire puja in the meadow

PEMA DRACPA



Steven Dorn installing prayer wheels

AMANDA LEWIS



Ping Hui & Dan Zhou reciting bodhisattva aspirations

AMANDA LEWIS



Guru Padmasambhava empowerment

AMANDA LEWIS

Due to the kindness and generosity of many PBC sangha members and friends, the glorious mandala of Palden Padma Samye Ling continues to shine!

Over the past year:

- More than 10,000 light offerings were installed around the Three Kaya Temple
- The Eight Great Stupas were fully painted, including opening the buddha eyes
- After the wall structure around the gonpa was built, 112 stupas were painted and installed in honor of Venerable Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche
- The Five Dhyani Buddha statues were delicately ornamented with gold leaf, and auras within golden gaus were constructed on top of their thrones
- Felix Febo built 34 new wooden puja tables for the main shrine room
- In the main hallway of the gonpa, naga ladies making offerings to the Three Jewels were installed on top of lotuses and marble columns
- The Vajrakilaya Temple roof and windows were repaired
- The roof of the temple portico beneath the Dharma wheel and deer was resurfaced and waterproofed
- The sangha house deck was stained and our organic garden yielded bountiful, delicious food for the sangha
- Marie Friquenon, Joyce Loke, and Richard Cullen gave many dana offerings to the PSL sangha for retreats
- The PSL road was improved in August 2011 thanks to donations by the Hinman Foundation and Lars Cederholm
- Additional land was recently donated to Padma Samye Ling due to the ongoing generosity of Lars Cederholm and Anna Rohegova.



Judith Allen painting the stupas



Carlos Mollogon: the Maharaja



Enjoying sangha festivities



Andrew Cook editing the Great Guhyagarbha



Painting 112 stupas around the gonpa



Richard Steinberg stains 34 puja tables



Trudi and India enjoy the summer season



Mark Simons painting many stupas



Relaxing during a Tibetan picnic



Gonpa shines with light offerings

Learning Dharma Skills at PSL: Living in the Heart of the Mandala



PEMA DRACPA

Khenpo Rinpoche giving the text empowerment & transmission of Mountain Retreat Instructions by H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche

The Learning Dharma Skills Program was created by the Venerable Khenpo Rinpoches to welcome students interested in living and learning about Tibetan Buddhism through daily service and practice. This residential volunteer program is a full-time opportunity for Buddhist practitioners to deepen their meditation and understanding of the Dharma in an ideal retreat setting that is specifically designed to empower and encourage our progress on the path as bodhisattvas dedicated to helping others. The program is one of the many skillful methods the Venerable Khenpo Rinpoches have implemented to establish a growing, loving, and devoted community of practitioners dedicated to learning, preserving, and glorifying the Nyingma lineage of wisdom and compassion.

Vajrayana and the Art of Lawn Mower Maintenance

There is a never-ending amount of work to be done here. Whether you stay three weeks, three months, or three years, there will always be grass to cut or snow to shovel, mowers to fix, rooms to clean, pots and dishes to wash, and lunches to cook.

If I had thought that way four weeks ago, I would have missed . . . Refuge with Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche and his smile; the milky way; skies painted by Monet; gifts from people I just met; authentic human beings who care about your spiritual progress; learning to change a gear on a rider mower (that I broke); sanding a door and thinking, “That’s some of my habitual patterns being sanded as well;” thinking you can’t do something and then being asked to do it, because some people have more faith in you than you do; moving the buddha statue auras; watching the leaves turn colors on 500 acres of trees; changing prayer flags and watching the wind wait in anticipation; seeing where Khenchen Palden



LAWA

Rinpoche, Jack, Richard, and Jeff paint stupas

Since June 2010, we’ve had 27 wonderful participants, and we’re so thankful for their dedicated service.

Three-month seasonal stays are recommended; however, there’s flexibility to apply for longer or shorter periods of time. Program participants are invited to attend all retreats and teaching programs at PSL, partake in annual language courses, meditate in our beautiful temple, study in the Shantarakshita Library, and delight in the breathtaking views and scenic trails of our flourishing retreat environment.

It’s easy to apply and we’re continually looking for people to live and serve at Padma Samye Ling for extended periods of time. You can download an application and more information on our website at: www.padmasambhava.org/volunteer.html.

Rinpoche sat and looked out from his cabin; touching heads with Jomo Lorraine; listening to intelligent people talk about matters of the heart; watching chipmunks and deer walk around without fear; dragging drain pipes with the ATV; making friends with people you would never meet in your “normal” life; doing malas while circumambulating the gonpa; learning how to bow; reading on the sangha house porch while it pours rain and you stay dry; having access to as many books on Tibetan Buddhism as you can read.

Two weeks in, I realized it wasn’t Laia who was asking me to sweep the gonpa—it was Khenpo Rinpoche. How difficult is it to sweep the floors compared to walking across the Himalayas from Tibet to India?

Yes, there is an endless amount of work to do at PSL, just like there is an endless amount of work I choose to do on myself (and when it’s done I’ll come back). I leave here wishing I could stay longer. Even as we enter winter, I have a strong foundation to continue my spiritual practice, a sense of how we limit our potential based on a past that has very little to do with the present, a new group of friends with similar priorities, and a teacher that I will have forever. **-Charles Ruland**

“ I spent two months at PSL doing volunteer work, which I cannot even call ‘work’ because it was pure pleasure. I fell in love with PSL from the first time I saw it, and later with the people who lived there. I think that was the best time of my life. Of course, I had lots of beautiful moments before it, but nothing can compare to the time I spent there. I cannot describe everything that happened to me at PSL, but coming back home I was already a different person—more mature, more spiritual, and more focused on the Dharma path. I remember a couple of times I had to almost pinch myself when I stood on top of the mountain—I firmly believed I was in Dewachen because it just couldn’t get any better. I had so many beautiful, amazing moments that when I think of them I become speechless. I’m very grateful to everyone who made it all possible: those who built this sanctuary, the people who support PSL, and those who work there. Now looking back at everything I’ve been through since then, I’m sure that I couldn’t do it without the Dharma in my life, and without spending this precious time in PSL. I wish everyone could visit this wonderful place and have the opportunity to stay there. I’m sure I will be coming back to PSL again.”

-Dinara Faleyev

“ Before I participated in the Learning Dharma Skills Program at PSL I think I did not fully realize the importance of the sangha and the relentless support that it provides. The community at PSL radiates with such love and joy that you cannot help but be uplifted in your practice and have a brighter view of the world. During my time at PSL, I read a quote from the *Words of My Perfect Teacher* in which Patrul Rinpoche says that we should consider any being who inspires true bodhichitta in us to be a buddha. I remem-

ber having that thought so often at PSL because of the myriad ways in which people expressed their love to me, and to everyone else present and elsewhere.”

-Jeff Berman

“ I feel I benefited spiritually and in my practice more than any other way. Being around other people interested in the Dharma, practicing regularly with the sangha, and being able to attend Rinpoche’s teachings helped strengthen my faith, understanding, and commitment in ways I hadn’t imagined.”

-Bonnie Holsinger

“ I felt that by assisting to uplift the mandala, I strengthened my own personal practice and the community’s efforts toward building Rinpoche’s beautiful vision. I felt great satisfaction with this.”

-Jack Housman

“ My time at PSL provided me the incredible opportunity to set down my self-centered struggles and join in something inconceivably larger, in the enlightened unfolding that is the Rinpoche’s mandala. While taking part in such unquestionably beneficial activity is an enormous blessing in itself, for me the greatest blessing was the chance to see all the places in my daily work where I was not practicing the Dharma. Of course, PSL is the ideal environment to bring all those blind spots slowly onto the path, and being in the presence of a realized master such as Khenpo Rinpoche allows such integration to take place as a joyful act of love rather than a grind.”

-Emmanuel Ananda

“ I think it is the most wonderful experience I’ve had in recent decades. In the Learning Dharma Skills Program, I was able to bring my years of work experience to PSL in a way



Kirk, Steve, Jeff, and Andy restoring the roof



Installing the Buddha auras



Unloading 112 stupas



Doug, Amanda, Dragpa, and Virginia hanging prayer flags

that reinforced strong ethical and moral precepts, while at the same time benefiting the center. Having the Dharma be integral to my everyday routine also reinforced the path of the Dharma; it was something I lived—before breakfast, after dinner, even during dream-time—in a way I’d not experienced before—in my life.”

-Carol Stromek

“ This program allowed me the opportunity to come to Dzogchen retreats by working, and with so many different areas

of work needed, anyone can find their niche. Padma Samye Ling is ideal for getting away from the hustle and bustle of city life, and having some peace and quiet for meditation and reflection. I met so many wonderful fellow Dharma practitioners of all different levels of experience, many of whom will be friends for the rest of my life. Most of all, I am grateful for the opportunity to hear the teachings of Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche, and to be in his presence day after day.”

-Kirk Lawson

The Five Strengths of a Dharma Practitioner

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

The most simple and widely used techniques for Shamatha are: (1) meditation with an object and (2) meditation without an object. For Shamatha with an object you can use a small statue of Buddha Shakyamuni and put it in front of you, looking at the level of his third eye. Bring your mind and eyes together and look to the point of the Buddha's third eye, almost creating a triangle, and just hold your attention there for as long as you can. With objectless Shamatha meditation, you can simply relax or imagine an object. In Dzogchen teachings, you imagine a small, white AH syllable in a white sphere right on the tip of your nose, and then concentrate. You can either close your eyes or keep them open—whichever feels more comfortable.

5 According to the Buddha's teachings, there are different levels of wisdom, such as understanding relative truth, absolute truth as it is, and how relative and absolute truth are combined without separation. The teachings also identify three types of wisdom: (1) wisdom that comes from studying, (2) from contemplating, and (3) from meditating and practicing.

Our true nature is simple, easy, and gentle, but long ago our mind began twisting itself until it expanded and trapped us in a cocoon. The mind was trapped by itself, not by anyone else. Similarly, our own creation of duality has trapped our intelligence, blurred our wisdom, and made things chaotic. Duality mind makes simple things complicated, and complicated things even more complicated.

Wisdom is simple and now we have to come back to that simple state. Because our habitual patterns are so strong and deep, like thick clouds in the sky, we have to clear them away and rediscover our true nature. In order to do this, the teachings say that it's good to study the Tripitaka—the Vinaya, Sutra, and Abhidharma teachings. When we study these three, we learn about morality and conduct, concentration and meditation, and the wisdom of the way things are. When you absorb these into your heart and mind, knowledge comes and opens your wisdom eye.

This kind of knowledge is called "certainty wisdom." In order for certainty wisdom to shine, we need to apply the second wisdom of contemplation. When we reflect on the meaning of the teachings, we have to use our own intelligence to refine what we've learned. The Buddha said, "Don't just take my word. You must examine and investigate for yourself." The certainty wisdom that comes from contemplation means that we no longer have doubt or hesitation, and we aren't worrying that this or that might happen.

Study and contemplation produce intellectual understanding, but we won't realize the simple meaning of the nature the way things are through intellect alone. We need to apply the third wisdom of meditation and practice, which will bring certainty wisdom to full bloom. Then we'll begin to see the nature directly with our inner wisdom eye—not just theoretically.

With the third wisdom, we meditate on what we've studied and contemplated. In Vajrayana, this wisdom meditation involves visualizing buddhas, chanting mantras, and engaging in Dzogchen meditation, all of which bring us closer to understanding the true nature. It is often said that in absolute meditation, we're resting in the state of simple, fresh, naked, ordinary awareness, coming back to the nature without exaggerating the way things are. Simply relax

in the fresh, present moment state of the mind, and then meditate. This is Vipashyana Dzogchen meditation, which is also called "great emptiness meditation."

When we analyze things outside of us, we find the same thing as when we look within: emptiness. The Madhyamaka and Dzogchen teachings mention many times that the things we see are formations of heaps of atoms joined together. No single, substantially solid object exists. For example, if we examine a mountain, we eventually discover that it's just open, empty energy. There's no core, true existence. Right now it looks solid due to our habitual patterns and dualistic mind, but really it's a hallucination, an emptiness form. For that reason, the Buddha used the example of a field of grass: at first it looks like one solid green mass, but it's actually many individual blades of grass.

In terms of relative truth, objects are made of masses of atoms, and each atom has many particles that temporarily come together, but there's nothing solid. If we read books by great masters such as Nagarjuna, Mipham Rinpoche, or other great teachers from Tibet and India, we can see how they explored and analyzed every aspect of existence and discovered the nature of reality as it is. In a way, they were the first physicists. We can read and contemplate their teachings, but again, the final result of study and contemplation is practice. We have to practice in order to actualize the teachings.

According to Dzogchen pith instructions, start by simply relaxing into the present state of your mind and rest in that state. This is the entrance to discovering the nature of emptiness and appearances, and is commonly known as Vipashyana meditation. Vipashyana is a Sanskrit word that means "supreme, extraordinary seeing," or "insight." We didn't recognize the true nature before, but now we're seeing it, which is wisdom.

If wisdom is applied with devotion, joyful effort, mindfulness, and concentration, then everything will be smooth and beautiful because all of the qualities of the nature are blended together perfectly. In order to maintain this vision, Buddha Shakyamuni, Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche, and many great masters said many times: "See experiences as a dream, as magic, as a display." These teachers were not making this up. This entire world is a playful, magical display, including ourselves. Everything is in a beautiful, glorious, perfect state. Continually ignite this wisdom in your heart and mind, while constantly wishing good things for others. Stay down to earth, keeping up your good qualities and these Dharma practices. Be in the natural rhythm. This is known as being a practitioner.

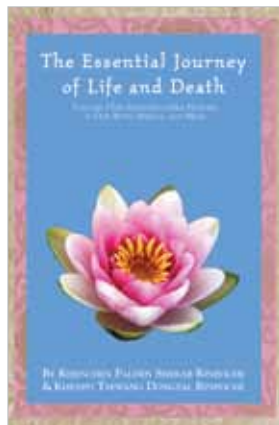
Always conclude your practice with beautiful aspirations, dedicating the merit for all sentient beings to become enlightened now and in the future. Sincerely wish to remove all beings' suffering, difficulties, sicknesses, old age, loneliness, and whatever troubles they may be experiencing. Wish that they have an abundance of joy, happiness, and peace, and that they remain in that joyful state forever, fully discovering the enlightened natural state of their buddha-nature.

When we keep up these beautiful aspirations, we fulfill our mission on this earth. If we leave this world with the beautiful attitude and fuel of the five strengths, we'll be lifted into the next stage, and this chapter of our lives will have been perfect and glorious. We will leave a legacy and example for others, and will move forward with a beautiful vision and goal. ❁

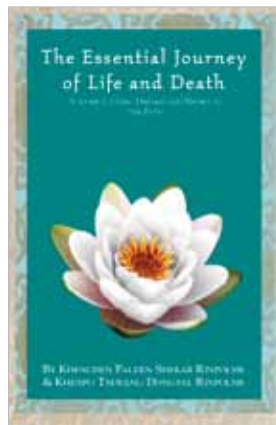
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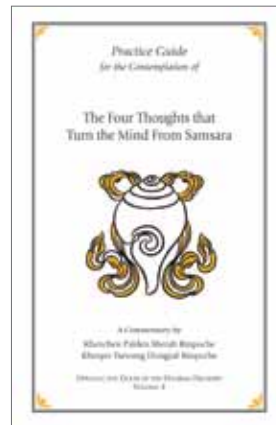
January 2012
Ceaseless Echoes of the Great Silence: A Commentary on the Heart Sutra Prajñāparamita, 2nd Edition
 This revised and updated edition now includes a comprehensive, expanded glossary of Tibetan Buddhist terms.



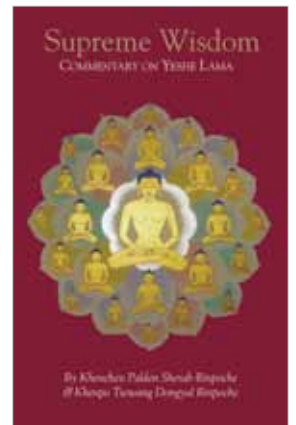
Spring 2012
The Essential Journey of Life and Death, Vol. 1: The Indestructible Nature of Our Body, Speech, and Mind
 Fresh, accessible advice that directly addresses our shared experiences of living and dying, including detailed meditation instructions on the peaceful and wrathful deities.



Spring 2012
The Essential Journey of Life and Death, Vol. 2: Using Dream Yoga and Phowa as the Path
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 Reflecting on our precious human birth, impermanence, cause and effect, and the suffering of samsara is essential to develop a clear understanding of samsara, and to firmly turn toward the Dharma.



Summer 2012
Supreme Wisdom: Commentary on Yeshe Lama
 This innermost teaching of the Great Perfection includes all the practice instructions necessary for sincere, dedicated practitioners to achieve enlightenment in a single lifetime. Restricted text.

Devotion is the Door to Realization

Ven. Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Ven. Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche taught on the *Seven Chapter Prayer* by Guru Padmasambhava from March 29 to April 24, 2010, at Padma Samye Ling.

EDITED BY RICHARD STEINBERG, PEMA DRAGPA, AND ANDREW COOK

To make the most of our time, we should continually generate and increase our devotion and bodhichitta. Of course, we all have devotion to the Dharma—that is why we are here. The Buddha’s teachings say that devotion is the door to realization, that when there is devotion, realization will follow. And what is ‘devotion’? It is great appreciation and respect for the teachings, as well as confidence in them. It is the closeness we feel to the Dharma and to Guru Padmasambhava. It is the joy that we feel being part of something so special. So, let us increase our devotion as we learn about and engage in the practices on Guru Padmasambhava, uniting this devotion with the ever-expanding bodhichitta thought of love and compassion for all living beings.

When we practice on Guru Padmasambhava, we should feel that he is the embodiment of all enlightened beings, of all lineage masters, buddhas, and bodhisattvas. We should also feel gratitude for our circumstances and situation, realizing what a wonderful opportunity we have. Ignite these beautiful qualities and share them with all living beings. This is devotion. Buddha Shakyamuni repeatedly emphasized the importance of devotion. He said that without devotion, people die of thirst, even when there is delicious spring water nearby. This is a metaphor for what happens when we have received the finest teachings and yet are without appreciation and gratitude, and so do not practice them. In the *Konchok Tala Sutra*, the Buddha likens devotion to the feet of a pilgrim who is walking to the city of liberation, to the hands that gather everything good and avoid all that is not, and to the eyes that see things clearly. The Buddha used so many metaphors for devotion.

There are three kinds of devotion. (1) The first devotion is based on curiosity and interest. You hear the teachings and you feel drawn to them. Something is sparked in you. (2) The second devotion is based on desire or will. You want to know more about the teachings. You want to actively explore their meaning. You listen to,



Khenpo Rinpoche, Lama Chimed, and Khenchen Rinpoche at PSL in 1994

contemplate, and practice the teachings. (3) The third devotion is based on confidence and unfailing conviction. This comes about through exploring the teachings with interest and joy, along with reason and meditation practice. Here, you have come to the conclusion that the teachings are correct, and that they are right for you. Now you can keep going without any fear or hesitation. When we have confident and unfailing devotion, the blessings of the Buddha and Guru Padmasambhava come so easily. Our practice expands and deepens, and realization is ours.

With strong devotion, even one very simple Dharma teaching will become the cause of great spiritual progress. Yet without devotion we will not change, even if we have received many profound teachings from many great masters. For this reason, the future Buddha Maitreya said that individuals who lack devotion will not grow. He compared the absence of devotion to a burnt seed that cannot sprout. Similarly, the great master Patrul Rinpoche taught that being surrounded by all the books of the Buddha is no different than being surrounded by blank paper if we have no devotion. He also said that we may have received the most profound pith instructions, but lacking devotion, those instructions can become mere breath or vapor, and no real benefit is going to happen.

We all have some degree of devotion, but sometimes it’s a little shaky or fragile. So it is important to take care of our devotion by reactivating, restrengthening, and reglorifying it. As Guru Padmasambhava and Yeshe Tsogyal prayed, “May my devotion never waver, but always remain strong and steady.” We should pray in the same way. Keeping devotion fresh and vital is the responsibility of every practitioner and is itself a wonderful practice.

Furthermore, it is crucial to unite devotion with bodhichitta. Again, when our devotion develops to the point that we are free from doubt and hesitation, realization comes easily; hence, unshakable devotion brings powerful blessings. *The Seven Chapter Prayer* speaks of this quite explicitly. In fact, this prayer itself—known as *Leu Dunma* (*le’u bdun ma*) in Tibetan—is the unity of devotion, bodhichitta, and Dzogchen meditation, expressed in the form of practice on Guru Padmasambhava. The *Leu Dunma* is actually a Guru Yoga practice. The great master Karma Chagme explains that the absolute Guru Padmasambhava is the innate nature of mind, which is itself the innate nature of everything. This means that devotion, bodhichitta, and everything else merges back into the intrinsic nature of mind, or primordial awareness, without any

subject or object.

Having reached the absolute state of Guru Padmasambhava, we are one with him, and we have achieved his level of dharmakaya realization. So we simply relax in that state. But to achieve this understanding, we increase our devotion, joy, and bodhichitta; we visualize and supplicate Guru Padmasambhava with practices such as the Seven Line Prayer; and we conclude everything in the Dzogchen state. Following this, we dedicate the merit of our practice to our families, our friends, and all living beings. This is the way to achieve the absolute state of Guru Padmasambhava, and this is how we can increase our inner beauty and let it shine in the world.

The great masters of Tibetan Buddhism have all said that Guru Padmasambhava is the buddha of the present degenerate age. During this time, he is the sole protector and refuge of sentient beings. Guru Padmasambhava is none other than Buddha Samantabhadra and Buddha Vajradhara. He is the Five Dhyani Buddhas and Buddha Shakyamuni. In essence, all the buddhas come together in the single state of Guru Padmasambhava, as he himself proclaimed in his teaching. It is also said that Guru Rinpoche is the lama of all Vajrayana Buddhism. When we connect with Guru Padmasambhava, we are thus connecting with all enlightened beings throughout space and time. On the absolute level, Guru Padmasambhava does not exist externally: he is one with the natural state of our mind. Relax in that state with great joy and confidence, allowing all fabricated thoughts and dualistic conceptions to dissolve.

The *Seven Chapter Prayer* comprises the actual words of Guru Padmasambhava. Written in the handwriting of wisdom dakini Yeshe Tsogyal, it was later revealed as a terma by Tulku Zangpo Dragpa and transcribed by the great tertön Rigdzin Godemchen. At the very beginning of this teaching are six messages written in secret dakini sign language. Immediately following them is the phrase “Guru Namö.” These are the words of Guru Padmasambhava, who is paying homage to his teacher. Then the time when this teaching was given is noted—the *gyal* month of the male Fire Horse year, which corresponds to 821 AD in the Western calendar.

The text then describes the place where this teaching took place. It was given at glorious Samye Monastery, during a big and elaborate ganachakra festival. At that time, Guru Padmasambhava was surrounded by a principal retinue of five disciples: (1) the ordained monk Namkhai Nyingpo, (2) King Trisong Deutsen, (3) wisdom dakini Yeshe Tsogyal, (4) Dorje Dudjom of the Nanam clan, and (5) the King’s own son, Prince Lhasé Mutri Tsenpo. They prostrated to the teacher, circumambulated him, made mandala offerings of precious jewels, and said the following:

Oh, Great Teacher! Among all Vajrayana teachings, the most important is to preserve and protect the samayas. In order to do this, the teachings say that devotional prayers made with longing are the most important. Therefore, please give us a powerful teaching that will uplift our devotion, a teaching that will be a wake-up call to ordinary beings, a teaching that contains the blessings of all the Vajrayana deities. In particular, Great Teacher, may your blessings penetrate this prayer. May it be a prayer we can say morning and evening, with less words and more meaning, for the benefit of ourselves and future beings. Please Great Teacher, Great Buddha, bestow upon us this very kind of teaching.

After they made this sincere request of Guru Padmasambhava, he responded as follows:

Listen, you fortunate beings of Tibet! The Vajrayana teaching is not common. It appears only rarely. In ancient times, Buddha Kashyapa did not expound the Secret Mantra vehicle. Nor did the eighty-four million buddhas of the past—they taught only the Hinayana and Mahayana. Why did they not impart the secret Vajrayana teachings? Because individual beings were not ready. Long, long ago, during the Kunkod Aeon, the Buddha Ngonjung Gi Gyalpo gave many Vajrayana teachings. During the current era, the time of Buddha Shakyamuni, the Vajrayana is being taught. And one million aeons from now, during the Metok Kodpa era, a Buddha named Jampalyang, who is similar to me, will appear and expound the Vajrayana.

Why are the Mantrayana teachings expounded during these three times? Because beings alive then are prepared to receive the secret teachings, and thus are very fortunate. The Vajrayana will not appear outside these three aeons. During the time of Buddha Shakyamuni, our current era, we have been born as human beings with the eighteen precious endowments. We possess every freedom and luxury quality. Not only this, but we have entered the perfect path of the secret Vajrayana. Therefore, we should not succumb to the powers of laziness and negligence. This is the time to practice the teachings.

In order to actualize our practice, we need the “four imperatives.” Without these imperatives, we might break our samayas and fall back into the depths of samsara. The buddhas of the past, present, and future have given many teachings, but no Buddha has ever taught that someone will become enlightened by indulging in negative emotions. So, what are these four ingredients? (1) First, the moment our three doors of body, speech, and mind incline towards habitual patterns, we must instantly and forcefully cut down that inclination and restore our practice. This is the first imperative.

(2) Second, sentient beings always possess five negative emotions. When any of these poisons are raging strongly, we need methods and skills that directly liberate the poison into its own natural state. Attachment, anger, arrogance, jealousy, or ignorance—whether manifesting singly or in combination—the moment any negative emotion arises, practitioners must remember to apply the Dzogchen teachings and instantly liberate that poison. This is the second imperative.

(3) Third, even when we are practicing with joy and devotion, distractions will arise. They may come sneakily, in low-key and unobtrusive ways, but they disturb us nonetheless. These distractions are always connected to hope and fear. Hence, whenever we are distracted, we must instantly restrengthen mindfulness. Distractions, hope, and fear are not signs of achievement—they are not blessings. Do not be led astray by distractions, and do not get caught up in the games of hope and fear. This is the third imperative.

(4) Fourth, in order to maintain the quality of our Dharma practice, it is crucial to keep our samayas pure. This means we must practice good morality. Hence, we need instructions that are like an archer drawing his or her bow; to efficiently strike the target, the archer makes sure their bow string is neither too tight nor too loose, but rather in perfect balance. Similarly, the morality samaya is gentle and peaceful, and at the same time strong and courageous.

These are the four imperatives taught by Guru Padmasambhava that will bring our practice to fruition. ❀



2010-11 IN REVIEW



Solar Anniversary of the Mahāparinirvāna of Khenchen Rinpoche - PEMA DRAGPA



Nyungne Retreat at PBDC - RON WAGNER



9th Year of PSL Shedra: Nine Yanas - JOYCE LOKE



PBC Sangha in Deer Park, Sarnath, India



Month-long Dzogchen Mountain Retreat - ANN HELM



Great Guhyagarbha arrives! - PEMA DRAGPA



PBC Russia Sangha at Kunpenling near Moscow



PSL Winter Wonderland - AMANDA LEWIS



PBC PR Losar Celebration - ZULLY RIVERA



Refuge Ceremony at Yeshe Tsogyal House - HUNTER ARMISTEAD



Calm Abiding Yoga Retreat - AMANDA LEWIS



Vajrakilaya NYC New Year's Practice - PEMA DRAGPA



Tashi Prayer Retreat in Puerto Rico - ISABELLE & ELLENE COLON



Black Hayagriva Winter Retreat in WPB - HUNTER ARMISTEAD



White Lotus Summer Dzogchen Retreat at PSL



Seven Line Prayer Retreat in Chicago



White Umbrella Windhorse Retreat - PEMA DRAGPA

The Beauty of Staying Connected

Now it's easier than ever to be a part of the Padmasambhava Buddhist Center mandala. Due to the ongoing kindness, dedication, and talents of many PBC sangha members, you can go online to learn about Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche's upcoming teachings and retreats, participate in your local sangha practices and activities, find photo archives of past events, participate in various volunteer opportunities, make prayer requests, donate to PBC projects, and enjoy the Khenpo Rinpoches' new publications, free videos, and live webcasts.

Many thanks to our website designers Ericson Proper, Gordon Angus, Fernando Vela, Marina Doudko, Nikolay Shkaruba, and Denis Skurov. Much appreciation goes to our graphic designers Sandy Mueller, Michael Nott, Mark Flinton, Beba Febo, and Mary Kuka. Thanks for the ongoing efforts of our e-bulletin communicators Pema Tsultrim, Robert Marigza, Tracy Moore, Chris Rothman, Tim Tavis, and John Burke. Thanks also to Tim Tavis, Ron Wagner, and Marcos Polanco for their help with live webcasts.

Through the sangha's collaborative efforts, PBC now has:

- Seven professional websites, including the main Padmasambhava Buddhist Center website, PBC Tennessee, PBC Puerto Rico, Palm Beach Dharma Center, PBC Moscow, PBC Chicago, and the new Samath Nunnery website at PBCIndia.org
- Stores that wholly support PBC activities include two online stores—Chiso Online Dharma Store and Chiso on Amazon—and three PBC Dharma stores in Nashville, West Palm Beach, and Puerto Rico supported by Dolly Carlisle, Heike Amelung, and Edna de Jesús, respectively
- More than 200 free videos of the Khenpo Rinpoches' teachings and practices on PBC YouTube
- Several official PBC Center Facebook groups that are updated daily

- Two newly published books by the Khenpo Rinpoches: splendid Presence of the Great Guhyagarbha and the Seven Line Prayer Practice Guide. This upcoming year, sangha members have been working diligently to publish the Essential Journey of Life and Death, Ceaseless Echoes of the Great Silence (expanded 2nd edition), and Supreme Wisdom: Commentary on Yeshe Lama
- Four new sadhanas were published by Khenpo Rinpoche and Dharma Samudra translators and editors this past year, including an expanded edition of the PBC Daily Prayers. We would especially like to thank Toy Fung-Tung for sponsoring the printing of many copies of the PBC Daily Prayers and Stainless King sadhanas
- Six weekly and monthly sangha news e-bulletins
- An annual magazine and bi-annual program schedule newsletters, as well as PBC business cards, book trade catalogs, and beautiful wowcards mailed to PBC sangha members
- The PSL Shantarakshita Library archives have continued to expand and now include most of the available videos and recordings of Khenpo Rinpoches' teachings given in the USA since 1982. Two new computers with several large external hard drives and two printers were added to the library digital archives this year with the help of Tim Tavis and John McCorkell, and all the teachings were thoroughly cataloged
- All of Khenpo Rinpoche's teachings given this year were recorded and are being transcribed by many volunteer sangha members. This is the essential foundation for all future publications by the Khenpo Rinpoches

We sincerely thank everyone for enjoying and supporting the Venerable Khenpo Rinpoches' vision, and for being a part of the living mandala of the Padmasambhava Buddhist Center.



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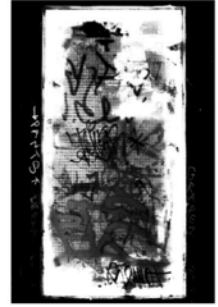
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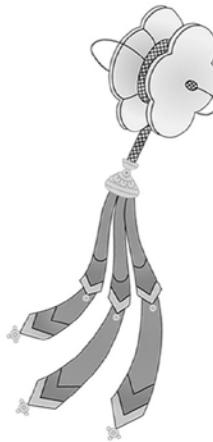
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