

THE VOICE OF CLEAR LIGHT - Special Announcement Issue
News and Inspiration from Ligmincha Institute
Volume 8, Number 7 September 2008

For easy reading, we recommend that you print out "The Voice of Clear Light."

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UPCOMING RETREATS AT LIGMINCHA'S SERENITY RIDGE RETREAT CENTER The four retreats described below will all take place at Serenity Ridge, Ligmincha Institute's retreat center in Nelson County, Va. To register, or for more information about teachings in the Bon Buddhist tradition of Tibet, please visit www.ligmincha.org or contact us at Ligmincha@aol.com or 434-977-6161.

Sept. 10 - 14, 2008 Heart Drops of Dharmakaya With Ponlob Trinley Nyima Rinpoche
The nature of our own mind remains hidden behind clouds of thoughts and emotions until a master directly points out the source, the essence, the "heart drop." This is the method of direct introduction to dzogchen, the highest and most subtle path of meditation in Bon. The Heart Drops of Dharmakaya teachings were composed by Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, a Tibetan master who upon his death in 1935 achieved the rainbow body, in which his physical body dissolved into light. Shardza Rinpoche was one of the most influential Bon teachers of his time; his works are used as textbooks in many Tibetan monasteries. During this retreat Ponlob Trinley Nyima Rinpoche will lead us in a series of extraordinary practices that invoke direct perception of the nature of mind. Unlike methods that involve watching the breath or otherwise calming the thoughts, these practices rely on body postures, sounding of Tibetan syllables, and simple visualizations to draw us quickly to an experience of our essence. These essential teachings are presented in the book "Heart Drops of Dharmakaya," with commentary by Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, who is widely revered as the greatest living dzogchen master of the Bon lineage. This book is available from the Ligmincha Institute Bookstore & Tibet Shop, www.ligmincha.org/store. PONLOB TRINLEY NYIMA RINPOCHE is the Ponlob, or head instructor, of Menri Monastery in Dolanji, India. Born in Dolpo, a remote region of western Nepal, he has the family name of "Yangton" and an ancestry that traces back to Yangton Sherab Gyaltsen, a famous dzogchen and tantric master of the 11th century. Rinpoche began his training in 1976 at age 10. He received his geshe degree in 1989 from the Dialectics School at Menri Monastery and has been teaching there since then. He became Ponlob of the monastery in 1992. Please join us for this rare and unique opportunity!

Retreat cost: \$525 (includes meals; accommodations are available)

Please visit Ligmincha's Web site for further information and to register:

https://www.ligmincha.org/component/option,com_retreat/Itemid,131/retreat_id,30/

Oct. 8 – 12, 2008

Dream Yoga: The Practice of Lucid Dreaming as a Path to Enlightenment With Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

It is said that the practice of dream yoga deepens our awareness during all our experience: the dreams of the night; the dream-like experience of the day; and the bardo experiences after death. Indeed, the practice of dream yoga is a powerful tool of awakening, used for hundreds of years by the great masters of the Tibetan traditions. Unlike in the Western psychological approach to dreams, the ultimate goal of Tibetan dream yoga is the recognition of the nature of mind, or enlightenment itself.

This intensive dream yoga retreat is designed for those just beginning the practice as well as experienced practitioners wishing to deepen their practice of dream yoga. Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche will discuss the relationships between dreaming and waking, and dreaming and death. He will instruct us in the “four preparations” for sleep and the uses and methods of lucid dreaming. The “clear light” practices of sleep yoga will also be introduced as will supportive practices related to the goddesses (khandros) of dream and sleep. This intensive five-day format allows us time to more deeply share and work with our dreams in the presence of the teacher. The formal transmission of the teachings from the Bon Mother Tantra will be given.

Retreat cost: \$525 (includes meals; accommodations are available)

Please visit Ligmincha's Web site for further information and to register:

https://www.ligmincha.org/component/option,com_retreat/Itemid,131/retreat_id,22/

Nov. 5 – 9, 2008

The Seven Mirrors of Dzogchen

With Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche

This November we are fortunate to have an opportunity to study and practice dzogchen with Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche, the abbot of Triten Norbutse Monastery in Kathmandu, Nepal. Khen Rinpoche will be introducing us to the Seven Mirrors of Dzogchen, a powerful heart-essence teaching from the Tibetan Bon Buddhist tradition. This teaching will give a direct introduction to the clear, open awareness of the dzogchen view as well as methods for maintaining this state.

The Seven Mirrors of Dzogchen are:

1.

The Heart Mirror of the View

2.

The Heart Mirror of the Meditation

3.

The Heart Mirror of the Result

4.

The Heart Mirror of Conduct

5.

The Heart Mirror That Explains the Pure Realms and Lands of Samsara

6.

The Heart Mirror That Explains the Benefit of Meeting With This Teaching
About Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche

A preeminent Bon master, Khen Rinpoche has taught at Ligmincha Institute's summer retreats and given the transmission of The Twenty-One Nails, a supreme dzogchen teaching. Khen Rinpoche also teaches widely throughout Europe. He is beloved and respected by all who have

had the opportunity to learn from him. Khen Rinpoche is known for the depth of his understanding, which he transmits with warmth and humor in clear English. Please join us at Serenity Ridge for a powerful retreat experience.

Retreat cost (includes meals; accommodations are available):

Early-bird registration: \$450 by Oct. 1 Late registration: \$525 after Oct. 1

Please visit Ligmincha's Web site for further information and to register:

https://www.ligmincha.org/component/option,com_retreat/Itemid,131/retreat_id,31/

Dec. 27, 2008 – Jan. 1, 2009

Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung, Part I: Ngondro, the Foundation of Dzogchen Practice

With Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche extends a personal invitation to both new and experienced students to join him at the start of a new cycle of dzogchen teachings this winter. This is the first time in five years that Rinpoche will personally teach the ngondro practice.

The ngondro is the doorway through which one enters the vast and profound Bon Buddhist path. A set of nine foundational or preliminary practices, the ngondro provides a solid foundation of understanding and experience upon which a strong spiritual life develops. It is often described as a friend who accompanies you throughout your spiritual life.

The nine practices in the Bon ngondro are: Opening Your Heart, Meditation on Impermanence, Admitting Your Misdeeds, Bodhicitta (Generating the Mind of Enlightenment), Taking Refuge, Offering the Mandala, Purification Through Mantra, Offering Your Body, and Guru Yoga.

The more you devote yourself to these practices that tame, purify and perfect your body, speech and mind – and the more you become familiar with the experiences that these practices bring – the more you will find spiritual practice grounded within you. Join Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche for this six-day intensive retreat as he teaches us to connect with the power and beauty of the ngondro.

NOTE: The ngondro comprises Chapter 1 of the Chag Tri teachings from the Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung. It is essential to study and practice the chapters of the Experiential Transmission in sequence. Therefore, the ngondro is a prerequisite for continuing to study the Bon dzogchen path of the Experiential Transmission each year at our winter retreat with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche.

Retreat cost (includes meals; accommodations are available):

\$450 received by Nov. 19; \$525 received after Nov. 19

Please visit Ligmincha's Web site for further information and to register:

https://www.ligmincha.org/component/option,com_retreat/Itemid,131/retreat_id,23/

FOR MORE INFORMATION about teachings in the Bon Buddhist tradition of Tibet, visit www.ligmincha.org.

QUESTIONS? Email us at Ligmincha@aol.com, or call 434-977-6161.

ABOUT THE DREAM YOGA TEACHINGS — AN INTERVIEW WITH GESHE TENZIN WANGYAL RINPOCHE

On February 19, 2008, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche offered a brief overview of his coming dream yoga teachings scheduled for this October 8 through 12 at Ligmincha's Serenity Ridge retreat center in Nelson County, Va.

VOICE OF CLEAR LIGHT: You have been teaching Dream Yoga many times over the past few

years since the publication of your book *The Tibetan Yogas of Dream and Sleep*. What will your teachings emphasize at this fall's retreat?

GESHE TENZIN WANGYAL RINPOCHE: As always, the core information remains the same, but the approach to the information, and particularly how the information is applied, changes from retreat to retreat. The longer I have been teaching and the longer my students have been practicing, the more simplified, direct and effective the teachings become. Hopefully, I can emphasize some of the more essential elements of the teaching with more effective ways of relating the practice to the modern lifestyle and modern individual. Basically, this fall I will be emphasizing the cream of the teachings, the nectar of the teachings.

VOCL: What is a new person likely to gain from attending this retreat? What is an experienced practitioner likely to gain?

TWR: For people who have been practicing, of course this is an opportunity to understand and connect more deeply, to apply the practice of dream yoga in a quintessential way. They can further explore what doesn't work for them and what can work for them. It's an opportunity to reinforce their practice.

For people coming for the first time, the dream yoga teachings may be a way to discover in their sleeping and dreaming hours a hidden time, a hidden space, a hidden way to practice meditation in their life — and through that opportunity, to further their spiritual development.

Many people think to themselves, "I don't have time to practice." But if you are able to use sleep and dream as a way of practicing, it is like discovering many more years of time in your life for practice. We spend one-third of our life, or an average of 20 to 25 years, asleep. Depending on how much time you have left in your life, suddenly you have discovered 10 or so more years to do practice.

If you don't use this time for practice, you will be using it instead for the wrong things — for dreams of ignorance, for nightmares. If you can take over that time, clearly it's a great opportunity for change.

VOCL: How can engaging in dream yoga support the other meditation practices a person may be doing?

TWR: Many other practices we do, including forms of tantric visualization, require a foundation of feeling clear within oneself. Before transforming into the tummo goddess, for example, we engage in practices to clear our obstacles and obscurations. If I can feel clearer than before, then I can undergo a more complete and vivid transformation. I think dream yoga can be very helpful in that aspect of clearing.

Of course, one must also have a measure of clarity in order to practice dream yoga. That is why we engage in preliminaries like the practices of tsa lung and the nine breathings of purification. You need to have clear, open attention to the four major chakras as you fall asleep.

But dream yoga itself can be very clearing. For example, when you draw attention to the heart chakra while falling asleep, any pain you have been feeling in your heart will be the cause of manifestation in your dreams. Thus, your dreams will manifest in a way that reflects the pain you feel in your heart. During lucid dreaming, then, you are working with the heart chakra in physical, energetic and mental ways to clear that aspect of pain. Once you've cleared it, then the next time you draw your open attention to the heart chakra as you fall asleep, it will have another effect.

VOCL: Who is most likely to find dream yoga practice most accessible and have the best results from it?

TWR: People who have some more sense of light sleep, who have clear dreams, who are able

to detach from the stresses of the workday as their evening begins... these people are most likely to be able to connect to the practice with good results.

A PERSONAL INVITATION FROM TENZIN WANGYAL RINPOCHE

Joyful greetings to everyone,

I am writing to invite you to begin the study and practice of the Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung (Zhang Zhung Nyam Gyu) along with me this winter.

For the first time in many years, I will be teaching the first chapter of the Chag Tri practice manual, which presents the foundational practices (Ngondro) of the Experiential Transmission. These auspicious teachings provide an authentic doorway into the Bon dzogchen path. I personally invite everyone, and especially those who want to follow the Bon dzogchen teachings in a deeper and more committed way, to attend this winter's retreat at Ligmincha Institute's Serenity Ridge Retreat Center in Virginia, USA, from December 27, 2008, through January 1, 2009. This is the way for all students to connect deeply to the dzogchen lineage of the rainbow body.

The Experiential Transmission is the centerpiece of my teachings in the West. I've often said that if I could have only one text, the Chag Tri manual would provide all I or anyone would need to practice and accomplish the path of dzogchen. Last winter, after many years Ligmincha Institute celebrated the conclusion of the first complete presentation of this cycle in the West. It is time to begin again, this time presenting a deeper inner understanding of the text and the practices it conveys.

It is essential to study and practice the chapters of the Chag Tri in sequence. You must start at the beginning with Part 1, and since I present these teachings now only once a year at Serenity Ridge, I want to make everyone aware that I will begin a new cycle this year. Please reflect seriously on joining me and a growing sangha of committed dzogchen practitioners to study and practice these luminous teachings.

It is my sincere wish to see you all at the retreat this December.

With my blessings,

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

'SLEEP AS A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY,' AN ONLINE CONVERSATION WITH TENZIN WANGYAL RINPOCHE

In a conversation with BuddhistGeeks.com, recorded during Week 1 of the recent Summer Retreat at Serenity Ridge, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche discussed the importance of sleep in relation to the spiritual path. To listen to the nearly 20-minute conversation online, visit:

<http://personallifemedia.com/podcasts/236-buddhist-geeks/episodes/3969-sleep-spiritual>

NOTE: To hear Part 2 of this talk:

<http://personallifemedia.com/podcasts/236-buddhist-geeks/episodes/6529-yogas-dream>

AN UPDATE ON LISHU INSTITUTE FROM TENZIN WANGYAL RINPOCHE

During the annual summer retreat at Ligmincha Institute's retreat center in central Virginia, Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche gave an update on Lishu Institute, Ligmincha's forthcoming residential center for short- and long-term study and practice in Dehradun, India. At the close of his talk, students presented Rinpoche with signed and sealed letters from the office of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and the Department of Religion & Culture of the Central Tibetan Administration of H.H. the Dalai Lama, acknowledging their support for this important project for

the preservation of the Tibetan Bon Buddhist tradition. Lishu Institute will play a major role in ongoing efforts to preserve the Tibetan Bon spiritual tradition in the West, according to Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, founding director of both Lishu Institute and Charlottesville, Va.-based Ligmincha Institute.

"The primary goal of Lishu Institute is to sow the seeds of the Bon teachings in Western students, both experientially and through intellectual training," Rinpoche explains.

Only students who are committed to following the path of the Bon Buddhist teachings and who have a serious interest in engaging in rigorous long-term study and practice will be invited to enroll in Lishu's programs of several years' duration, Rinpoche emphasizes. Lishu Institute will offer a highly affordable opportunity for these committed students, he adds. "I know of some students who already have spent the last three or four years making their lives more compact and flexible as preparation to live and study there."

Rinpoche explains that there will also be opportunities for shorter engagements at Lishu, such as working with a Tibetan scholar on a one-month translation project or attending a retreat as short as one or two weeks.

In late October 2008 Rinpoche will lead a pilgrimage to Lishu Institute and other sites in India. Participants will be introduced to the beautiful site of the Institute and attend a blessing of the land; join a celebration of the 80th birthday of His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima, spiritual head of the Bon tradition and abbot of Menri Monastery; and enjoy opportunities to connect with the local people who have been helping the Institute to manifest.

"John Massie, Candace Byers and Santiago Villaveces spent more than a month there last winter. We are working together to refine our tasks and how to accomplish them," Rinpoche says, adding that other people can contribute to this effort by offering their services as a volunteer or by giving a financial donation.

"We definitely need funding to move forward with our projects there. If you are in a position to contribute, or are in a position to find people willing to contribute, your help will be most welcome at this time."

For more information about Lishu Institute, its programs, and the October pilgrimage, visit www.lishu.org or email lishu@ligmincha.org

To view the text of the letters of support and appreciation from the Office of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and the Department of Religion & Culture, visit

<https://www.ligmincha.org/donate/letters-of-support-for-lishu-institute.html>

To contribute online now to Lishu Institute, visit

https://www.ligmincha.org/?option=com_setcontrol&form=4&Itemid=63&Itemid=63

To contribute by check, please make your check payable to "Ligmincha Institute" and in the memo field, indicate where you would like us to direct your donation – for example "Lishu Institute," "Retreat Center Development," or "General Donation." Mail your check to:

Ligmincha Institute

313 2nd St., S.E., Suite 207

Charlottesville, VA 22902

NEW ITEMS AT LIGMINCHA'S BOOKSTORE AND TIBET SHOP

To see the newest items at Ligmincha Institute's Bookstore & Tibet Shop, visit

<https://www.ligmincha.org/store/by-type/new-items/view-all-products.html?practice=0>

Kits for Sur Chod and Sang Chod:

* One kit includes an abalone shell, one package of Swift Lite charcoal, and crushed juniper. \$24

* The second kit includes a bronze chalice, sand, one package of Swift Lite charcoal, and crushed juniper. \$35

Meditation Belts:

* Woven cotton belt. 108 inches long. \$10

* Wool, one size, non-adjustable. 72 inches long. \$48

Cards and Thangkas of Deity Images:

* Yeshe Walmo wallet sized card. \$2.50

* Thangka: Shenlha Okar. \$450

* Thangka: Red Garuda. \$450

* Thangka: Sherap Chamma. \$500

* Thangka: Tapihritsa. \$425

* Thangka: Five Buddha Families. \$500

* Thangka: Tapihritsa and Nangzher Lopo. \$650

* Thangka: Dream Khandro, Gyuma Chenmo. \$425

Shrine Items:

* Water Offering Bowls: White Metal with Medallions. \$58 for set of 7 bowls

* Melong, silver plated. \$45

* Bonpo mandala set in silver, designed by Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche. \$1,600

* Tsampa. For tormas, offerings for sur chod, or breakfast, Tibetan style. \$10

Ligmincha Institute's BOOKSTORE & TIBET SHOP Visit our online store,

www.ligmincha.org/store, for: * A unique selection of books on Tibetan Buddhism, both new and

hard to find * Transcripts and audio CDs of teachings by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and other

Bon lamas * Ritual items: traditional bells, drums, incense, malas, singing bowls, butter lamps

and prayer flags * Gift items: earrings, pendants, handmade journals, traditional Tibetan-style

shirts and coats, Tibetan music CDs * Wall hangings, thangkas and statues * Meditation

cushions and Tibetan rugs Ligmincha Institute's Bookstore & Tibet Shop 313 Second St. S.E.,

Suite 107 (entrance on Garrett St.) Charlottesville, VA 22902 Telephone: 434.220.0060 /

toll-free: 866.522.5269 Email: store@ligmincha.org Web site: www.ligmincha.org/store