

Special Announcements Issue

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Prayers for the Earthquake Victims

A Message From Rinpoche

Dear sangha,

Probably all of you are following the news of the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear crisis in Japan. This is a moment for us to dedicate our prayers and meditation practice to the benefit of the Japanese people. I recommend lighting candles and reciting the [bardo prayer](#). Those who are familiar with the Tibetan version of this prayer, I would suggest getting together to light candles and sing it as a group. I send all my prayers in this difficult time.

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche



An Interview With Khen Rinpoche

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Abbot of Triten Norbutse Monastery to Visit Serenity Ridge This May

Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche will be leading a very special retreat this May at Serenity Ridge, Ligmincha's retreat center in Nelson County, Va. Khen Rinpoche is the abbot (khenpo) of Triten Norbutse Monastery in Katmandu, Nepal, a major Bon monastery established in 1987 by H.E. Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche. He is widely known for his command of the English language and for his transmissions that illuminate the teachings of dzogchen. This interview took place at Triten Norbutse in March 2011.



Khen Rinpoche (R) with Tenzin Rinpoche (L) and Yongdzin Rinpoche. Photograph by Tomas Ward

Sue Davis-Dill: Students of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche first met you in 1998. It was Ligmincha Institute's summer retreat held in New Mexico, and you were attending Yongdzin (Lopon) Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche. You have been traveling and teaching with Yongdzin Rinpoche for so many years.

Khen Rinpoche: Yes, since 1998. That is the first time that I went to the West with him, and since then I have been traveling and teaching with him. We have been to the U.S., Mexico, and many places in Europe teaching students of Bon. Also, I have given teachings at Oxford University.

SDD: Can you tell us a little about your training? When and where did you receive your geshe degree?

KR: I received my Geshe degree in 1994 from Menri Monastery in India.

SDD: And how did you come to Triten Norbutse?

KR: When I obtained my geshe degree it was March of 1994. That same year Yongdzin Rinpoche sent me a letter saying I must come to Triten Norbutse Monastery. With delight I

accepted. I already had the intention to study with him, particularly the tantra and dzogchen practices.

In 1994 I gave some informal teachings at the monastery; there were only about 10 to 20 monks at that time. Later that year, I think it was around November, Tritten Norbutse Monastery's Yungdrung Bon Academy of Higher Study, which has the dialectic school and program of geshe degree, was inaugurated with the presence of His Holiness Menri Trizen Rinpoche and Yongdzin Rinpoche. Since then I have been teaching. In 1996 I was appointed as lupon, which means the principal teacher, and then in 2001 I was appointed as khenpo, the abbot.

SDD: Who have been your primary teachers?

KR: His Holiness Menri Trizen Rinpoche, Yongdzin Rinpoche, and also, one of my main teachers of philosophy in the dialectic school at Menri Monastery was Geshe Yungdrung Namgyal, who was a great scholar and has a geshe degree from Yungdrungling Monastery and Drepung Monastery, which are both in Tibet.

SDD: Is this the same Geshe Yungdrung Namgyal who taught Tenzin Rinpoche?

KR: Yes, the same. Until 1986, when Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche graduated with his geshe degree, we were together at Menri Monastery – but not in the same class. I began in 1981, so for six years, we were together.

SDD: For the teachings that you will be giving at Serenity Ridge in May on the Five Buddha Bodies, can you say some words of explanation, and address the question: "How can Westerners benefit from this particular teaching?"

KR: This teaching is part of the preliminary practices of dzogchen of the Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyu, or Oral Tradition of Zhang Zhung. But it is not very, very preliminary.

Similar to many other meditation practices, people can benefit from this practice on many different levels. Of course one can benefit at a very profound spiritual level. And not only that,

by practicing this, it can help in our normal day-to-day life. It can help to expand the mind, control or overcome different kinds of emotions, and also positively affect one's physical health. The main principle of this practice is to liberate oneself at different levels — the physical level, the energetic level, and also the mental, or spiritual, level. It helps to liberate from the different negative emotions, and then to develop positive attitudes.

SDD: What are these negative emotions and positive attitudes?

KR: There are five principal negative emotions: anger, attachment or desire, jealousy, pride, and ignorance. Every human being, every sentient being, has these five emotions.

Of course some people have them in a more manifested way, and some people have them in a more hidden way, but there is nobody who does not have these kinds of emotions. Sometimes in day-to-day life, people feel if they don't have these emotions, they lack something and they cannot accomplish things, which is not exactly right. When you engage with certain emotions — like when you feel strong anger with a particular person, and with this take action — at that moment you may feel relief, but it does not end there. It will lead you further into negative emotions. And then it leads you in more and more. Engaging with negative emotions does not liberate them.

Through this practice with the Five Enlightened Bodies we work with the antidotes of the negative emotions. For anger, we practice with compassion or loving-kindness. If you develop the attitude or feeling of loving-kindness or compassion, then naturally this will reduce your feeling of anger or hatred.

It doesn't mean that you liberate anger completely, but it reduces it. This gives you more openness, and the more you open, the less you get this emotion of anger. Same way with desire. The antidote of desire, of attachment, is to practice great generosity. For the antidote or method to liberate jealousy, we practice great openness. The more we are open, the less jealousy we experience. Jealousy is based on the feeling of the lack of openness. For pride, we have great peacefulness. The antidote of ignorance is the practice of wisdom. Of course when we speak about wisdom, there are many different levels of wisdom.

All of the preliminary practices are different methods to develop these positive attitudes and to overcome or dissolve or reduce these negative emotions. So in this way, we keep our mind and our energy more peaceful and in more favorable conditions. In this way, all the other good conditions will naturally arise.

Particularly in this practice, we deal with our physical body, which is composed of a combination of the five elements of earth, water, fire, air, and space. Within the physical body there are five main organs, which are the main machines of our physical body. These five organs are the spleen, kidney, liver, lung, and heart. According to our spiritual teachings and also according to the Tibetan medical system, these are the five main points of the five elements at our physical level.

Each organ is connected to one of the five elements, and each element is connected on an impure level with our five negative emotions. If we speak about the pure aspect, or the liberated aspect, then this is connected with the five positive emotions and the five wisdoms.

In this practice we try to connect on a spiritual level with what we call the five enlightened bodies, which are the manifestations of the five wisdom deities, who in turn are the manifestations of the five wisdoms. The five wisdoms are none other than the liberation of the five negative emotions which I just mentioned. We begin by visualizing seed syllables in specific organs; these seed syllables are like the energetic level of these positive attitudes or five wisdoms. This experience then connects with the elements, the wisdoms, and then the five enlightened bodies. On the spiritual level there are many different names we can talk about, but in fact it all goes to the same point.

On a physical and energetic level, this practice also helps to liberate health problems. Our health problems are connected with the imbalance of the five elements and disorders or defects of the five organs. So this visualization practice can also help us achieve better health or overcome health problems.

Of course when you are in a good attitude, this is very important for anything, any activity you do, including business.

SDD: And the five wisdoms?

KR: They are the wisdom of emptiness, wisdom of equanimity, mirror-like wisdom, discriminating wisdom, and all-accomplishing wisdom.

So, we find out all these five wisdoms and all these five enlightened bodies are within ourselves. Realizing this is the purpose of this practice.

SDD: Thank you Rinpoche.

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Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche will be giving these teachings on “Self-Purification through the Five Enlightened Bodies of the Five Buddhas” at Serenity Ridge from May 18-22, 2011. [More information / register online >](#)



Online Teachings in April

Two Free Webcasts and an Online Workshop With Rinpoche

In coming days Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche will give two free live Webcasts, followed by a three-week online workshop. Please join us from the comfort of your home computer for these teachings and guided meditations:

- **Sunday, April 17**, 12 noon Eastern Time (New York Time) — *'Finding a Place of Peace'*: Rinpoche will teach and guide a calming and centering meditation that can help you find inner refuge during times of transition. For our Internet audience only.

- **Wednesday, April 20**, 7 - 8:30 p.m. ET — *'Discovering Your Creative Potential'*: In this live broadcast of a [free public talk](#), Rinpoche will give his first teaching in a 2011 series on how to unleash the free flow of creative expression.

[Learn more / enter the broadcast site >](#)

Online workshop starts soon! Beginning Saturday, April 30, Rinpoche will be offering a three-week workshop on Tibetan meditation: “The Nature of Mind — Achieving Great Bliss through Pure Awareness.” Space is limited, so register soon. Offered in partnership with GlideWing Productions.

[Learn more / register for online workshop >](#)



More Than 4 Million Recitations of Long-Life Mantra!

Rinpoche’s Birthday Celebration in Nepal

Words of gratitude from Rinpoche on Facebook: “To everyone, thank you for your beautiful words of greeting for my birthday. It is not normally a Tibetan tradition to celebrate birthdays but turning 50 seemed a little significant. I was very happy to be able to travel with family, students and teachers and celebrate. Most important thing I thought of during this time was how grateful I feel for all people in my life. Thank you all.”

International sangha accumulated more than 4 million long-life mantra recitations and offered them symbolically to Rinpoche during his birthday celebration in Katmandu, Nepal, on March 7. The mantras were presented to him after a mandala-offering ceremony. His smile was captured on a video slideshow — see the link in the slideshow article below.



Second International Lishu Retreat

New Slideshows Take You There

Take a walk on the land at the Lishu Institute in Dehradun, India, where you'll see the progress of the building construction and be with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche on this sacred occasion! Then off to Menri Monastery, India, where you can see His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima and the new nunnery. Next, to Triten Norbutse Monastery and other locations in Nepal, marked by a birthday celebration for Tenzin Rinpoche. Pictures are worth a thousand words, so please enjoy these three video slideshows of images and music assembled by Lutz and Bogusia Dausend, including photographs by Pavel Kuzmin.

[View the slideshows >](#)



News From Ligmincha Institute's Board of Directors

[Print this article](#) / [Print full issue](#)

Introducing New Additions to Ligmincha's Staff and Council

The board of directors of Ligmincha Institute is pleased to announce several new additions to its staff and Council, and invites you to say hello to these new faces!



Paige Hartsell

Paige Hartsell has joined our staff as Ligmincha's Registration Coordinator; she is in the office two mornings a week and oversees various aspects of retreat registration, including correspondence with retreat participants and related administrative tasks.

Joyce Asmussen has accepted a Council position as Director of Retreat Coordination. In this volunteer position she will be coordinating the efforts of staff, council, and other volunteers to promote a supportive environment for the transmission of the Bon teachings at Serenity Ridge retreats.

Joyce will oversee organizational needs prior to, during, and at the conclusion of each retreat.



Joyce Asmussen

Responsibilities include communicating with each teacher beforehand to determine specific needs, such as preparing teaching spaces, organizing materials, and communicating with other council members. During retreats Joyce will coordinate the activities of volunteers engaged in work exchange to ensure events are facilitated in ways that align with the needs of the teachers and teachings.

As the retreat coordinator position evolves, Joyce eventually will train several additional volunteers to oversee both pre-retreat and on-site retreat coordination. Whenever possible, on-site retreat coordinators are functioning in pairs to more effectively address needs related to retreat events. In the event that Joyce as Director of Retreat Coordination cannot personally attend a retreat, she will give as much advance assistance as possible to the on-site coordinators.

Adrienne Goldstone has accepted the Council position of Director of International Sangha Relations. In this time of growth in our sangha, Adrienne's task as volunteer is to assist Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche in formulating a cohesive structure for the many different centers and practice groups around the world.

Please join the Ligmincha board of directors in welcoming Worth, Paige, Joyce and Adrienne to

their new posts!



Special Opportunity to Receive Transmissions From His Holiness Registration Now Open for First Three Days of Summer Retreat

We have good news for those who cannot come for the entire first week of Ligmincha Institute's 2011 Summer Retreat at Serenity Ridge: Registration is now open for the first three days only, Saturday through Monday, June 25 through 27. Space is limited, so register soon! Please join us for this rare and unique opportunity to receive teachings and transmissions from His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche, the 33rd Menri Trizen; and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, founder and spiritual director of Ligmincha Institute.

[Learn more or register >](#)



Rinpoche's New Facebook Page

To Stay in Touch, Press "Like"

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche announces that he has a brand-new Facebook page! To see his occasional postings of videos, photographs, and messages, including updates about his teachings, visit <https://www.facebook.com/tenzinwangyalrinpoche> and press "Like." If you are already a Facebook friend with Rinpoche via his older page, please be aware that you must "Like" this new page in order to continue receiving his Facebook postings.



Upcoming Retreats

Ligmincha's Serenity Ridge Retreat Center

The retreats described below will take place at Serenity Ridge, Ligmincha Institute's retreat center in Nelson County, Va. To register or for more information, click on the links below, or contact us at registration@ligmincha.org or 434-263-6304.

April 13 - 17, 2011

Living With Joy, Dying in Peace

Gaining Comfort and Intimacy With the Dying Process

Annual Spring Retreat With Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Denying our own mortality not only separates us from the vibrancy of living in the moment, it also leaves us ill equipped for the critical moment when death comes to ourselves or to our loved ones. The Bon Buddhist tradition is rich with knowledge and methods for using this Great Moment wisely. Through teachings and guided meditations, in this five-day retreat Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche will help us to: recognize death as a doorway to opening the heart and achieving self-realization; prepare for our own death; and learn how to promote a more peaceful, uplifting dying process in others.

[Learn more or register >](#)

May 18 - 22, 2011

Self-Purification Through the Five Enlightened Bodies

With Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche

Please join us this May for these special teachings with [Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche](#), abbot (khenpo) of Triten Norbutse Monastery in Katmandu, Nepal. A powerful means of purifying oneself on all levels of experience, these teachings from the ancient

Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyu

cycle of dzogchen teachings have never before been offered at Ligmincha.

[Read an interview with Khen Rinpoche about these teachings >](#)

[Learn more or register >](#)

June 11-24, 2011

Summer Work Retreat

Free of charge. Whether you join us for one afternoon, one day, one week, or the entire two weeks, this is a wonderful time to share with sangha and to be of joyful service. Our work retreat

includes vigorous work periods, daily meditation practice, and ample time for a swim in the pool or a walk along the Rockfish River. Participants are provided with free air-conditioned accommodations in Garuda House and free meals. For those who participate in one full week, there will be a 50 percent discount on one week of the summer retreat. If you participate in both full weeks of the work retreat, there will be a 50 percent discount on two weeks of the summer retreat.

For more information or to register, please email Ligmincha at registration@ligmincha.org or call 434-263-6304.

June 24, 2011 (Friday), 4-8 p.m.

Fundraising Dinner at Serenity Ridge

**A special evening with His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche
and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche**

Proceeds from this dinner will benefit the orphans under the care of His Holiness at Menri Monastery in Dolanji, India.

[Learn more or register >](#)

June 25 - July 15, 2011

**A View From the Heart: Purifying Your Vision Through the Practice of the Six Lamps
Annual Summer Retreat With Honored Guest H.H. Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche
and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche**

Everyone is cordially invited to join us this summer for a rare and unique opportunity to receive teachings and transmissions from [His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche, the 33rd Menri Trizen](#) ; and [Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche](#),

founder and spiritual director of Ligmincha Institute. Ligmincha's annual Summer Retreat is open to newcomers and longtime students alike. You may attend one, two, or all three weeks of the retreat.

[Learn more or register >](#)

Oct. 5 - 9, 2011

**Connecting With the Living Universe: The Healing Power of the Five Natural Elements
Annual Fall Retreat With Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche**

According to the ancient Tibetan spiritual traditions, our planet is alive and sacred; and the five elements of earth, water, fire, air, and space are not just natural resources but can be considered fundamental aspects of a living universe. Please join us for this special opportunity to learn how to connect, revitalize and commune with our living universe in ways that heal ourselves and our world.

[Learn more or register >](#)

Oct. 18 - 23, 2011

The Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung, Part 3

Dzogchen Teachings With H.E. Menri Lopon Trinley Nyima Rinpoche

We are honored by this special opportunity to receive dzogchen teachings from [His Eminence Menri Lopon Trinley Nyima Rinpoche](#),

the head instructor of Menri Monastery in Dolanji, India.

Prerequisite: Participants must have received the teachings for Parts 1 and 2 of the [Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung](#)

in order to attend these teachings.

[Learn more or register >](#)

Dec. 27, 2011 - Jan. 1, 2012

The Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung, Part 4

Annual Winter Dzogchen Retreat With Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Prerequisite: Participants must have received the teachings for Parts 1 and 2 of the [Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung](#)

in order to attend these Part 4 teachings.

[Learn more or register >](#)

To register for any of the above retreats, or for more information about teachings in the Bon Buddhist tradition of Tibet, please contact us at registration@ligmincha.org or 434-263-6304, or go to:

<https://www.ligmincha.org/retreats/retreats.html>