

Special Announcements Issue

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Letter From the Editors

Rinpoche's New Book Coming Soon

Dear Friends,

We have some wonderful news: A new book by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche will be published in June!

Awakening the Luminous Mind: Tibetan Meditation for Inner Peace and Joy, edited by Marcy Vaughn, is being published by Hay House. It will be available for general distribution in June but will arrive in the Ligmincha bookstore in late May, and can be

[pre-ordered now](#)

. In this issue, we've included an excerpt from the new book. Enjoy!

We are looking forward to [Ligmincha's 20th Annual Summer Retreat](#) and hope you'll take advantage of the chance to celebrate with old friends, meet new friends and reconnect with our teacher. This year's summer retreat (June 24–July 14) continues the teachings of the Six Lamps (Part 2) from the *Oral*

Transmission of Zhang Zhung

, the most important cycle of dzogchen teachings in the Bon Buddhist tradition of Tibet. It's open to both beginners and experienced students. Geshe Nyima Kunchap Rinpoche (who also is teaching Ligmincha's two-year Soul and Life-Force Retrieval training program) and other visiting Bon lamas will also grace us with their presence at this retreat.

[Register soon](#)

for the summer retreat—the early-bird deadline is May 14.

Thank you, Rinpoche, for your presence, inspiration and joy.

In Bon,
Aline and Jeff Fisher



Finding Inner Refuge Through the Spaciousness of Mind

An Excerpt from Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's New Book *Awakening the Luminous Mind*

The third aspect of refuge is associated with the mind. The principles of body, speech, and mind are interrelated, but the mind is primary. Consider your sense of self. You have some idea of who you are. I'm not talking about the strong voice that says, "I am a professor," or "I am a mother." Let's look at the "three o'clock in the morning" voice. At that time the professor or the mother is sleeping and someone else is there. There is a sense of not knowing who you are rather than asserting that you are somebody. The asserting voice is the ego. It is more active, and so it is not hard to find. If you meet someone and have a ten-minute conversation, you have a good sense of who they think they are. That's not what is interesting here. More interesting is that they don't know who they are. There is a pervading dullness—the absence of knowing oneself—called ignorance. Do I know myself in this moment? Or is not-knowing present in me at this moment? You may say, "What do you mean by that? I can understand what you're saying, but..." That's a voice. But beyond that voice there is a sense of not knowing. It is not about not knowing the meaning of what I'm saying. I am talking about the root not-knowing—not knowing yourself. This pervades everything happening in your mind, in your speech, and in your activities. What don't you know? You don't know yourself. There is a traditional Bon prayer that is sung to one's teacher: "Bless me to recognize my true face with my own eyes." Some people might think this refers to their actual face, but this is not what the prayer refers to. It is not referring to appearance or to form. At the gym, people are interested in looking at their own form, face, and muscles. How many mirrors are there? How many mirrors do you have at home? What are you looking at? You are looking at your face, your hair, your body. Wouldn't it be nice if you could simply look in a mirror and recognize who you truly are?

We feel uncomfortable whenever we engage in doubt, when we lack confidence or lose our sense of direction. Those are the moments we face challenges. What can we do? I recommend taking the medicine I call spaciousness. How do we take the medicine of spaciousness? As before, draw your attention inside—not to the body, not to the voices, but to the mind itself. Instead of feeling stillness or silence, try to feel the spaciousness. Why is this important? The nature of mind is very spacious. The root texts in the Bon tradition describe the nature of mind as clear and luminous. All pain, confusion, and struggle that you feel are simply because you don't recognize the mind's true quality.

As you become still and silent, it is then easier to close your eyes and draw attention to your mind. You can feel space around and within that sense of not knowing. You can discover awareness in that ignorance. You recognize the light within that darkness. You don't try to renounce ignorance and find awareness. You are finding awareness within that ignorance. You are not living with the effort of trying to renounce that ignorance. Effort is becoming effortless. The mind that was not aware is now conscious of that state, that base. The moment you feel that, you feel incredible protection. You feel a sense of security, a sense of peace, a sense of balance. The notion of refuge is about really feeling protection. So the third door to discover inner refuge is the door of the mind, and that door is accessed through spaciousness.

Reprinted with permission from Awakening the Luminous Mind: Tibetan Meditation for Inner Peace and Joy.
Hay House, June 2012. The book can be [pre-ordered now](#).



Two Free Webcasts and an Online Workshop

In Coming Days With Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche



Opening the Three Doors

An Invitation to Apply to the Fall 2012 U.S. Three Doors Academy

For more than two decades, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche has brought the ancient Bon tradition's legacy of wisdom and compassion to Western students. As he has witnessed the profound benefits of the practices in his students' lives, he has become increasingly interested in offering these practices to many others by presenting them in a secular way.



This focus has led to the creation of The Three Doors, an educational organization dedicated to the wisdom of meditative practice for positive change and enhanced well-being.

Working closely with a group of senior students, Rinpoche mentored a process of applied practice and transformation which informed the curriculum of The Three Doors Academy. These senior students graduated last summer and are now teaching in Academies in the United States, Latin America and Europe as well as bringing the practices to their respective communities.

The Three Doors Academy is an in-depth three-year training course for those who wish to reflect upon their lives and engage and transform limiting patterns of behavior through meditations of body, speech and mind. It is a rare opportunity to directly apply practice to challenging emotions and stressful circumstances and to experience positive changes. The training of the Academy brings meditation directly into your life as you are living it, enriching your relationships with others and encouraging engaged action in society.

The 2012 U.S. Academy, scheduled to begin in October 2012, is currently accepting applications. [Marcy Vaughn](#) and [Gabriel Rocco](#) will teach this Academy.

Academy participants attend two six-day Group Training Retreats each year, immersing in the teachings and practices they use in their everyday lives. Additionally, participants receive ongoing support in the form of monthly group conference calls, one-on-one mentoring sessions and online resources—as they work to transform 21 specific situations in their lives each year, for a total of 63 transformations by the end of the program. Students are asked to practice daily and to track their experiences in writing. They also complete a creative project inspired by their practice.

Academy participants report many positive results. They have been able to alter critical interactions with loved ones, turn inward for support rather than continually seeking reassurance from others and find greater self-confidence available where it is most appreciated—meeting the challenges and opportunities of life. Participants in the training find support and encouragement in small group work, the mentoring relationship and a “buddy system.” The commitment the group makes to their own practice and to each other over the course of the training is a powerful healing agent.

Participants also speak of the challenge of really facing themselves and learning to value what they see. One Academy trainee shared:

"Perhaps it happens to everyone—coming home late and hungry and opening the refrigerator to find old, not-so-inviting stuff. But because you're hungry you make do with what you have and prepare a meal. And it has happened to me that from such an unlikely mixture of leftovers a delicious stew, or soup, or sauce for pasta has come out, which could not have been tastier if I had had all the proper, fresh ingredients.

"This image came to me on the last day of the second European Three Doors Group Training Retreat. I felt that the deepening of the practice of reflecting on my life and hosting what I see was somehow like opening the refrigerator of my body, energy and heart, and finding old fears, sadness and pains which had been lying there for so long, denied, frozen, unrecognized. After the first moment of rejection, thinking, 'I don't want to deal with that,' I felt it was time to take them out if I wanted to 'eat' and get 'nourished.' It was time to accept, embrace and host them, and start cooking and transforming them on the fire of joy, love, compassion and equanimity. I found out that I could even love my fear, my sadness.

"So whatever our refrigerator has in store for us, that is what we need to see, acknowledge, recognize, transform. We need to do this not with judgment, guilt or criticism, but with compassion and joy. Even old stale fear, stale sadness and stale pain can be transformed into the juiciest, tastiest, most nourishing dish!"

Taste of The Three Doors, a one- or two-day experiential workshop that introduces people to the practices and method of this approach, was offered in Los Angeles in March, and will be in Berkeley, Calif., on July 28–29, 2012. Workshop participants are able to experience and engage in a systematic self-inquiry while working within the container of a focused, supportive group. Rinpoche plans to bring Taste of The Three Doors workshops to additional U.S. cities, to Europe and to Latin America.

Over the next several months [free online sessions](#) will give people a sampling of The Three Doors program.

More information about the [The Three Doors](#)

[Application form](#)



April 22: A Day of Healing

Soul Retrieval Ritual With Geshe Nyima Kunchap

Tibetans traditionally view the five elements of earth, water, fire, air and space as pervading all of life. The ancient shamanic rite of soul retrieval from the Mother Tantra of the Bon tradition calls on the living essence of the elements to balance and heal the individual.

Geshe Nyima Kunchap will perform a soul retrieval ritual at Serenity Ridge on Sunday, April 22, 2012, from 9 a.m.–6 p.m. As well as being trained in sutra, tantra and dzogchen, Geshe Kunchap is a master ritualist of the Yungdrung Bon tradition. Just attending the ritual itself can bring healing effects. Join us for this special event!

[Learn more and register](#)



Q&A With Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Refuge Vows This Summer

Voice of Clear Light recently asked Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche about his plans to offer the Refuge Vows during the first week of the 2012 Summer Retreat, which will take place from June 24 through July 14. His answers are below.

Voice of Clear Light: Why are you choosing to offer Refuge Vows at this time?



Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche: Traditionally, taking refuge and being fully committed to one's spiritual path are what defines whether or not a person is a Buddhist or Bön practitioner. In the West I have seen some teachers taking a very light attitude toward refuge ceremonies and prayers, offering them to students who are having their very first encounter with the spiritual tradition. Many students, too, approach it lightly. For example, I often meet students who say, "I have taken refuge with this teacher and that teacher." I don't approach it so lightly. This summer will be only the second time I have offered the Refuge Vows in the United States in my more than 20 years of living here.

There are many people who have followed the Bon teachings and traditions for a long time and who feel very much at home with them, and have made this the path of their life. So I'm giving these students an opportunity to commit more deeply to the tradition and to their teacher.

Of course, there will be those attending the retreat who will not feel ready or inclined to take these vows. So during the ceremony there will be a session of practice in Garuda House where people will be comfortable to practice separately. The refuge ceremony is only for those who feel they are ready and will benefit from making this commitment.

VOCL: What state of mind should a student have when entering the teaching hall to take refuge?

TWR: The best state of mind is a deep sense of inner refuge—feeling open and connected with oneself, with a quality of warmth—while also generating devotion to the four objects of outer refuge. In the Bon tradition, these four are the teacher, the buddha, the dharma and the sangha.

VOCL: What kind of commitment does taking refuge involve?

TWR: Generally, the commitment involves having more awareness of and connection to the enlightened beings, with a sense of honoring their presence in this world. It also involves having

the same sense of connection and honor toward the sacred art, symbols and other images that represent those beings. More specifically, I feel it is important to surrender to a state of total trust in and loyalty to the buddha, dharma and sangha and to the lama, yidam and khandro. These are the main aspects of the commitment that comes with taking refuge.



Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche: Innovation within an Ancient Tradition

A Weekly Wisdom Interview By Tami Simon of Sounds True

In March, Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche was a featured speaker on Sounds True Radio. You can listen to the online interview or download a transcript of it [here](#).



Welcome to Ligmincha's New Bookstore Manager

Bo Holland Joins Us at Serenity Ridge



Please join us as we welcome Bo Holland to the position of manager of Ligmincha Institute's

Bookstore and Tibet Shop. Bo has been a student of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's for the past seven years, and brings a host of skills to her new position. You will find Bo at Ligmincha's store at the Serenity Ridge retreat center, and our online store, www.ligminchastore.org . Come say hi to Bo the next time you visit us at Serenity Ridge, or [email her](#) .

Many heartfelt thanks to former bookstore manager Melissa O'Neill. We wish that all good things come her way as she and her husband, Kevin O'Neill, settle into their new home in Bloomington, Indiana.



Volunteer Help Wanted

Position for Database Programmer

Ligmincha Institute is looking for a volunteer to program a retreat registration database using Microsoft Access 2010 software. If you work with Access 2010 and would like to assist in this way, please [email Ligmincha](#) .



New Position Available at Ligmincha

Retreat Center Maintenance Technician

We are now accepting resumes for the position of Retreat Center Maintenance Technician for

Ligmincha Institute's Serenity Ridge Retreat Center in Shipman, Va., 30 minutes south of Charlottesville. Tasks will include work in electrical repairs, plumbing, carpentry, masonry, painting repairs and other general maintenance; landscaping and grounds maintenance; and supervision of subcontractors when needed. Position requires being onsite for all events, assisting in welcoming retreat center visitors and serving as liaison for volunteer workers. This is an ideal situation for a couple who could co-manage these responsibilities. Candidate(s) must have relevant experience and skills. Position is for three years. Includes stipend plus free onsite housing in one-bedroom cottage at our rural hilltop center; seasonal use of swimming pool; and free registration for some retreats. Ligmincha Institute is a drug-free workplace and equal opportunity employer.

Please send inquiries and resumes to Ligmincha [by email](#) .



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.

May 5–9, 2012

Soul and Life-Force Retrieval Training

Two-Year-Certificate Program

Session 1: With Geshe Nyima Kunchap

This unique program, offered in four five-day sessions in the spring and fall of 2012 and 2013 at Serenity Ridge, will provide the in-depth knowledge and experience needed to perform the Bon Buddhist practice of soul and life-force retrieval for oneself or—with the instructor's permission—for others. Early applications are encouraged.

[Learn more or apply](#)

June 10–23, 2012

Annual Summer Work Retreat

Free of charge

You may arrive as early as June 10, 2012, to participate in the Summer Work Retreat, which will take place from June 10 through 23. The work retreat is free of charge. Whether you join us for one afternoon, 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 the registration fee for 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 the registration fee for two weeks of the summer retreat. To register for the Work Retreat, [email us](#) or call 434-263-6304.

June 24–July 14, 2012

A View From the Heart: Purifying Your Vision Through the Practice of the Six Lamps (Part 2)

▣ 20th Annual Summer Retreat / 20th Anniversary Celebration!

With Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Registration is now open for the 20th Annual Summer Retreat and 20th Anniversary Celebration! Come for one, two or all three weeks. No prerequisite, newcomers welcome.

[Learn more or register](#)

Oct. 10–14, 2012

Awakening the Luminous Mind

Annual Fall Retreat

With Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

More information coming soon.

Dec. 27, 2012–Jan. 1, 2013

Winter Retreat 2012: Experiential Transmission, Part 5

Dzogchen Teachings With Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Online registration is now open! Prerequisite: Participants must have received the teachings for Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung in order to attend these Part 5 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>