


[Current Issue](#)
[Previous Issues](#)
[Translations](#)
[Ligmincha International](#)
[Bookstore](#)
[PDF](#) | [Print](#) | [E-mail](#)

Volume 22, Number 2/ April 2022



Letter from the Editors

Prayers for Peace



Dear Friends,

Our hearts go out to all. To Ukraine, to Russia and to the world as we watch this war and crisis change the landscape and lives of so many people. It's very hard to see so much suffering. How do we help and stay open in the midst of this tragedy?

In a **recent broadcast** during the Interfaith Prayers for World Peace, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche brings perspective and compassion to the difficulties we all

are experiencing, reminding us not to judge or criticize in anger, even though these are very natural emotions to feel. Rather, to keep opening our hearts and include everyone in our prayers. We can recognize that peace and love, no matter what religion or what country they are coming from, are universal and we all can come together. When there is suffering, no matter who is suffering, you, or your friend, or your enemy, it is all suffering in samsara.

In this issue:

- Donate to benefit Ukrainian refugees during this time of crisis. Join in prayer sessions for world peace.
- Read Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's teaching on Relating Well to Death and Living Life Fully Now, an excerpt from the fall retreat, 2021.
- Read a related question about not wanting to face the dying process in the Student and Teacher article.
- Attend the Serenity Ridge Summer Retreat with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche in person or online June 19-July 2. It will be a practice retreat based on the Seven Mirrors of Dzogchen.
- Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's new book, *The Seven Mirrors of Dzogchen*, is now available in the Ligmincha Bookstore.
- View Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's upcoming worldwide teaching schedule.
- Check out Ligmincha Learning's online courses. The Five Elements begins April 1; Sherap Chamma begins April 15.
- "Bring Body, Speech & Mind to Life" is a free yearlong CyberSangha program with full moon practice and more.
- Ligmincha Italy announces two upcoming retreats, onsite and on Zoom.
- Read the story of Khyungtrul Rinpoche, one of the "Spiritual Stories of Zhang Zhung."
- GlideWing's next online workshop begins April 30: Tibetan Dream Yoga.
- Volunteers are needed to join our Zoom team.
- Spanish translation link for the February VOCL.

In Bon,
Aline and Jeff Fisher



Relating Well to Death and Living Life Fully Now

An Excerpt from Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's Fall 2021 Retreat

Receive VOCL by Email

Subscribe

Bookstore & Tibet Shop

Ligmincha's online store is **currently offline** because of staffing issues.

We hope it will return soon.

In the meantime, visit the Bookstore & Tibet Shop when you come to Serenity Ridge Retreat Center. Most books published through Sacred Sky Press, Ligmincha International's publishing arm which supports books on Bon teachings and translations of texts, are available through [lulu.com](https://www.lulu.com).

About Voice of Clear Light

Voice of Clear Light is a free email publication of Ligmincha International. Your suggestions and contributions to *Voice of Clear Light* are welcome. To contact us, send an email to: voiceofclearlight@ligmincha.org

For more information about Ligmincha International, the teachings of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, or retreats at Serenity Ridge or our other regional centers, please contact us at:

Ligmincha International
554 Drumheller Lane
Shipman, VA 22971
office@ligmincha.org

Bring Voice of Clear Light to your email inbox >

Subscribe

Stay in Touch

Follow Ligmincha on



During this retreat we are meditating and imagining that we have only one year left to live, and coming to feel the strong sense of impermanence this evokes. *If I truly have only one year to live, what would I do? What are the priorities in my life? And what would I stop doing?* The reason we want to think in this way is that it is never too late to change things in our life. So what is preventing you? Well, what is really preventing you is your current pain identity made up of the patterns that you have been holding on to now for quite a long time. That pain identity is preventing your experiencing a fuller sense of openness, flow and joy, and preventing you from doing what you would like to do.

And it also affects our relationship with death. Death is not a personal problem. Death happens to everyone, every Buddha, every bodhisattva, every famous person, every successful person. There's nothing wrong about it. We can have a better relationship with our death, and the sense that when the moment comes may I be okay with that. Because truly it is not an end, it's a beginning. It is not a stop, it's a continuation of existence and your rebirth. It is not a failure, it's a completion of something.

What makes death most difficult is this famous pain identity that I have been talking about all the time. And it is not one, it is many small pain identities. Clearly there are moments in the process of dying when one feels completely okay. But then there are moments when one feels, *okay maybe I need to prepare myself*. Preparing oneself primarily comes down to these two things: to live fuller and share fuller, serve fuller; and then also to not get caught up in the stories. You wish and you pray that when the moment of death comes, you will completely embrace it and have peace with it.

So moment to moment, our attitude and feeling toward the dying process has something to do with our identity. And one identity that we all have deep inside is what we call in Tibetan *dak dzin*, permanent grasping. We all have that; this deep sense of *forever*. In the teaching it talks about *dak dzin*, which literally could be translated as *self-grasping*. Using more common language, I translate it as *pain identity*. I like that, because it's easy to understand. The simple definition of pain identity is when I identify myself not with my strength but with my weakness. You see, most of your identity is based on your conditions, and not on your potentiality. It is based on your closedness, and not on your openness. It is based on your limits, and not on your boundlessness. So limits, closedness, conditions produce pain. And whatever identity produces pain, that is what I call pain identity.

In death and dying it is the same thing; the resistance toward death, fear of death, fear of change, fear of transition. All these fears are different faces of essentially one single sense of identity, and that usually has to do with this permanent-grasping identity, this sense of forever. If you ask yourself, are you going to live forever, of course no one is going to say, yes to that, unless they're crazy. Nevertheless, the sense is there, a kind of hidden, unspoken secret wish, desire, need, fantasy, dream: *I'll live forever. And that is why I have to struggle, that's why I have to accumulate more, that's why I have to work hard and save, and that's why in my striving to accumulate, I may even have to be a little mean to be able to accumulate enough*. That's the idea, you know? *I have to fight for this ego, because this ego is going to live forever*. Look closely in yourself, and I hope you can see it. That is what makes our life more problematic and brings more conflict in our life, more confusion in our life, more pain in our life, more blockages in our life, more fear of death and the process of dying.

Again, what makes the transition of death and dying most difficult are essentially two things. One is the pain identity that does not want to lose itself. And second is the pain identity that is attached to objects, such as family, possessions, titles, status, none of which lasts. It all arises out of this one single sense of identity, which secretly believes in FOREVER and it's called, *dak dzin*. That is exactly the reason why we do the practice of impermanence, so that we are really able to see it.

Some of you here at this retreat are older than me, and some of you are younger, but we are all more or less in similar situations. Even if you live long, how long will that be? Not that much, right? But the way that you are living your life right now, the ways that you behave and the ways that you plan things, it's clear you obviously have a different plan. Your behavior doesn't correspond to the amount of time you have left. If your behavior directly corresponded to how much time you have left, then you certainly wouldn't be behaving like you behave. Everything that makes you angry would not make you angry. Everything that bothers you would not bother you if you've calculated well how much time you have left. If you have calculated that, then people would not bother you because they would not be *able* to bother you; conditions would not bother you because they would not be *able* to bother you; changes in life would not bother you because they would not be able to bother you. Even if somebody is rather mean to you, criticizing you, they would not bother you. Your famous person would lose the power. Why? Because you know just how much time you have left.

Do you see how, with that understanding in mind, we just don't have time to worry anymore? I feel that way. It's not worth worrying about anything, because worrying is not necessarily smart. It does not necessarily have a lot of clarity. It does not necessarily have a lot of fire. It's not very engaging, active, productive, is it? It is just a confusing behavior. The same with your being aggressive, or saying



Follow Tenzin Wangyal
Rinpoche on



Search

something mean to someone, or getting into this pain competition with someone, in families particularly. It's time to let everybody win. Find victory in the ability to *lose*. Find power in the ability to give up power. I feel very strongly that the real power is not in the one who grasps and holds onto power. The real power is in the one who can let go of the power that they have. So it is the time to let go. It's not worth getting angry, it's not worth getting agitated. At this point in life, if you want to live fully, you have to really truly change your view. And the view will change if you truly develop this sense that you only have one year to live. Because really one year, 10 years, 20 years, they're not that much different.

Personally, I will say, there are a lot of things that you will be able to let go of, because you won't be reinforcing the pain identity that needs to hold onto them. As a result of that, many things will manifest. Sometimes it may be forgiveness, even though for so long you've held the belief: *how can I forgive them for that!* If you are closed, then you cannot forgive, but because you are feeling more open, you can forgive. Sometimes it may manifest in your being gentler, being softer, being less critical, less judgmental, collaborating more with people, being more accepting, contributing more the things that you can contribute, and recognizing, too, when it is not your place to contribute things. It could be anything, but whatever it is, it's a joy.

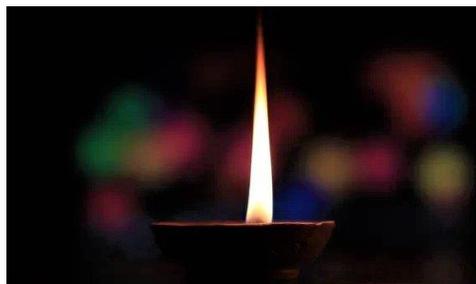
So the result is that we will have more joy in living. What does that mean, joy in living? It could mean anything. Doing nothing, simply getting up in the morning and watching the sunrise could be such a joy. Or just walking down the street smelling the different scents could be such a joy. Or just watching the kids play can be very joyful. Or seeing two people walking by and holding hands can be very joyful. You see, when you want to be happy, then everything can make you happy. And when you want to be sad, then even the Buddha can make you sad. If the Buddha showed up full of light, you would complain that it seems like too much light. So life is like that.

Clearly in life there are a lot of people enjoying so much, despite all that they *don't* have. As well, there are a lot of people who are *not* able to enjoy themselves despite all that they *do* have. We see that all the time. So in our own life the little ups and downs will not change us so much, but what will change us is to awaken and to recognize. I would encourage you to continuously reflect on only having one year left to live. Try to be more aware of the pain identity, try to be aware of the permanent grasping mind, try to be a little bit more aware of specific things that you are attached to, particularly where that attachment is causing issues, problems, pain. If you recognize that you only have one year to live, then you will not be worrying so much about that. That's clear, right?



Ligmincha Fundraising Benefits Refugees of Ukraine Crisis

Join in Interfaith Prayers for World Peace



Since the start of the conflict in Ukraine, growing numbers of people have lost their homes or their loved ones. Many others have been injured, and many families have been separated.

Please consider joining Ligmincha International's fundraising efforts on behalf of the situation in Ukraine. You also can join Ligmincha instructor and practice leaders around the globe for online sessions of meditation, prayer and contemplation.

Fundraising Efforts

As of March 25, 2022, Ligmincha International has raised \$31,800 and so far has sent \$4,000 to Ligmincha Hungary and \$22,000 to Ligmincha Poland for them to donate to services in their countries that benefit Ukrainian refugees. Additionally, Ligmincha Hungary has raised \$5,200 and Ligmincha Poland has raised more than \$14,000. Ligmincha Poland has opened its center and is accepting refugees. Ligmincha Hungary also is providing support and assistance to Ukrainians who have been displaced.

Chamma Ling Poland is hosting refugees from Ukraine at its center in Wilga in a calm environment that allows them to consider what to do next. Some are given help in finding a job and nearby apartment. At the center, volunteers try to organize shared meals and activities for the children, and fulfill other needs. Says sangha member Michael Glijer, who recently spent a weekend at the center and talked with guests, "All conversations and gestures are dominated by one omnipresent emotion: enormous gratitude for being welcomed and taken care of. This feeling seems to be stronger than sadness and suffering. so despite the tragic circumstances, everyone is smiling and full of hope." Sangha members are buying clothing for two families now that spring is coming and they need lighter clothes and shoes.



Unpacking a gift

In



Refugees in front of the center

Hungary, the Ligmincha sangha gathered clothing and supplies for the children and, working with a Hungarian NGO, helped transport clothing and food to an orphanage in Ukraine close to the Hungarian border. The sangha is exploring future support for this and other orphanages. They also have contacted a Hungarian wholesaler to purchase food at a discount price. "There is a shortage of many things in Ukraine, and it is helpful to buy things in Hungary and take them to Ukraine," says sangha member Balazs Balogh." They hope to do this every few weeks and take the supplies to Ukraine where they are most needed.



Food and supplies transported from Hungary to orphanage in Ukraine



Babies in Ukrainian orphanage across the border with Hungary

You can donate to Ligmincha International's fundraising efforts on behalf of the situation in Ukraine in several ways. One-hundred percent of all donated funds will go to related relief efforts, with an emphasis on supporting refugee services. Ligmincha will help to ensure that the funds go directly to services offering immediate, tangible benefit to those in need.

Here are several ways you can donate.

- [Donate through Ligmincha International](#), a U.S. 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.
- [Donate through Ligmincha Poland](#), which is raising funds as part of the same campaign.
- [Donate through Ligmincha Hungary](#), which also is raising funds as part of the same program, and [learn more](#) about Hungary's activities in support of refugees.

Prayers for World Peace

Toward world peace, join faith leaders from around the globe for online prayer and silent contemplation. You can view each session on the [CyberSangha website](#) or on Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's [Facebook page](#). A recording of each session will be available on the CyberSangha website in the Schedule of Interfaith Prayer sessions soon after the broadcast ends.

Additional prayer groups and special events are being held, including many sponsored by Ligmincha sanghas around the world. At press time, prayers were being sponsored by Ligmincha France/Switzerland, Serenity Ridge Retreat Center in the U.S., Ligmincha Hungary, Ligmincha Finland, Ligmincha Poland and Ligmincha Mexico, among others.

[View current prayer schedules around the world](#)



The Seven Mirrors of Dzogchen Practice Retreat

Summer Retreat at Serenity Ridge and on Zoom June 19-July 2

Join Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche for the annual two-week Summer Retreat at Serenity Ridge in Virginia or online via Zoom. The Seven Mirrors of Dzogchen is an essential text of the Tibetan Bon dzogchen tradition, which directly introduces us to the clear, open awareness that is our true nature and offers methods for maintaining a connection to the natural state. The text was composed by Drenpa Namkha, a great Tibetan meditation master of the late seventh/early eighth century.

Rinpoche has offered teachings from this text on several occasions, most recently during Serenity Ridge's summer retreat of 2020, and has published a book of commentary on the Seven Mirrors based on the 2020 teachings. In this summer's two-week retreat, Rinpoche will guide us to recognize and rest in our true nature, engaging selected practices and meditations from the Seven Mirrors text. Newcomers and experienced practitioners are equally welcome to attend this retreat! The emphasis on practice will allow experiences and realization to deepen in the warmth of our collective practice.



Join us for one or both weeks of the summer retreat, as we gather both in person and online to connect with the practices of the Seven Mirrors. Through the power of these teachings and the warmth of our collective practice, may we realize the radiant, clear light of our true nature and act for the benefit of others in authentic, kind and wise ways!

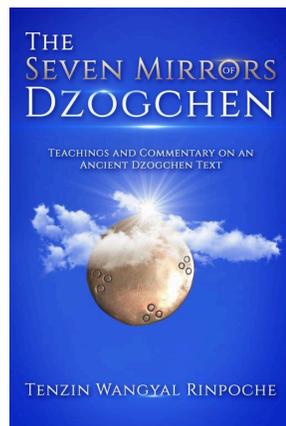
Recommended reading: *The Seven Mirrors of Dzogchen: Teachings and Commentary on an Ancient Dzogchen Text*, by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche (2022, Sacred Sky Press)

[Learn more](#)



The Seven Mirrors of Dzogchen

New Book by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche Now Available in Ligmincha Store



Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's newest book, *The Seven Mirrors of Dzogchen: Teachings and Commentary on an Ancient Dzogchen Text*, is now available in the Ligmincha Bookstore and Tibet Shop, following a brief delay in the printing process. The book is based on teachings that Rinpoche gave during his 2020 summer retreat, which was held completely online and drew more than 600 participants from 43 countries around the world.

The teachings and commentary in this book are based on a profound text on the nature of mind called *The Seven Mirrors of Dzogchen* by Drenpa Namkha. He was a great Tibetan master in the late seventh/early eighth century from the ancient land of Zhang Zhung, which later became part of Tibet. It is one of the essential texts of dzogchen, the highest teaching in the Tibetan Bon tradition and some Tibetan Buddhist lineages. Dzogchen, known as the "great perfection," points out the nature of one's mind as clear and open, aware, and the source of all positive

qualities in life.

With his ability to bring the deep teachings of ancient texts into the modern world and make them relevant and engaging for his students, Tenzin Rinpoche, through commentary and meditations, brings these ancient teachings to life. He shows how the mirrors, which are the reflection of our highest potential, are as applicable today as they were in the past. The book focuses in particular on the first four mirrors of dzogchen: the view, meditation, result and conduct. Exploring these teachings and applying them in our lives can help us open to our true nature.

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, founder and spiritual director of Ligmincha International, is an accomplished author as well as a highly respected and beloved teacher to students around the world. *The Seven Mirrors of Dzogchen* is published by Sacred Sky Press, a division of Ligmincha International committed to making the sacred teachings and practices of the Tibetan Bon Buddhist tradition more widely available.

[Learn more](#)



Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's Upcoming Teaching Schedule

Rinpoche is Traveling Once Again!

Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's teaching schedule for 2022 continues to grow! Four seasonal retreats at Serenity Ridge are planned to be offered both in person to a limited number of participants, following social distancing guidelines, as well as online. Retreats in Poland and Crestone, Colorado also are planned for both in person and online, and Rinpoche has scheduled in-person retreats at other locations throughout the world.

You can find the latest listings and any changes in the Events section of the [Ligmincha website](#) or the [Serenity Ridge website](#). Please register for these online retreats through the specific Events box on the website.

- March 31-April 3, 2022: Serenity Ridge Spring Retreat: [Breath and Awareness](#)
- April 8-10, 2022: Ligmincha Mexico: [Fivefold Teaching of Dawa Gyaltzen](#)
- May 6-7, 2022: Amsterdam, the Netherlands: [The Six Lamps](#)
- May 27-29, 2022: Berlin, Germany: [The Seven Mirrors of Dzogchen, Part 4](#)
- June 4-6 2022: Pont-la-Ville, Switzerland: [The Heartdrop of Chamma](#)
- June 19-July 2, 2022: Serenity Ridge Summer Retreat: The Seven Mirrors of Dzogchen Practice Retreat
- August 8-14, 2022: Buchenau, Germany: [The Essence of the 21 Nails \(Practice Retreat\)](#)
- August 16-21, 2022: Chamma Ling Poland, [Tummo Part 2](#)
- September 2-4, 2022: Budapest, Hungary, Topic TBA
- September 23-25, 2022: Chamma Ling Colorado, [A-tri Dzogchen Teachings, Part 2](#)
- October 11-16, 2022: Serenity Ridge Fall Retreat, Topic TBA
- October 28-30, 2022: Berkeley, California: [The Twenty-One Nails \(Part 2 of 6\)](#)
- December 26-January 1, 2023: Serenity Ridge Winter Retreat, [Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung, Part 3](#)



Ligmincha Learning's Online Courses in April

The Five Elements and Sherap Chamma



Ligmincha Learning is pleased to offer two upcoming video-based online courses beginning in April: The Five Elements with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche April 1-May 14; Sherap Chamma, Mother of Wisdom and Love with Marcy Vaughn April 15-May 14; and Ngondro: The Foundational Practices with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche (this course can be joined at any time).

These courses feature beautiful video teachings, guided meditations, readings, journal writing activities, and the opportunity to interact with senior mentors and classmates from

around the world.

April 1-May 14, 2022

The Five Elements, Healing with Form Energy and Light with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

In this course Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche explores how each of the five elements relates to our daily experiences, emotions and relationships. Rinpoche guides meditations for each of the elements, designed to help clear our obstacles and bring balance to our lives.

[Learn more/register](#)

April 15-May 14, 2022

Sherap Chamma, Mother of Wisdom and Love with Marcy Vaughn

In many cultures the primordial female energy is seen as the origin of existence and the source of all positive qualities. Sherap Chamma, Mother of Wisdom and Love, is the source of wisdom, and her medicine is love and compassion. The teachings of Sherap Chamma comprise one of the most important tantric cycles of the ancient Bon tradition.

[Learn more/register](#)

March 11-December 17, 2022 (ongoing and can be joined at any time)

Ngondro: The Foundational Practices with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

The Ngondro teachings are a set of nine practices that offer complete instructions for taming, purifying and perfecting the suffering mind

[Learn more/register](#)

Learn more at ligminchalearning.com. (Find descriptions in the top menu under Courses.)



'Bring Body, Speech & Mind to Life'

Free Yearlong CyberSangha Program with Full Moon Practice and More



With the Tibetan New Year which began on March 3, 2022 (Year of the Water Tiger), Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche launched a new online program of 24-Hour Full Moon Practices, plus related live teachings and science/spirituality dialogs with Rinpoche and invited guests.

Every offering of this yearlong program is free and open to all. Events can be viewed on Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's [Facebook Page](#) or on the [CyberSangha website](#). See the upcoming schedule below.

In the Tibetan tradition, body, speech and mind are known as the three doors to enlightenment, for they are considered the only tools we have for progressing on the spiritual path. Through these doors we either exit and become separated from our true nature, or we enter into the fullness of being, realizing and manifesting our capacities in this life for the benefit of others.

The 2021 program helped participants discover a sense of peace within. This year, from that foundation of peacefulness the practices can be brought to life, awakening clear, positive action; realizing our true voice; and manifesting qualities for the benefit of others.

Whether you are a longtime meditation practitioner or a novice, you are welcome to attend any or all live broadcasts throughout the year. Except for the 24-Hour full moon practices, no advance registration is required. The 24-hour session begins with a teaching and guided meditation at 10 a.m. New York time on the day of the full moon, and ends at 10 a.m. the following day. Participants will be supported by Ligmincha International's global community of practitioners. Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and other Ligmincha lamas will take opportunities to join participants throughout the 24 hours.

Unlike Rinpoche's CyberSangha Facebook Live broadcasts, the 24-hour full moon practice takes place via Zoom, in an online meeting space. There is no cost to participate, but registration is required.

MONTH OF THE BODY (March 16-April 14)

A full-moon practice was held March 17-18, and a Science & Spirituality Dialog with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche; Bessel van der Kolk, author of *The Body Keeps the Score*; host Alejandro Chaoul-Reich, and other invited presenter(s) was held March 23. The dialog can be viewed in the [CyberSangha archives](#).

MONTH OF SPEECH (April 15-May 13)

Friday, April 15, 2022, 10 a.m. New York Time: Teaching and guided meditation with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. More information to come.

Saturday, April 16, 2022, 10 a.m. New York time: 24-Hour Full Moon Practice, Through Silence, Realize Your True Voice.

[Register now](#)

MONTH OF THE MIND (May 14-June 11)

Saturday, May 14, 2022, New York time: Teaching and guided meditation with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. More information to come.

Sunday, May 15, 2022, 10 a.m. New York Time: 24-hour Full Moon Practice, Through Spaciousness, Manifest Qualities That Benefit Others

Registration opens after April 17.

Visit the [CyberSangha website](#) for complete information and updates.



The Story of Khyungtrul Rinpoche

One of the Spiritual Stories from Zhang Zhung

In the Bon tradition spiritual stories are a traditional form of teaching, inspiring practitioners to develop and strengthen their faith and devotion. In the second season of online "Spiritual Stories from Zhang Zhung" hosted by Ligmincha International European sanghas and Lishu Institute in India in December 2021 and January 2022, Khyungtrul Rinpoche, a great 20th century master, was the focus of one of the three presentations.

Lishu teachers Geshe Sherap Lodoe spoke in Tibetan, and Dr. Sangmo Yangri translated into English. Real-time translation was available in Finnish, German, Hungarian, Italian, Polish and Spanish. Here is an edited excerpt from the talk, prepared by Ton Bisscheroux.



Khyuntrul Rinpoche, ca. 1935 at age 38



Khyuntrul Jigme Namkha Dorje (1897-1955), popularly known as Khyuntrul Rinpoche, was one of the great Bon masters of the 20th century. He was a contemporary of Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen Rinpoche, a great Bon dzogchen master who attained the rainbow body. At the end of his life, while giving instructions to his disciples, Khyuntrul Rinpoche left his body and remained in a state of *thukdam* (meditative state) for 49 days. Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche (born in 1961), founder and spiritual leader of Ligmicha International, is regarded as his reincarnation.

Khyuntrul Rinpoche made the enlightened teaching of Yungdrung Bon available in the northern part of Tibet, when hardly any teachings were available for the Bonpos that region and where Bonpos were tortured and looked down upon. Not only was he a great Bon master, he also was a Nyingma Buddhist master and respected in all the traditions. In a text by the great eighth century Bon master Drenpa Namkha, it was prophesied that Khyuntrul Rinpoche would be his blessed son in the future.



Photo taken by Giuseppe Tucci in 1935 at Guru Gyem caves, a site associated with Drenpa Namkha

The birthplace of Khyuntrul Rinpoche was the Kham region called Hor in eastern Tibet. His father was one of the ministers of the king of Hor. Before Rinpoche was born, his mother had several auspicious dreams. In one, she saw a great tantric master with long hair and a robe. He went inside the family prayer room, sat down in front of the beautiful altar, and showed a card with images of deities used in tantric and dzogchen initiations. In her dream she saw the tantric master blowing a conch shell and beating on a drum, both auspicious signs.

Khyuntrul Rinpoche was the eldest child, with seven brothers and one sister. He was very peaceful and compassionate. According to Tibetan tradition the eldest son has to take care of the family. As a child Khyuntrul

Rinpoche felt great liking for playing drums and ritual instruments, and he had clear visions about gods and mandalas. When he shared his visions almost nobody believed him. His father, concerned if his son would be able to take care of the family income, beat and scolded him. For a long time Khyuntrul Rinpoche did not say anything to his father about that, but finally he said it was enough. His father was proud that his son stood up for himself.

When Khyuntrul Rinpoche was 8 years old, a master named Gyalwa Tsultrim was invited to his house to perform rituals. During the ritual sessions, the master asked his family members to abstain from nonvirtuous deeds. Khyuntrul Rinpoche never forgot the master's advice and always engaged in virtuous deeds. He also received the preliminary practices, the ngondro, from this master. Later Khyuntrul Rinpoche and his father visited Gyalwa Tsultrim at the Ri Tse Druk monastery in Kham, a special region surrounded by six precious mountaintops. Khyuntrul Rinpoche was so impressed that he promised himself that in the future he would become a great hermit and practitioner just like his master. On a later pilgrimage to the monastery, he had a vision of Tulku Loden Nyingpo, a great 14th century Bon master who wrote an extensive hagiography of Buddha Tonpa Shenrap Miwoche, founder of the Bon tradition.

When Khyuntrul Rinpoche made a pilgrimage to the holy mountain Konpo Bonri in southern Tibet, the fields around the mountain were filled with colors of the rainbow and he smelled the sweet fragrance of herbal and medicinal plants. At Kunzang Thugkha, near the summit of Kongpo Bonri, while reciting the *Sa Le O* mantra he had an extraordinary vision of Shenlha Okar, the primordial Buddha in the Bon tradition, who appeared brightly in front of him in shining colors, within a sphere of tigles and a rainbow halo.



Holy mountain Konpo Bonri

Great visions are not only dependent on outer circumstances. The more we purify our afflictions and

become free from them, the more possible it is to have pure vision. When a master has a pure vision, that is a result of a pure state of mind, because all visions are an expression of the absence of afflictions. When we have visions of mandalas or deities at the moment of dying, that is a direct fruit of being free of mental afflictions.

Rinpoche received his novice monk vows from the master Goton Niyma Gyaltzen and was given the name Khyungtrul Gyaltzen. Even when Khyungtrul Rinpoche became a monk, his father did not give up the hope that his son would become a great householder. He asked his son to go out and collect taxes. But when Khyungtrul Rinpoche heard the stories of the people about a bad harvest or suffering a great loss, their sadness and helplessness, he developed great compassion and burned the books with the tax debts. He told the people that they did not have to pay taxes anymore to his father, and he brought nothing home. His father was angry and scolded him, but Khyungtrul Rinpoche said, "Father I am your firstborn son and I will inherit your wealth and properties. I have burned the tax books, so now you don't have to give me anything anymore!"

It is said that Khyungtrul Rinpoche recognized his natural state of mind at age 13. He went to Pal Nyima Bum-Sal, a master of the Pa clan, one of the five big families in the Bon tradition, who had the power to see the future. Asking for advice on good places to practice that would bring about the right fruit, he was told to go several places if he wished to attain the rainbow body, and other places if he wanted to have great followers. "My advice is that you to go to Mount Kailash in the upper part of Tibet, and you will become beneficial in preserving the enlightened teachings of the Yungdrung Bon. It is a great challenging period for Bon dharma and particularly in the Zhang Zhung Ngari territory, the upper part of Tibet. Though the place was the origin and source of the enlightened teaching of Yungdrung Bon, nowadays there is hardly any remains of Bon teachings, and Bon pilgrims are badly treated there. It would be good if you can bring positive changes in the mind of people and revive the teachings there."

At age 23, Khyungtrul Rinpoche left his homeland and did not want to return. He had no desire to take anything from his home, but his father insisted on sending an assistant, food and other things for a pleasant journey. On the way from his hometown, he experienced various auspicious signs, as if he were escorted by local spirits. He went to all the sacred places and shared his money with monasteries and with poor people he met. When a group of pilgrims from their homeland saw Khyungtrul Rinpoche carry his own backpack like a common man, they were touched that the firstborn son of high-born family was traveling this way.

At the retreat place Chukmo Palri, Khyungtrul Rinpoche took an oath that he would not leave before receiving a sign of the progress of his practice. There he did the *tsa lung* and *tummo* practices, and he experienced a great bliss of the inner heat. Even though he wore only a thin cloth, he did not feel any cold. In the *tummo* practice we say that the wind, the prana, flows in the central channel, and that leads to the feeling of bliss. When he experienced the signs of progress, he continued on his journey.

Rinpoche went to Driktsam Thakar, a place where Shenchen Luga had discovered a great treasure of Yungdrung Bon teachings. There is a story about a little hole in this place. Forgetting his walking cane in the cave, when he remembered it the cane flew out, creating a hole in the cave that is still there. It is said that if you look through this hole you can see the future. When Khyungtrul Rinpoche looked through this hole he had a vision of a great text in this cave, and close to this text he saw a lamp that illuminated everything. Later Khyungtrul Rinpoche realized that the vision prophesied that he would write and publish a great text that would clarify the teaching of Yungdrung Bon and revive the Bon teachings in Zhang-Zhung Ngari. Khyungtrul Rinpoche was the first master in the Tibetan tradition to publish text using the technology of the printing press, and he published several books through this technology.

At the end of Khyungtrul Rinpoche's holy journey he went to Bhutan. The king of Bhutan was so impressed his simplicity and power that he asked him to reside permanently in Bhutan, but after some time Khyungtrul Rinpoche left. There was an incident in Bhutan when people offered Khyungtrul Rinpoche poison to drink. Since he was a great practitioner, the poison did not harm him, and he purified the poison through *tsa lung* practices. On the border of Bhutan and Nepal, Khyungtrul Rinpoche performed a *chod* practice, which was so powerful that he felt spirits appear and eat his physical body.

There is a Tibetan saying: a great master is like a flower; wherever he goes, his odor is spread everywhere, and one can smell the odor even before the master arrives at a place. Through the simplicity of Khyungtrul Rinpoche's teachings and his conduct, there came a great change in the mind of the people about him and the Bonpos in general in the northern part of Tibet.

Later Khyungtrul Rinpoche built the great Gurgyam Monastery in northern Tibet. After building the monastery, he needed the *kangyur* (texts) and *tengyur* (commentaries) of the Yungdrung Bon teachings. His family was still very wealthy and they had the texts preserved at their home. So he sent two monks (one the great scholar Palden Tsultrim) to collect these texts from his family. There was a funny moment when the monks arrived, when his father said, "Now he needs something from my house! He was the one who said he didn't need anything, and now he sent you to collect the most precious property."

In general, his family was a great support for the Bon teachings. The family had printed the complete *kangyur* four times in wooden block. Later one of these blocks was offered to the Kham region. All the



Guryam Monastery, in northern Tibet, thought to be the central area of the ancient kingdom of Zhang Zhung

other blocks were destroyed in the Cultural Revolution, so the Bon *kangyur* we have now comes from this block.

Khyungtrul Rinpoche had a special connection to Palden Tsultrim. Each man called the other man his master, and there was great respect and connection between the two. Khyungtrul Rinpoche was supposed to write and complete 13 volumes of the Yungdrung Bon teachings. But he shared with Palden Tsultrim that he spent all his early years in life listening to the Bon teachings and the rest of his life practicing and spreading these teachings, so he only completed seven volumes. He gave Palden Tsultrim the responsibility and authority to complete the last six volumes, and also asked him to complete his biography. Palden Tsultrim did this. The history of Yungdrung Bon teachings was first published in Lhasa, and this book has

become a great reference book for Bon and Buddhist scholars.

The life stories and achievements of Khyungtrul Rinpoche are vast and endless. Khyungtrul Rinpoche continued his journey from Bhutan to Nepal and India. After many years of traveling and visiting holy places, he returned to the upper part of Tibet, as he was advised earlier. Khyungtrul Rinpoche died in 1955 at Guryam Monastery. Khyungtrul Rinpoche had many disciples at Menri Monastery and nearby Dolanji in Northern India, including Sangmo Yangri's father.



Ligmincha Italy Hosts Two Upcoming Retreats

The 12 Little Tantras of Bon Dzogchen in May



Ligmincha Italy will host two retreats with Geshe Nyima Woser Choekhortshang Rinpoche, both onsite to a limited number and online on Zoom. On May 13-15, 2022, in Bologna, Italy. Choekhortshang Rinpoche will teach on The 12 Little Tantras of Bon Dzogchen. On November 18-20 in Napoli, Italy, he will teach on Dream Yoga.

May 13-15, 2022, in Bologna, Italy, The 12 Little Tantras of Bon Dzogchen. This is a teaching

which goes very deeply into the essence of the great perfection and guides directly to the meaning of self-realization by essential instructions from the oral transmission of Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyud.

Registration for this retreat will open by early April.

November 18-20, 2022 in Napoli, Italy, Dream Yoga from the Mother Tantra. This will be the first retreat of a six year cycle of teachings from the Ma Gyud (Mother Tantra) that will take place in Italy with Choekhortshang Rinpoche. In the Ma Gyud there are six main teachings: dream yoga, sleep yoga, chod, phowa, bardo and tummo.

Geshe Nyima Woser Choekhortshang Rinpoche lives in Prague, Czech Republic, and currently is an assistant professor in the Department of South and Central Asia at Charles University in Prague. He completed his geshe degree at Menri Monastery in northern India in 2008. He regularly teaches at Ligmincha sanghas in Italy and is a spiritual advisor for Ligmincha Italy.

[Learn more](#)

[Read biography of Choekhortshang Rinpoche](#)

For more information contact: ritiri@ligmincha.it (Alessandro Belardini, vice president, Ligmincha Italy)



Upcoming 3 Doors Programs

Embracing Death, Walking the Healing Path, Breaking the Spell of Story

The 3 Doors is pleased to announce three online spring programs to support you in deepening your practice and connecting with community. They include a six-week course, monthly meditation series and a weekend workshop.

With the support of senior teachers and small class size, participants will receive personal attention and have the opportunity to share experiences and learn from the experiences of others.



Embracing Death in the Inner Refuge

April 22-May 27, 2022

In this six-week course, all are invited to join senior teacher Marcy Vaughn to explore teachings on impermanence and to deepen your relationship to the inner refuge. New teaching and guided practice modules will be released weekly and are complemented by three live Zoom group sessions.

[Learn more/register](#)

Walking the Healing Path: Deepening Series

April 24, May 22, June 19, 2022

1:30-3 p.m. New York time

All participants in any past or current Walking the Healing Path online or in-person program are invited to join together for three months of guided practice and discussion sessions led by senior teacher Raven Lee. The themes that will be explored are: How can we honor our human stories and emotions without being captured by them? How can we open our hearts in the face of suffering without being overwhelmed, retreating or disconnecting? All sessions will be held on Zoom.

[Learn more/register](#)

Breaking the Spell of Story, Freeing the Voices: A Writing and Meditation Workshop

May 14-15, 2022

Whether you are a new or experienced meditator or a new or experienced writer, this online weekend workshop with senior teacher Marcy Vaughn and teacher Juanita Rockwell will introduce you to meditation and writing practices that can help you break the spells that bind and free the voices that can benefit your writing and your life. All are welcome.

[Learn more/register](#)



Upcoming GlideWing Online Workshop

Tibetan Dream Yoga Begins April 30



GlideWing is pleased to offer Tibetan Dream Yoga, an online workshop with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche from April 30-May 29. Now with Spanish subtitles. In this four-week workshop participants will explore and practice the ancient Bon Buddhist teachings of Tibetan dream yoga. The workshop provides detailed instruction for dream yoga practice, with discussion of the relationships between dreaming and waking and between dreaming and death. Participants will practice from their own homes, at their own schedule, with personal guidance from Rinpoche.

It is said that the practice of dream yoga deepens our awareness during all our experience: the dreams of the night, the dreamlike 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.

[Learn more/register](#)

Upcoming: [Who Am I? A Journey to Self-Realization](#), June 11-26, 2022.

Ongoing: [Focusing and Calming Your Mind: The Tibetan Practice of Zhine](#), a free two-seel, self-guided online workshop.

Learn more at glidewing.com



Join Our Zoom Team!

Volunteers Needed for Zoom and Webinar Hosts, Co-Hosts, Chat Managers

Do you have experience hosting Zoom meetings for large or small groups? Would you like to use those skills to support Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, our resident lamas and other teachers? Please consider joining Ligmincha International's Zoom team volunteers.

We are looking for three to seven people to join our experienced team of Zoom meeting and webinar hosts, co-hosts and chat managers. This team ensures that Ligmincha teachers and students have a seamless experience during online events and that they can focus on teachings and practice rather than technology. Our Zoom team volunteers:



- Open each online meeting session.
- Assign meeting roles to others (co-hosts).
- Establish the interpreter channels for translators.
- Play audio, text and video files when requested by the teacher.
- Ensure that meetings are recording to the cloud, and stop recordings when needed.
- Manage Q&A queue.
- Stream event to Facebook or YouTube.
- Support Rinpoche, resident lamas and teachers with technology testing and issues.

Global Zoom team members support retreats and other events based on their availability, and we try to have a host and a co-host (or two) from our team for every retreat session. You can join this team from anywhere in the world. The knowledge and skills needed to support Ligmincha events on Zoom include:

- Some knowledge of Zoom account settings and controls.
- Strong, conversational-level English skills.
- High-speed internet connection.
- Familiarity with WhatsApp (our communication tool).
- Familiarity with Google Docs.

Hosting or co-hosting all or part of an event gives you free access to all of that same event, even if you are only working on the Zoom team for a few sessions. The team is made up of lively and fun people who like working with technology and who love being of service to the Ligmincha teachers and community of practitioners.

To join the Zoom team, please write to zoom@ligmincha.org and share with us your experience with Zoom and let us know a bit about yourself. Training on the more advanced and less common features of Zoom is available to team members. Ligmincha is committed to creating and sustaining a diverse and inclusive environment. All qualified applicants for these volunteer positions will be considered.



Student and Teacher

Together on the Path

In this excerpt from the Fall 2021 Retreat on Living in Joy, Dying in Peace, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche speaks to a student's difficulty with imagining dying.

Student: I have an aversion to looking at the death process. It's not because I'm afraid. What's hardest for me is imagining saying goodbye to my children and all my loved ones. The thought of that moment beyond which I will never see them again is very, very painful for me. Can you please share anything that might help me with this?



Rinpoche: Anytime when we love, it is a strong experience, especially with children. The idea that we won't see them, we won't be around once we're dead, the separation, of course is painful. But when you have a wonderful relationship and you're doing well and they're doing well, then we are lucky in those situations to recognize that loving them is one thing; not being able to see them, being dead is a different story.

What we really wish for is their well-being. I don't have to see them. I don't have to be around all the time. Of course it is hard. But at some point, that is what we need to feel. In any relationship, that is how we need to feel. If you really care about someone then their well-being is your well-being. Their happiness is your happiness. Their freedom is your freedom. Their joy is your joy. If they're happy that's what really matters.

If you are open to this idea, and you are able to feel that, then you separate your attachment from a real sense of love. Attachment is always painful, but the purer your love gets then it is not painful. A pure sense of love has so much space in it. That relationship doesn't require that you see them all the time. So their joy is your joy, their freedom is your freedom. If they're happy, that's what matters. At some point we have to go, and if they are okay, then that's what matters.



Spanish Translation of VOCL

Link to February Issue Now Available

Look for the **translations** of the Voice of Clear Light newsletters at the top of the **VOCL website**.
[Read VOCL in Spanish](#)

Serenity Ridge Retreat Center
Headquarters of Ligmincha International
554 Drumheller Lane
Shipman, VA 22971
Serenity Ridge office: **+1-434-263-6304**
Ligmincha International office: **(+1) 434-263-3657**

[Subscribe to Voice of Clear Light](#)