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Teaching Issue

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'Deepening Our Connections'

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An Edited Excerpt From Oral Teachings Given by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, July 2009

Today marks the last day of our retreat, and the question arises: How can you take what you have gained — all of your experiences and realizations — and integrate it into your daily life? Allowing these experiences to take root and grow requires challenging your old, habitual patterns.

One way to do this is through reinforcing your informal and formal meditation practice. I strongly recommend engaging in formal meditation practice every day. A very common phrase we recite is "I don't have time." But is this really true? Just being aware that we may have adopted that mantra is a key element of the integration process. And then also remembering that it is just not true — we really do have time. It's just a question of making meditation a priority.

If the mantra "I don't have time" is very strong, then please try to remember to say it in reverse ways, such as "I don't have time to worry!" or "I don't have time to suffer!" "I really don't have time for these negative thoughts and activities; I'll just move on and start living!"

We all know we have time, even though we say we don't. We have no trouble finding the time to worry! In fact, it's not uncommon that the worry is there upon first waking up in the morning. Any moment in your day could be used for practicing worry — you can have one foot in your car, the other foot on the pavement, your arms full of shopping bags, and yet amid all this movement you'll still find time to worry. In that very hectic moment, you can still worry, can't you? And yet in order to meditate — we feel we need the right time and the right space, our bedroom is not big enough, the living room couch has too much stuff on it — we find that every place is just not quite the right place to do it! We are used to making up incredible stories, aren't we? So a key element in integrating our practice into our daily lives is to challenge those deluded stories of the mind and develop the ability to cut through them. We all know what I'm referring to here. The sad part, though, is that even knowing this, we don't change so easily.

Another thing that's very helpful for integrating our experiences into our daily life is having some sense of sangha, of the community of practitioners. For sure, those of you who are living near one of our retreat centers or who are volunteering in some capacity find that being actively involved ties us a little more closely to each other. Such involvement is not necessary, but you can feel its beneficial effect. It's one more reason to talk to each other, to meet with each other. These external activities can connect us back to the teachings and to a deeper part of ourselves.

Some people may not feel this kind of connection is necessary. They may live in an area where there are no other sangha members, and may feel, "I can practice in the morning after I wake up, I can practice before I go to sleep at night, I integrate the experiences and insights from the retreat well back into my life, and sangha is fully present in that experience, their external presence is not so necessary for me." If that is the case, then you are free from needing it. If that is not the case, then you have to do something different, right?

If there are no sangha members nearby, then the Internet is one possible way to maintain closeness. Another way is to create a local sangha. When I first arrived in America, I did not have a sangha, and so we have created a little sangha here at Serenity Ridge and Ligmincha Institute, and we have created a

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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](#).

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:

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little global sangha. If I managed to create a little sangha out of nothing, I'm sure everyone can do it. It can help to feel the support of others in maintaining a group practice. Sangha can also be there to offer help and prayers when someone is going through a health challenge or loses their job. Activities like these build community, and the social circle can further support integrating one's meditation practice into all of one's life. We really need to do that!



Enthronement in Nepal

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Senghe Wangyal Rinpoche Recognized as Reincarnation of 15th Menri Abbot

On Feb. 18, 2011, 5-year-old Senghe Wangyal was recognized as the reincarnation of Kundun Yungdrung Tshultrim, the 15th Menri Abbot. On March 8, 2011, Senghe was enthroned at Tritten Norbutse Monastery, Kathmandu, Nepal. Senghe's parents, Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and Khandro Tsering Wangmo, spoke in April with VOCL about their experiences surrounding these events. An accounting of what they shared, along with some photographs taken during the ceremonies, appears below.

Early one December morning in Valle de Bravo, Mexico, Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, the most-senior teacher of the Tibetan Bon tradition, called Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche to his room.



Enthronement — Senghe with Tenzin Rinpoche and Khen Rinpoche

Both Bon masters were at the lakeside resort town to officiate at the internal consecration of the **Great Bon Stupa for World Peace**, a giant sacred structure at the Chamma Ling Retreat Center. Also officiating was Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche, abbot of Tritten Norbutse Monastery in Kathmandu, Nepal. They were joined by other lamas of the Tibetan Bon and Buddhist traditions; Tenzin Rinpoche's wife, Khandro Tsering Wangmo; their young son, Senghe; local shamans; as well as hundreds of devoted sangha members and friends who were there to celebrate the consecration.

Yongdzin Rinpoche's reason for meeting that morning was unexpected. It had nothing to do with the matters of the day. But as Tenzin Rinpoche looks back on it, he was not entirely surprised by what his root teacher had to tell him.

"He said, 'Senghe is a reincarnated master,'" Tenzin Rinpoche says. "He told me he wanted to go through the traditional process that would identify who he was in his previous life."

Noticing the Signs

When asked recently if they had noticed any signs in their son during the years leading to this recognition, Rinpoche and Tsering noted that they had long been aware of Senghe's special connection to the teachings.

"On some days, as soon as he would get up in the morning he would spend anywhere from 5 minutes to half an hour praying," Rinpoche explains. "He was not imitating adult prayers, but was reciting something that was clearly his own." During long car rides Senghe often would not allow his parents to play anything on the CD player but one song, over and over: his favorite prayer, the "Invocation of Nyame Sherap Gyaltzen," which invoked the first abbot of Menri Monastery in central Tibet. "If we stopped playing it even after two hours, he would cry. Tsering would tell him 'That's enough!' but he could not be consoled."

Tsering recalls a visit to Kathmandu when 3 1/2-year-old Senghe would keep insisting on going to the monastery so he could make friends with the monks. "He would wrap himself in a white towel, wearing it like a *gnakpa* to imitate the lamas. The monitor would try to shoo him away," she says. Sometimes he



Follow Tenzin Wangyal
Rinpoche on



Search

would head straight for Yongdzin Rinpoche's drum and start striking it, to the senior master's amusement. When Senghe saw the lamas doing the traditional mask dance, he would imitate the dance in front of Yongdzin Rinpoche. On a visit to Tsering's brother's house in India, when they offered Senghe the usual tea and cookies, Senghe took off his shoes and dashed to the shrine room, where he beat the drum and blew the conch shell.



Senghe with Yongdzin Rinpoche

One sangha member in the United States, too, remarks about how struck she was by Senghe, as a toddler, taking her prayer beads from her to bless them with reverence. At Serenity Ridge, Ligmincha's retreat center in central Virginia, students have frequently witnessed Senghe darting into the meditation hall to play cymbals and drum. "Senghe would continually wait until the next bell so he could go in the gompa to play," Tsering notes.

Recognizing Through Ritual

As part of the formal identification process, Yongdzin Rinpoche advised Tenzin Rinpoche and Tsering to perform certain prayers at Menri Monastery in India, as well as at Triten Norbutse Monastery in Kathmandu, Nepal. They found a convenient opportunity to follow his instructions within just a few weeks, during a planned trip to India and Nepal. There, Rinpoche and Tsering engaged the monks at both monasteries to perform the prescribed rituals and prayers.

Then, one day in early February at Triten Norbutse, Yongdzin Rinpoche completed a series of prayers and purification rituals. The abbot, Khen Rinpoche, entered the guardian shrine room with Senghe and Tenzin Rinpoche, accompanied by Ghen Yeshe, the monk charged with doing morning and evening rituals related to Sipe Gyarmo, the most powerful protector of Bon. More rituals were performed.

The next day, on the auspicious full-moon date of Feb. 18, 2011, the final rituals were completed. Senghe's identity was confirmed. Senghe Wangyal was recognized by His Eminence Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche as the reincarnation of Kundun Yungdrung Tshultrim, the 15th Menri Abbot. The recognition took place in the presence of Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, Khandro Tsering Wangmo, Lhari-la Kalsang Nyima, and Geshe Tenzin Loday. Yongdzin Rinpoche gave Senghe a blessed cord and a *khata* (traditional offering scarf), and anointed his head with water.

The Ceremony

The official enthronement took place a few weeks later. There was only one day's notice, and so it was that Tenzin Rinpoche made a surprise announcement to all the international students and friends accompanying Tsering and him on their trip to Kathmandu. The large group of travelers had journeyed there for the main purpose of celebrating Tenzin Rinpoche's 50th birthday, a joyful event organized about a year in advance by Tsering. But as Rinpoche describes it, that celebration quickly took second place to the enthronement.

Senghe Wangyal Rinpoche was enthroned at Triten Norbutse Monastery in Kathmandu, Nepal, at 1:30 p.m. on March 8, 2011, the auspicious date of the birthday of Nyame Sherap Gyaltsen, founder and first abbot of Menri Monastery in central Tibet. In attendance were Yongdzin Rinpoche; Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche, abbot of Triten Norbutse Monastery; other lamas and monks of Triten Norbutse; and the members of Ligmincha Institute's international sangha.

Senghe, a very active 5-year-old often given to mischief, rose to the occasion. "Tsering and I were concerned about how he would make it through the ceremony. But throughout, he was amazingly still and focused with presence," Rinpoche notes.

Tsering agrees. "I think the experience was powerful for him. Normally he would fight against wearing a *chubba* at Losar ceremonies at Serenity Ridge. But on the enthronement day, we asked him if he wanted to wear it and he said 'Yes!' 'You have to be nice.' 'Okay!'"

What the Future Will Bring

Tsering and Rinpoche's plans for the immediate future are life as usual, so they can permit Senghe to enjoy the opportunities now available to him. He will go to school in Virginia, take swimming lessons, continue his taekwondo classes.

Within a few years Tsering will accompany him to Kathmandu, where Senghe can be close to Yongdzin Rinpoche and begin his studies with teachers at Tritten Norbutse Monastery, one of the two most important Bon monasteries in the West, while he also attends a regular school.

"We will both try our best to give him an education," Tsering says. "Yongdzin Rinpoche told us, 'Now Senghe is recognized as the 15th Menri abbot, but it is up to you how you take it from here.'" The next step, she adds, is for Senghe to receive all the spiritual teachings and transmissions, both at Tritten Norbutse and Menri Monastery in Dolanji, India.

Tsering plans to return with Senghe to Virginia each summer and during other convenient school breaks. Tenzin Rinpoche will make frequent trips to Nepal to be with his family, amid his busy international teaching schedule. "As parents, we will do our best to try to give him our support," Rinpoche says. "Tsering in particular loves our home here in Charlottesville. We are used to the comforts and amenities of the West. Tsering will have to give this up for long months of the year. Kathmandu is dirty, dusty, and polluted, and it goes for hours at a time without electricity. But she is willing to do that."

"We have been very thankful to have Senghe in our lives," Rinpoche adds. "Who knows what this recognition will mean for the future? What Tsering and I wish is that Senghe will pursue whatever the blessings may be from Yongzin Rinpoche or from his previous life — that he will pursue this path so he can be beneficial in preserving the teachings and be helpful toward others' illumination. As his parents, that is our wish."

— Article by Polly Turner. Photographs of recognition and enthronement ceremonies by Martin Schröder.

Click on a photograph to view slideshow



New Names for Ligmincha's Worldwide Centers

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A Letter From Rinpoche

Dear Sangha,

Because of the enthusiasm of my students, many centers and sanghas have formed all over the world. This growth has happened very quickly. Every one of these organized efforts is important to help us preserve and share the teachings of the Bon tradition.

In the beginning the names of the centers and sanghas were not so well thought out; for example, some were called Garuda, others Bon Garuda, and still others Garuda Bon. After reflecting for a long time on this, I have decided to standardize the names.



From now on, all organized sanghas will have the name Ligmincha followed by the geographic location; for example, Ligmincha Houston and Ligmincha Germany. We are all one sangha, and so it makes sense for these groups to have one name, similar to the networks of international centers and dharma groups of Rigpa and Shambhala.

In addition, all current and future residential retreat centers will be called Chamma Ling, also followed by the name of the location — for example, Chamma Ling Colorado and Chamma Ling Poland. The only exceptions are Serenity Ridge, our retreat center in Virginia, and Lishu Institute in India, both of which will keep their current names.

Each center and sangha will continue to function as an independent entity. I have asked each of them to set up their own Facebook pages.

My wish is that as our sanghas expand, this growth will happen in a cohesive way so we can continue to connect and support each other in the best ways possible.

With my love and blessings,

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche



Exciting News!

New Property Donated to Ligmincha Institute

We invite everyone to a very special retreat with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche near Ligmincha Institute's new land in the lakeside town of Rangeley, Maine. Ligmincha is very honored to acknowledge receipt of this land via a recent, generous donation, and is excited about this opportunity to share with others the inauguration of the new property. The retreat will be held July 22-24, 2011; the topic is *Healing Through Love and Wisdom: The Practice of Sherap Chamma*.

[Learn more or register >](#)



Free Live Webcasts With Rinpoche on June 22 and 26

View Recordings Now of Rinpoche's April Broadcasts

Mark your calendar for a live Webcast of a public talk by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, scheduled for Wednesday, June 22, 2011, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Eastern Time (New York time). The topic is 'Tapping Into the Source of Creativity.' If you live in or near Charlottesville, Va., we encourage you to come view the talk in person; Ligmincha is presenting this talk in partnership with Unity Church in Charlottesville.

Just four days later, Rinpoche will be treating us all to another live Webcast, for our Internet audience only — join us from your computer on Sunday, June 26, from 12 noon to 1:15 p.m. Eastern Time.

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

And ... if you missed the recent Webcasts given by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, you can view recordings of these two recent teachings now at the links below:

- [April 17: "Finding a Place of Peace" >](#)
- [April 20: "Discovering Your Creative Potential" >](#)
- ["The space is right there" \(2-min. excerpt from April 20 talk\) >](#)
- ["Shifting toward the positive" \(4-min. excerpt from April 20 talk\) >](#)



New: The Three Doors International Newsletter

Information, Updates, and Inspirations

The very first issue of the *The Three Doors International Newsletter* is now out! This new online

publication features:

- news about the worldwide **Three Doors Academies** and their teachers
- an inspiring talk recently given by Kallon Basquin in Mexico, as an introduction to this new program
- sharings by participants about their experiences with the program and reasons for applying

Applications are being accepted until June 20, 2011.

[Read the free newsletter now >](#)



Sangha Sharing

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Songs of Expression

During the recent Spring Retreat at Serenity Ridge — Living With Joy, Dying in Peace — Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche invited retreatants to share some "Songs of Expression": poems, readings, songs, or other sharings. He noted that such collective expressions can be very alive and powerful. Below are a few sharings from retreatants of poetry and photographs.

Thunderhead

Miles and miles distant,
 Yet filling much of sky onward,
 Lone thunderhead floats in silence –
 Culminating, cumulating, gestating –
 Pulsating variations, bursts of lambency,
 Flickering, flashing, incandescent nimbus womb.

Is there sound inside this cloud,
 Where thunderbolts, contained within yet
 Massively discharging, illumine a world
 Juiced and shocking, throbbing,
 Damply burning?

I stand, slack-jawed, in rapt
 Amazement;
 Others walk on, heads down,
 Unseeing, unmoved,
 Missing Nature's
 Astounding show of lights.

But somewhere not too far off,
 I know,
 Another soul
 Thrills, witnessing what perhaps seems
 Best described as an Unmasking of God.

— H.R. Gillmore, Virginia Beach, Va.

* * *

As the spring cherry blossom
 Softly unfurls its petals and
 One by one
 Sends them skyward
 In passing rivers of wind
 So is my heart
 When winter is ended

— Ana S., Chicago

* * *



— Photograph by Debi, West Virginia

* * *

Vast blue sky
 rabbit cloud
 vulture circles high above
 my corpse-like pose
 on the ground beneath.
 prayer flags crisply flapping
 tree tops budding
 in the brilliant light.
 sudden joy, simply there

— Dorrie Ameen, New York

* * *





— Photographs of Serenity Ridge by Carole Ann Al-din, Wheeling, W.V.



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.

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. *Week 1 is full, but registration remains open for Weeks 2 and 3.*

[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 >](#)

Nov. 3 - 6, 2011**Tibetan Yoga: Magical Movements for Your Awakened Body
A Tsa Lung Trul Khor Retreat with Alejandro Chaoul-Reich**

Whether you are a newcomer or have already received this training, we warmly encourage you to attend this retreat. There is no prerequisite for attending.

[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>

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