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## Teaching Issue

Volume 15, Number 3 / June 2015



### Letter from the Editors

#### Many Ways of Giving



Dear Friends,

Our hearts go out to all those in Nepal who are struggling in the aftermath of the earthquakes that struck there in April and May. We all felt the devastation hit especially close to home, given the proximity of the quakes to Tritten Norbutse – the monastery of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's teacher Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche – in Kathmandu.

Shortly after the first quake, Tenzin Rinpoche spontaneously wrote a beautiful poem in response to the calamity, and upon reading it one's heart breaks with his words and images of the impermanence and suffering. Through the poem, Rinpoche urges us to recognize deeply both the extraordinary preciousness of this life that we are living in this moment right now, today, and the equally compelling truth that the time of our own death is completely unknown to us. Rinpoche urges us to see these truths within the heartbreak of what is occurring in Nepal, reorienting us toward what is most important in this short life. We feature the poem, "From A Lamenting Heart," in this issue of the Voice.

The compassionate response to the VOCL special announcement about the first quake was extraordinarily beautiful in all its forms of donations and prayers. Please see below for an update on the situation, as well as details on how to help further with Ligmincha's ongoing aid and relief effort. Thank you so much.

We all give in many ways and forms, and many of you have given us articles to share in this issue! There are many others who are working behind the scenes giving their time and their love to prepare each new issue of VOCL, knowing how precious our connections are to the teachings and to each other.

A quote from Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's new book, *The True Source of Healing: How the Ancient Tibetan Practice of Soul Retrieval Can Transform and Enrich Your Life*, Hay House, July 7, 2015:

*When we are connected to our natural state of being, giving to others involves no stress or mental exhaustion. Like a genuine smile, our actions are spontaneous, effortless, and joyful. They energize both the giver and the receiver.*

This issue begins with a few excerpts chosen from one of Tenzin Rinpoche's earlier books, *Healing with Form Energy and Light*, highlighting the healing value of the elements in our lives. Rinpoche's new book, *The True Source of Healing: How the Ancient Tibetan Practice of Soul Retrieval Can Transform and Enrich Your Life*, will be out in July – see the article on how to order yours from [Ligmincha's Tibet Shop](#). Don't miss the next webcast in the Soul Retrieval series, a full-day, free webcast on June 13: "The True Source of Healing: Your Own Inner Refuge." Volunteers are now translating the webcasts live in up to 12 languages. Thank you to all who are giving your time and skill to make the webcasts happen, and especially to Rinpoche for his generous gift to us all!

Features from many others are included in this issue. Read Jaroslaw Kotas's beautiful, personal account of 20 years since Rinpoche first brought the Bon to Poland, with details about the anniversary celebration

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#### 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](#).

#### 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](mailto: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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#### Stay in Touch

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and retreat happening there this August. View pictures and read about the the wonderful new additions and remodeling done at the Great Stupa for World Peace in Valle de Bravo, Mexico; thanks for sharing, Elena Ochoa-Villasenor. There's also a great sharing by Jennie Makihara of her experiences at the recent retreats at Lishu Institute in Dehradun, India, with news, too, about the first three-year program beginning in September at Lishu. Read the new issue of *Ligmincha Europe Magazine*, just out; thanks to Ton Bisscheroux and all those contributing to make it inspiring and informative. You can attend the Summer Work Retreat at Serenity Ridge, and Serenity Ridge Fall Retreat is now open for registration, with Winter Retreat Registration opening soon. And, of course, you'll want to check out the upcoming online retreats offered through Ligmincha Learning and GlideWing beginning in July. Take note, too, of the new VOCL translations in Spanish and Portuguese, thanks to Lourdes Hinojosa and Rodrigo Esteves!

So many gifts, thank you all!

Best in Bon,

Aline and Jeff



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## The Elements and Our Well-Being

### A Few Excerpts from *Healing with Form, Energy and Light* by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche



Photo by Maria Aurelia Kulik

Study of and practice with the elements is meant to positively affect our well-being by giving us the tools to bring the elements into the balance that underlies health and wholeness in any dimension of experience. It does not take great intuition to know when we are in or out of balance. We all know these experiences. They fall along a continuum from the most disturbed imbalance – psychosis or serious illness – to perfect balance, which occurs only when we can abide in the nature of mind, the buddha-nature. In our daily lives we are somewhere in between, moving from being more in balance to being more out of balance, and back again.

The idea of balancing elemental energies can be usefully applied to any human function, quality, or activity: health, relationship, spiritual practice, psychological make-up, emotional state, physical environment,

and so on. Using imbalance of the elements as a primary metaphor, we can understand illness and unhappiness as well as obstructions on all levels of spiritual practice. Balancing the elements then becomes a metaphor for healing, for the development of positive qualities and capacities, and for the elimination of negative qualities. If one element dominates, we need to cultivate its opposite. If we are dominated by fire, for example, then we try to activate water or earth, and vice versa. If earth is dominant – we are dull, sleepy, heavy – then we activate air or fire. And if air dominates us – we are flighty, nervous, with a short attention span – then we activate earth or water. There are many obvious examples of balancing in everyday life: if a fever becomes life-threatening, we may be told to soak in cold water; if we become too cold, we apply warmth; and if we're dehydrated, we drink water.

By nature, all conceptualizations are symbolic and the five elements are symbols of great depth and long tradition. Beyond metaphor, however, the five elements are energies that can be worked with directly by the practitioner through physical actions, energetic movement, and the flow of awareness.

\*\*\*\*\*

Each action that we take, on any level, is an expression of the elemental qualities in some combination or interplay, and a reinforcement of the conditions that generated it. Anger, for an easy example, is usually a fiery response. If we habitually react with anger, we cultivate the fire in ourselves, though in this instance it's a negative attribute of fire. In the same way, because creativity is connected to the luminous fire nature, when we respond creatively we are also developing the fire element in ourselves, in this case its positive aspects. Over time our habitual actions and reactions favor the development of certain elements and often leave others less cultivated or weaker. This process is further strengthened by cultural norms that favor some elemental qualities over others. To continue with the fire example, growing up in a social group that favors aggressive, fiery reactions, we will tend to develop those qualities to the detriment of softer, more watery responses to the world.

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One way to think about long-term imbalance is to think about what you've wanted to change about yourself and how you act and react in life. This inquiry usually leads to particular traits or capacities you want to develop or diminish. What do you want to change in how you feel physically, emotionally, energetically, mentally? Where do you run into problems? Are you always late? Do you talk too much?

Too little? Are you generally alert or dull? Agitated or calm? Are you creative? Comfortable in yourself? Are you grounded? Do you worry too much? Are you responsible? Are you accomplishing what you want? How is your meditation practice? Is there progress or do you simply spend time in a trance every day? Is your meditation the same as it was years ago or has there been progress? Do you have more insight? Is your mind quieter and calmer? Are you more peaceful? Is your practice joyful or is it a burden?

The answers to these questions can be translated into elemental terms. For each area that you would like to change, think of the elemental quality that needs to be cultivated or diminished. You will most likely, but not necessarily, come up with one or two elements that seem to dominate your experience or one or two elements that seem lacking.

Another way to find out what your dominant traits are is to ask your friends what element they think dominates you. Even if they don't know anything about the elements, you might find that you get surprisingly consistent responses.

The important thing is to understand yourself. Bring your intelligence to bear on the questions of your own life and apply your insights to improving the quality of your life and the effectiveness of your spiritual practice. You can change even very ingrained habitual tendencies, but you must apply your understanding and effort, and you must do so intelligently. Life is too short to waste doing inappropriate or ineffective spiritual practices, and too short not to engage in appropriate and effective spiritual practices.

These excerpts are from Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's book *Healing with Form, Energy and Light: The Five Elements in Tibetan Shamanism, Tantra, and Dzogchen*, available at [Ligmincha's Tibet Shop](#).

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's latest book, *True Source of Healing: How the Ancient Tibetan Practice of Soul Retrieval Can Transform and Enrich Your Life*. Hay House, July 7, 2015, will be out in early July. A limited number of copies are available now through [Ligmincha's Tibet Shop](#).



## Full-Day Free Live Webcast on June 13 with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

### 'The True Source of Healing: Your Own Inner Refuge'

Please join Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and invited Tibetan Buddhist lamas online for this special free full-day live webcast on Saturday, June 13, 2015, 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Eastern time U.S. (New York time).

Your own inner refuge is the true source of all the elemental essences you need in order to heal your soul. In this daylong webcast event, Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche will explain how you can discover the elemental qualities of earth, water, fire, air and space within the unbounded sacred space, pure awareness and genuine warmth of inner refuge. He will guide a formal meditation practice that you can do daily to restore your soul, and describe an informal practice for retrieving the elemental essences amid the challenges of everyday life. Senior student Lourdes Hinojosa will guide a separate meditation session. As a special closing presentation, invited lamas of other Tibetan Buddhist schools will join Rinpoche in discussing essential aspects of their meditative traditions.

#### Schedule

The June 13 daylong webcast event will take place in four separate sessions, as shown below. Immediately upon registering you will receive your personal, unique viewing link for Session 1. For Sessions 2, 3, and 4, look for an email 15 minutes before each session is scheduled to begin; this email will contain your unique link for the coming session.

[Register now](#)

*All times shown are Eastern Time U.S. (New York time).*

**9–10:30 a.m.:** Teaching and guided meditation with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

**11:15 a.m.–12:15 p.m.:** Guided Practice with senior student Lourdes Hinojosa

**1:15–2:45 p.m.:** Teaching and guided meditation with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

**3:30–4:30 p.m.:** Teachings/presentations by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and invited lamas of other Tibetan Buddhist schools

This webcast is Part 5 of a free, yearlong course in soul retrieval and is open to all (viewing Parts 1 through 4 is not required).

[Learn more about the course](#)

[Chart of the five elements and their associated qualities](#)

**Real-time translation** will be offered in as many as 12 languages. You can access these translations [here](#).

The yearlong course and webcast series are based on Rinpoche's upcoming book *The True Source of Healing: How the Ancient Tibetan Practice of Soul Retrieval Can Transform and Enrich Your Life* (Hay House, July 7, 2015). [Order the book now.](#)

[Register for the webcast](#)  
[Learn more](#)

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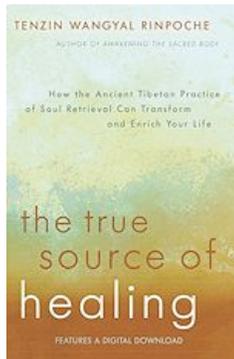
Mark your calendar for Rinpoche's next webcast on **June 27, 2015** (Saturday), 12-1:15 p.m. Eastern time: "Dream Yoga." Broadcast live from the annual Summer Retreat at Ligmincha's Serenity Ridge Retreat Center in Nelson County, Virginia (not a public talk, but webcast is open to all).

[Learn more](#)



## Hot Off the Press!

### *The True Source of Healing* by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche



Recall a moment in your life when you felt complete, satisfied, fully alive, at home in yourself. Imagine that it is possible for you to feel that way not only now and then but most of the time. This is what soul-retrieval practice offers. —from *The True Source of Healing*, by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's latest book, *The True Source of Healing: How the Ancient Tibetan Practice of Soul Retrieval Can Transform and Enrich Your Life*, serves as your lifetime manual for becoming a happier, healthier and more fulfilled human being. In simple, accessible language, Rinpoche:

- Explains the Tibetan practice of soul retrieval.
- Helps you assess your needs and your personal path to healing.
- Provides a variety of teachings and self-guided meditations for retrieving and nourishing yourself with the essences of the five natural elements.
- Explains how to routinely charge your internal battery when faced with difficult life challenges, toward enhancing your physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.
- Reveals how to bring increased happiness and well-being to others.

More than three years in the making, *The True Source of Healing* will be officially released by the publisher, Hay House, on July 7, 2015. A limited number of early copies are now available at [Ligmincha's Tibet Shop](#).

*The True Source of Healing* serves as the basis for Rinpoche's free, yearlong Internet course in Soul Retrieval, launched on Jan. 10, 2015.

[Learn more](#)

#### Praise for *The True Source of Healing*

"In a time when we have lost our collective and personal souls, Tenzin Wangyal offers us an unflinching compass to our original, unbroken self. Read this book, and find your way back to health and wholeness!"  
 — **Alberto Villoldo, Ph.D.**, author of *Shaman, Healer, Sage* and *Mending the Past and Healing the Future with Soul Retrieval*

"Tenzin Wangyal is a generous teacher, an insightful master, and a brilliant translator of timeless wisdom. In *The True Source of Healing*, he demystifies the ancient practice of soul retrieval in a profound, clear, and accessible way that gently leads us to the core of our very being. This journey with Tenzin is a joy, and the results are transformational."  
 — **Davidji**, best-selling author of *Secrets of Meditation*

"Tenzin Rinpoche offers an ancient, lineage-based approach to the concept of soul retrieval, and in so doing brings brilliant Tibetan Bön wisdom to the heart of this practice."  
 — **Charlie Morley**, author of *Dreams of Awakening*

"What a treasure! Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche skillfully guides us in ancient practices to retrieve our basic goodness and intelligence. These practices, which we can apply immediately to our fast-paced and stress-filled lives, will revitalize us at the deepest level of our being. *The True Source of Healing* invites us to stillness, silence, and spaciousness, and to joyfully allow the qualities of our basic nature—unbounded awareness and a warm heart—to emerge so that we may be healed."  
 — **Matteo Pistono**, author of *Fearless in Tibet* and *In the Shadow of the Buddha*



## An Update on the Nepal Earthquake

### Prayers and Funds Needed for Those Affected



*More than 8,000 people have been reported dead in the massive 7.8 magnitude earthquake that occurred in Nepal on April 25. A second earthquake struck Nepal on May 12. Ligmincha International Board Chair Rob Patzig suggests how sangha and friends can offer prayers and financial support.*

Dear Sangha and Friends,  
Thank you to all who responded so compassionately to my initial letter regarding the plight of Nepalese in the wake of the first earthquake. I am pleased to share with you that through your generous donations we have collected more than \$20,000 to help meet basic

needs and help repair structures that were damaged by the earthquakes.

#### Update:

Tuesday May 12 saw another violent earthquake strike Nepal. The second quake has caused many buildings and homes, already weakened by the quake last month, to collapse. At least 65 people have died in this second quake and thousands have been injured. Please continue your prayers and practices in support of the many who are suffering in the aftermath of this disaster and for those who are working to provide aid. Ligmincha will continue accepting donations to benefit relief efforts in Nepal and the Bonpo communities there.

[Click here to make a donation](#)



## From a Lamenting Heart

### A Spontaneous Poem by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, May 10, 2015



While teaching the Bon in Spain  
I hear the news of an earthquake in Nepal.  
Instantly the hairs on my body stand up  
Sadness whirls in my heart  
Anguish penetrates my body.

Is this the punishment of angry local deities?  
Or natural, samsaric destruction?  
Or simply a fate that has befallen us?  
Beneath the earth, stones collide.  
There can be no certainty of any reason.  
A profusion of causes and conditions  
In spaces outer, inner, and secret  
Result in this elemental dream-like disaster.  
Among the thousands of dead and injured  
Men and women, children and elderly.  
Mother and child, once inseparable even for a moment,  
Now apart, forever.  
How appalling.

Couples bonded in love and affection,  
 With dreams for a lifetime together,  
 Are torn apart and permanently separated.  
 My heart fills with agony.

In any family, many are dead.  
 Some are left alive and injured.  
 All that had been earned is lost.  
 All that had been built up has collapsed.  
 Lonely, friendless, hopeless, exhausted,  
 A survivor looks to the sky and sees only a void,  
 Looks down at a collapsed wall and sees corpses.  
 Minds wander untethered like souls between lives.  
 Fathers, spent of strength, do not know what to do.  
 Grandparents nearing the completion of contented lives  
 Once full of children and grandchildren leading joyful lives  
 Are now alone.

A home with generations of memories—gone.  
 Spiritual monuments, priceless objects of heritage  
 Turned to rubble in a moment.  
 I am pierced with sadness.

There is a thundering sorrow beneath the earth.  
 Who listens? No one.  
 The sound vanishes like an echo.  
 An innocent newborn child,  
 Who has not even seen the light of this world,  
 Experiences life and death at once.  
 Challenging even to imagine.  
 Like a bad omen in a dream  
 This too will dissolve.  
 People will gradually forget.  
 One day, it will be difficult to trace what happened here.  
 Therefore, in this crucial time, let us remember!

The deceased of Nepal and Tibet have a long history of friendship.  
 Let us perform a dedication prayer and join our merit.  
 All who survive—laity, monks, and nuns  
 United in heartfelt sadness  
 Can lift some load of suffering, whether small or large.  
 Each of us can dispel another's darkness with the light of compassion.  
 Each of us can bear witness to the grieving of another.  
 When we have lost the way forward and do not know what to do,  
 When we cannot see the light because of the darkness of suffering,  
 At that moment, our advice to one another is precious.

To intelligent men and women,  
 There is no greater demonstration of impermanence than this.  
 Now have the diligence to understand!  
 Old and young are liable to become sick.  
 The circumstances of your own death are uncertain.  
 Possibly, your death is very close.  
 Do not concern yourself with elaborate strategies for this lifetime.  
 Do not abandon your peace to busyness.  
 Do not abandon your happiness in pursuit of wealth.  
 Do not abandon your compassion in anger.

As if there were just today to live,  
 Do good for yourself and others.  
 Enjoy close friends and family.  
 Learn a new art form to be wiser.  
 Laugh like a child thousands upon thousands of times.  
 Take joy in activities outside your profession.  
 Even if one finds true happiness in that which is considered crazy, do it!  
 Spread your love and compassion like the million rays of the sun.  
 An altruistic heart effortlessly works for good.  
 Turn your happiness like a wheel—in all directions.  
 Endeavor to work without bias for all beings and for truth.

This earthquake is a master of appearance.  
 If you still have difficulty understanding the essence of the teachings

After a lifetime of listening,  
Perhaps now your heart has been moved.  
If your mind is still unripe  
After completing nine hundred thousand preliminary practices,  
Perhaps now your mind has been tamed.  
I praise the masters of natural existence!

For these deceased and faultless people,  
With compassion and respect from the core of my heart  
I will offer these strings of words like necklaces of flowers.  
Every time I pray, I will not forget.  
I dedicate my virtuous actions to all who suffer.  
May you be liberated in a pure land.

*This is a spontaneous poem. Written by Ababa (Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche) in Berlin, Germany, 2015. Translated from Tibetan to English by Dr. Sangmo Yangri and Matthew Conover. Edited by Marcy Vaughn.*



## Grass Put in Our Heads

### Reflections on the Recent Retreats at Lishu Institute in India

*In March and April, a two-week Phowa retreat and six-week intensive Tibetan Language Retreat were held at Lishu Institute. Lishu plans to open for full curriculum study in September and will offer a three-year, full-time residential program. Jennie Makihara, who participated in both retreats, shares some impressions of her time at Lishu. (This article also appears in the Spring issue of [Ligmincha Europe Magazine](#)).*



#### The Sights and Sounds of Lishu Institute

Vickie Walter and I arrived at Lishu Institute for the first time in a hired car from Menri Monastery, where we had been enjoying the final days of Losar celebrations. We had been in the car more than six hours, riding down curving mountainous roads, and this was my first time seeing this section of India near Dehradun where Lishu Institute is located. As the car took a turn off the main road, it looked like we were turning into someone's driveway, one-storey farmhouses and cows close to the dirt road. Then we rounded a bend and all of a sudden, standing high above us was the tall Lishu Institute building I had been seeing for the past year in videos and photos. We were greeted by a line of welcomers holding khata and leis of marigolds. The greeting touched my heart. I had come here to attend two spring retreats held before the three-year residential program begins this fall: a two-week Phowa retreat and a six-week Tibetan Language retreat.

Everyone lives and practices together in one building at Lishu Institute, which sits atop a small hill above the farming village of Kotra Kalyanpur like a tower, with sights and sounds rising up from below. Teachers, staff and guests lived on the third floor, while we students lived on the second floor below them. I could hear the quiet sounds of morning prayers when an honored guest stayed above my room, or people practicing in the meditation hall or their rooms. A pair of blackbirds would tap loudly at the window above my balcony door each morning at exactly 6:30 a.m., and the sounds of cuckoos, parakeets and other birds were plentiful throughout the day, often joined by the mooing of cows. From our balconies we would wave down at the nearby villagers cutting their wheat with sickles. Most are practicing Hindus, and frequently we heard their drumming and singing during prayers, festivals and weddings. I enjoyed taking my mala up to the



*Sunset at Lishu Institute*

west side of the roof each evening to recite Ngondro mantras before dinner. Up there on the Lishu Institute roof I could watch the sun setting most evenings, red and sinking behind the clouds. I watched the colors change as the evening turned to darkness, peaceful sounds of creatures and earth calming, coming in for the night to rest.

### On Phowa and Kusha Grass

During my first two weeks at Lishu Institute, we students were fortunate to be joined by the Menri Shedrup Lopon Geshe Gelek Gyatso Rinpoche, head teacher of the Bon Dialectic School at Menri Monastery. He taught us the practice of Phowa from the Ma Gyud teachings. Each day for two weeks, we had four practice sessions involving breath, sound and visualization that included shooting our consciousness through the tops of our heads.



*Mealtime during Phowa retreat*

We would crack up sometimes, laughing at ourselves and each other when our teacher would call on us to sing — SOLO — one of the Ma Gyud or Phowa prayers to check if we had it right. Sometimes we were on pitch and sometimes we weren't; either way, the spirit and camaraderie were such that no one was judging or critical, just appreciating each other's sincere effort and laughing at our own humanness. And even though four languages were spoken at mealtimes by our diverse group — Tibetan, English, Russian and Hindi — we managed to communicate and grow close as time passed.



*The Menri Shedrup Lopon assists as His Holiness inserts kusha grass in Vickie Walter's head following the Phowa retreat*

Traditionally, a piece of kusha grass is inserted into the crown of a student's head at the successful completion of a Phowa retreat. I had seen a photo once of a group of monks from Menri with the grass sticking up from their heads after Phowa training; and back in 2005 when I had done a Phowa retreat with two other students at Menri Monastery, His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche and Menri Lopon Trinley Nyima Rinpoche had gone back and forth about whether or not to do the grass ceremony with us, and the end decision was no grass for us. Imagine my joy when I found out from Shedrup Lopon that he was planning to take us to Menri Monastery for the grass ceremony with His Holiness at the completion of our retreat this spring. This, indeed, did happen, and His Holiness successfully inserted individual stalks of grass into each of the five Phowa participants' heads. It was entirely worth the drive back up those

very curvy mountain roads in a hot taxi to get precious time with His Holiness joking and laughing and very seriously taking time to find exactly the right spot where each sharpened piece of kusha grass met smoothly and relatively painlessly with our central channels.

### Tibetan Language Retreat 2015

Classes in reading, Tibetan grammar and Tibetan prayers filled our days during the six-week Tibetan Language program at Lishu Institute led by Sangmo Yangri. My favorite class was Tibetan prayers. Within the first four weeks, with Sangmo's guidance, we had translated all the Ngondo prayers and mantras. Then we translated the prayers about the mantras in what I call the Blue Book, used by the students at the Bon Dialectic School at Menri. Finally we moved on to working with reading and translating prayers to Yeshe Walmo and Sipe Gyalmo.



*Tibetan language class*



*Matthew Conover, Jennie Makihara and Anna-Kaisa Hirvanan receive Tibetan language certificates from Sangmo Yangri*

Following our morning Tibetan grammar class, Sangmo also taught a reading class where we read together the praise poem to Tonpa Shenrap from the same Blue Book. Sangmo is an excellent storyteller and grew up in Dolanji Village close to all the traditional Bon teachings. She filled in the holes of this encapsulated version of Tonpa Shenrap's life with vivid stories, mostly new to us. Most intriguing to me — perhaps more so than the story of Gya Kongtsa Trul Gyal, who built the library in the ocean with the help of the Nagas and the Gods — is the story of Queen Gu Ling Ma, especially the part where Tonpa Shenrap heals her of her leprosy and then the disease shrinks inside her and comes crawling out of her nostril as a spider . . . !



## Applications Open for Three-Year Lishu Program

### First Program Starts in September 2015!

*Lishu Institute is the fulfillment of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's vision of providing a retreat center and study program for Western students to do long-term, in-depth study and practice of the Tibetan Bon Buddhist teachings. The first Three-Year Residential Program is planned to start in September 2015.*

We are pleased to announce the opening of the application to attend the first year of the Three-Year Residential Program at Lishu Institute near Dehradun, India. Each year of this program will be divided into 10-week trimesters. The first trimester is expected to begin September 14, 2015.



*Sangmo Yangri, teacher/treasurer, and Geshe Thupten Negi, president of Lishu*

For the fall semester, Sangmo Yangri, Ph.D. will teach the first two sutric vehicles of The Nine Ways of Bon from the Central Treasure. She is the first Tibetan woman to earn a doctoral degree in Bon philosophy.

The second trimester, beginning January 4, 2016, a geshe selected by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche will teach the third and fourth higher sutric vehicles from The Nine Ways of Bön, with Sangmo Yangri translating into English.

During the third trimester, which starts March 28, 2016, the balance of this text will be taught.

Potential students are welcome to apply to attend Lishu Institute for one, two or all three trimesters per year. It is also possible to attend the second or third year without

attending in previous years. The deadline for submitting applications for September is July 1, 2015.

Interested students are encouraged to visit [www.lishu.org](http://www.lishu.org) to obtain the application and to learn more. All applications are welcome and will be evaluated on the basis of the following:

- History of spiritual practice and study.
- Motivation for applying.
- General and financial ability to attend. (Please note that there is no guarantee of financial aid, but some aid may be available to supplement students' ability to pay.)



*Ruins on the Lishu property*

Lishu Institute presents a unique and precious opportunity to study and practice the Bon teachings and to share them with others. Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche would like each Ligmincha sangha to raise funds to sponsor a practitioner, or practitioners, from their group to attend the training at Lishu Institute. The Lishu International Support Committee is currently working with the Ligmincha International Board of Directors to develop a general scholarship fund for Lishu Institute.

[Learn more](#)  
[Email questions or comments](#)



## How the Whole Thing Began

### Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche in Poland

*Jaroslav Kotas, instructor and translator for Ligmincha Poland, shares his personal account of first meeting Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche in Poland, and how his connection to Bon and the teachings have developed and thrived in Poland. This August celebrates the 20th anniversary of Bon teachings in Poland.*

Year 2015 marks 20 years of Yungdrung Bon teachings in Poland. Those teachings have been brought by my beloved lama, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. He was and he still is a true pioneer. Twenty years ago, Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche started to teach in a formal way in the West, but he quickly recognized that this is maybe not the way the teachings should be received by Westerners. Rinpoche is very flexible as he teaches that the greatest wisdom is an absolute openness, so after he recognizes something, he changes.



*Stupa in Chamma Ling Poland*

I met Rinpoche for the first time in Krakow, five years after he came to Poland. The next year I attended my first retreat with him and received very high tantric teachings, preliminaries to dzogchen called "inner rushan." I knew tsa-lung already, and I applied those exercises to my life wishing to change quite difficult and painful situation I was in back then. From the very beginning I felt a great trust in Rinpoche and practicing what I had learned, which at this point did not even include many teachings such as guru yoga or prostrations, and things started to change in my life. I found a new job and changed my place of residence. It was amazing and I could feel the power of personalizing the practice. I felt I am at home, I found my teacher.

During all of his years of coming to Poland, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche shared a lot – the basics of the practice (ngondro), rushans, dream yoga, tummo, bardo, elements, Sherap Chamma, so-called shamanic practices based on Bon causal vehicles, and much, much more, especially from the Ma Gyud (Mother Tantra). Some of his old students dropped away, which appears sad to me. As a "rookie" among practitioners, I had a hard time to understand what else they were looking for. With Rinpoche's teachings, they could contact the true source; but on the other hand, perhaps they were looking for something else, or for a different lama appearing for them as a better one. Now, after 15 years of practicing Bonpo dharma, I know a lot more about the different faces of our human ego and its pressure to look for change. Pressure means effort—an obstacle if someone wants to practice the Great Perfection, the essence of all the teachings we have in the Bonpo tradition.



*Jaroslav Kotas with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche*



*During the August retreat with Rinpoche, we will celebrate 20 Years of Bon Tradition in Poland.*

*[More information](#)*

Tenzin Rinpoche doesn't like to hurry things. They come spontaneously and at the proper time. This was true with the dzogchen teachings. First we received the Warrior Seed Syllables practice, and we could taste a transformation on a very deep level, without the participation of the inflexible will. Some people really cultivated this practice, and then the dzogchen teachings of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche appeared. As someone who was longing for that, I was extremely lucky and happy. I had received such teachings previously from Yongdzin Rinpoche and Khenpo Rinpoche, but knowing the unique style of my master now, I was able to go really deep, understanding that everything we can try to discover is in one thigle nyag chig, a single sphere. Beautiful. Wonderful. First foundation and then fruits. But one must practice and apply this profound knowledge in one's life, looking at different aspects of our human experience. Not an easy task but worthy of trying. One must be ready for both failure and victory. I can only hope I cannot only listen to his teachings but also get its essence.



*Welcoming of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche in Chamma Ling, Poland, 21 Nails, July 2014*



*Hanging prayers flags at the end of the retreat*



*Rinpoche teaching in new gompa Chamma Ling, Poland, July 2014*

So for me it is very remarkable that in summer 2015 in our Bonpo Center in Wilga, Poland, we will finish the teachings coming from one of the most important texts in Zhang Zhung Nyan Gyud lineage – Twenty-One Nails, transmitted by Taphritsa to Nangzher Lodpo in the seventh century. We are still lacking eight Nails to finish whole cycle. But if anyone wishes to attend they should not worry about the 13 Nails that we've received so far. Rinpoche teaches in a very magical way, which means you receive a lot more than the explanation of the text. You will taste those dzogchen teachings taking your own life as a base for your reflection, and then if you are lucky and put your attention sincerely to the teachings and

practice, you may discover a lot. I strongly recommend the summer retreat in Poland in August for all who seek a true transformation and sincere connection with her or his true inner being. You may change perspective looking into your life, and this change is definitely for the better.



*Alejandro Chaoul-Reich will be teaching Trul Khor, Part 1 in Wilga, Poland this August 23-26.*

[More information](#)



## Donate to Ligmincha's 2015 Summer Fundraising Auction

### Set for June 26 at Serenity Ridge

We are looking forward to the annual summer fundraising auction, celebrated this year during the first week of the Summer Retreat at Serenity Ridge on Friday, June 26.

The auction is an important public fundraising event for Ligmincha and is essential to furthering Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's vision for Serenity Ridge. Please help by donating auction items. We are seeking quality practice-related or shrine-related items that can inspire or deepen our practice. Financial contributions are also welcomed.

[Donate funds](#)

[Learn more](#)

[Learn more about the Annual Summer Retreat](#) (June 21 – July 4)

Please email the [Ligmincha International office](#) or mail your donated items to:

Ligmincha International at Serenity Ridge  
554 Drumheller Lane  
Shipman, VA 22971

You also are invited to attend the auction, whether or not you are able to come to the summer retreat. For more information, [email the office](#).



## A New Logo for The 3 Doors

### Changing Our Look!

*The 3 Doors organization shares its new logo and the significance behind it.*



The 3 Doors is wearing an updated look through an exciting new logo! It reflects our maturing as an organization while retaining the intention and tradition inherent in the original logo below:



The original logo depicts the wheel of joy, a universal Bon and Buddhist image that for centuries has symbolized the joy of liberation, the result of transforming the three root poisons of attachment, aversion and ignorance that drive the wheel of suffering for all beings. The three main colors represent the opportunity of the three doors of body (white), speech (red) and mind (blue) to express the primordial purity of being. The gold symbolizes the honorific of the three doors, the "ordinary" transformed to the pure gold of the sacred within oneself through the realization of the inner refuge.

The need for a new logo emerged at the first international organizational retreat of The 3 Doors in Summer 2014, a watershed in our development as a group of committed volunteers, staff and teachers. How could we express the essence of the sacred power of the teachings of liberation from suffering, the core of The 3 Doors teachings and practices, as we bring them out to more and more people? The new logo retains all the significance of the dance of energies of the joy of liberation through the three doors of body, speech and mind, but frees the image from belonging to any particular religion. The essence of these teachings is available to all, as pure water quenches the thirst of all who are parched.

We are grateful for the skills of our designer, Roza Gazarian, who listened and responded to our request for a new image with enthusiasm. She is familiar with the teachings of Tenzin Wangyal and a dedicated practitioner. Rinpoche selected the final image with his blessings to represent the view and methods of The 3 Doors.



## Chamma Ling in Valle de Bravo Mexico

### Reflections and Photos from a Very Special Retreat

*Elena Ochoa-Villasenor recently shared news and wonderful photos of Chamma Ling in Valle de Bravo, Mexico and the recent retreat there.*



As many of you know, we held the consecration of The Great Stupa for World Peace in Valle de Bravo in 2010 with the presence of our beloved teachers, Venerable Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak, Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and other teachers and monks. Thanks to the generosity of one of the members of the sangha, many new additions have been completed that we all enjoyed at our recent retreat held in March 2015. The interior of the stupa was remodeled using a new-age design. And we now have a truly amazing and beautiful Ma Gyu mandala created by Lama Yungdrung covering the space above us.



We inaugurated the kitchen and the dining room, and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche stayed for the first time in the Lama House. Last but not least, we "planted" the first Bodhi tree, designed to be similar to the original one in Bodh Gaya, India but made out of iron and copper. This project is going to give us the resources to begin the building of dormitories. The tree has 108 leaves, and each contains the name of a family or individual who donated \$108 dollars. We are beginning the second of hopefully many more trees, with the idea of having members of all our sanghas around the world be present in this beautiful woods of trees surrounding the Stupa and receiving the blessings. We invite you to be there with us!

If you'd like to learn more about the Bodhi Tree project and how to help, please email [Elena Ochoa](mailto:Elena.Ochoa@voiceofclearlight.org).

[Learn more about Chamma Ling Valle de Bravo](#)



## Participate in Summer Work Retreat

June 14–19 at Serenity Ridge

Join us at Serenity Ridge for Ligmincha Institute's Summer Work Retreat, set for June 14–19. Each day includes vigorous work periods, meditation practice and free time. Accommodations and food are provided. Those who participate in the full work retreat will receive a 50 percent discount toward one week of the Summer Retreat, set for June 21–July 4.

[Learn more](#)



## Ligmincha's Annual Fall Retreat Open for Registration

Oct. 21–25 Retreat Topic is 'The Five Elements'

Ligmincha's Annual Fall Retreat at Serenity Ridge on "The Five Elements: Connecting with the Living Universe" with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, is open for registration! The retreat is set for Oct. 21–25, 2015.

According to the ancient Tibetan spiritual traditions, the five natural elements of earth, water, fire, air and space are fundamental aspects of a living universe. Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche will guide practices through which we can deeply connect with the elemental essences, and nourish and restore health and vitality.

[Learn more/register](#)



## Winter Retreat 2015: 'The Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung, Part 2'

Registration Opens Soon

This year's Winter Retreat, "The Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung, Part 2: Introduction to the Nature of Mind" with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche at Serenity Ridge, will take place Dec. 27, 2015–Jan. 1, 2016. The Experiential Transmission series is the centerpiece of Rinpoche's dzogchen teachings and is presented each year at our Winter Retreat. Registration will open soon.

*Prerequisite: Completion of Part 1 of the Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung series in 2014 or any time in the past.*

[Learn more](#)



## 'The Five Elements: Healing with Form, Energy and Light'

Ligmincha Learning's Next Online Course Begins July 3

Ligmincha Learning's next seven-week online course, "The Five Elements, Healing with Form, Energy and Light," will be held: July 3–Aug. 14, 2015. The course, crafted by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, features video teachings, guided meditations, readings, journal writing activities, and the opportunity to interact with senior mentors and classmates from around the world.

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](#)



## Four-Week GlideWing Online Workshop Begins July 11

‘Awakening the Sacred Arts: Discovering Your Creative Potential’

Join us for this opportunity to free yourself from creative obstacles, nurture your capacity for joyful self-expression and make positive changes in your life.

The Tibetan spiritual traditions tell us that unleashing our dynamic creative energy is a matter of recognizing and tapping into the wellspring of creativity that already exists within us. This four-week online workshop is for anyone who seeks to usher a vision into reality – whether through creative problem solving, personal growth or bringing creative artistry to a whole new level.

[Learn more/register](#)

### Coming in September:

Sept. 19–Oct. 11, 2015: [Tibetan Sound Healing](#)



## Read the New Spring Issue of *Ligmincha Europe Magazine*

Full of Inspiration and News!

[View Ligmincha Europe Magazine](#)



## Spanish and Portuguese Translations of VOCL

Links to April Issue Now Available

[Read VOCL in Spanish](#)

[Read VOCL in Portuguese](#)



## Upcoming Retreats

### Serenity Ridge Retreat Center

The retreats listed below will take place at Serenity Ridge Retreat Center, headquarters of Ligmincha International, located in Nelson County, Virginia. To register or for more information, click on the links below, or contact us at [sr.registration@ligmincha.org](mailto:sr.registration@ligmincha.org) or 434-263-6304.

#### June 21–July 4, 2015

##### Summer Retreat – Dream Yoga

with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Attend one or both weeks.

[Learn more/register](#)

#### Oct. 21–25, 2015

##### Fall Retreat – The Five Elements: Connecting With the Living Universe

with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

[Learn more/register](#)

#### Nov. 5–8, 2015

##### Trul Khor Part 5: Post-Training

with Alejandro Chaoul-Reich, Ph.D., and honored guest Geshe Tenzin Yangton

[Learn more](#)

**Dec. 27, 2015–Jan. 1, 2016**

**The Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung, Part 2: Introduction to the Nature of Mind**

*with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche*

[Learn more](#)

[Read more about retreats](#)

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 [sr.registration@ligmincha.org](mailto:sr.registration@ligmincha.org) or 434-263-6304, or visit the [Serenity Ridge website](#).

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