

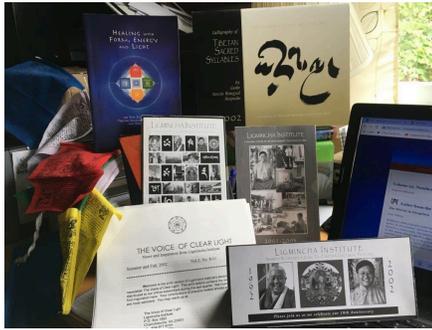

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[Previous Issues](#)
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## Volume 22, Number 4/ August 2022



### Letter from the Editors

#### The Play of Time and Timeless



Dear Friends,

The world conspired recently for us to rediscover a treasury of Rinpoche's teachings that had been included in some early Voice of Clear Light newsletters. Enjoying the timelessness of these teachings, we also realized, when looking at the dates on some of the newsletters, that we have been editing the VOCL for 20 years! In celebration, we share two excerpts from 2002, one from Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's oral teachings on the Nature of Mind given during the Winter Retreat of 2002, and the second on Relating to Meditative Experiences from the Summer Retreat of 2002, which we featured in the

Student and Teacher article. Enjoy!

Rinpoche also gave his first retreat in Crestone, Colorado in 2002, now Chamma Ling Colorado Retreat Center, a beautiful center in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado where retreats are hosted and several unique dark retreat cabins are available to host individuals on personal retreat. And after two years of not having in-person retreats sponsored by Chamma Ling due to the pandemic, it is great news that Rinpoche will be back in Crestone this September to give teachings on A-tri dzogchen; see all the details below. Also, we are all looking forward to the publication of the book of A-tri teachings from Rinpoche's retreats in the Netherlands given over seven years (2013-2019) that will be published for general release in the near future.

It's amazing how time flies! Back in 2002 Ligmincha was celebrating its 10th anniversary with a Lung-Ta Tibetan Cultural Festival at Serenity Ridge, and Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche was teaching at the Summer Retreat along with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. It was also the grand opening of the first Garuda House dormitory wing, which enabled students to stay in rooms on the land. Before that, we all had to stay with friends, rent hotel rooms or camp on the land. And the Voice of Clear Light newsletter was not a website yet; it arrived as a text-only HTML email, or it would arrive in the mail as a paper copy for those without email access. While change is always happening in this world of time, what great good fortune we all have to be able to touch a deeper, timeless and unchanging truth, the essence of who we truly are. For that connection we are forever grateful to Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche.

Thanks to all those who have worked on the VOCL over the years, and thanks to YOU, our wonderful family of devoted Bon practitioners and faithful readers.

Also in this issue:

- Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's upcoming teaching schedule.
- Prayer wheels coming soon to Serenity Ridge.
- A special August 13-14 dzogchen teaching at Serenity Ridge and online with Geshe Choekhortshang Rinpoche.
- Opening Your Heart to the World and other 3 Doors events.
- A-tri dzogchen retreat in Colorado September 23-25 or online.
- Something new this October at Serenity Ridge! Fall Retreat and Dialogues combine.
- A brand-new course on prayer flags with Tsering Wangmo on Ligmincha Learning beginning August 1, plus two more courses starting in September.
- Ton Bisscheroux interviews about the umdze (practice leader) training program.
- A full month of upcoming free CyberSangha events.

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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](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](mailto:voiceofclearlight@ligmincha.org)

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- GlideWing online workshop Healing from The Source starting August 20.
- Spanish translation for the June VOCL.

In Bon,  
Aline and Jeff Fisher



## Finding Yourself in the Nature of Mind

### An Excerpt from Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's Winter Retreat 2002



Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche in 2002

In order to directly experience the nature of mind, during dzogchen practice we try to create certain conditions within the body, speech and mind. We use postures or movements of the physical body, practices of the breath, and the concentration and focus of awareness of the mind.

It is not as if the nature of mind is a separate object, a separate place to where you as a subject can take a bus, train or a plane. It is not like that. There is no place to go, no place to search for the nature of mind. Nor is the nature of mind a form with a particular shape or color that you can experience. If you are searching for your nature in those ways, you will not find anything. That is guaranteed.

We are so conditioned to always be expecting to see some *thing*. It is very, very difficult for us to rid ourselves of the mind of ours that has expectations. If you go out to find a job, you go with the expectation of finding one that pays well, say. That expectation helps guide your search toward finding the right job for you. In looking for the nature of mind, though, it makes no sense to look with the expectation that you will see something, because there is nothing to see.

Now you may be thinking, "There's nothing to see? Well, that's a little discouraging." Maybe you are curious about what this means. You are beginning to realize that you cannot experience the nature of mind in the same way that you can experience your dreams, your thoughts, your feelings, or any kind of form. The nature of mind will not be seen in any of those ways. It is possible that during meditation, sometimes you will see various colors or shapes that are signs or qualities of some experience of, or connection to, the nature of mind, but even these are not the nature of mind.

The introduction to the nature of mind is essentially about creating the right causes and conditions. That's really what it is. In the same way that by placing a mirror in different locations you find that your view changes, so too by putting your body in the right position, your breath in the right position, and your mind in the right position, you are able to simply find yourself in that place. But when you find yourself in that place, it is not that you are seeing something, it is only that you are *being*. The moment you think that you are seeing your nature, you are actually not. You see, one of the subtlest obstacles to resting in the nature of mind is not being able to get rid of the seer, the one who sees. Until you get rid of the observer, the perceiver, the subject, the nature of mind remains hidden.

So you don't create or force the experience of the nature of mind; rather, you can put the proper conditions together for finding yourself there. It would be a good idea to look at all that we experience in our lives in that same way, understanding that we cannot always achieve the results we want by forcing them, but we can instead try to set up the proper conditions for those results to arise naturally.

Often we ignore the advantages of setting up the proper conditions and just struggle to force the result into manifestation. For example, you want to be happy. So what do you do sometimes? You just try to force yourself to be happy, even though in a relative sense you are simply in the wrong place to support being happy. Let's say you are somebody who has a knack for electronics, who is fascinated working all day long on computers and has so much knowledge about how they work, and yet you may not be able to cook even a cup of tea for yourself. Now, if you were put into the position of being a chef at a restaurant, then that would definitely be the wrong place for you to be happy. So you don't realize you are in the wrong place, the wrong time, the wrong situation, and all you know is that you want to be happy. The location makes you suffer, the situation makes you suffer, the timing makes you suffer, and yet you simply push yourself to be happy. You just cook furiously, and the customers continually are dissatisfied, and eventually the restaurant has to go out of business. This forcing of the situation would obviously be the wrong approach.

What should you do instead? Focus your effort on changing the place, changing the timing, changing the circumstances to make them the right ones for being happy. If you do find the right conditions, then you'll be naturally happy. You create the causes for natural happiness rather than futilely struggling to force the result. Many times in our lives we get stuck simply because we don't know we are trying to force a result that is not supported by our circumstances. We may only be repeating to ourselves, "I



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Rinpoche on



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want to be happy, I want to be happy, I want to be happy." The added tension created by trying to force your happiness actually tends to worsen your situation. It actually creates the opposite effect, digging you deeper into that unfortunate situation. Do you see how that kind of narrow, result-oriented focus can be a kind of a secret obstacle for us at times? This is especially true regarding the practices of the nature of mind.

So what is the introduction to the nature of mind? You understand that it is not the same as my saying, "Look at this cup." [Rinpoche holds up a teacup.] Rather, there are exercises, practices and techniques that all create a space where there is a greater chance to have experience. None of those techniques you learn are the nature of mind. None of those practices are the nature of mind. They are a very skillful means.

In one important sense the only time you will have an experience of the nature of mind is when you are not practicing. But you must begin with the practice and then during the session you forget the practice. How can you forget the practice? When you come to the place where there is nothing at all you could call effort, that is the moment when you find yourself in the nature of mind, free from your thoughts, feelings, emotions and conditions, abiding in the space of infinite potential, in which there is a cause for the perfection of every experience that could arise. There is a sense of nothing lacking, because everything is perfected. The sense of longing, lacking, missing, of not having enough, none of those experiences are there. On the contrary, there is the sense of being complete, perfected, whole; and you find yourself.

So regarding the introduction to the nature of mind, the important point here is not to get too attached to the techniques or methods, but to work with them so you can create the right position of the body, the right breathing, the right focus of the mind. If you are able to bring together the right conditions of body, energy and mind, then there is no way not to experience your nature. As we always say, there is no power or force that could possibly stop the result when all the causes and conditions are together.

The same is true with regard to being happy. If all the causes and conditions for your being happy are together there, you will naturally be happy, and there is no force at all that can stop you from being happy and make you suffer. Likewise, if those causes and conditions are not there, if the causes and conditions are the wrong ones, then there is no force that can make you feel good. That is why the whole notion of cause and effect, or the law of karma, is so important in the dharma.

So we must develop those causes and conditions that support the experience of the nature of mind without being too attached to the techniques or practices. This does not mean you don't learn how to do the practices precisely; you do learn them, very precisely. However, it's just like an old man who walks from one place to another with the help of a walking stick. His goal is to arrive at the new location, not simply to become attached to the walking stick, right? We also know that if the old man tries to walk there without the stick, for sure he will not reach his goal. Therefore, when walking to the new location he makes sure he has a firm grasp of the sturdy stick that supports him. Once he reaches his destination, the walking stick is no longer important to him.

The practices, the techniques, are exactly like that. The methods are exactly like that. They never lose their potential to be of benefit when the need arises, but just don't get attached to them. Is that clear?



## Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's Upcoming Teaching Schedule

### August Through December 2022

Here is Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's teaching schedule for the remainder of 2022. Rinpoche will offer two more seasonal retreats at Serenity Ridge in Virginia this year, both in person and online, as well as other retreats in Europe, Colorado and California. Many of his retreats will be offered both in person and online.

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.



- 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, [Healing Practice of the 5 Elements](#)
- September 10-11, 2022: [3 Doors Retreat on Zoom](#)
- September 23-25, 2022: Chamma Ling Colorado, [A-tri Dzogchen Retreat Part 2](#)

- October 11-16, 2022: [The Five Elements and Tsa Lung plus Serenity Ridge Dialogues](#)
- October 28-30, 2022: Berkeley, California: [The 21 Nails \(Part 2 of 6\)](#)
- December 26, 2022-January 1, 2023: Serenity Ridge Winter Retreat, [Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung, Part 3](#)



## Prayer Wheels at Serenity Ridge Coming Soon!

### Thanks to Generous Support from Fundraiser



Thanks to a successful start to our 2022 fundraising activities, Serenity Ridge Retreat Center will soon have 15 stunning prayer wheels lining the path between Kunzang Khang and Garuda House. These prayer wheels were gifted to the center by Vicki Wheaton just as covid struck and everything had to shut down. Now, thanks to more than \$13,000 raised through the summer auction and the generosity of donors contributing directly, we are now working to install the wheels.

These prayer wheels come from Menri Monastery in India and have been filled with an extraordinary number of mantras, 800 pages of them in each wheel! Among the prayers are the three heart mantras, the 100-syllable mantra, the principal mantra of Sherap Chamma, the longevity mantra and praise of Tsewang Rikdzin, the Sigyal Drak Ngak mantra and others. Each time the wheels spin, the blessings of the mantras flow out and bless us, the land and all beings, similar to the action of prayer flags, like the ones lining the entryway to Serenity Ridge. We are especially indebted to Khedup Datsang, Vicki Wheaton, Raven Cypress Wood and many Charlottesville sangha members for their work to fill the wheels with the blessing power of the mantras. And we are deeply grateful to John Massie for his beautiful design of the wheel houses.

We invite everyone to come to the center in October for our fall retreat and to experience for yourself the power that these wheels give to the center and to us practitioners.

As Rinpoche shared during summer retreat, Serenity Ridge needs more support to fully manifest his vision of the center, which is the headquarters of Ligmincha International. We hope to begin walking trails this fall on almost 100 acres of forest. And as more activity comes to Serenity Ridge, we need to consider putting in a long-overdue new well and expanding the septic system. The aim is not to expand the center; rather, we need to undertake the work that ensures visitors and retreat-goers can take the fullest advantage of the spaces, and minimize the ecological footprint.



*Vicki Wheaton, Khedup Datsang and Raven Cypress Wood prepare materials to go in the prayer wheels*

If you would like to contribute to Rinpoche's vision of Serenity Ridge as a focal point for new program development, short -and long-term retreats and the preservation of Yungdrung Bon, please consider making a donation.

To Donate  
click here.



## Geshe Choekhortshang Rinpoche Coming to the United States!

### Join Us at Serenity Ridge or Online August 13-14 for Special Dzogchen Teaching

Geshe Choekhortshang Rinpoche, well known throughout Europe and to Ligmincha's online community for his warmth, humor and breadth of knowledge, very recently received a five-year visa for the United



States! This will be his first visit to the US, and he has agreed to offer a dzogchen teaching at Serenity Ridge August 13-14. Join us at Serenity Ridge or online on Zoom for this special retreat.

Choekhortshang Rinpoche will give instruction on the Four Goodnesses of Tapihritsa, a part of Tapihritsa's final instructions to Nangzher Lopo. These eighth century teachings are extremely precise pith instructions on the view, meditation, conduct and fruit of dzogchen, the deepest teaching in the Bon and some Buddhist lineages. The Four Goodnesses are extracted from the first written dzogchen instructions ever written down in the Bon tradition. They are the origin of the Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyu teachings that have been handed down to us in the present day.

Saturday, August 13, will be a full day of teaching and practice, and Sunday will be a half day, ending around lunchtime. More information will be added to the Ligmincha website as it becomes

available.

The sixth International Seminar of Young Tibetologists, being held the first week of August in Charlottesville, Va., is the initial reason for his visit to the US. At Serenity Ridge we are thrilled that he has agreed to stay on and teach a weekend retreat at the center.

Choekhortshang Rinpoche was born in Dolpo, Nepal, in 1976 and received his geshe degree from Menri Monastery in India in 2008, serving as a secretary to His Holiness the 33rd Menri Trizin during his studies. He was elected president of the Bon Dialectic School and was editor-in-chief of the Bon-sGo journal and later was treasurer of Menri. A researcher who has participated in many academic conferences, he lives in Prague, Czech Republic, where he is an assistant professor in the Department of South and Central Asia at Charles University in Prague. He has taught at many Ligmincha centers and sanghas in Europe.

[Learn more/register](#)

[Visit the Serenity Ridge website](#)



## Opening Your Heart to the World

### 3 Doors Weekend Retreat with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and Other Programs

This summer and fall, The 3 Doors is offering a number of programs open to everyone where participants will be guided to deepen their experience of inner refuge, explore what arises within the support of community, and more fully integrate meditation into daily life for the benefit of self and others.

Within each one of us is a heart of compassion, our natural response in the presence of suffering. But often we are overwhelmed, saddened or burdened by the suffering we perceive in the world around us, and we may shut down or turn away. If we acknowledge how the pain of others touches us and are supported to open in the presence of our pain, from the openness itself we touch the source within, a source of compassion, and can respond to others in a beneficial way. The upcoming 3 Doors courses listed below can help.

#### Beginning in August

##### ***Discovering Refuge Within: An Eight-Week Meditation Journey***

This program will offer the opportunity to deepen one's experience of the foundational 3 Doors practices of stillness, silence, spaciousness and abiding in inner refuge with the fresh voice of a new 3 Doors teacher each term. Teachers from around the world will lead these programs in native languages. Both experienced practitioners and those new to meditation will find support in this course to integrate the benefits of meditation into everyday life.

[Learn more](#)



*Lhundrup, the spontaneously perfected enlightened qualities and their effortless expression (by Tenzin Wangyal)*

**September 10-11, 2022*****Opening Your Heart to the World: A Weekend Retreat with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche***

The 3 Doors warmly invites everyone to join Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and 3 Doors senior teachers for a weekend retreat on Zoom. Participants will be guided to connect with the inner refuge of an open heart of wisdom and compassion, and to dedicate their practice to the benefit of others. Tenzin Rinpoche will offer teachings, and 3 Doors senior teachers Marcy Vaughn, Gabriel Rocco, Alejandro Chaoul and Raven Lee will guide the practices.

This retreat provides a unique opportunity to experience the 3 Doors practices as presented by the founder of the organization himself. In addition, opportunities will be provided for participants to deepen and reflect on their experiences through sharing and discussion in small groups. Translation will be available in Spanish and German. Check the webpage for updates about translations into additional languages.

[Learn more](#)

**October 19, 2022-June 7, 2023*****Compassion Project***

In its seventh year, the Compassion Project serves anyone who wants to expand their capacity for caring for self and others. Over the course of nine months, senior teachers Marcy Vaughn and Gabriel Rocco, together with 3 Doors teachers in Latin America and Europe, will guide participants to use practices of body, speech and mind to support personal transformation. Participants will learn to apply these practices to reduce stress and meet challenges with renewed energy; bring self-compassion to feelings of overwhelm and burnout; and connect with oneself and others from a place of presence and compassion.

[Learn more](#)

For a full list of programs, visit [The 3 Doors homepage](#).

**A-tri Dzogchen Retreat with Tenzin Rinpoche****In Colorado September 23-25 or Online**

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche will be returning to Crestone, Colorado September 23-25 to continue his teaching on the dzogchen text, *The Stages of A-tri Meditation*. The A-tri is an essential meditation guide to one of the three main dzogchen lineages in the Tibetan Bon tradition.

Rinpoche will be presenting these teachings at the beautiful Colorado College campus in Crestone, Colorado, and simultaneously with our worldwide sangha via Zoom. We invite you to attend these special teachings in the physical presence of our teacher in the

inspirational setting of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of Colorado.

You will not discover a more clear or concise guide to dzogchen practice than the A-tri. Written by the 13th century master Drugyalwa Yungdrung, based on even earlier teachings, this step-by-step guide introduces preliminary practices, the nature of mind, and how to deepen one's practice and understanding until ultimate liberation. A book on the A-tri, based on Rinpoche's teachings in the Netherlands over a seven-year period, was published recently by the Netherlands sangha and is now being revised for publication in the United States by Sacred Sky Press.

This retreat is the second in a three-part series that Tenzin Rinpoche began in September 2021. As part of the registration package, all who register will receive video recordings from last year, which can be reviewed before this year's retreat. All are welcome! The third teaching in the series is planned for September 2023, both in person and online. The retreat is sponsored by Chamma Ling Colorado, with the support of Ligmincha International.

**Schedule: (subject to change)**

**Friday, September 23:** 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Mountain Time (11 a.m.-7 p.m. New York time)

**Saturday, September 24:** 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Mountain Time (11 a.m.-7 p.m. New York time)

**Sunday, September 25:** 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Mountain Time (11 a.m.-3 p.m. New York time)

Registration will open soon.

[Learn more/register](#)  
[Chamma Ling Colorado](#)



## Something New Coming This October to Serenity Ridge!

### Combined Fall Retreat and Serenity Ridge Dialogues

Serenity Ridge is excited to announce a major change in our event schedule this fall! For the first time, from October 11-16, the Fall Retreat and Serenity Ridge Dialogues will merge. The mornings will focus on teachings and practice from the Bon Mother Tantra, this year the Five Elements and Tsa Lung (five energetic movements for clearing the channels and winds). During the afternoons the Serenity Ridge Dialogues will bring presenters together for discussion and practice.

The event will be held both in person and online on Zoom, but attendees are particularly encouraged to come to Serenity Ridge in Virginia if possible to benefit from the richness of in-person teachings and informal interactions.

As many people know, every October when he comes to Serenity Ridge, Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche teaches from the Ma Gyu. And for much of the past decade, Serenity Ridge also has offered a program known as the Serenity Ridge Dialogues. That two-day event has brought scientists, health care professionals, and practitioners and teachers from many different lineages (not just Bon or Buddhism) into conversation about aspects of practice and works to shed light on them from a contemporary perspective, in a way that can help inform our practice.

This fall, the morning will focus on the five elements and tsa lung. Tenzin Rinpoche will guide the sessions with support from Geshe YongDong Losar, who is joining us from Vancouver, Canada. The afternoons will bring presenters together with Rinpoche and Geshe YongDong around specific areas of scientific investigation. Menpa Phuntsog Wangmo, founder of the American Tibetan Medical Association and the international director of the Shang Shung School of Tibetan Medicine, will be one of three special guests. Dr. Sat Bir Singh Khasla, assistant professor of medicine at Harvard University and a specialist in body-mind medicine and yoga therapy, and Lonny Jarrett, an expert scholar, teacher and practitioner of East Asian medicine, also will join us.

The Dialogues has always proven to be a fascinating series of conversations, enjoyed as much by the presenters as by the attendees. This year, by merging it into the Fall Retreat, the goal is to deeply shift the conversation toward *practice*. Rather than just engaging in intellectual conversation about practice, we will follow Tenzin Rinpoche, Geshe YongDong and our presenters into an exploration of how practice works and how we can inform it through contemporary and traditional understandings of breath, movement and the five constituent elements.

This event will be both in person at Serenity Ridge and online. However, in the past years, much of the event takes place in conversations between sessions in the dining hall, on walks and sitting outdoors. We strongly encourage everyone who can to come in person for this special inaugural event!

[Learn more/register](#)



*Michael Sheehy, PhD, Lama Willa Blythe Baker, PhD, Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and Ruth Q. Wolever, PhD, at the 2019 Serenity Ridge Dialogues*



## Ligmincha Learning's Upcoming Courses

### Including New Lungta Course with Khandro Tsering Wangmo Khymsar



Ligmincha Learning is pleased to offer a brand-new course on Raising Lungta with Prayer Flags with Khandro Tsering Wangmo Khymsar, the wife of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, beginning August 1. Two other upcoming video-based online courses will begin in September. They are Transforming Our Emotions Through the Six Lokas with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche September 2-October 23 and Treasures of Bon

History, Lineage and Practices with Geshe Denma Gyaltsen and John Jackson September 16-October 22.

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.

### August 1, 2022-Ongoing

#### Raising Lungta with Prayer flags with Tsering Wangmo Khymzar

In this self-guided course, which is available to take at any time, Khandro Tsering Wangmo Khymzar shares everything you need to know to raise lungta (windhorse) prayer flags. Included in her series of videos is a discussion of lungta (luck, prosperity and positive energy), what it is, how to maintain it and how it can be lost. Tsering-la teaches about the symbols and meaning of lungta prayer flags, when they should be raised, and when not to raise them. Participants will learn how to use prayer flags to lift their own energy, spirit and general well-being, or do so on behalf of others.



The course includes audio files of Geshe Denma Gyaltsen singing all of the mantras and prayers for this ritual, which you can download and use for yourself. PDF files of the prayers, sacred images, lists of needed ingredients and more also are included.

This is the first Ligmincha Learning course to teach a traditional Tibetan Bonpo skill or ritual. Now in development is a course with Lama Kalsang Nyima that will teach how to construct a Yeshe Walmo namkha. Namkhas are a traditional form of art made with strings and sticks used to represent one's yidam deity.

[Learn more/register](#)

### September 2-October 23, 2022

#### Transforming Our Emotions Through the Six Lokas with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

At one time or another each of us suffer strong emotions that throw us off balance, cause us to act in ways that we later regret and make us lose touch with our true nature. Centuries ago the masters of the Bon lineage developed the meditations of the Six Lokas specifically to remedy this situation, to help us live our lives in a balanced and relaxed way.

The meditations focus on the root causes of our suffering, which are anger, desire, greed, ignorance, jealousy and pride. Through each meditation we examine our habitual patterns so that we may recognize them, then through the enlightened energy of the Buddhas to purify and transform them so that we and all other beings might not continue to suffer in this way. The practices have a deep healing and transformative power, and are traditionally practiced at length as a preliminary to dzogchen contemplation.

[Learn more/register](#)

### September 16-October 22, 2022

#### Treasures of Bon History, Lineage and Practices with Geshe Denma Gyaltsen and John Jackson

This course designed for anyone who would like to learn more about, or deepen their existing knowledge of, the ancient, profound Bon tradition. This course is ideal for beginners who have recently connected with Bon teachings and want to know more about where it comes from and the many varied forms of practice in the tradition. It is also well suited for practitioners who have learned several practices and would like to know how all the practices fit together into a beautiful and complete system of philosophies and meditations.

[Learn more/register](#)

Learn more at [ligminchalearning.com](http://ligminchalearning.com). (Find descriptions in the top menu under Courses.)



## Ligmincha's Umdze Training for Practice Leaders

### How the Program Evolved and Is Continuing to Change

In the past, when Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche was invited to teach in a country, he encouraged the participants to practice together. During the past 30 years, practice groups were formed in many countries, and all these groups needed practice leaders. Until a few years ago, all the countries had to find out by themselves how to organize that.

In 2019 Ligmincha International launched an online training program for practice leaders (called *umdzes*) worldwide. The training course is available through [Ligmincha Learning](#). Ton Bisscheroux interviewed people about the umdze training program: John Jackson, who helped the online program in dialogue with the Ligmincha International Practice and Teaching Committee; Rob Patzig, president of Ligmincha International; and Laurent Pennings, participant in the umdze training.

**Ton:** How does someone become an umdze?

**John:** In the past, Rinpoche asked the one who organized the retreat to lead a practice group. Those people became an umdze because Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche said, "You are an umdze now." In consultation with Rinpoche, the organizer would ask other participants to lead practice groups. In the beginning they had little experience, and there was no formal training for them.

**Ton:** When was the first training for umdzes?

**John:** In 2018 I was invited to give a program for all the *umdzes* in Poland. I had been teaching in their retreat center in Wilga, so they knew me. They have practice groups in 10 cities, and they wanted better communication, to share their expertise, and to share what worked and what didn't work. After I had done this in Poland, in 2018 I reached out to the French sangha and offered the training to the French-speaking umdzes of Ligmincha France & Suisse Romande, where umdzes from the French-speaking part of Switzerland also participated. In 2019, I went back to Poland for a second *umdze* retreat. Mexico had its own umdze program, developed by Wojciech Plucinski, who took his expertise from Poland to Mexico.



*Laurent Pennings of the Netherlands participates in an online umdze training*

**Ton:** In 2019 Ligmincha International launched the online umdze program. Can you talk about it?

**John:** It was Rinpoche's wish to improve the preparation of the umdzes, standardize their level of training and develop a program for new umdzes. In the International Practice and Teaching Committee, we discussed the role of an umdze, and what they should know when they guide people. Starting in March 2020, to become an umdze you must be nominated by your national organization's leadership to go through the umdze training. Participants learn to guide certain practices, to perform a prostration, to create and maintain a shrine. There are two stages in the course. First, you have to finish all the steps on the website, and then you have to go to a senior teacher and be checked out. Existing *umdzes* are strongly encouraged to enroll in and complete the training program.

It is important that the online training program will be translated into different languages, because not everybody speaks English. We are still working on that, because we have a lack of translators. The course is offered free, and the national sangha pays for the certification of a senior teacher.

**Ton:** How many people have participated so far?

**John:** At this moment 65 people are enrolled. All the Polish umdzes are enrolled, and they have been working through it as a group. Eight participants from the Netherlands are enrolled. Further, there are participants from Costa Rica, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and the United States.

**Ton:** Rob, how many people have finished the training?

**Rob:** About 8 to 12 people have gone through the full program. But our program was designed before Covid struck and was intended for in-person practice groups. There hasn't been a lot of incentive to move through the program because we have not been meeting in person for so long. However, some people have completed both phases of the program.

And now the Practice and Teaching Committee is revisiting and supplementing the program. We need to support people to guide both in person and online, and that takes some different skill sets. We also want the program to reach beyond just teaching the basics of guiding practice. Some of our goals for the revision are to focus less on the English language and to provide more opportunities to come together for practice. And, following Rinpoche's always inspiring and living example, we want to create a dialogue among our teachers and practice leaders about how the practice lives in us. How do we experience our own pain identities, how do we ensure that our guiding of practice isn't being led by our pain identities, and how do we see the fruit of our service and our practice?

Our committee did a beautiful job of defining the first steps, and all of us are grateful to John for his initiative and direction in putting forward the first phase of the program. We have a lot of work to do to fully express Rinpoche's vision for sacred community, and we are all excited to keep moving forward on this path.

**Ton:** How many umdzes are there now worldwide?

**Rob:** Because Ligmincha is not highly centralized, we don't have an exact count. But there are more than 90 people around the world guiding practices as taught by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. Some are more active than others.

**Ton:** Can you talk about the tsa lung certification program for umdzes?

**Rob:** We have recently launched a program on the Outer, Inner and Secret Tsa Lung for existing umdzes. This course is a deep dive into the channels and winds and these beautiful practices from the Ma Gyu, or Bon Mother Tantra. The students who graduate from it will not only have deepened their practice, but they are building a stronger sense of community by studying and practicing together. At the end they will have permission not just to guide these practices, which many already do, but to teach them within

Ligmincha to new students, to offer workshops or short retreats on the practices. This is the first of many more resources we wish to give to our practice leaders around the world.

We are really excited about this program, and 80 practice leaders are enrolled in the course. It just launched at the beginning of July. I say practice leader because not every country uses the term umdze.

**Ton:** Laurent, Ligmincha Netherlands offered a program for sangha members to do the umdze training together. Can you talk about the umdze training in the Netherlands?

**Laurent:** Recently, we completed the first year of the training. Every month we met for three hours. A few times we met in person, and during the coronavirus lockdowns, we met online. Every meeting, we started by sharing about our personal life, did guru yoga and worked with the online program from Ligmincha International. We discussed several books from Rinpoche, did practices, and in the end had to complete an online quiz. You had to complete the quiz successfully to go to the next part of the course. The first year was focused on study, integration of the practices, and how to create and maintain a shrine. In the second year we will learn how to interact with a group of participants and how to guide practices. We started the first year with eight participants, and five will continue in the second year.

**Ton:** What was your motivation to participate in this training?

**Laurent:** I received an e-mail with an invitation. When you had been following Rinpoche for more than five years, and if you wanted to contribute to the community, you could participate. Reflecting on how my connection to Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and his meditations helped me out of a physical and emotional exhaustion, I wanted to do something for and with others. The meditations have been lifesaving for me. I was so stuck in life and felt so terrible. In the sangha I felt connected to others, and that helped me to clean up my mess.

In the first meeting where we talked about our motivation, I felt the warmth of the group and felt a bigger power that carried us. I experienced that it was so much more powerful to do the training together than if I had done it alone behind my computer screen. The meetings felt like healing and coming home.

**Ton:** What was challenging for you in the training?

**Laurent:** Reading the books. We had to read six books, and there is no book I have completed. I need time to reflect and digest the content, and for me there was not enough time to do so. And sometimes I found it hard to join every month. Sometimes I wanted to relax on the weekend, but I had made the commitment, so I went to the meeting.

**Ton:** What do you enjoy about the training?

**Laurent:** What I really enjoy is the feeling that as a group we are a family. I appreciate that people take responsibility for their own problems and don't blame others. I experience the richness of the practices. I have always enjoyed working with the Fivefold Teaching of Dawa Gyaltsen, and then I discovered there were even deeper layers when somebody else guided that practice.

**Ton:** Thanks for sharing your experiences. From my own experience I know that guiding practices also deepens the experience and understanding of the practices.

Read more about the components, commitments and requirements of the [Umdze Training Program](#).



## Upcoming CyberSangha Events

### Clearing Obstacles of the Mind August 10

The CyberSangha team warmly invites you to join in the following new offerings. They include a teaching and guided meditation with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche on August 10 followed by a 24-hour full moon practice August 11. They are open to all, and we hope you can join us.



**CyberSangha®**

The free yearlong program [Bring Body, Speech & Mind to Life](#) continues, and there is an additional Tibetan-language broadcast in the Five Wisdoms of Tibet series plus a new series in Tibetan on Cross-Cultural Parenting. For the Tibetan-language events, simultaneous translation to English and other languages may be available; we'll let everyone know in advance if it is.

### **Wednesday, August 10, 2022, 12 noon New York time** **Realizing Your Full Potential: Clearing Obstacles of the Mind**

In a live online broadcast, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche offers a teaching and guides a meditation to mark the start of the Month of the Mind, part of his free yearlong program Bring Body, Speech & Mind to Life.

Open to all.

[Learn more & view live](#)

#### **Thursday, August 11, 2022, 10 a.m. New York time**

##### **24-Hour Full Moon Practice, Through Spaciousness, Manifest Qualities That Benefit Others**

During the August 11 full moon, join us online for a guided meditation followed by a 24-hour session of mantra recitation, contemplative silence and further periods of guided meditation. With its focus on spaciousness of the mind, the full moon practice marks the start of the Month of the Mind. 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.

[Learn more and register now](#)

#### **Saturday, August 20, 2022, 11 a.m. New York time**

##### **The Five Wisdoms of Tibet, Part 5: Wisdom of Equanimity**

In Part 5 of this ongoing series, prominent teachers from six Tibetan spiritual traditions come together to discuss their shared and unique perspectives of the wisdom of equanimity. Conversation is in Tibetan language; simultaneous interpretation into English and multiple other languages may be available (to be announced),

[Learn more and view live](#)

#### **Saturday, August 27, 2022, 11 a.m. New York time**

##### **Cross-Cultural Parenting, Part 1: Helping Children to Thrive When Traditions Collide**

When raising children in a country that is foreign to you, not them, how do you help them to thrive without sacrificing your own cherished cultural heritage and values? Our three panelists, Tsering D. Watermeyer, Tenzin Thosam and host Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, are all Tibetan immigrants to North America. They discuss common parenting challenges of immigrants and their suggestions for building healthy, happy families. Part 1 in an ongoing series. Conversation is in Tibetan language; simultaneous interpretation into English and multiple other languages may be available (to be announced).

[Learn more and view live](#)

#### **Thursday, September 8, 2022, 12 noon New York time**

##### **Realizing Your Full Potential: Ripening the Conditions of the Body**

In a live online broadcast, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche offers a teaching and guides a meditation to mark the start of the Month of the Body, part of his free yearlong program Bring Body, Speech & Mind to Life. Open to all.

[Learn more & view live](#)

#### **Friday, September 9, 2022, 10 a.m. New York time**

##### **24-Hour Full Moon Practice, Through Stillness, Awaken Clear, Positive Action**

During the September 9 full moon, join us online via Zoom for a guided meditation followed by a 24-hour session of mantra recitation, contemplative silence and further periods of guided meditation. Part of the Month of the Body.

*Registration opens after August 12.*

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



## **Second New Free Online Classes Through CyberSangha**

### **Allowing Clear, Positive Action to Arise Begins September 15**

CyberSangha is happy to announce that its free online classes continue with Allowing Clear, Positive Action to Arise, a monthlong meditation course for releasing effort related to our negative actions and connecting more fully with our inner stillness, the source of clear and positive action. It will be held on four Thursdays at 1 p.m. New York time, September 15-October 6, 2022, with Anja Benesch, via Zoom. It is designed to accompany the Month of the Body in the yearlong online program **Bring Body, Speech & Mind to Life**. It is open to all but limited to 21 participants.



**CyberSangha**  
Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

[Learn more and register](#)



**Anja Benesch** works as a psychotherapist in private practice in Berlin, Germany. She has completed The 3 Doors Academy and Teacher Training and is an instructor for Ligmincha Germany. She recently became a member of Ligmincha International's Practice and Training Committee. Gathering for practice is her favorite way of connecting with people.



## Upcoming GlideWing Online Workshop

### Healing from the Source Begins August 20



GlideWing is pleased to offer Healing from the Source, a three-week online workshop with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche from August 20-September 11. Participants will practice from their own homes, at their own schedule, with guidance from Rinpoche.

In this video-based online workshop, Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche focuses on cultivating loving-kindness as a means for preventing and healing both physical and emotional pain. Based on ancient teachings of dzogchen from the Tibetan Bon Buddhist tradition, the workshop helps one discover the great healer within. The core teachings of dzogchen introduce us to the nature of mind, to our own inner refuge, the true source of healing. Everyone has access to this source through the three doors of body, speech and mind, Rinpoche has explained. He describes stillness of the body, silence of speech and spaciousness of the mind as the three precious pills, a powerful medicine you can take at any time, with no side effects, to help divert you from your self-punishing tendencies, clear pain and negativity, cultivate awareness, and ultimately access the healing qualities that spontaneously arise in that space.

The three precious pills serve as the foundation of the main practice. Their healing effects come from resting deeply in the space that opens, then gradually bringing awareness to your emotional or physical discomfort. In that unconditional openness, the pain or discomfort naturally dissolves. In time you may become aware of positive qualities naturally arising within, such as loving-kindness, joy, equanimity or compassion. As you allow those qualities to mature, you can feel their warmth.

[Learn more/register](#)

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

Learn more at [glidewing.com](http://glidewing.com)



## Student and Teacher

### Relating to Meditative Experiences

*This edited excerpt is from oral teachings given by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche during Ligmincha's Tenth Annual Summer Retreat, July 2002, and was included in a VOCL from 2002.*



Sometimes during meditation practice you find you are looking for experiences. You want something, whether it is great bliss or perhaps a kundalini experience. And when you have an experience in practice, you often completely forget about the basis of the experience and instead become totally involved in the experience. With any kind of meditative experience, it is important to feel the space of the experience.

We need to ask, is the experience or the experiencer more important? According to dzogchen, the experiencer is more important. Even if you are having an incredible experience, if you lose the basis of that experience, there is no particular benefit of having that experience. It is important to abide in the self and not be deluded by experience.

Dzogchen talks a lot about experiences, such as sit this way, breathe that way, get into this position to have that experience. Fundamentally, though, one of the main principles in dzogchen is not to introduce experiences but to introduce the experiencer. If that point is not understood, when you have an experience in meditation you lose the space. Then it is easy to get caught up with the experience. In the conventional sense you may enjoy the experience, but ultimately, that experience didn't really serve the purpose of introducing you to your natural mind.



## Spanish Translation of VOCL

### Link to June Issue Now Available

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

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