

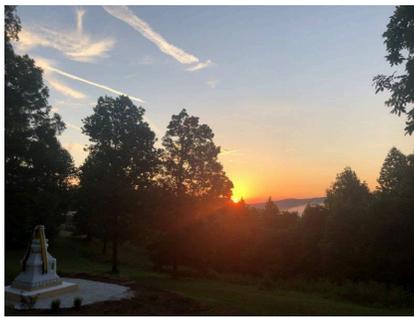

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Volume 19, Number 5 / October 2019



Letter from the Editors

New Bön Stupa Consecrated at Serenity Ridge



Dear Friends,

We are so happy to share more about the recently completed stupa, or chorten, at Serenity Ridge, the first Bön stupa in the United States and Ligmincha's fifth stupa worldwide. The consecration of this beautiful stupa was performed during this past summer retreat by His Holiness the 34th Menri Trizin, Lungtok Dawa Dhargyal Rinpoche, while he was visiting and teaching here with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. The creation of this landmark Bön stupa was sponsored by sangha member Vicki Wheaton, and it is dedicated to both her late

husband, Bönpo Thashu Lama, and to her mother, who passed away in 2017. Thank you so much Vicki! Enjoy all of the pictures and learn more about the symbolism of the stupa and all the elements that go into it. Of course, best of all, please come visit Serenity Ridge if you haven't already, and see the stupa firsthand – it's located right beside the entrance to Serenity Ridge overlooking a gorgeous view of the valley and mountains. Thank you so much to all who made it happen!

The teaching excerpt for this issue is from the oral teachings given by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche in 2000 on the topic of how we approach death and how we can help those who are dying. Rinpoche will be giving teachings on "Guidance for Living and Dying; Commentary on the Bardo" at the upcoming Fall Retreat at Serenity Ridge. We also feature a student question on this topic in the column: Student Teacher – Together on the Path.

We have many announcements and happenings to report at Ligmincha International:

- Ligmincha's online store is now open. Don't miss the two newest books published by Sacred Sky Press: *Living Wisdom*, featuring excerpts of dzogchen teachings from His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche; and *Journey into Darkness*, the spiritual journey of the Buddha Tonpa Shenrap's daughter Shenza Nechung, translated by Sangmo Yangri, Ph.D.
- Rob Patzig shares how we can help with the stupa project in Mexico.
- We also share photos of Kunzang Khang and a few sangha memories in remembrance of Grover Overstreet, who was the project manager on the construction of Serenity Ridge's new multipurpose building.
- See the latest dates and locations for Rinpoche's worldwide teaching schedule through December.
- Four upcoming retreats at Serenity Ridge: the annual Fall Retreat October 22–27 on "Guidance for Living and Dying: Commentary on the Bardo Teachings"; two trul khor (Tibetan yoga) retreats; a special dzogchen retreat with H.E. Menri Ponlop Trinley Nyima Rinpoche and the Winter Retreat December 26–January 1, 2020: "Dzogchen Practice Retreat: Turning Inward."
- Two Ligmincha Learning online courses begin in October: "The Five Elements" and "Tibetan Language Bön Prayers: The Invocation of Tapihritsa."
- GlideWing's next online course with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, "Tibetan Dream Yoga," Starts November 16.
- The 3 Doors announces a new online course: "The Healing Power of Silence" with Gabriel Rocco.
- Student and Teacher – Together on the Path, a regular feature of VOCL.
- The link to the latest *Ligmincha Europe Magazine*. It includes a full year of articles and pictures featured between Summer 2018 and Summer 2019.
- View the Spanish translation of the August VOCL.

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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

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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In Bön,
Aline and Jeff Fisher



Approaching Death Free of Attachment

An Edited Excerpt from Oral Teachings by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, July 2000



This retreat is a wonderful opportunity for us to have [now His Eminence] Yongdzin (Lopon) Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche here, especially for those of you who don't know him. Yongdzin Rinpoche is the principal teacher of the Bön Buddhist tradition, and for me personally, he has been my root master and the person who cared for me when I was growing up. This morning I was making a little pancake for breakfast for him, and he said, "Oh, this is what I used to make for you!" When I was 10 years old I didn't know how to cook, so he made me that pancake a number of times. Now 30 years later, he could say, "This is what you learned from me!" [laughter] I have been very fortunate, and we all are so fortunate that I can now share my teacher like this with you.

There are so many different ways we can approach learning the dharma. When we approach the bardo teachings in Lopon's scholarly way, very carefully going through all the details of the ancient texts, I know what must go through new people's minds! Please have patience. Understand as much as you can of the details. Try to get as much as possible. But as I said this morning, don't worry about what you don't get. Listen and try to understand, and what you don't understand, don't worry about. This is the place to work with what you do understand, what you do connect with, what you do feel. And what you don't understand, don't work too much in that area.



Speaking a bit more on what Lopon said today, we are cultivating devotion, inspiration and connection, and if you didn't want to do that, you wouldn't be here. It is your wanting that brings you here – wanting to engage with the practice. Ultimately, hopefully, the wanting and wishing and desiring will be the basis of your illumination. Illumination comes from there. In the West sometimes people misunderstand this. Especially in the '60s and '70s, spiritual pursuits often seemed to be more about "Don't worry, be happy, have no attachment, do whatever comes to mind." This is not what the teachings are saying. The teachings

encourage us to be responsible. Whatever happens to you, the consequences are based on your actions.

For example, love is at the foundation of all spiritual traditions. We all seek and want to be loved. But there is a degree to which love can be painful, if it is based too much on attachment and too little on loving-kindness. At the same time, there may be some people in your life with whom you would prefer not to engage too much in this lifetime. It is okay to feel this way about someone. Just be sure not to engage with them in a negative way. These are examples of the kind of detachment that is helpful in preparing for one's own death.

You may know someone who is in the process of dying, or who is experiencing sickness or old age. In each of these cases, one of the most difficult internal things people face before they die – the external difficulties would be the sickness itself, the medical treatments, the pain, etc. – is that they don't want to give up. That is the most common form of suffering. People don't want to give up their body, their loved ones, their identity. They don't want to give up their wealth, or anything else they are familiar with. They don't know what will happen if they let these things go. What really happens? It is very hard to know, but for sure one is going to lose everything when one dies. Those close to one who has died feel sad for one year, two years, and then later, people forget.

The most difficult thing people face at death is their own grasping mind. It seems silly to talk about attachment to a fancy dress, but you never know what a person might be attached to as they die. I may be attached to the idea that I made so much money, it is all there in my savings account, but now I can't use it. I have a beautiful house, beautiful things, but now I cannot use these things. I have so many



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good friends and I didn't spend enough time with them. All these feelings are based on intense and serious attachment, which is hard to step back from. The moment you step back from it, it hurts.

We have the question of how one can help dying people. The teachings at this retreat give part of the answer: Never create a situation that contributes to a dying person's sense of attachment. That is the lesson here. Avoid being someone to whom the dying person feels attached, and avoid creating a situation that reminds the person of things that evoke attachment. Does that make sense?

As the person approaches death, when you engage in conversation with them you can get a sense of where the person is. Of course, you don't want to say outright, "Come on, be detached. It is okay for me to be attached, but you are the one who is leaving!" You don't want to go with that. Instead, you can try to loosen up the conversation so it is lighter and more spacious. The mind should not be holding on, not only at the moment of death but also at the time of any departure, such as going on a long journey, or even going to sleep. Your state of mind right before you fall asleep has a strong effect on the quality of your dreams. And your state of mind before death has a strong effect on your experiences in the bardo, or on your experiences in your next life to come.

During any major transition it is important to have a sense of lightness and spaciousness. At those times one should not cultivate heavy and dark experiences. So, lighter and spacious – that explains everything.

Tenzin Rinpoche will be teaching on "Guidance for Living and Dying: Commentary on the Bardo Teachings" at the annual Fall Retreat at Serenity Ridge, October 22–27, 2019. You can learn more/register on the [Serenity Ridge website](#).



A Stupa (Chorten) at Serenity Ridge

First Bön Stupa in US Consecrated During Summer Retreat



Stupa with statue detail of Kuntu Zangpo

Stupas, or *chorten* in the Tibetan language, are an important part of Bön and Himalayan culture. Serenity Ridge Retreat Center, headquarters of Ligmincha International, now has its own stupa—the first Bön stupa in the United States and Ligmincha's fifth stupa worldwide. The new stupa was consecrated during the 2019 Summer Retreat in a ceremony that included His Holiness Dawa Dhargyal Rinpoche, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and his family, and many monks.

Within the Nine Ways of Bön, Tonpa Shenrap—founder of the Bön tradition—explained and taught the construction of *chortens* as a part of the Fifth Way, "The Way of Virtuous Lay Practitioners." Tonpa Shenrap had his disciples build the first *chorten* as a support for doing prostrations and circumambulations, expressing and cultivating devotion, and as a way of making offerings to perfect the accumulation of merit and purify negativities. *Chorten* exist in many forms, each with a precise shape, measurements and other requirements. However, three requirements

common to all: they must contain relics of the buddhas; statues and images; and sutric, tantric and dzogchen scriptures.



Group during stupa consecration, June 2019

Ligmincha maintains five stupas around the world. In Mexico there are three stupas. The first Bön stupa built in the West is in Torreón. Consecrated in 2006, it stands 18 meters (59 feet) high and holds room inside for individuals and small groups to practice. Just north of Torreón is the Lerdo stupa, which stands at 12 meters (39 feet) tall. The third is the Great Bön Stupa for World Peace in Valle de Bravo. Dedicated to the Venerable Lupon Sangye Tenzin Rinpoche, His Eminence Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, it is the second Bön stupa built in Mexico and the largest in the West. With a height of 34 meters (almost 112 feet), the stupa contains an interior teaching hall with room for more than 200 people. In Poland, about 60 miles from Warsaw, is the Stupa of the Mind of Enlightenment. The newest stupa, at Serenity Ridge Retreat Center near Shipman, Virginia, was consecrated this summer.

*Stupa consecration*

The Serenity Ridge stupa is of a type known as an "Elegant Yungdrung Chorten," or "Yungdrung Kolek Chorten." It was envisioned and sponsored by Vicki Wheaton, a longtime student of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and dedicated sangha member. While it purifies the negativities of all sentient beings, this stupa arose from a specific desire to benefit Vicki's deceased husband, Thashu Lama, who passed away on September 14, 2007, and also her mother, who passed on May 7, 2017.

According to Khedup Gyatso, who was instrumental in designing, preparing and building the stupa, "Inside this particular *chorten* are objects containing the blessings of the Supreme Lord of Refuge the 33rd

*Khedup Gyatso and Vicki Wheaton*

Menri Trizin Rinpoche. There are Yungdrung Bön scriptures of sutra, tantra and dzogchen as well as 110 *tsa tsa* (sacred objects molded during special ceremonies). The benefit of constructing this *chorten* is that its beauty to the eyes is related to its exact measurements, which illustrate the self-nature of the divine. With these correct measurements, it is a superior dwelling place for enlightened energy. It has been said that if you endeavor to accomplish a construction for the buddhas' relics, even defilements from the five heinous acts will be purified. Needless to say, lesser acts will be purified. Therefore, how is it possible to express the inconceivable potency of the exalted good qualities of relics? Similarly, through these limitless exalted qualities and power, if future generations of disciples want to purify the two kinds of defilements and complete the two kinds of accumulations, they can make this request at the immeasurable construction for the buddhas' relics by prostrating, circumambulating and making offerings."

*Excavating the stupa site**Vicki Wheaton placing texts in the stupa*

The idea for a memorial stupa started more than 10 years ago, and at the time Vicki intended to put it on her own property. But it became clear that more people could benefit by it being at the retreat center, a more public space, and in 2019 all of the

conditions and circumstances came together for the stupa to become a reality. She obtained the *sok shing*, the central beam of the stupa, and the protective cover at the top during a visit to Menri Monastery. While it usually requires months of advance preparation to have such objects made, through the intercession of His Holiness the 34th Menri Trizin, Vicki was able to get them "on the spot." What could have been a significant obstacle simply dissolved. Such things happened repeatedly. Throughout construction seemingly insurmountable obstacles arose, only to evaporate a day or two later.



Tsa tsa of Sherap Chamma to be placed inside the stupa



Lama Yungdrung painting the stupa



Geshe Denma painting the stupa



Tsering Wangmo and Vicki Wheaton with scarves for consecration

Many people were involved in ensuring the success of the project. Khedup Gyatso's immense knowledge and practicality were indispensable. John Massie helped identify the best location. Raven Cypress Wood was involved in multiple steps. Geshe Denma Gyaltzen of Ligmincha Texas and Lama Yungdrung Lodoe of Ligmincha Mexico painted the final form. Local sangha member Tom Elliot provided his expertise to shape the concrete into the precise forms required by the texts, assisted by Norbu Dawa.



His Holiness the 34th Menri Trizin during the consecration



The shrine at the consecration ceremony



Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche offers a gift to Vicki Wheaton



Sunrise at the Serenity Ridge stupa

During the second week of the summer retreat, in a ceremony attended by retreat-goers and others, His Holiness Dawa Dhargyal Rinpoche, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and his family, and many monks joined in consecrating the stupa.

Located at the front of the property just inside the entrance gate, the stupa is a beautiful place for circumambulating, reciting mantras and resting. From late summer to fall, it is the very first spot that the rising sun falls upon at Serenity Ride. As one approaches, its energetic and healing qualities can be immediately felt. It is a blessing to the land and all who live on it or visit it.

A special thanks to Raven Cypress Wood, whose knowledge was instrumental putting this article together.



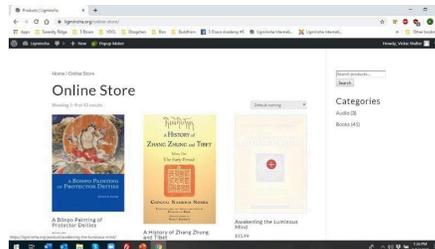
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Two New Sacred Sky Books Available

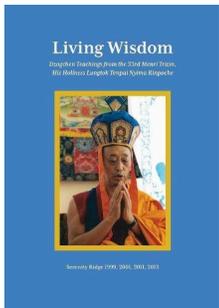
Ligmincha's online store is now open and offering a range of books and media related to Tibetan Bön Buddhism. More than 40 books and audio are now available, and more offerings will continue to be added in the future.

Among the offerings are two new books by Sacred Sky Press, a division of Ligmincha International.

[Visit the online store](#)



Living Wisdom: Dzogchen Teachings from the 33rd Menri Trizin, His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche



Living Wisdom presents selected, edited excerpts of teachings from four visits of His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche, the 33rd Menri Trizin, to Serenity Ridge in 1999, 2001, 2011 and 2013. His Holiness was the abbot of Menri Monastery in Dolanji, India, and spiritual leader of the Tibetan Bön Buddhist tradition from 1968 until his passing on September 14, 2017.

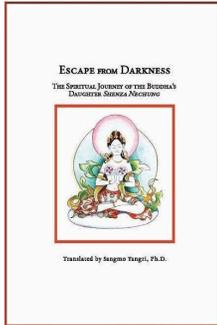
Teachings on dzogchen are among the highest offered in the Tibetan Bön tradition, pointing out the true nature of mind. The excerpts in this book include profound teachings from the 33rd Menri Trizin on the Twenty-Four Masters, subsequent Lineage Masters of the Zhang Zhong Nyen Gyü, and the Six Lamps.

Throughout his life, His Holiness the 33rd Menri Trizin worked tirelessly to preserve the ancient Bön tradition and culture. Numerous full-color photos are included. The book was

first made available during the visit of His Holiness Dawa Dargyal Rinpoche, the 34th Menri Trizin, to Serenity Ridge in June 2019.

[Order *Living Wisdom*](#)

Escape from Darkness: The Spiritual Journey of the Buddha's Daughter, Shenza Nechung



In the Tibetan Bön tradition, there have been numerous female lay and nun practitioners who attained high spiritual states. Their stories are included in Bön texts and also are a part of local folklore but are not well known. This book is an attempt to fill the void that has been left for centuries.

In *Escape from Darkness*, the first story of a female Bön practitioner is brought to light by translating the life story of Buddha Tonpa Shenrap Miwo's younger daughter, Shenza Nechung, and describing her spiritual journey. The book tells the tale of how the demon Khyappa Lakring attempts to defeat the teachings of the Yungdrung Bön by seducing Shenza Nechung, and how she is eventually rescued and reconnects with the dharma.

The book is translated by Sangmo Yangri, Ph.D., a scholar, teacher, translator, and the first Tibetan female to receive a Ph.D. in the area of Tibetan Bön studies. In 2015, she was appointed to the position of teacher and translator at [Lishu Institute](#) in northern India, founded by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche for the intensive study and practice of Bön.

The book also includes a foreword by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, commentary by Sangmo Yangri, and reflections by Tsering Wangmo and Marcy Vaughn.

[Order *Escape from Darkness*](#)

Ligmincha's physical Bookstore & Tibet Shop is located at Serenity Ridge Retreat Center near Shipman, Virginia, and is open during retreats.

[Visit the online store](#)



Improvements to the Great Stupa for World Peace

Ways You Can Contribute to This Fundraiser



Great Stupa for World Peace

The Great Bön Stupa for World Peace in Valle de Bravo, Mexico, was consecrated on December 4, 2010. Now, Ligmincha Mexico has a program to improve the retreat center and also allow groups and individuals to generate merit by sponsoring a series of new stupas.

The Great Stupa is a spiritual center for the Ligmincha Mexico sangha and the international community. It also is home to Mexico's two resident lamas, Lama Kalsang Nyima and Lama Yungdrung Lodoe. Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche has said, "This stupa is a place where everybody can come to learn and heal, a place where it may be possible to have experiences for spiritual development and for the soul to grow."

Tonpa Shenrap, founder of the Bön tradition, described the purpose of a stupa as carrying the teachings through time as well as helping individuals in the present: "To teach future generations, and because it is necessary to purify defilements and perfect the accumulation of merit, establish a *chorten* to act as a support for devotional prostrations and circumambulations." Creating stupas, maintaining them and being in their presence are all ways of accumulating merit and purifying negativities.



His Holiness the 34th Menri Trizin in Valle de Bravo this summer



Stupa plans

Ligmincha Mexico's fundraising project will create 33 stupas circling the Great Stupa. Four large stupas will be almost two meters (six and one-half feet) tall, and 29 of them will be one and one-half meters (almost five feet) tall. The proceeds also will fund the building of new dormitories for people who want to stay onsite for retreats or come to the stupa for personal retreat.



Smaller stupas

To date, this fundraising project has been a great success. Only one large stupa and one small stupa remain unsponsored. The large stupas can be sponsored for \$28,500 (US) and the small stupas for \$5,700 (US). The

smaller stupas' cost is equal to 108,000 Mexican pesos, an auspicious number. Even if you cannot visit the Great Stupa or one of Ligmincha's other stupas around the world, you can directly participate in their creation by donating to this project. If you cannot sponsor the full cost of a stupa, any amount will be most appreciated.



Dorm room rendering

Sponsors will have their name, or the name of someone they wish to memorialize, placed on a bronze plaque on the stupa. Ritual items will be placed inside each stupa as a part of their consecration.

To contribute to this project, you can [make a donation to Ligmincha International](#). In the comment field please write "Great Stupa" so that we can direct the proceeds to this program.

You can see what this project will look like when finished in a rendering available [here](#).



The Creation of Kunzang Khang

In Remembrance of Project Manager Grover Overstreet

Enjoy these photos of Kunzang Khang, the beautifully designed multipurpose building at Serenity Ridge Retreat Center, headquarters of Ligmincha International. We also share a few sangha memories in remembrance of Grover Overstreet, who was the project manager on the construction of Kunzang Khang, which took place over a year and a half period. He passed away from cancer on September 1.



The completed Kunzang Khang (House of All Goodness). Photo by Vickie Walter.

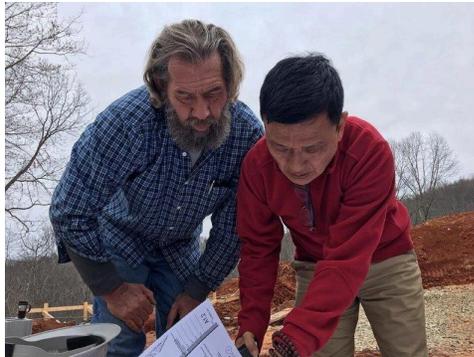
Named Kunzang Khang (*House of All Goodness*) by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, the building was completed in April 2018. A special blessing and ribbon-cutting ceremony was held with many in attendance to celebrate: students, neighbors, lamas, local Tibetan residents and project manager Grover Overstreet, along with others who worked under his supervision.



Grover Overstreet, project manager for construction of Kunzang Khang. Photo by Brian Harris.



Early sketch of building with color



Grover and Rinpoche with April 2017 plans



Excavation of building foundation.



Initial construction, July 2017



Wonderful signs during construction

We were so fortunate to have had Grover as our project manager. He always looked out for Serenity Ridge's best interests in the many decisions that had to be made during construction.

–Sue Davis-Dill, Executive Director, Ligmincha International

Grover amazed me with his ability to practice equanimity in the face of all of the chaos that naturally occurs onsite with a building project such as this. As the project manager, he was the representative of the general contractor and orchestrated all of the countless subcontractors hired to get the job done. He was also the liaison between the general contractor and all of the various design professionals, all of the building inspectors, the engineers and all of the representatives of Ligmincha. It was mind-blowing how well he was able to balance the many disparate needs and wants of all interested parties. And he did so with a skillful softness most of the time, and then he utilized a fiery wrathfulness whenever it was called for.

One day early on in the initial phase of construction of the building, I saw that he had nailed to the rough opening of the building a list of a dozen or so precepts for the myriad subcontractors and construction workers working throughout the space of the building. Among the precepts, written in thick carpenter's pencil on a simple torn scrap of cardboard nailed to the doorway so that all who walked in would see, were these commands: no chew [ed: chewing tobacco]; no cursing; no tracking in mud from boots . . . a dozen such commands written to kindly keep the job site orderly and nice in the midst of all of the goings-on over the coming months.

–John Massie, Designer and Retreat Center Developer



Views from the side and the back of Kunzang Khang. Photos by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche.



Views from the side and the back of Kunzang Khang. Photos by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche.



Ribbon-cutting ceremony with Rob Patzig, Khenpo Ngawang Dorjee and Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. Photo by Regula Franz.



Ribbon-cutting ceremony with Rob Patzig, Khenpo Ngawang Dorjee and Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. Photo by Regula Franz.



VOCL editor Aline Fisher, project manager Grover Overstreet and building designer John Massie. Photo by Brian Harris.



Ki Ki So So Lha Gyal Lo! Photo by Polly Turner.

Grover was always polite and big-hearted, ready to do whatever was asked of him. Even after the building was finished, he continued to come to Serenity Ridge, helping however he could with the maintenance of all the systems in the building. He lived out in the country but near Serenity Ridge and though not a practitioner, he gravitated there so naturally – what great karma!

–Jeff Fisher

While I didn't know Grover directly, I saw his hard work come to life whenever I came to Serenity Ridge over the couple years that it was being built. Just amazing! I attended the ribbon-cutting and when I saw him there, I was quite moved, seeing his dedication and pride in this spectacular accomplishment.

During this past summer retreat with His Holiness the 34th Menri Trizin, I was continually reminded of all the great work done on the Kunzang Khang – as we did trul khor practice on the deck in the morning with such beautiful views; as we practiced in the spacious downstairs room of Kunzang Khang; when we enjoyed the Sa Le Ö concert in comfort and ease, and of course during all the wonderful meals held inside the newly acoustically sound dining hall – all were a true joy.

–Aline Fisher



Photo by Melissa Katz



Photo by Maria Quintana



Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's Worldwide Teaching Schedule

October Through December 2019

Here is a list of Rinpoche's upcoming retreats through December 2019. It includes Rinpoche's in-person teachings at Ligmincha International retreat centers or other locations throughout the world. It also includes his online teachings offered through Ligmincha Learning or GlideWing. The schedule will be updated as teachings are added or revised.



- **October 4–November 17:** Online course through Ligmincha Learning: [The Five Elements: Healing with Form, Energy and Light](#)
- **October 11–13:** Telluride, Colorado: [The Power of Dreams](#)
- **October 22–27:** Serenity Ridge, Shipman, Virginia: Fall Retreat: [Guidance for Living and Dying: Commentary on the Bardo Teachings](#)
- **November 2–3:** Bourg-en-Bresse, France: [The Knowledge and Wisdom of Longevity](#). Visit [Ligmincha France](#). Email: [Ligmincha France](#)
- **November 9–10:** Seoul, South Korea: [Tibetan Sound Healing](#). Email [Theressa Hong](#)
- **November 15–December 22:** Online course through Ligmincha Learning: [The Three Heart Mantras](#)
- **November 16–December 15:** Online course through GlideWing: [Tibetan Dream Yoga](#)
- **November 22–24:** Berkeley, CA: [The Body of Light: Transformation Through Space, Light and Energy, Part 2](#). Email [Laura Shekerjian](#)
- **November 29:** Sao Paulo, Brazil: [Spontaneous Creativity](#). Visit: [Ligmincha Brazil](#)
- **November 30–December 1:** Sao Paulo, Brazil: [Awakening the Luminous Mind](#). Visit: [Ligmincha Brazil](#)
- **December 26, 2019–January 1, 2020:** Serenity Ridge Shipman, Virginia: Winter Retreat: [Dzogchen Practice Retreat: Turning Inward](#)



Four Upcoming Retreats at Serenity Ridge

Annual Fall and Winter Retreats, H.E. Menri Ponlop and Tibetan Yoga



Serenity Ridge is offering four upcoming retreats this October through December. They include Fall Retreat teachings on the bardo with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, a dzogchen teaching with His Eminence Menri Ponlop Trinley Nyima Rinpoche, two Tibetan yoga (trul khor) retreats and a Winter Retreat dzogchen retreat, open to all, with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche.

October 22–27: Fall Retreat with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, "Guidance for Living and Dying: Commentary on the Bardo Teachings." Rinpoche will lead participants in exploring the transition between life in death, including preparation for

dying, the process of dying, practices related with the bardo, how to prepare for one's own death and how to help others who are dying.

November 8–10: Special Retreat with His Eminence Menri Lopon Trinley Rinpoche, "Pith Instructions from the Golden Advice." These teachings based on the ancient sage and lama Drenpa Namkha's succinct advice to dzogchen practitioners. A renowned scholar and meditation master, His Eminence is the head instructor of Menri Monastery in Dolanji, India.

November 8–11: Tibetan Yoga (Trul Khor) Parts 2 and 3 with Alejandro Chaoul-Reich and Rob Patzig. These two retreats will be taught concurrently, with Part 2 set for November 8–10 and Part 3 held November 8–11. Deepen your experience of the ancient practice of Tibetan yoga (trul khor) from the Bön A-Tri Dzogchen tradition.

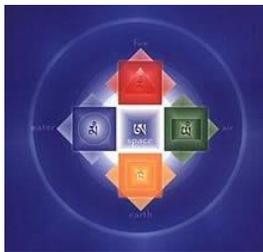
December 26, 2019–January 1, 2020: Winter Retreat with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, "Dzogchen Practice Retreat: Turning Inward." Rinpoche invites everyone to join him for a dzogchen meditation and practice retreat. As a support for practitioners, this retreat will be in partial silence.

Learn more/register for any of these retreats by visiting the [Serenity Ridge website](#).



Ligmincha Learning Online Course Begins October 4

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



Ligmincha Learning is pleased to offer an online course with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche on "The Five Elements: Healing with Form, Energy and Light," from October 4–November 19, 2019. The five elements—earth, water, fire, air and space—pervade our lives, are the essences of our being and can be sources of profound healing.

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

Each section of the course includes videos of Rinpoche's teachings and a guided meditation; readings from his book *Healing with Form, Energy and Light*, and assignments for journal writing, discussion, and formal and informal practice. The course is designed so that you may integrate study and practice into your everyday routine, learning at your own pace while enjoying the support of classmates and the course mentor.

To learn more about the five elements teachings, see *Healing With Form, Energy and Light: The Five Elements in Tibetan Shamanism, Tantra and Dzogchen* by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche.

[Learn more/register](#)

Coming in November: "The Three Heart Mantras" with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, November 15–December 22.



Tibetan Language Bön Prayers: The Invocation of Tapihritsa

New Ligmincha Learning Course with Geshe Denma Gyaltsen and Bob Clark



The Tibetan Language Bön Prayers Program is pleased to announce a new online course focusing on the Invocation of Tapihritsa taught by Geshe Denma Gyaltsen, the resident lama of Ligmincha Texas. It will be offered October 20–November 17 through Ligmincha Learning. There is no prerequisite for the course.

The course focuses on this 23-verse prayer spontaneously composed by Nangzher Löpo upon recognizing the enlightened master Tapihritsa, who manifested in the sky above him as a radiant Buddha of white light. Following this encounter, Nangzher Löpo, a renowned eighth century scholar and practitioner, was the first to write down Tapihritsa's teachings in the Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyüd (the Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung), one of the most revered series of Bön dzogchen teachings. The Invocation of Tapihritsa beautifully communicates the unbounded wholeness of Bön dzogchen, sacred narrative and religious art.

Guided by Geshe Denma's lively teaching, students participating in the five-week session will study approximately four verses of Tibetan text for each class. They will learn Tibetan letter recognition, correct pronunciation and the melody of the invocation. They will encounter the prayer's meaning through Tibetan stories, prominent thangka paintings and Bön philosophy.

The course is co-designed with Geshe Denma as the lead teacher and Bob Clark, an English teacher and longtime student of Tenzin Rinpoche, as teaching assistant. The course implements a blended approach to online learning with both self-paced study and a weekly class. The live class through Zoom videoconference occurs Sundays at 10 a.m. Eastern time. Cost of the course is \$125.

[View video about the course](#)

[Learn more/register](#)



GlideWing 'Tibetan Dream Yoga' Starts November 16

Four-Week Online Workshop with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche



"Tibetan Dream Yoga," an online workshop with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche offered through GlideWing, will be held November 16–December 15, 2019. Learn and practice from your own home, at your own schedule, with personal guidance from Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche.

In this four-week workshop, students will explore and practice the ancient Bön Buddhist teachings of Tibetan dream yoga. The workshop provides detailed instruction for dream yoga practice, with discussion of the relationships between dreaming and waking and between dreaming and death. Rinpoche also will provide instructions for foundational practices done during the day and for the uses and methods of lucid dreaming.

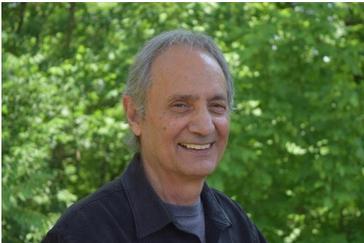
Through dream yoga practice, we can cultivate greater awareness during every moment of life. If we do, freedom and flexibility continually increase, and we are less governed by habitual preoccupations and distractions. Eventually we may develop a continuity of awareness that allows us to maintain full awareness during dreams as well as in waking life. When we fully develop this capacity, we will find that we are living both waking and dreaming life with greater ease, clarity and appreciation.

[Learn more/register](#)



The Three Doors New Online Course

'The Healing Power of Silence' with Gabriel Rocco



A new six-week self-guided online course with 3 Doors senior teacher Gabriel Rocco will be offered December 6, 2019–Jan 17, 2020 (with a break on December 27). This new 3 Doors course will support participants in recognizing patterns of inner and outer speech and how to use precision of attention to rest in powerful, transformative inner silence.

Our attention often identifies with and clings to inner dialogue, which accompanies us – invited or not – throughout our everyday experiences. This inner speech and reactive commentary separate us from the spacious awareness and warmth of our authentic being. This self-paced audio course is designed to increase the light of lively awareness in your life.

The course includes a new teaching module and guided meditation practice that will be released on each of six Fridays: December 6, 13 and 22 (skipping December 27) and January 3, 10 and 17. The module can be streamed or downloaded. An online classroom platform provides the opportunity to ask the teacher questions and share experiences with other participants from around the world.

[Learn more](#)

Gabriel Rocco is a senior student of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. He received his Master of Arts in contemplative psychotherapy from Naropa University in 1981. Following 20 years as mind-body health specialist at the Wellness Community in Philadelphia and senior instructor of University of Pennsylvania's Program for Stress Management, he remains a therapist in private practice. Gabriel is one of the senior teachers of The 3 Doors Academy, a two and one-half year training program presenting teachings and practices to support connection to one's sacred body, genuine speech and luminous mind. He co-designed the curriculum for The 3 Doors Compassion Project with his wife, Marcy Vaughn. Gabriel was on the Ligmincha International Board of Directors for 18 years, where he served as chair.



Student and Teacher

Together on the Path

As students on the Tibetan Bön Buddhist path, we offer our teachers a range of questions from the simple to the complex. Here we share an excerpt from the transcript of oral teachings given by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche at the 2003 Spring Retreat at Serenity Ridge on "Guidance for Living and Dying: Commentary on Bardo Teachings from the Bön Mother Tantra."

Student: The teachings point to an underlying joy that arises in the absence of things. I am trying to relate to that in the absence of those close to me who have died. I feel greater pleasure when they



are there, but can I tap into joy without their presence?

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche: We reconnect to these experiences of joy inside ourselves. Someone whose presence brought you joy has died, and now the absence is there. But only thinking, "Now they are not here anymore, and we can never sit together and talk," is not going to help you. If you think, "Well, it was wonderful when they were here, and this is a natural process that they have passed away," that is a better way to think. The relation between the teacher and student is similar. You don't need to be neighbors; even if you never see each other again, the inspiration that you have is alive, the joy that you have is

always alive. If that aliveness is always there, that is the greatest gift, because it is not dependent on the existence or presence of something or someone. It is always there. That is very powerful. When joy is dependent on someone being there, it is difficult and actually becomes an obstacle.



Ligmincha Europe Magazine #29

Summer 2018 – Summer 2019

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Spanish Translation of VOCL

Link to August Issue Now Available

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



Upcoming Retreats

Serenity Ridge Retreat Center

The events listed below will take place at Serenity Ridge Retreat Center, Ligmincha International headquarters located in rural Nelson County, Virginia. To register or for more information, visit the [Serenity Ridge website](#), [email](#) or call 434-263-6304.

October 22–27, 2019

Fall Retreat—Guidance for Living and Dying: Commentary on the Bardo Teachings
with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

November 7, 2019

Tibetan Yoga Practice Day
with Rob Patzig

November 8–10, 2019

Special Retreat—Pith Instructions from the Golden Advice
with H.E. Menri Lupon Trinley Nyima Rinpoche

November 8–11, 2019

Tibetan Yoga, Part 2 and Part 3
with Alejandro Chaoul-Reich and Rob Patzig

December 26, 2019–January 1, 2020

Winter Retreat—Dzogchen Practice Retreat: Turning Inward
with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

To register for any of the above retreats, or for more information about teachings in the Bön Buddhist tradition of Tibet, please visit the [Serenity Ridge website](#), [email the registrar](#) or call 434-263-6304.

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