

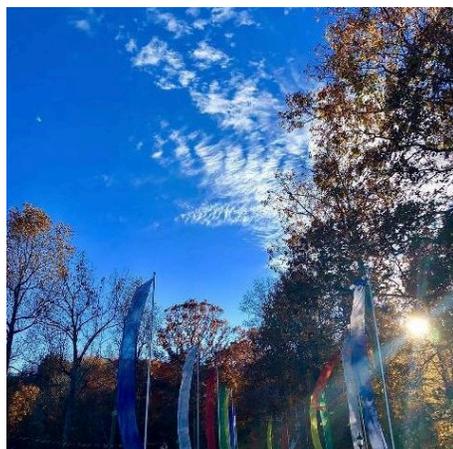

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Volume 18, Number 6 / December 2018



Letter from the Editors

Inner World Peace



Dear Friends,

We have some very big news!! His Holiness Lungtok Dawa Dargyal Rinpoche, the 34th Menri Trizin, will be visiting and teaching at three Ligmincha centers worldwide—Serenity Ridge in Virginia, Poland and Mexico—in 2019. E MA HO! Read the letter from Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche below for all of the wonderful details.

This past evening, as we were finishing this issue of the VOCL, I was reading Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's beautiful teaching excerpt that we feature in this issue, and I was so moved. I saw it so lovingly and carefully put down in writing, going from Rinpoche's heart to Jeff's heart and then to mine. The piece stayed with me, floating in my awareness as I fell off to sleep.

When I first awoke in the morning, fragments of a dream came to me, and also the words "Inner World Peace." A beautiful phrase, and it kept coming back to me this morning – the play in those words. Our peace is an inner peace. And our world is very much an inner world.

So this beautiful gesture that arose from the space of dream, I spontaneously share here in words, as best I can, and along with Jeff, send out to you the wish that as we come to the end of 2018, may we all find ourselves sharing the space of inner world peace now and in all the years to come. Please enjoy this beautiful teaching excerpt!

Lots of important information for you:

- Just announced: Sa Le Ö, a musical healing and meditation event created by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, is coming next June to the U.S. and Mexico!
- Read an update about Geshe Tenzin Yangton, who is on extended leave as resident lama at Serenity Ridge and is residing and recovering at Menri Monastery now.
- Hot off the presses! The list of 2019 retreats at Serenity Ridge is here, including four retreats with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche.
- See Rinpoche's upcoming worldwide teaching schedule.
- Another FIRST: Rinpoche now has an audio book available of *Tibetan Yogas of Dream and Sleep*, read by our own Marcy Vaughn, available through Amazon.com.
- A new book, *Mind Beyond Brain: Buddhism, Science, and the Paranormal* was just released by David Presti, based on the 2010 Ligmincha conference held at Serenity Ridge.
- A brand NEW online course from Ligmincha Learning will be offered beginning in January on "Treasures of Bön: History, Lineage & Practices."
- Start the new year with a three-week online course through GlideWing on "Awakening the Sacred Body."
- Lishu Institute offers several retreat options beginning in January 2019.
- Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche will give three live Facebook broadcasts in December; and beginning in the new year, he will host conversations with indigenous people on a variety of topics.
- Read about Polly Turner's journey to Menri Monastery in "Finding Oneself in the Losing."
- The 3 Doors celebrates the graduation of the Latin American Academy, plus the first retreats for 2019.

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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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- You can find the link for the Spanish translation of the October VOCL.

In Bön,
Aline and Jeff Fisher



Letter from Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

His Holiness to Visit Ligmincha and Bön Centers Worldwide



His Holiness Lungtok Dawa Dargyal Rinpoche during enthronement. Photo by Salvador Espinosa.

Dear Sangha and Friends,

It has been almost a year since the appointment of His Holiness Lungtok Dawa Dargyal Rinpoche as the 34th Menri Trizin. On September 6 of this year, a formal grand enthronement ceremony took place at Menri Monastery in India.

In recognition of his enthronement, and as a way to deepen our connection to His Holiness, I extended an invitation for him to teach at our Ligmincha International centers in Poland, Mexico and the United States. With this letter I am happy to announce that His Holiness has honored us by accepting our invitation. Not only will he visit our Ligmincha centers, but he will also visit other Bön centers worldwide. This

tour of Europe and North America will last approximately three months. We will share more details of his itinerary soon.

As His Holiness' first trip to the West after his enthronement as the Gyalwa Menri Trizin Rinpoche, this is a historic event. Ligmincha International is blessed to be organizing this trip. It is the biggest tour that has ever been organized for the Menri Trizin. I would like to invite everyone to participate and connect with His Holiness, the spiritual head of the precious and profound Yungdrung Bön tradition. Please join me and all the Ligmincha International sanghas in welcoming His Holiness to the West.

This is a rare opportunity to receive teachings from the head of the Bön tradition without travel to Menri Monastery and with translation into Western languages. His Holiness is an excellent teacher: clear, accessible and plainspoken. I encourage each of you to make a heartfelt connection to him. European sangha members can join Ligmincha Poland as they welcome His Holiness to Chamma Ling Poland, in Wilga. For those in North America, His Holiness will be at Serenity Ridge Retreat Center in Shipman, Virginia for both weeks of our annual summer retreat, which begins June 23, 2019. In Mexico he will teach and offer his blessings at Chamma Ling Valle de Bravo.



The 34th Menri Trizin. Photo from Menri Monastery.

If you cannot attend his teachings you can participate in other ways. If you would like to contribute toward the expense of transportation, lodging and preparing our centers to receive His Holiness, you can make donations to any of our centers.



His Holiness Dawa Dargyal Rinpoche, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and his son, Senghe

As a way of celebrating and strengthening our connection to each other and to our hearts, I am also excited to share with you that we will be making musical offerings of the Bön three heart mantras in both the U.S. and Mexico during the time of His Holiness' tour. These performances will include a master flute player from Nepal as well as a professional Tibetan singer who will perform the three heart mantras using the melodies that I've developed in the past few years and have been using at retreats around the world. We plan to hold these performances in Mexico, Texas and Virginia. These concerts will be fundraisers to support two orphanages: one in India and one in Nepal. I hope to share more details with you soon.

Please join me in praying for the health and well-being of His Holiness, that his lifespan may be perfectly fulfilled and that his trip will benefit many people and countless sentient beings.



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With my blessings,
Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

If you would like to donate to any of our centers, you may do so by clicking below.

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Hosting Pain with Self-Compassion and with Wisdom

An Edited Excerpt from Oral Teachings Given by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, Summer 2018



Emotions like anger and attachment manifest because of a loss of connection to our true self. When these and other emotions arise in the midst of conflict, how we reflect on them is based on the depth of our self-awareness and our ability for self-reflection.

If you're in a conflict with somebody, whether it's a deep conflict, a medium conflict or a light conflict, it may be the case that when you see that person, your first thought is that it's all about them, that the problem is solely because of that person. This is the lowest level of reflection, when you are focusing only on the other person. At that level, we are looking for how we can clearly blame somebody else, or legally blame them, or morally blame somebody. Whatever it is, the focus is all about somebody else. If you're asking those kinds of questions, then yes, you may indeed find those

answers. And superficially, you may resolve something. But you have not touched at all yourself. You have not even acquired that sense of questioning – of self-journey. Because from that view, it's not about self: the focus is all on somebody else.

At that level, the object itself becomes the strong focus. You are angry at someone, disappointed in them. You have a hard time forgiving them. And that image shows up in your dreams, or it shows up suddenly and destroys a joyful moment. It even shows up in your deep meditation; everything is good, wonderful, spacious, but a moment before the bliss arises, that image arises. Right? That image of something problematic that is outside oneself is the sole focus. The deeper question though, *Who is it who is having the problem?* does not arise. All these disturbing things are happening externally, but the question of why they are happening, and to whom they are happening, are not questions we even ask.

It's because the pain is bigger than the awareness that is asking the question, *Who?* When that occurs it is a problem. So, when you are feeling pain in this way, when something is charging you up so much, then it's good to draw your attention to your body, because at that moment you are very much in your head, in your mind, in your stories. It's like we say at the beginning of every meditation: bring your attention to your body.

We've all known there are times when our stories are so strong that they can blow us away. When that happens, we lose our connection to our body. This is very important. You're wrapped up in the story, getting worked up over something and getting so far away that you're totally ignoring what is really important: your body, your heart, your breath. So your own body, your own heart, your own breath – these are fundamental things, to be acknowledged and taken care of, to be lived within and lived through. That's why we refer to them as the three doors. These are doorways for when the mind goes so far away in a kind of uncontrolled, very difficult way. They become a wonderful support. And coming back home into your body in the midst of a difficult moment can be very grounding. So, when pain mind needs the support of the silence and stillness, that's when you want to come more into your body and have more connection to that silence and stillness. That surely helps if you can do that. It's like, here is your body, and awareness comes, and it's as if they are holding hands with each other.

An intermediate level of reflecting on a conflict would be when the focus of your reflection has moved from looking only at the other person to looking more at *us*. The focus becomes the interaction between the two of you. *What happened? What did I do? What did she do, he do? And Oh, I would not have done this, if she had not done that.* Very often people will say, *I am trying to handle my family. I'm trying to handle my husband or my wife.* They're trying to handle somebody, right? Or this phrase, *I'm trying to figure out somebody.* How much time have you spent trying to figure out other people? First of all, how many people have you wanted to figure out? Let's get that long list out and have a look! [laughter] And now, how many successes have you had with that list? How far along in the list are you? Okay, maybe I've been trying to figure out fifteen people in my life, and for three of them it's quite clear. For the fourth

one its taking a long time, and for the rest I have no clue! Is that what you are trying to do? Is that how you're spending your time getting older faster?

Or, do you not have a list of anyone that you're trying to figure out, because you only have one person to figure out – you! Of course, there will also be surprises there, but at least the surprises are related to only one person. At the higher level of reflecting, one looks inside and inquires, *Who is the one that is disturbed? Why did I do that action? Why did I say that? Why did I feel that? Why do I have those thoughts? Who is it that became carried away?* This higher level of self-reflection is a deeper way of reflecting on deeper stories, deeper wounds and weakness. And at this level, when we ask *Who?* we may find a self there. *We say, It really hurts me. What they said really hurt me. What they did really hurt me.* So when you address that *me* with the question of *Who?*, when you go inward at this level of reflection, you find something, and what you find is more like a pain identity, or an energetic thing that is in some sense located in the body.

Now at this level the awareness that is asking, *Who?* and the contraction that's being looked at would both be of similar size. In that case, when you're looking at *who*, you will find it is your pain identity. With that recognition of a pain identity, what arises is compassion for that inner wound – the awareness that reflects deeply within yourself. That awareness is a true compassion because that awareness is the real healer.

There are now a lot of studies emphasizing the benefits of self-care and self-compassion. That is when the smart ego, which is a nice ego, a compassionate ego, is better at accommodating or hosting the pain identity. It's like when two people are holding each other, and one is troubled and the other is not, and the untroubled one is supporting the troubled one, saying, *It's okay, it's okay.* It's a conceptual kindness that is helping. That's what the antidote is at the intermediate level, it's ego-compassion or self-compassion.

When one inquires, *Who?* and something is found there, that means the awareness is not able to dissolve it. In that case you accommodate it or host it with self-compassion, like a mother does when a child is crying. You go closer to that pain. You give the warmth. You are like a mother, and that level of self is like a child in pain. We always give the example of that. When that sense of who, that wound, becomes clear, then the space of that pain identity opens up. And when the space of that pain identity does open up, what arises out of that space? Love and genuine spontaneous qualities arise. They arise from within, simply by self-reflecting and asking, *Who?*

When we talk about hosting, there are two kinds. One is when the ego-compassion is hosting, and the other kind is when wisdom is hosting. For the most developed practitioner, when they ask, "Who?" it means, "Who is asking?" and that means more like a higher awareness is being engaged. It's a self-reflecting with more of an unconditional awareness. And when that awareness looks in, it's like a light shining and BAM, the contraction dissolves. It's called observing through naked awareness. When you observe the contraction through naked awareness, when that is looking at the contraction, then BAM, it vanishes. And that's a success story, isn't it?

Of course, it's not always the same for us in all situations. In some situations we clearly reflect solely on the other person as the cause; in another situation we may reflect on both ourselves and the other person; and in another situation, we will be asking the deeper questions about ourselves.

So, "Who?" – it's the best question! The best question in the spiritual journey is, "Who is suffering? Who is in pain? Who is thinking? Who is feeling? Who is acting the way they're acting? Who is saying what they're saying? Who is feeling the way they're feeling?" "Who?" is the best question. And the best answer would be not finding anybody. [deep exhalation] Finding unbounded space with infinite possibility to manifest. That's all that is there. That's the best answer.



A young Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche as a monk (left) with his teacher Yongdzin Rinpoche (center) and Khenpo Nyima Wangyal Rinpoche.



Sa Le Ö Musical Event Coming Next June!

Fundraising Performance to Benefit Children in Nepal and India

Don't miss Sa Le Ö, a musical healing and meditation event created by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. The tour will be coming next June to the U.S. (Houston, Texas and Serenity Ridge Retreat Center in Virginia)



and Mexico (Torreón, Mexico City and the Stupa for World Peace at Valle de Bravo.)

This fundraising event is being organized by Ligmincha International. All proceeds will be donated through Ligmincha for the education of children of Nepal and India, and also for the children at Menri Monastery.

Performers include Bansuri flute artist Raman Maharjan from Nepal, and Tibetan opera director, singer and dancer Tsering Wangmo. Majorjan is the wonderful artist who performs on the recording of the Sa Le Ö mantra (one of the Three Heart Mantras) often played at

Rinpoche's retreat.

Tickets go on sale in January 2019. Look for more details on the [Ligmincha](#) and [Serenity Ridge](#) websites soon!



Update on Geshe Tenzin Yangton

Serenity Ridge Resident Lama on Extended Leave



Geshe Yangton (right) at Menri Monastery

Many readers know and have met our beloved resident lama at Serenity Ridge, Geshe Tenzin Yangton (Geshe-la). And many also know that he became ill in fall 2017. Western doctors were not able to provide a clear diagnosis and course of treatment, and in January 2018 he elected to return to Nepal to be closer to the support of his family, Tritten Norbutse Monastery and Tibetan doctors. After several months of rest in Kathmandu, Geshe-la left Nepal for Menri Monastery in Dolanji, India, where he has been residing and recovering since that time.

Geshe Yangton is still working to regain his strength and energy. During the week of rituals and activities at Menri Monastery related to the commemorative activities on behalf of the 33rd Menri Trizin and the enthronement of the 34th Menri Trizin, Geshe Yangton was well enough to join Geshe Tri Yungdrung in taking a group of Western students on an all-day tour of the monastery and of several sacred sites nearby. All who met with him that day felt great joy in seeing him, paying respect and offering their warm wishes for his continued healing.

With respect to his role as a resident lama, Geshe Yangton continues to be on an extended leave of absence. Ligmincha holds an outstanding offer open for his return at any time. Please continue to pray for Geshe Yangton's health, full recovery and return to his role as a resident lama within Ligmincha.



2019 Retreats at Serenity Ridge

Four Seasonal Retreats with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and More



Serenity Ridge Retreat Center from above. Photo by Salvador Espinosa.

Four exciting seasonal retreats at Serenity Ridge with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche are planned for 2019. They include teachings ranging from connecting with the five elements, to the second year of tummo (inner heat), guidance for living and dying, and a special silent dzogchen practice retreat in December that is open to all.

In addition, senior student and teacher Marcy Vaughn will be teaching her annual Sherap Chamma retreat in February during Losar (Tibetan New Year). Serenity Ridge will host a special Symposium for Contemplative Sciences in April. And Alejandro Chaoul-Reich and Rob Patzig will offer two concurrent trul khor (Tibetan yoga) retreats in November.

A highlight of the year will be a visit by His Holiness Lungtok Dawa Dargyal Rinpoche during the Summer Retreat. (See related letter from Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche about his visit.) Immediately preceding that retreat will be a special fundraising dinner and concert for Tibetan orphans.

Serenity Ridge Retreat Center is the headquarters of Ligmincha International and welcomes retreat participants from all over the world. Retreat dates and topics are below. Look for more information, as it becomes available, on the [Serenity Ridge website](#).

February 8–10, 2019

Sherap Chamma: Mother of Wisdom and Love

with Marcy Vaughn

In many cultures the primordial female energy is seen as the origin of existence and the source of all positive qualities. As such, Sherap Chamma, Mother of Wisdom and Love, is the source of wisdom, and her medicine is love and compassion. With visualization, the sound of mantra and deep contemplation, senior student and teacher Marcy Vaughn will guide participants in a beautiful and simple meditation practice enabling each to connect directly with the divine feminine energy. (Concurrent Personal Practice Retreat available.)

April 11–14, 2019

Spring Retreat—The Five Elements: Connecting with the Living Universe

with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

According to the ancient Tibetan spiritual traditions, the five natural elements of earth, water, fire, air and space are fundamental aspects of a living universe. Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche will guide practices and activities through which we can deeply connect with the elemental essences, and nourish and restore health and vitality. Group activity and time for participants to engage directly with the elements in nature will be an integral part of the retreat. (Concurrent Personal Practice Retreat available.)

April 15–16, 2019

Ligmincha Symposium for Contemplative Sciences: Body, Breath & Mind

with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and other researchers/presenters

Join Rinpoche and a range of guests from different backgrounds but with common interests at this "Jeffersonian dinner" type of symposium. Small groups of presenters from different fields and spiritual backgrounds will engage in lively discussion and debate on the intersection of meditative practices related to the body, energy and speech, and our relationship to the mind. (Concurrent Personal Practice Retreat of 1-5 days available.)

June 22, 2019

Fundraising Dinner and Concert for Tibetan Orphans

Look for more information soon about Sa Le Ö, the musical healing and meditation event created by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche that will be coming Serenity Ridge and other locations in the U.S. and Mexico.

June 23–July 7, 2019

Summer Retreat—Tummo: Inner Fire of Realization, Part 2 of 3

with His Holiness Lungtok Dawa Dargyal Rinpoche and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

We are honored to have His Holiness, the 34th Menri Trizin (abbot of Menri Monastery and head of the Tibetan Bön lineage), join Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche in teaching the practice of tummo (inner heat). Tummo teachings include both tantric and dzogchen support practices to burn away subtle obscurations and cultivate bliss. All are welcome. Participants may attend one or both weeks but are encouraged to attend both weeks, if possible, as the practice has a cumulative effect. Includes teachings on the Three Great Mantras. For the last two days of the retreat, His Holiness will give teachings and empowerment on "The Knowledge and Wisdom of Longevity: Teachings from the Tsewang Jarima." The tummo series will conclude in summer 2020. Live translation in Spanish.

October 22–27, 2019

Fall Retreat—Guidance for Living and Dying: Commentary on the Bardo Teachings from the Bön Mother Tantra

with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

The word "bardo" means "in between" in Tibetan—including that time between life and death, and the time between death and rebirth. The teachings on the bardo are one of the six great methods of the path of the Mother Tantra (Tib.: *Ma Gyü*), one of the major tantric cycles of Bön. Rinpoche's teachings will focus on this chapter of information and advice regarding the bardo. Ample time for meditation, practice,

and questions and answers will be included in the retreat.
(Concurrent Personal Practice Retreat available.)

November 7–10, 2019 (tentative date)

Trul Khor, Part 2 and Part 3

with *Alejandro Chaoul-Reich and Rob Patzig*

Deepen your experience of the ancient practice of Tibetan yoga (trul khor) from the Bön A-tri Dzogchen tradition. The contemplative physical movements of trul khor enable participants to clear obstacles and obscurations to openness and clarity in meditation practice.

Participants in Part 2 will deepen the practice of the 16 movements, the outer tsa lung and the 9 Breathings of Purification.

Participants in Part 3 will focus on learning to guide the practice, as well as learning more about the tradition and the place of trul khor in the teachings. Students who take part 3 will then have the opportunity to apprentice with Ale and Rob over the 12 months after the retreat to become instructors. (Personal Practice Retreat of 1–3 days available.)

December 26, 2019–January 1, 2020

Winter Retreat—Dzogchen Silent Practice Retreat: Turning Inward

with *Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche*

Join Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche for this special week of dzogchen meditation and practice in an atmosphere of introspective silence. Dzogchen, which translates as “great perfection” or “great completion,” is the highest among the profound teachings of the Bön and Tibetan Buddhist traditions. These teachings point out our true nature, the source of wisdom and all positive qualities. All are welcome to attend this special practice retreat—from those who are exploring dzogchen for the first time, to those who have completed other dzogchen retreats, to those who have completed part or all of the Experiential Transmission series. Live translation in Spanish.

Details of the retreats will be added to the Serenity Ridge homepage as they become available. Other retreats may be added during the year.

[Serenity Ridge homepage](#)



Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche’s Upcoming Teaching Schedule

More Information Available Soon on Ligmincha Website

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche’s teaching schedule for December and January, as far as it is known at this time, is on the Ligmincha International website.

The schedule 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.

In addition, a listing of Rinpoche’s free live Facebook teachings and guided meditations is available [here](#).

Here is a list of Rinpoche’s retreats as we know them so far for December and January. Check back on the Ligmincha International website soon for a more updated list of 2019 retreats and teachings.

- **December 14 -16, 2018:** San Jose, Costa Rica: El Yoga de los Sueños Y del Dormir/Sleep and Dream Yoga (in English with Spanish translation). [Email for information.](#)
- **December 27, 2018–January 1, 2019:** Serenity Ridge, Shipman, Virginia: [Annual Winter Retreat: The Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung, Part 5.](#)
- **January 25–27, 2019:** Houston, Texas: [Spontaneous Creativity: Meditations for Manifesting Your Positive Qualities](#)
- MORE TO COME!!

[Schedule by date](#)

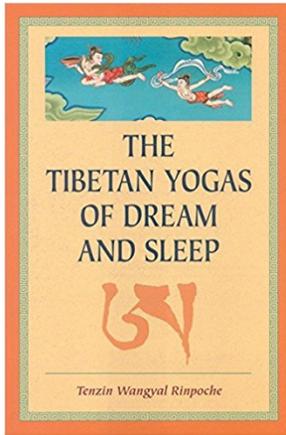
[Schedule by location](#)



First Audio Book by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche Now Available

***The Tibetan Yogas of Dream and Sleep* in New Format**

We are excited to announce the release of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche’s first audio book! *The Tibetan Yogas of Dream and Sleep*, in unabridged audible format, narrated by Marcy Vaughn, is now available through [Amazon.com](#).



The audio book is 7 hours, 33 minutes long. Amazon is offering a free Audible trial and a free app so that you can listen wherever you are, and even if you switch devices, you don't lose your place!

It is said that the practice of dream yoga deepens our awareness during all our experience: the dreams of the night; the dreamlike experience of the day; and the bardo experiences after death. The practice of dream yoga is a powerful tool of awakening, used for hundreds of years by the great masters of the Tibetan traditions.

Unlike in the Western psychological approach to dreams, the ultimate goal of Tibetan dream yoga is the recognition of the nature of mind or enlightenment itself. "If we cannot carry our practice into sleep," Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche says, "if we lose ourselves every night, what chance do we have to be aware when death comes? Look to your experience in dreams to know how you will fare in death. Look to your experience of sleep to discover whether or not you are truly awake."

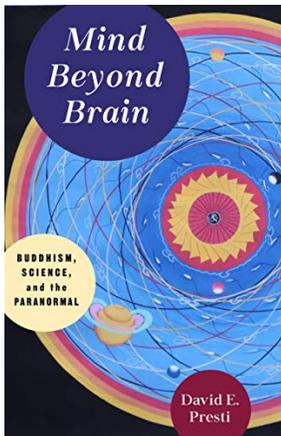
[Purchase audio book](#)



New Book: *Mind Beyond Brain* by David Presti

Based on 2010 Ligmincha Buddhism and Science Conference

We are pleased to announce the release of a new book, *Mind Beyond Brain: Buddhism, Science, and the Paranormal*, by David Presti, with a foreword by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. The book, published by Columbia University Press, is available through [Amazon.com](#) and other venues.



The contributed papers in the book are all derived from talks by renowned researchers given at a 2010 conference held at Serenity Ridge Retreat Center in Virginia and sponsored by Ligmincha. In his introduction to the book, Tenzin Rinpoche says the gathering was a realization of some of his own longtime interests, including how ancient spiritual practices can bring about physical health benefits along with profound shifts in consciousness.

Researchers in the book explore unusual phenomena that are difficult or impossible to explain based on current scientific theory. As the book jacket says: "In *Mind Beyond Brain*, the neuroscientist David E. Presti, with the assistance of other distinguished researchers, explores how evidence for anomalous phenomena—such as near-death experiences, apparent memories of past lives, apparitions, experiences associated with death, and other so-called psi or paranormal phenomena, including telepathy, clairvoyance, and precognition—can influence the Buddhism-science conversation. Presti describes the extensive but frequently

unacknowledged history of scientific investigation into these phenomena, demonstrating its relevance to questions about consciousness and reality. The new perspectives opened up, if we are willing to take evidence of such often off-limits topics seriously, offer significant challenges to dominant explanatory paradigms and raise the prospect that we may be poised for truly revolutionary developments in the scientific investigation of mind. *Mind Beyond Brain* represents the next level in the science and Buddhism dialogue."

Coming soon: Since 2010, Ligmincha has continued to sponsor regular conferences on science and spirituality. The next, Ligmincha Symposium for Contemplative Sciences: Body, Breath & Mind, is scheduled for April 15–16, 2019. Guests from different backgrounds but with common interests will focus on the intersections of meditative practices related to the body, energy and speech, and our relationship to mind. Look for more information on the [Serenity Ridge website](#) soon.

[Order the book](#)



NEW from Ligmincha Learning: 'Treasures of Bön: History, Lineage & Practices'

Online Course January 5–February 9, 2019

Ligmincha Learning has a new online course "Treasures of Bön: History, Lineage & Practices," that will be held from January 5–February 9, 2019. It is designed for anyone who would like to learn more about, or deepen their existing knowledge of, this ancient, profound tradition.

In a new course format, Geshe Denma Gyaltzen, resident lama for Ligmincha Texas, and John Jackson, mentor for many Ligmincha Learning courses and international teacher, enter into deep conversations around essential masters and teachings of the Bön tradition. The conversation is followed by a guided meditation led by either Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche or Geshe Denma.

The course is ideal for beginners who have recently connected with Bön 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.

The course is divided into five parts:

- History and Lineage
- The Causal Vehicle
- The Path of Sutra
- The Path of Tantra
- The Path of Dzogchen

[Learn more and view short video](#)

Coming in February 2019: "[The Five Elements, Healing with Form Energy and Light](#)" with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, February 9–March 23, 2019.



Tonpa Shenrap Miwoche, founder of the Bön tradition of Tibet



GlideWing Online Course 'Awakening the Sacred Body'

Begins January 5, 2019 with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche



Start the new year with "Awakening the Sacred Body: The Tibetan Yogas of Breath and Movement," an online workshop offered through GlideWing, with personal guidance from Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. This three-week online workshop, offered January 5–27, 2019, instructs you in practices of Tibetan yoga, practices that have been used for thousands of years to open and awaken the energy centers and channels of the subtle energy body.

Students will explore two sets of practices that, while easy to perform, can bring profound mental, emotional and physical benefits. In the Nine Breathings of Purification, you will rely on the power of the breath to clear and open three channels of light within the body as a means to connect with the natural mind. The Tsa Lung movements will help you open five chakras within the central channel of the body in order to access the deeper wisdom that is always available.

In each practice you will be guided to bring to mind the specific obstacles you are personally facing in life so you can clear them, access their antidotes and transform your life in lasting ways. The power of each practice relies on the correct focus of mind as you guide your breath—and with it, the subtle breath known as prana, chi or lung—into and through the visualized channels and chakras, releasing obstacles and obscurations through physical movement and with the exhalation. Together, these practices can allow you to discover the best of who you are and manifest your greatest potential.

[Learn more/register](#)

Starting in February: "[The Truth That Sets You Free: Discovering Your Inner Wisdom Through Practices of Waking and Sleeping](#)" with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, February 16–March 10, 2019.



Register Now for Tummo and Dream Yoga at Lishu Institute

Short Course in Phowa Also Available



Lishu Institute, Ligmincha's residential retreat center for intensive practice and study of the Tibetan Bön teachings, is beginning a new 10-week retreat on Tummo and Dream Yoga in early January 2019.

All are welcome to attend this intensive retreat, where they will live and practice at Lishu in an idyllic rural setting near the town of Dehradun in Northern India.

From January 7–March 1, students will have an opportunity to receive in-depth teachings on the topics of tummo (inner fire) and dream yoga from the Bön Mother Tantra, along with the practice of tsa lung trul khor (Tibetan yoga) from both the Zhang Zhung and the A-tri traditions.

Geshe Sherab Lodoe from Menri Monastery will teach, and resident teacher and translator Sangmo Yangri will translate. Students also will be supported by an experienced tummo practitioner from Triten Norbutse Monastery near Kathmandu, Nepal and newly graduated geshe from Menri Monastery.

If you are not able to attend this longer retreat, Lishu also will offer a short retreat on Phowa (transference of consciousness) March 4–17. The third trimester of the year will focus on dzogchen (nature of mind) teachings from the Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyü: 12 Small Tantras, to be held April 1–May 21.



The view from Lishu's back balcony

The course of study will include academics, meditation and practice and Tibetan yoga, plus an opportunity to visit nearby monasteries and towns.

For more information, email Sangmo Yangri.

[Application](#)

[Visit the website](#)



Upcoming Facebook Live Broadcasts

Coming in 2019: Conversations with Indigenous People



Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche offers several live Facebook broadcasts in December as part of his ongoing Pith Instructions series. In January 2019, Rinpoche hosts two Facebook Live conversations, one of them with invited members of indigenous communities from South America, Mexico and Africa.

You can view these upcoming broadcasts on [Rinpoche's Facebook page](#), and you can find even more Internet teachings [here](#). In addition, [real-time translation](#) of Rinpoche's Facebook Live broadcasts is available in multiple languages.

Rinpoche's Facebook broadcasts have been set for the following dates:

- **December 5, 2018, 1 p.m. New York time:** "How to Use Meditation Practice to Help Others"
- **December 12, 2018, 1 p.m. New York time:** "Above the Ego: Honoring the Dimension of the Sacred"
- **December 19, 2018, 1 p.m. New York time:** "The Power of Awareness in Times of Transition"
- **January 23, 2019, 1 p.m. New York time:** "Ancient Wisdom for Healing the Earth: A Group Conversation with Members of Indigenous Communities." How can we humans find more balance with nature toward healing the Earth? In conversation with host Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, members of indigenous communities Lorenzo Ccapa and Zenobia Cruz from Peru, Mindahi Bastida from Mexico and Colin Campbell from Africa discuss ancient perspectives on this critical topic of our time.
- **Wednesday, January 30, 2019, 10:30 a.m. New York time:** "Songs of Wisdom: A Group Reading of Poetry from the Spiritual Traditions of Tibet." Allow yourself to be surprised and inspired by the melodic sounds of spoken creative art. Host Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche of the Bön tradition and invited guests from other Tibetan spiritual traditions engage in a reading of sacred poetry. In Tibetan language only.

You can view past broadcasts in the [2018 Video Archives](#) on the [Ligmincha Learning](#) website.

[Learn more](#)

[Watch live](#)



Finding Oneself in the Losing

A Longtime Student's First-Time Journey to Menri Monastery, India

Polly Turner, Ligmincha International's director of webcasts and social media, wrote the following article after returning from her first visit to Menri Monastery. Photos were taken by Polly Turner, except the one with His Holiness.



HH 34th Menri Trizin, my brother & me

For 23 years, almost a third of my life, hardly a day has passed when I haven't connected one way or another with the Tibetan Bön tradition, the indigenous spiritual tradition of Tibet. After first meeting the prominent Bön teacher Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, nearly from the very start I imagined making a pilgrimage to the seat of Bön, Menri Monastery near Dolanji, India, where so many of my friends had made their way. But it was only a few weeks ago that I finally found – and lost – myself there.

When my former husband and I first traveled from the Philadelphia area to Charlottesville, Virginia, in the late 1970s to visit friends, the sunset behind the Blue Ridge Mountains pulled us

like a magnet toward that cozy, radiant college town. I felt the very same pull each time we visited thereafter, until one day we pulled into the driveway of our new home there. Twelve years and two children later, an artist friend invited me to venture into town one evening to "check out" a public talk by some Tibetan teacher. There, in the words and presence of Tenzin Rinpoche, I found the same glorious sunset personified. When the teaching was over, someone announced the weekly evening meditation practices we could attend at Ligmincha Institute with Rinpoche and his small, devoted sangha – the community of meditation practitioners. Without hesitation I attended, nearly every week, and soon twice a week. I never looked back.

The esoteric prayers, prostrations, evocative dancing deities on wall hangings, incense, Tibetan terminology, oral teachings penned into countless notebooks in hopes of preserving them somewhere other than the leaky vessel of my mind – all these adornments evoked an essential truth that slowly, steadily, became a shared bloodline among this close-knit group of Charlottesville meditators. Together we tended the shrine in the little center on Forest Hills Avenue that Rinpoche called home. We administered his office matters. We cleaned his kitchen before each of his returns from constant travels to teach worldwide. We baked treats to enjoy with tea after group meditations, edited newsletters, designed logos, held council meetings, maintained a website and e-mail list, hosted offsite retreats, and helped to sell meditation practice supports. With help from generous donors, together we located land for a retreat center and jury-rigged a barn to make a functioning teaching hall. We set up a new meditation center and dharma store downtown. We painted drywall in a newly erected dormitory building. We ran live webcasts. We attended retreat after retreat, after retreat.

During this time Ligmincha's worldwide sangha grew and flourished. The jumble of shamanic, tantric and dzogchen teachings and arcane Tibetan accoutrements slowly settled into shimmering clarity, as we came to embrace the simple, underlying truth to which they all pointed. Whenever I met a student of Bön from anywhere around the world, there was never a question that we shared an essential, grounding and joyful truth. It was no longer so much of a pull. Rather, we were at the center: a silent, clear, confident way of being.

Rinpoche had regularly brought teachers from Menri Monastery to the United States to teach us, or to assist at the retreat center with rituals and prayers. He brought his root teacher, the gentle and formidable Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, the esteemed head teacher of Bön, to whom several Bön lamas referred, unsurprisingly, as a living buddha. He brought His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche, revered spiritual leader of Bön and abbot of Menri. We relished the visits of these great masters and many other respected visiting lamas.

Often over the years as I helped to update the text on the Ligmincha website or write an article for

publication, I would type out the words "Menri Monastery near Dolanji, India." I pictured in my mind this holy monastery where Rinpoche had grown up under the close, nurturing guidance of Yongdzin Rinpoche, and where he was part of the first class of Menri students to receive their geshe degrees. Even though several of my sangha brothers and sisters had been there many times over, the monastery seemed shrouded in some magical dimension on the other side of the globe, wholly inaccessible due to the cost and time of travel; to the Indian culture in which women had a lower standing than men; and to reports from friends who went there for just a few weeks, yet afterward had trouble reacclimatizing to the West.

But finally, saddened by the death of His Holiness in fall 2017, I could no longer deny that the teachers' time, and mine, was running short. What's more, my brother moved to Delhi in his work with the State Department. I joked about visiting him. He encouraged me to come. Surprisingly, he offered to be my travel companion as I toured monasteries. That sealed it. I was sure I couldn't afford a trip around the world. But with the good graces of my new husband and my aging father, whom I'd brought to live near us in coastal South Carolina, I bought the plane ticket. I ordered immunizations for typhoid and Japanese encephalitis – what horrible diseases might one contract just from drinking tap water, being bit by a mosquito, walking in dirt, or breathing in smog? With a 10-year visa in hand and a hurricane at my heels – Hurricane Florence was making a beeline to Wilmington, N.C., my airport of departure, requiring us all to evacuate – I caught one of the very last uncanceled flights out. It seemed meant to be. Twenty-eight hours later, after exiting my final plane in Delhi, I spied a gentleman holding a sign with my name on it, my brother at his side.

Steeped in jet lag, I felt oddly at home in India, comfortable in my skin, but fully at the mercy of my brother, the chaperone. He had taken off a week from his new job, and we hired a driver to usher us on the nine-hour journey north to the foothills of the Himalayas. Before long we were in a car weaving through a chaos of honking traffic that paid no heed to lines in the bumpy road and yet somehow avoided sideswiping all the homeless people, cows and stray dogs that lined the way. Eventually, we wound down a mountainside to an Airbnb deep in the lush countryside and a footpath from the monastery.



Footpath from the Airbnb to Menri

The next day, Lama Kyap kindly arrived to transport us by car to Menri. Dolanji, it turned out, consists only of a dusty cafe and a couple of glorified mini-garages selling anything from candy and soda to notepads for young monks to scrawl on. A few wary monkeys peered at us from atop a sign over the roadway proclaiming "Tibetan Bönpo Foundation Dolanji." A long stone stairway with a hot iron handrail curved upward – so we were told – toward the still-invisible monastery above.

My longstanding fear of traveling to Menri was not that I might never make it there, but that I would – and that in so doing, I would become disassembled and unable to put myself back together again. In a way, that fear was justified. After reaching the top of those stairs, throughout the heat of day, at every turn I had to let go of any preconception and sense of control. Menri Monastery is a jumble of glorious buildings and alleyways, built in tiers on the mountainside. Every corner brings a new vista of the vast valley below, a sacred stupa, a residence, a teaching hall, a library, or a small gathering of men or boys clad in maroon robes.



Hurrying past the main temple



Shrine in the main temple



Menri monks in traditional debate

Lama Kyap took us first to the library's director, Geshe Tri Yungdrung. As we sat down by Geshe-la's desk, Lama Kyap translating, my attention was immediately drawn to a pile of paperbacks next to me that seemed immediately familiar. They were too familiar: an array of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's books in English. For close to 10 years I had labored on two of them as editor, working on the drafts almost daily from my home offices in Virginia and later South Carolina. The dichotomy shook me: Here I was, lost on some alien planet; and yet the most familiar and beloved aspects of my life were irrevocably, intimately linked to this place, these people. I couldn't stop smiling. There was no time to reflect. Geshe-la immediately ushered us on a full guided tour of the library, its texts and artifacts, and then led us through more roadways, alleyways and vistas to the reception room of the monastery's newly enthroned abbot and worldwide spiritual leader of Bön, His Holiness Lungtok Dawa Dargyal Rinpoche, the 34th Menri Trizin. I did three traditional prostrations, we presented His Holiness our silk offering scarves, and he blessed my mala, my Tibetan rosary.

From there my brother and I were ushered to a most-congenial His Eminence Menri Lopon Trinley Nyima Rinpoche, the monastery's head teacher. His Eminence took us out to the stupa where the 33rd Menri Trizin had been cremated and into a small museum dedicated to his relics, a stunning confirmation that this precious teacher of mine was truly gone. Without delay we were shown through the main temple, empty of monks and their ritual drumbeats and chanting. Geshe Thupten Negi, secretary of Lishu Institute in Dehradun, India, kindly treated my brother and me to lunch. The next day a driver allowed us to peer through grimy panes into sacred structures where Yongdzin Rinpoche and Lopon Sangye Tenzin Rinpoche, another of Rinpoche's main teachers, had resided; and then took us to the nunnery across the valley, where an elder teacher poured us apple juice from a crumpled juice box, and where nuns served us rice, greens and beans and invited us to light butter lamps in prayer. As we climbed yet one more set of stairs, I gave a spontaneous, bemused glance to the nun showing us around, and she, like a sister, immediately lit up with a laugh.



Lighting butter lamps at the nunnery

Later, my brother and I revisited the monastery on our own, feeling our way through the maze. We took a side trip to the nearby bustling town of Solan, where we followed steep alleyways through a chaos of vendors hawking food, Indian fabrics, and who knows what. Wilting in the heat, we lost our way. A couple of teenage girls pulled me next to them to steal a fast selfie with this exotic, sweaty Westerner in her wide-brimmed hat.

It was all utterly impossible and utterly rich, colorful and delicious. We lost ourselves over and over, and continually found ourselves somewhere else. There were moments to breathe, and little time to exhale. Within a few days, we found ourselves being driven back to Delhi. A few days later, somehow, some way, I found myself on the plane home. There were 30 hours of negotiating screening checkpoints, waiting at airports and sitting in airplanes. My husband greeted me outside of baggage claim and transported me

back to our seaside condo.

My dad was fine. The condo had weathered the hurricane. The electricity was back on, the Wi-Fi worked. But nothing has functioned the same since, nothing has quite been in control. How can it be under control, now that the deities have jumped from their wall hangings and drawn me into the dance? Even my blessed mala broke, its beads spilling across the kitchen floor. Twenty-three years of practice and devotion to Bön could never have prepared me for the walk up the stairs to the other dimension, the center of the mandala. I know I can't send the deity back to the wall. But I will continue sitting, time and again, on my meditation cushion, observing the constant, eddying thoughts and feelings, and learning how to rest, allow and just be.



On the road back to Delhi



News from The 3 Doors

Latin American Academy Graduation and Upcoming Courses

The 3 Doors graduates of the Latin American Academy celebrated the culmination of two and one-half years of group retreats, personal practice and community building under the guidance of senior teachers Alejandro Chaoul-Reich and Laura Shekerjian in Tepoztlan, Mexico in October 2018. The next Latin American Academy will begin in August 2019. More details coming soon!



Two online 3 Doors courses are planned in 2019: "Awakening Power of Breath" with senior teacher Laura Shekerjian in February–March 2019 and "Exploring your Wisdom Breath Energies" with senior teacher Alejandro Chaoul-Reich in March–April 2019. Additionally, "Walking the Healing Path" with 3 Doors senior teacher Raven Lee will take place in June at Lake Constance, Switzerland.

[Learn more/register](#)



Spanish Translation of VOCL

Link to October Issue Now Available

Look for the [translations of Voice of Clear Light newsletters](#) at the top of the [Voice of Clear Light website](#).

[Read VOCL in Spanish](#)



Upcoming Retreats

Serenity Ridge Retreat Center

The retreats 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, click on the links below, [email us](#) or call 434-263-6304.

December 26, 2018–January 1, 2019

Winter Retreat: The Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung, Part 5

with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Prerequisite: Previous completion of Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung series.

[Learn more/register](#)

February 8–10, 2019

Sherap Chamma: Mother of Wisdom and Love

with Marcy Vaughn

April 11–14, 2019

Spring Retreat—The Five Elements: Connecting with the Living Universe

with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

April 15–16, 2019

Ligmincha Symposium for Contemplative Sciences: Body, Breath & Mind

with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and other researchers/presenters

June 22, 2019

Fundraising Dinner and Concert for Tibetan Orphans

More information to come!

June 23–July 7, 2019

Summer Retreat—Tummo: Inner Fire of Realization, Part 2 of 3

with His Holiness Lungtok Dawa Dargyal Rinpoche and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

October 22–27, 2019

Fall Retreat—Guidance for Living and Dying: Commentary on the Bardo Teachings from the Bön Mother Tantra

with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

November 7–10, 2019 (tentative date)

Trul Khor, Part 2 and Part 3

with Alejandro Chaoul-Reich and Rob Patzig

December 26, 2019–January 1, 2020

Winter Retreat—Dzogchen Silent 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 [email the registrar](#), call 434-263-6304 or visit the [Serenity Ridge website](#).

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