

THE VOICE OF CLEAR LIGHT

News and Inspiration from Ligmincha Institute

Volume 8, Number 11 December 13, 2008

For easy reading, we recommend that you print out "The Voice of Clear Light."

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"THE RICHNESS OF OUR CONNECTION TO THE TEACHINGS" – an edited excerpt from the transcript of oral teachings given by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche during the 2000 ngondro retreat at the Serenity Ridge Retreat Center

Traditionally, one of the first things expounded on in the teachings is how very precious this life is. You don't need anything else to be rich; just having this precious life is the most richness one can ever have. One should recognize this. The teachings emphasize the preciousness of having a human body, and the preciousness of certain other conditions as well, such as being born in a central location – meaning, a location where you find the teachings, the dharma, the essence. The importance of being born at the right time, in the right space, in the right situation is all explained in the texts in great detail, at great length. From really understanding the importance of this, you realize it: you realize that life is precious. Human life is precious. The opportunity given to us right now is precious. We have in these teachings such a positive place to focus our lives, to think, to reflect, and to put our dedicated effort. This opportunity – the fact that we are able to do this, to have this experience – is

wonderful. It's good to reflect in this way. This kind of opportunity doesn't happen often.

So, the teachings emphasize that out of all of the possible life situations that one could be born into, it's a very rare opportunity to have all together in one's life the conditions of a healthy human body, an interest in the dharma, an interest in a specific entrance into the dharma, then to find the dharma, find a teacher, find profound teachings – not only find them, but find a connection to them, and then from that connection, to find developing within us a genuine confidence and trust in the essence of these teachings. It's really very special. It's good to realize this unique opportunity that we have, and to feel gratitude.

"BY CULTIVATING TRUST AND DEVOTION THROUGH UNDERSTANDING, ONE'S PRACTICE DEVELOPS LIKE A SPARK ON DRY GRASS" – an edited excerpt from the transcript of oral teachings given by Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche during the ngondro retreat at Serenity Ridge, November 2003

If we trust a teacher from the bottom of our hearts, then we will surely follow what they teach. If we don't trust this person, then there will always be some difficulties, some obstacles to following their instructions. And if we cannot follow precisely according to their teachings or instruction, then our practice will always be obstructed. Our practice may be disturbed by three kinds of obstacles: "ma tok," or not understanding or realizing; "lo tok," or wrong understanding; and "tet tsun," which means doubt, uncertainty, or lacking determination.

Therefore, first of all we have to understand the teachings or instructions correctly. Once we understand conceptually, we have to be able to gain the determination to realize this understanding. Then we have to be able to completely trust in this without any doubt. And then, our practice will develop like fire on the dry grass. Even a small spark on dry grass will grow quickly into a bright flame, getting bigger and bigger. Our practice will develop that quickly. Usually we practice every day, but even so, we still cannot continuously develop all the time. Sometimes our practice seems to be getting worse! This is caused by our lack of determination. It means that somehow we have some doubt. We may not even know what kind of doubt it is, but in the back of our minds, there's definitely something wrong. That is a kind of doubt, a lack of determination. So, we have to recognize that and understand it, and then purify this kind of thought. This is why we do the guru yoga practice. Through the guru yoga practice we can develop our inspiration and our determination. And every moment that we are doing guru yoga practice, we can feel the blessings. With those blessings we gain confidence. This is very important, confidence.

It's also very helpful to read the biographies of the early lineage masters of the Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyu. Those biographies have been translated into English, and they can give us much inspiration.

Inspiration is very, very important and not just with spiritual teachings. When our normal daily work inspires us greatly, then it is not difficult to do and the work becomes more effective. These teachings and practices of the Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyu require a lot of inspiration, aspiration, and devotion. Therefore, developing devotion is also very important. Without devotion we cannot get the proper inspiration or the proper trust and belief in the teachings or the lineage masters.

Devotion is not something that can be formulated into a rule: "You have to do this, and you have to do that." It's not like that. Devotion should come from our own understanding and experience. If you understand something quite well and correctly - "Oh, this is what that means!" - then from that understanding, trust develops. This trust is the basis for real devotion. Devotion is a form of trust. If we understand someone really well, then we trust them. If we don't understand someone, even if we say "I trust you" we don't really trust them.

Real trust should come from within our hearts. It comes from understanding. If we read the biographies of the early lineage masters, it will give us more understanding of their backgrounds, their practice, their knowledge, and what they did. We will understand them. We will naturally come to have the devotion, inspiration, and aspiration. Then it will be much easier to follow these teachings.

"ON THE ORIGIN OF THE ZHANG ZHUNG NYEN GYU TEACHINGS" - an excerpt from "Wonders of the Natural Mind" by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

The Dzogchen teachings of the Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyu, the Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung, are the oldest and most important of the Dzogchen traditions and meditation systems in Bon. The Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyu series of teachings was systematized by the Zhang Zhung

master Gyerpung Nangzher Lopo, who received them from his master Tapihritsa in the eighth century. However, these teachings were not composed by their human founder: They are not fabricated by thought but are self-originated. They have enjoyed continuous transmission by a “long” lineage through the centuries and never had to be concealed and rediscovered as terma which have “short,” or direct transmission from the time of their revelation.

Editors' Note:

“Wonders of the Natural Mind: The Essence of Dzogchen in the Native Bon Tradition of Tibet,” by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche (Snow Lion, 2000), is available in several languages at Ligmincha's Bookstore and Tibet Shop. Visit: <https://www.ligmincha.org/store/>

In addition, Ligmincha's Bookstore carries two books that inform about the Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyu lineage masters:

“The Little Luminous Boy” by Samten G. Karmay. \$59.

“The Oral Tradition of Zhang-Zhung” by John Myrdhin Reynolds. \$34.95.

“NANGZHER LOPO'S ATTAINMENTS” – a brief sketch excerpted from Ligmincha Institute's 2008 Wall Calendar

Gyerpung Nangzher Lopo belonged to the illustrious Gurib family of Zhang Zhung, a clan that boasted several previous Bon lineage holders. He received teachings from the esteemed master Dawa Gyaltsen and became a renowned eighth-century scholar and practitioner.

Through the practice of the yidam Meri he obtained great power and became royal priest to King Ligmincha of Zhang Zhung.

Nangzher Lopo was the first to set in writing the Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyu (Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung), one of the most revered series of Bon dzogchen teachings, which he himself received from his master Tapihritsa.

Nangzher Lopo developed pride due to his great power and fame, and it was to help him overcome this pride that Tapihritsa, having attained the rainbow body, appeared to him in the form of a young boy. The esoteric discussions and debate that ensued between Nangzher Lopo and the young boy humbled the great master and released him from his subtle obscurations. Nangzher Lopo achieved supreme realization and spontaneously composed a devotional prayer of invocation to his compassionate master, Tapihritsa, who manifested in the sky above him as a radiant buddha of white light.

COMING SOON: RADIO/INTERNET BROADCAST WITH TENZIN WANGYAL RINPOCHE ON THE POWER OF DREAMS

For two weeks beginning Dec. 17, 2008, New Dimensions Media will air an interview with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche entitled “Dreaming Your Way to Higher Consciousness,” hosted by Michael Toms (Program 3263).

For information on how you can hear this program either from a local radio station or directly from your computer, visit www.newdimensions.org and click on “Listening Options” in the left menu.

LIGMINCHA INSTITUTE'S 2009 RETREATS AT SERENITY RIDGE

Ligmincha's 2009 retreats at the Serenity Ridge Retreat Center, including Tenzin Rinpoche's spring, summer, fall and winter retreats, are now posted on our Web site for online registration. Visit Ligmincha.org and click on “Retreats,” or go directly to:

https://www.ligmincha.org/component/option,com_retreat/Itemid,138/

See also the newly posted 2009 worldwide schedule for Tenzin Rinpoche. Visit Ligmincha.org, click on “Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche” in the left menu, and then click on “Schedule by Date” or “Schedule by Location.”

Or, go directly to: <https://www.ligmincha.org/about-rinpoche/teaching-schedule-by-location.html>