

THE VOICE OF CLEAR LIGHT

News and Inspiration from Ligmincha Institute

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

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"OPENING YOUR HEART" - a few edited excerpts from oral teachings given by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, 2004.

Generally, different people succeed at different things in life. For everyone, success has so much to do with one's openness. We can see that very clearly. We may think at times that our success is due to our good logic or skills, or to our training, or to having enough

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education or enough confidence. These are also good reasons for success. But then there are the many times in life when an opportunity comes along to do something, and we think, "No, I cannot do that. That's too difficult a project for me. That's too big a task for me. It's too much work, it costs too much money, I don't have enough help." How many times do we hear ourselves saying things like that?

When you react in this way, it basically means you are not sensing the space of the situation. You feel as though the task is occupying all the space. When you don't have confidence in the space, then you won't take the initiative. This is because you do not have a sense of completeness.

Imagine that the heart is completely open. If it's really, really open, in a more enlightened sense, then in that openness love will spontaneously manifest. However, at the beginning stages of opening one's heart (through regular meditation practice), then the four

immeasurable qualities of love, compassion, joy, and equanimity will not be as spontaneous in coming. You may feel your heart is somewhat open, but not enough so to feel a really strong sense of love or compassion, or a strong sense of balance, or a strong sense of joy. Yet, the obstacles and the sadness that had been there are diminished. There is a bit more balance there. The hate is not as intense there.

When you feel these developments, that's really what tantric practice is about. Tantra utilizes the conceptual mind. You see, our minds are able to come up with incredible ideas and thoughts. We can see what great things people have accomplished with their thoughts. In the same way, our minds are able to generate incredible conceptual ideas of how we can develop in our relationships with others, how we can feel more joyful, how we can feel more balanced, how our hearts can open. That's really what tantra is about. Sometimes people say, "When I try to come up with ideas about what joy means to me, I just draw a blank." Yet, if I were to ask them about many other topics, then they would be able to generate so many ideas. For instance, if I were to say, "Let's talk about your confusion," you could probably tire everyone out talking about this subject. You could talk so much about it, with such complexity, so much depth, and so much excitement. Even if you were feeling sleepy, you would immediately wake up if you were suddenly asked to talk about your confusion.

What is it that makes us feel awake in that situation? What makes us come up with so many ideas? How are we able to converse for five hours about confusion, but not even for one minute on the feeling of joy? It's because we have not empowered our conceptual mind.

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Through the teachings and the practice, we are beginning to empower our conceptual minds on the basis of some sense of openness, rather than confusion. This is what we are trying to do here.

We are clearing the space in order to experience space - to just be in that space. We want to experience a sense of openness, a sense of completeness and a sense of the existence of certain qualities. How clearly can I just be as a result of clearing and dissolving my anger, for example? How clearly can I be as a result of sensing that I don't feel so imbalanced in my thoughts? After dissolving the anger or the imbalances, how much clearer is my sense of being than before? How much clearer is my sense of openness than before? In that openness what I feel is completeness. Completeness of what? Just completeness, not completeness of something. The kind of completeness that is based on conditions would not be the best kind of completeness. My sense of completeness stems from a feeling that I

don't lack anything. This is a better definition for this sense of completeness, rather than saying that if I have these 10 things then I will feel complete. When you narrow down the cause of your completeness to 10 things, then you may lose one after another of those causes until even all 10 are gone. That is not the true completeness, is it?

When you feel a bit more this true sense of completeness, then you feel more the existence of the virtuous qualities. You begin to feel the love that is there. When do you not feel love? When you feel incomplete. When do you not feel balanced? When you feel incomplete. When do you feel fearful? When you feel incomplete. When do you feel insecure? When you feel incomplete. The point is that when you're feeling more complete, then you feel the existence not only of the four immeasurable qualities of love, compassion, joy, and equanimity, but of every virtuous quality.

'ZHINE: DWELLING IN PEACE' - FEBRUARY 24 - 27, 2005

with Gabriel Rocco, at Serenity Ridge.

This year marks the fifth annual zhine retreat. Each year, a growing number of both beginning and senior students gather in February at Serenity Ridge, encouraged by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's strong and persistent recommendation to practice zhine. Through its skillful means, zhine strengthens the attention and develops the powers of concentration necessary to calm the mind, experience inner

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peace, and enter the tantric and dzogchen practices of Bon. For more experienced practitioners, zhine continues to develop the stability necessary for contemplation, the capacity to rest in the uncontrived natural state of the mind.

Each year the guidance and instruction for the practice of zhine at this retreat evolve further as they are informed by Tenzin Rinpoche's continuing commentaries and clarification of this calm abiding practice. This retreat is appropriate for new and experienced zhine practitioners. Everyone is invited to join in the warmth and community created by the many returning students as we develop the power of zhine and its capacity to enhance the results of other Bon dzogchen and Mother Tantra practices we have received from Tenzin Rinpoche.

Gabriel Rocco is a senior student of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. He has studied and practiced with Rinpoche since 1993 and is a member of the Ligmincha Board of Directors. Gabriel received his master's degree in contemplative psychotherapy from Naropa University.

Register for the zhine retreat by the "early-bird" date of December 22 for a fee of \$200, by January 26 for \$250, or after January 26 for \$275. Contact Ligmincha Institute at ligmincha@aol.com or (434) 977-

6161.

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF ZHINE - an excerpt from "The Tibetan Yogas of Dream and Sleep" by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche:

"Zhine practice should be done every day until the mind is quiet and stable. It is not only a preliminary practice, but is helpful at any point in the practitioner's life; even very advanced yogis practice zhine. The stability of mind developed through zhine is the foundation of dream yoga and all other meditation practices. Once we have achieved a strong and reliable steadiness in calm presence, we can develop this steadiness in all aspects of life. When stable, this presence can always be found, and we will not be carried away by thoughts and emotions."

"The Tibetan Yogas of Dream and Sleep," by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. Edited by Mark Dahlby. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1998. Available at Ligminchaj's Bookstore. Visit www.ligminchastore.org or call toll-free (866) 522-5269. In the Charlottesville area, call (434) 220-0060.

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HEART TO HEART - Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche responds to a student's question. (an excerpt from oral teachings given by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, 2004)

Student: I feel a sense of completeness while we're practicing and then I lose it because of "grasping mind." How should we practice to have a stronger innate self-awareness and a greater ability to abide?

Rinpoche: Good question! It seems like the answer is to practice more, doesn't it? This idea of a sense of completeness is very interesting. Is it a feeling? Is it a state? Is it a realization? Is it something that you have to hold onto? To cultivate? It seems that you can have different levels or ways of relating to that sense of completeness. Let's say there is a big sense of completeness, what one might call the embodiment of completeness. At the other end of the spectrum, there is the very conditional kind of completeness. Between those two there are an infinite number of layers of ways of being. With how many of those layers do you have a relation? It's interesting to reflect on this and to observe your own experience.

We place great importance on our ability to clear and release our obstacles and negative emotions, but the experience of actually resting in the space after the release is equally or even more important than the effort of releasing those obstacles. People go to therapists with the sole intent of releasing what is troubling them.

That's good, but therapists should allow their clients equal time as well to recognize the space that exists in the absence of any obstacle once it is cleared.

Usually after a problem is released, people immediately start to redefine themselves. My point is to not do that right away. Imagine that in the sky there are a lot of clouds, and you are trying to clear away one section of them. Once that area is cleared, what do you see? You see the sky. You don't try to reorganize the clouds again in that clearing. You are trying to see the sky more, the openness. People are afraid of the openness; or it has no meaning for them, they don't recognize it. They don't just allow it experientially and let it be present a little more. What do we do during the exhaustion part of the Heart Drops practice? We rest there. After contemplative breathing, what do we do? We rest there. The active stages of meditation practice are moving something, but they are not the unchanging state. Ultimately, the practice is not about doing, it's more about resting, about abiding. We do these practices because they allow us to abide more clearly.

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GESHE TENZIN WANGYAL RINPOCHE'S WINTER TEACHING SCHEDULE NOVEMBER

November 17, 2004, Charlottesville, Va.

'Sound and the Natural Elements,' Public Talk. Downtown Center

Contact: Ligmincha Institute, 313 2nd St. SE., Suite 207,
Charlottesville, VA 22902;

(434) 977-6161; fax: (434) 977-7020; e-mail: ligmincha@aol.com

November 19 -21, 2004, Berkeley, Calif.

'The 21 Nails, Part 5.' Contact: Laura Shekerjian, (510) 849-2373;
e-mail: lauras@majornet.com

DECEMBER

December 27, 2004-January 1, 2005, Charlottesville, Va.

Annual Winter Retreat: 'The Experiential Transmission of The Zhang
Zhung Nyen Gyu, Chapter 3, with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche; and
Ngondro Practice Retreat with Geshe Lungrig Gyaltsen

Contact: Ligmincha Institute, 313 2nd St. SE, Suite #207,
Charlottesville, VA 22902;

(434) 977-6161; fax: (434) 977-7020; e-mail: ligmincha@aol.com

JANUARY

January 14-16, 2005, Los Angeles, Calif.

'Sacred Syllables: The Healing Power of Sound in the Tibetan Bon
Buddhist Tradition'

Contact: Ligmincha California c/o Bob Anger, 929 Idaho Ave. #7, Santa
Monica, CA 90403-2957; (310) 369-4747; e-mail: RobertA@fox.com

Jan 28-30, 2005, Houston, Texas

'Sacred Syllables: The Healing Power of Sound in the Tibetan Bon Buddhist Tradition.' Contact: Ligmincha Texas, (713) 621-7430; email: info@LigminchaTexas.org

Website: www.LigminchaTexas.org

FEBRUARY

February 4-6, 2005, New York, N.Y.

'Experiential Instruction of the Dzogchen Masters of the Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyu'

Contact: New York Open Center, 83 Spring St., New York, NY. (212) 219-2527.

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WINTER RETREAT REMINDERS

This year the Winter Retreat at Serenity Ridge begins on Monday, December 27 (two days after Christmas, rather than one) and ends on Saturday, January 1.

Tenzin Rinpoche will be teaching from Part Three of The Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung: The View, Meditation, Flexible Behavior, and Result of Dzogchen (includes chapters 4 through 7 of the Chag Tri). Part Two transmission is required.

At the same time at Serenity Ridge, Geshe Lungrig Gyaltzen will be leading a Ngondro Practice Retreat. As many of you know, Geshe-la's presence at the recent Fall Retreat was a blessing, and he is a wonderful teacher. We are very pleased to announce that the Ngondro practice retreat is open to all, even those of you who have not received formal teachings on the Ngondro. Geshe Gyaltzen will lead the Ngondro practice and transmission will be given at the end of the retreat. So for those of you who have been wanting to begin study of the Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung, Part 1 of these teachings is the Ngondro, and you may begin the practice at this year's winter retreat.

If you sign up by November 18 for the Winter Retreat - Part 3 of the Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche - the cost is \$450. After November 18, the cost is \$500.

If you sign up by November 18 for the Winter Ngondro Practice Retreat with Geshe Lungrig Gyaltzen, the cost is \$350. After November 18, the cost is \$400.

Contact Ligmincha Institute at ligmincha@aol.com or (434) 977-6161.

BEAUTIFUL 2005 CALENDAR NOW AVAILABLE AT LIGMINCHA'S STORE.

This year's 11" x 8 1/2" black-and-white calendar has 12 full-page images of original calligraphy by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. Included is a glossary of the dzogchen terms that describe the meaning of each beautiful piece of calligraphy. For the third year in a row, Ligmincha offers the full Tibetan calendar (in Tibetan and English),

as well as Bon and Buddhist auspicious dates and major U.S. holidays. The calendar is now available! Price: \$12.95 plus shipping. Visit www.ligminchastore.org or call toll-free (866) 522-5269. (In the Charlottesville area, call 434-220-0060.)

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In practicing calligraphy, one develops a deep relationship with the seed syllables. These syllables represent the subtle flows of energy and deep, inner qualities. The enlightened beings themselves emanate from these syllables. Gazing at these syllables, or painting them, is a powerful form of meditation through which one develops many subtle qualities such as doubtlessness and self-confidence. - Geshe

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

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For more information about Ligmincha Institute, the teachings of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, or retreats at

Serenity Ridge or our regional centers, please contact us:

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