



## International Sangha News

### Students Report From Around the World Entering Through the Three Doors

*Sangha member Karolina Seltenheim of Austria shares her experiences surrounding recent retreats in Austria and at Serenity Ridge, and retreatants share their photographs.*



Rinpoche teaches in Austria

The 2010 Summer Retreat at Serenity Ridge on the Three Doors was an opportunity for me to deepen my understanding of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's teachings. As I am very practically oriented, Rinpoche's ability to translate the ancient teachings so they can be applied to our modern lives was most helpful.

For me, the bottom line of this retreat was taking refuge. Each day we would take refuge — drop again and again into the stillness, silence, and spaciousness — until one day refuge took me into the place and space that could host all my emotions, feelings, and problems. All the difficulties that I previously couldn't abide, they dissolved. Wonderful and effortless!

A few months after the retreat I had the experience of organizing Rinpoche's dzogchen (*Zhang Zhung Nyam Gyu*

) teachings in Austria. So many people had been waiting for years to attend this one retreat, and it was a perfect setting for applying all the practices learned.

For example, when signing the contract with the center where the retreat was to take place, as the only responsible party I had to pay a large deposit of my own money without knowing if enough people would register in time. Singing the warrior syllable *A* was the solution for

clearing space and cultivating trust.

When I had to answer people's emails, I was able to more clearly observe my pain body and pain energy. I wanted to give quick responses, but never was able. As I felt the tension building, the *tsa lung* practice was the solution.



Karolina at Austria retreat When working out the practical details of the retreat with other sangha members and finding that we had conflicting schedules and levels of understanding, I realized that we needed to give time to cultivate the ripening quality of the warrior syllable *RAM*

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In the end, when the retreat finally manifested, it was more or less effortless — *DZA!*

It was a wonderful retreat: the teachings from Rinpoche at that beautiful retreat place, the mountains with the first snow. There were 142 people from 10 different EU countries and one from the United States, giving us the wonderful feeling of an international sangha. Please have a look, just for a moment, at the beautiful photos below, especially the one of the rainbow that appeared during the retreat in the cloudless blue sky.

— Karolina Seltenheim

*Photograph by Bogusia Dausend*

Images from October 2010 dzogchen retreat in Austria; click to view:







<http://www.buddhist.org> The Five Elements of Buddhist Practice: A Guide to the Buddhist Path, by Bhaddanta, Buddhist.org