



Lishu Institute's New Curriculum

Interviews with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and Sangmo Yangri



Lishu Institute, Uttarakhand, India

Lishu Institute, Ligmincha's residential retreat center for intensive practice and study of Bön in Northern India, will complete its first three years of teaching and study in June and will begin a new cycle in September 2018.

The curriculum has been revised, and participants are now able to apply for any of the three 10-week cycles offered during a year, as well as for the entire yearly cycle of study.

The schedule for 2018–2019 is as follows:

- **September 4–November 10, 2017:** *Demonstration of the Meaning of the Tantra of the Twelve Small Precepts* (practice on the natural state of the mind)
- **January 15–March 23, 2018:** *The Practice Manual Called the Six Essential Points of the Bodhichitta* (Six Lamps – practice of vision)
- **April 9–June 15, 2018:** *The 21 Nails*

The following edited interview with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, founder and spiritual director of Lishu Institute, and Sangmo Yangri, who designed the curriculum for the new program, conducted by student Tiany Tefy, originally appeared in the Autumn 2017 issue of Lig mincha Europe Magazine.

Rinpoche, Lishu Institute will introduce a new curriculum in September 2018, after the completion of the first three-year program. Does this mean the vision of the institute's mission has changed?

There will be changes in the curriculum starting next year, but the main purpose of Lishu Institute hasn't changed. The emphasis has always been and will continue to be providing long-term, residential and in-depth studies in the Bön tradition, preserving Yungdrung Bön's rich teachings and unique heritage.

Although students only began studying at Lishu Institute in 2015, the vision, preparation and work began many years before. We initially planned a five-year program of study, but discovered that this would not be feasible for most people. So we turned that into a three-year program, with the flexibility to come for only 10 weeks at a time to study specific topics.

After reviewing the results of the first three-year term, we are introducing some changes. We are adapting to people's needs. A big change is that, because of the redesign of the courses, students can begin at any time, and commit to as much of the curriculum as they want. Or, students can come to study specific aspects of the Bön teachings according to their interests and background.

There is so much benefit that comes from stepping out of one's daily routines to study and

practice dharma. We want to support as many people as we can, and we want to recognize that the modern world makes such a commitment quite difficult. These changes are meant to help with that.

We are not diluting the teachings, or simplifying them. Sangmo-la has diligently put this program together. And Geshe Sherab Lodoe and Sangmo-la are very skilled, very experienced teachers. They, and visiting teachers, will continue to present the highest quality courses. What we are doing is adding emphasis to the areas that are most relevant to the greatest number of students. So it is a continuous change with the flow of conditions.

What are the main changes from the first program?

The main change is that the *Nine Ways of Bön*, which is more study-orientated, will not be carried over. The *Ma Gyud* and *Dzogchen* teachings, which are practice-oriented, will remain. Moreover, there will be a new teaching on the Bön *Lam Rim*, a foundational text, together with a *Ngöndro* retreat.

Lishu Institute also will offer more short-term (two-week) retreats. For example, we currently have such a retreat on the practice of *Yeshe Walmo* on the calendar. This will give the opportunity to more people to experience the environment of Lishu Institute and get a taste for in-depth study, without having to start with such a big commitment.





6 / 6