



Chokgyur Lingpa Foundation

Newsletter 2/April 2011

In this issue:

Pilgrimage • 3 - 4

Trip to Thailand • 5

Yoga with the Monks • 5

Sadhana Ritual Course • 7

Nine Yanas' Retreat • 7

Gurus' Heart Advice • 8 - 13

Construction at
Cooperstown • 13

Upcoming Events • 14 - 15



His Eminence Tsikey Chokling during the annual lama dances

The Chokgyur Lingpa Foundation was founded in 2006 by His Eminence Tsikey Chokling Rinpoche together with his son, Kyabgön Phakchok Rinpoche.

The sole mission of the Chokgyur Lingpa Foundation is to benefit sentient beings and preserve the Buddha's sacred teachings.

www.cglf.org

A LETTER FROM PHAKCHOK RINPOCHE

Dear Vajra Friends,

I hope that all of you are well, happy and healthy. This is our second newsletter and it comes just when we are still recovering from the shock of the earthquake in Japan, where the loss of lives and whole cities has been catastrophic.

In the Four Seals of Dharma, Buddha taught about the impermanence of all conditioned phenomena in general. It is a fact of life that when one is born, one will leave this earth one day, and what is built will eventually be destroyed. The recent spate of natural disasters and wars around the world underline this truth. What we can do while living is to live a meaningful life and find a positive solution for the time of death, through our Dharma practice.

One of Vajrayana's unique qualities is that it teaches one how to utilise the point of death to achieve enlightenment. The best is of course for one to be able to recognise the self-cognizant wakefulness at the point of death. However, for those of us who are not able to do that, one of the best practices at the point of death is the profound transference of consciousness practice (or *Phowa* in Tibetan), where one can be liberated from rebirth in the lower realms at the point of death. Good practitioners who master this *Phowa* practice can directly transfer their own consciousness at that time to a pure land, where one will have all the necessary causes and conditions to enable one to achieve enlightenment.

Previously, Chokling Rinpoche has only given this teaching from the Chokling Tersar to a very select group of practitioners, primarily ordained sangha on the traditional three-year retreat. However, two years ago in 2009, Rinpoche gave the teaching for the first time in public, in Penang, Malaysia. At that time, 148 participants from seven countries received

the teaching, and due to the supreme blessings, every one of them displayed the external sign of accomplishment of this *Phowa* practice, evidenced through a piece of kusha grass (see photo below). This was achieved within four days which is extraordinary.



This year, Chokling Rinpoche has kindly agreed to give the teaching in public again, in Johor Bahru, Malaysia. Some of you may think that there is plenty of time to receive the teaching in the future, and some of you may feel that Malaysia is too far away to come for teachings. Our sangha members in Malaysia and Singapore have worked hard to make things convenient and comfortable for all participants, by having the retreat in a good hotel, and even arranging for group buses to ferry people who choose to fly in via Singapore. Milarepa, Marpa, Naropa and the great masters of the past certainly did not have all these comforts!

Therefore, please reflect on the impermanence of all things, and think carefully whether you want to seize this opportunity to receive a precious and rare teaching.

Sarva Mangalam!

Phakchok Rinpoche

You can find more information and register for the International Phowa Retreat via www.cglf.org/news-a-events/foundation-events.html. The deadline for registration is 15 May, 2011.

PILGRIMAGE: FOOTSTEPS OF THE BUDDHA

Last December, a group of seventy pilgrims of all ages and backgrounds from fourteen different countries had the good fortune to go on pilgrimage to the eight main places related to Buddha Shakyamuni's deeds. We were guided by Kyabje Chokling Rinpoche and Kyabgön Phakchok Rinpoche.

For ten days, life was filled with inspiring and intense experiences at the sacred places and also a lot of traveling—it felt like we were living in the buses sometimes!



Our itinerary was: Lumbini, Sravasti, Kushinagar, Vaishali, Rajgir, Nalanda, Bodhgaya, and Sarnath. At each place we paid respect, made offerings, and did some meditation together; one of the pilgrims (Hillary Herdman) shared some historical facts about the sites and both the Rinpoches gave brief teachings.

At the Lumbini garden, Chokling and Phakchok Rinpoches joined Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche and Tulku Urgyen Yangsi Rinpoche to perform the land consecration ritual for the new Ka-Nying monastery.



At Vaishali, the group offered representations of enlightened body, speech, and mind to the two Rinpoches. Near Bodhgaya we visited Cool Grove charnel ground and performed a feast offering together. One afternoon we were given a public audience with the XVII Karmapa. That evening the Rinpoches gave new blankets to more than three hundred local beggars and Phakchok Rinpoche taught on the *Wisdom of Passing Sutra*.



PILGRIMAGE: FOOTSTEPS OF THE BUDDHA

On our final day, we spent one day at leisure in Varanasi, near Sarnath.



One of the pilgrims wrote to us afterwards saying:

"We are keen to share some of our feelings from the pilgrimage. Firstly, my wife and I were very much inspired to see Chokling Rinpoche and his actions, which always remind us about the importance of non-dualistic thinking, something that we always miss in our daily life.

"Secondly, we were very happy to receive so many teachings and so much care and guidance from Phakchok Rinpoche who was so kind to lead the pilgrims, helping them get the best out of the pilgrimage. Thirdly, we were also very happy to see the harmony among the Sangha members, something that really supported us throughout the pilgrimage.

"My mother also sends many thanks and much gratitude (which she could not express in words at the time) to all those who were so kind in helping her when she was sick. This pilgrimage thus turned out to be a very special pilgrimage, and in many ways reminded us again and again about the importance of seriously practicing the Dharma, and, as Phakchok Rinpoche has reminded us, that it's so important to always engage in the practice of emptiness in our daily life."

"When we visit these sacred sites, we are reminded of the Master, Lord Buddha. It develops in us a strong sense of compassion. Ideally, one should be a better person when one returns, otherwise it is not useful, a waste of money and time."

- Walking with the Buddha by His Holiness Dalai Lama



“NAMASSAKARN!” FROM THE LAND OF SMILES

In his first tour of 2011, Phakchok Rinpoche travelled to Thailand from the 14th to 24th January. It was a highly successful tour, where Rinpoche met, taught and blessed close to 3,000 people in and around Bangkok. In this year's trip, Rinpoche re-visited and gave teachings in Tawana Hotel on The Path to Happiness and Dispelling Negative Emotions, The Essence of the Bodhisattva Practice at DMG, and profound teachings on *Recollecting the Buddha* and *Bodhichitta* at the Siam Society. This year's program also expanded significantly with first time visits to Buddhadasa Indapanno Archives, Nakorn Pathom, Mahidol University and Rajabhat University. Rinpoche also gave a lunchtime talk for the first time in C.P. Tower, the offices of the biggest conglomerate in Thailand, where Rinpoche taught the seven precious qualities that one should strive to cultivate. In the last two days of his stay, Rinpoche conducted two simultaneous meditation retreats, one for beginners and one for more advanced meditators.



Throughout his tour, Rinpoche emphasized the need to learn and practice the true dharma without any sectarian bias to ensure the foundation for Buddhadharma remain solid, and not just survive as a facade. A hectic tour for Rinpoche but surely a precious one for the Thai sangha!

YOGA WITH THE MONKS

Zim Pickens, one of Phakchok Rinpoche's American students, has been teaching yoga to the monks at Riwoche monastery for the last six months. The monks are steadily progressing through the first series of the Astanga Yoga system, mixing serious practice with laughter, joking and horsing around. It has been a good way for them to exercise and have fun before classes start each week.



THE FIRST SADHANA RITUAL COURSE AT RIWOICHE MONASTERY

From 1-30 November, 2010, CGLF hosted its first Sadhana Ritual Course at Pal Kagyu Shedrup Tashi Dhargay Phuntsok Ling monastery (aka Riwoche monastery), Tinchuli, Kathmandu. The course focused on the Guru Rinpoche sadhana called *Trinley Nyingpo* (The Heart Essence of Enlightened Activity) from the *Lamey Tukdrub Barchey Kunsel* (the Guru's Heart Practice, Dispeller of All Obstacles) cycle of treasure teachings from the Chokling Tersar (the New Treasures of Chokgyur Lingpa). The aim of the course was to provide all students with an equal opportunity to learn in detail about both the meaning and practical aspects of Vajrayana ritual practice. The teachings were given in Tibetan by Lama Tenpal Gyatso, one of Ka-Nying Shedrup Ling monastery's senior monks, and translated into English by Ani Laura, one of Rinpoche's students from England. Classes were held for four hours a day, six days a week, and all of the participants also performed the practice together each day.

At the beginning of the course, His Eminence Tsikey Chokling Rinpoche kindly bestowed upon us all the necessary empowerment and oral transmissions. Then for the first ten days of the course, Lama Tenpal gave a detailed explanation of development stage practice in general and the visualisation stages of the Trinley Nyingpo in particular. After that, he taught the students the different melodies and mudras, and how to make the offering tormas, play the vajra and bell and damaru, and how to perform the feast offering. We also learnt how to perform the smoke offering connected to this practice and to do the practice in its more extensive and concise forms. By the end of the course, we were all able to do the practice confidently, and also act as the chant master and shrine master.

Towards the end of course, we all went on pilgrimage to Asura cave in Pharping, which is one of Guru Rinpoche's holy sites, and made a feast offering. On the last day, we performed an elaborate feast offering with His Eminence Tsikey Chokling Rinpoche at Ka-Nying Shedrup Ling, who was delighted to see how much everyone had learnt and gave the group some excellent advice for practice.

It was an invaluable learning experience for everyone, and we're pleased to announce that we will be holding a second Sadhana Ritual Course from October 17 - November 17, 2011. For more information, please see www.cglf.org/news-a-events/foundation-events or email events@cglf.org.

Sarva Mangalam.



THE FIRST NINE YANAS' RETREAT IN NEPAL

Phakchok Rinpoche began the new year by holding the first Nine Yanas' retreat in Nepal. From January 2-8, Rinpoche gave teachings on the Shravakayana at Pal Kagyu Shedrup Tashi Dhargay Phuntsok Ling monastery (aka Riwoche monastery), Tinchuli, Kathmandu. The Nine Yanas (or nine vehicles) is a traditional framework or system of practice that's followed particularly in the Nyingma or Old School. With the aspiration to give dharma students the opportunity to study and train thoroughly and genuinely on the gradual path, Rinpoche began teaching this carefully arranged course on the Nine Yanas.

Rinpoche's teachings on the Shravakayana followed a book containing a collection of texts he had compiled specifically for this purpose, which includes texts by Indian panditas and Tibetan mahasiddhas, and words of the Buddha himself. These texts cover topics such as the history of the buddhadharma, philosophy, meditation, and mind training. There's also a specific sadhana for each yana. These sadhanas come from the *Rigsum Nyingtik* (the Heart Essence of the Three Enlightened Families), which is a branch teaching of the Three Sections of the Great Perfection, a very famous treasure teaching revealed by the supreme treasure revealer Chokgyur Lingpa. In this way, this course is a unique mix of philosophy, meditation, and ritual practice.

The retreat was a combination of teachings with Rinpoche, meditation sessions, and discussion groups. A small group of Western and South-east Asian students together with more than forty monks and nuns (the majority being Rinpoche's young monks from Riwoche and Vajra Varahi monasteries) attended the teachings. Rinpoche gave amazing teachings in both English and Tibetan, and during the last few days he also gave a lot of meditation advice and a very direct and inspiring commentary on Jamgön Kongtrul the

Great's Calling the Guru From Afar.

All of the sessions were held in the monastery's main shrine hall, which is very beautiful, although very cold! Everyone ate their meals together (courtesy of the monastery's new, very good cook) and drank tea in the morning and afternoon breaks together sitting outside on the sunny lawn or upstairs on the monastery roof. We had three meditation sessions a day, and the discussion session was guided by one of Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling's senior shedra (Higher School for Buddhist Studies) monks and translated into English.

Rinpoche gave a lot of time for questions and answers, which was extremely helpful for everyone, and was extremely kind as always in explaining crucial points again and again and again until we finally got it! Rinpoche ended the retreat with his last teaching, which was given amidst candle light (power cuts in Nepal...) and finished at ten at night. Everyone was so grateful to Rinpoche and said they had really learnt and understood something about the genuine buddhadharma and how to truly practice it in order to tame their minds.

For more information on these Nine Yanas' programmes, please email nineyanas@phakchokrinpoche.org.



GURUS' HEART ADVICE

Part two, continued from CGLF Newsletter 1/Dec 2010)

I would like to tell you how these two teachers (Tulku Urgyen and Nyoshul Khen Rinpoches) are connected. Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche was in general a Dzogchen master, but in particular one of the holders of Khenpo Ngakchung's oral lineage of Dzogchen meditation. Khenpo Ngakchung was a great master from the early twentieth century (1879 – 1941). One time Khenpo Ngakchung was staying in the forest doing meditation with his teacher. They only had a little bit of tea, so they would use each portion many times. When he used the tea the first time he would say, "This tea is nirmanakaya tea, because it is very black." The second they used it he would say, "It's sambhogakaya tea, because it is a little bit less dark", and the third time it would have no colour at all and so he would say, "It's dharmakaya tea. I am drinking the three kayas' tea!"

Khenpo Ngakchung did pongdag four or five times. Pongdag is a method to help us progress in meditation. Sometimes we feel our meditation is stuck at one level. How to go further? Practicing pongdag is a very effective method. Pongdag means you literally give up everything, all your possessions, whatever you have. When I first heard about this, I started counting my possessions so that I would know what it was I would have to give up. Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche was the student one of Khenpo Ngakchung's main students, Shedrup Tenpey Nyima.

When Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche came to Nepal, he and Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche shared many teachings. Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche gave Khenpo Ngakchung-style teachings to Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche and Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche gave Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche teachings from the Chokling Tersar (the New Treasures of Chokgyur Lingpa), such as the *Kunzang*

Tuktig (the Heart Essence of Samantabhadra) and the *Dzogchen Desum* (the Three Sections of the Great Perfection). I heard that while they were exchanging teachings they locked the door from inside and nobody else was allowed in.

Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche said that Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche's level of realization was the third of the four visions taught in the Dzogchen teachings. In the Dzogchen or Ati yoga teachings there are four different levels of realization of Thögal (Direct Crossing) called the four visionary appearances: the revelation of dharmata, increasing experience, maturation of insight, and exhausting dharmata. So Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche said that Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche had reached the third vision, maturation of insight. The fourth is perfect enlightenment. He was that kind of meditator. Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche said that very few can reach that level of realization in these times.

When I then went to request teachings from Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche the first question he asked me was, "What teachings have you received from Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche?" At that time I was very into the philosophical way of thinking. He asked me this very simple question. Honestly speaking, I had never studied any Dzogchen texts at all so I didn't know how to use these kinds of high words. I said, "I don't what *Trekchöd* (Cutting Through) means. I don't know what *Tögal* (Crossing Over) means. But I received this: Rinpoche said Phat. I spaced out. And now I am doing that." He listened. I spoke quite frankly. I said, "I am a little bit uncomfortable in meditation, but this is what I am doing." Then Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche said, "Alright, you must do guru yoga." He said that in any kind of meditation if you want to make rapid progress the method that allows you to do that is guru yoga practice. The blessings of the guru are very important he said. He also said, "When you want a certain treasure then in order to know the value of the treasure it is very important to

know the origins of the treasure, where it came from." Having said that, he gave me his book *A Marvelous Garland of Rare Gems: Biographies of Masters of Awareness* in the Dzogchen Lineage, two thick volumes of the lifestories of the Dzogchen lineage masters. I had to read them for two weeks while doing guru yoga at the same time. Early in the morning I would wake up, put on some warm clothes, do my practice, start reading, and then slowly fall asleep.

After that I received from Rinpoche teachings on Thögal, the other part of Dzogchen. I had received teachings on Trekchöd earlier on from Tulku Ugyen Rinpoche.

When he gave teachings he would pinpoint a few important things, a few crucial points of advice. He said, "Whenever you give teachings or do practice it is very important not to forget the kindness of the teachers and to remember how they received the teachings and how they practiced. Never forget that. Keep this in mind all the time. By doing so you will gain more diligence, more kindness, be less likely to become lazy, and it won't be so easy for your mind to fall into distraction." The second thing he said is that impermanence is a very important teaching.

I'd like to tell you a little bit about the kind of person he was and what he went through when he received the teachings. I think it's very important for us. Nowadays, myself included, we are very greedy in receiving teachings. The teachings become an object of our greed. We like to receive teachings on important texts, like 'The Last Advice of the Great Dzogchen Master so and so'. We like to hear those kinds of big names. Of course, whatever the advice is it's talking about the same thing: taming the mind. Nevertheless, we like to hear big names. We are greedy. We like to have this teaching, that teaching, this yidam, that yidam, Tara, Vajrayogini. We are so greedy for practices, but when it really comes down to the practice itself we are nil.

Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche told me himself how when he was receiving teachings from his guru he was the

youngest among all the students. He would go begging for food and then go up to the mountains to do meditation, rationing out his tsampa (barley flour). He said he could stay for about a month just eating tsampa with hot water and doing meditation. When the guru himself called his students and said, "Come down. I have to give you more teachings", he would say, "No. First I want to accomplish and experience the teachings you've already given me. When I experience exactly as it is explained in the texts then I will come down." So he would sit and sit and sit until gaining experience. Only then would he go and receive more teachings. Then he would go straight back to the mountains and do meditation. That is the kind of person he was. He went through that kind of training. When he told me this, I thought, this is a teaching telling me to not be too greedy and to practice until you gain experience.

He would tell us all the time that to be humble is very important, being humble from your heart. He never criticised anyone, not a single person. That is something I think we need to learn. In the Mahayana teachings, the bodhisattva teachings, the practitioner is taught to see all sentient beings as one's own parents. As a Vajrayana practitioner, whatever one sees, whether negative or positive, is seen with pure perception. All beings are seen as Buddhas and bodhisattvas. For example, for the guru yoga practitioner, whatever you see at all times is the guru. The table is guru. Your mind is guru. Your emotions are guru. Your bad karma is guru. Your pain is guru. Everything, whatever you see is the guru. Even an enemy coming towards you saying all sorts of unpleasant things—everything should be seen as the guru. So if you start criticising, what kind of practice are you doing? To criticise is totally against, the total opposite of your practice, whatever level you are at. When I looked carefully in that way then it became clear to me why it is so important not to criticise, because I criticise a lot myself. That is a very important teaching; not to criticise.

He would say, "I am afraid of human beings. I am not afraid of anything else, except human beings.

Human beings make trouble. Don't come to see me. Go away. Go away!" That is why the great masters talk of a cave in an empty, unpopulated land. Milarepa sang, "I wish to go there and die alone." He said that all the time. "I am a beggar", he said. "My wish is to go there and practice. That is my wish." So what does that mean? They're talking about the benefit of the solitude of the mountains and how human beings, their faces make the emotions come up. A smiling face makes you happy. A scowling face makes you angry. A neutral face makes you confused. All these different kinds of facial expression make us very emotional. And this is all to do with our greed. We want to make everyone laugh, but no matter how hard we try we can't and because of that we become upset. When you go to the mountains that whole turmoil of the emotions connected to faces is removed, because no one is there. Animals are there, yes, but the good thing about them is that you don't know if the deer are laughing or if the deer are angry. Their tails go around and up and down, but you don't really care. Just meditate. The birds just tweet and hoot. You don't know what they are saying. Just meditate. That is why Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche said, "I don't want to see human beings. I don't want to see them."

However, if you do want to see human beings then okay. You can see people, meet with them and talk or whatever, but be careful. Be aware that all of these different kinds of emotions can arise, so be wary.

He was quite famous for his mantra water. I was very curious about this, because I had heard that mothers who are having problems giving birth would drink some water Rinpoche had blown on and then the baby would be born without any difficulties. I asked Rinpoche what kind of visualisation and mantra he was doing when blowing on the water. I wanted to do it too, but he said, "No, no, I don't visualize or chant any mantra. I just stay in my meditation and blow."

Whenever we stayed with Rinpoche we had to do three practices each day without fail. Early in the morning as soon as we woke up we had to do Vajrasattva practice together in the shrine room. Then in

the afternoon we had to do Mahakala puja and in the evening we had to do a feast offering. We would do that everyday as daily group practice. When I asked him about the importance of these practices he said of course Vajrasattva practice is done for purification of the negative karma and habitual tendencies that obscure our buddha-nature. Then I said, "Why do we, Dzogchen meditators, need the protector Mahakala?" He said, "If in fact you practice very well then you don't need to go through the *texts* for the dharma protector offerings, chanting certain verses and arranging offerings in a certain way, but even if your practice is very good you still need the protectors in order not to have obstacles in practice." Then he said, "Most important is the feast offering, because, when we have perfectly completed the accumulation of merit then the realisation of emptiness is the automatic result. That is why it is so important to do feast offerings, because it is the fastest way to accumulate merit. Who is offering? I, the Buddha, am offering. What am I offering? The Buddha's wisdom. To who? To the Buddha. So everything is recognised as the buddha. Rinpoche said it is very important to do that kind of feast offering on a daily basis.

Of course we students would try to visualise Guru Rinpoche. Sometimes he would be without a nose, sometimes with no eyes. Sometimes he would be holding the vajra up in the air, sometimes down on his knee, because we would forget to visualise. They would read so fast. Then I found that the best way to do visualisation is to pick a picture, an actual image of Guru Rinpoche or whoever the deity is, and just place that picture in front of me. That is much easier for beginners. However, whenever I looked at Rinpoche during the feast offering he would just be sitting relaxedly in meditation posture. I don't think he was trying to visualise Guru Rinpoche. In whatever he did he would be in meditation. So I asked him, "During the feast offering are you visualising?" He said, "Yes. The Dzogchen method of visualising is a very easy way of visualising. Since we've already recognised the awakened state, we don't need to mentally create and fabricate the visualisation."

Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche was always very fatherly towards his students. Just like a father worries that his son might fall onto the wrong path, that his son might fall off a cliff, that his son will eat something bad, or fall into the company of bad companions, and takes on the responsibility of showing him the correct path, in the same way Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche cared for and guided his students. He said himself that the teacher is like a father and the student is not like a student, but a son.

The most important advice both of my gurus gave was to meditate. Meditate! Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche in particular said, "I don't care if you build big monasteries and other things and so forth. What is important is your practice and meditation. Meditation is the most important." In particular he told me, "Don't be eager to teach." That is something I think we all have a problem with, so he said, "Do not eager be too eager to teach right away." He said there are one hundred thousand dakinis' heart beats in each word of the texts, making us understand how important and precious the texts are.

My gurus gave me advice through scolding and different ways. One day I was staying with Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche and he was talking about the Great Perfection. Of course he was so incredibly kind and before he would give teachings he would always put his palms together and supplicate. He then gave me a piece of advice spreading out his five fingers in front of me: five different motivations. He drew a line along his little finger and pointing to the lower half said, "One motivation we have is fear and the wish to be free from that fear. For example, some people are sick or are experiencing some particular obstacle with their husband or daughter and then motivated by that they start to practice. That kind of intention is not very pure." Pointing to the upper half of his little finger he said, "The desire to gain excellent qualities. Both are samsaric motivations" he said. The second finger Rinpoche said is a mind which is neither positive nor negative, but neutral, a neutral intention. The middle finger he said is the motivation of those with inferior faculties, thinking, "I fear falling into the lower

realms. I want to be liberated from the lower realms. For that reason I want to practice observing karma." The next finger he said is the motivation of those with mediocre faculties, those at the Hinayana level, who fear samsara. Buddha taught that samsara is a pit of fire, a nest of poisonous snakes, a land of cannibals and so on in order to instil fear and revulsion in them, to make them want to be free from samsara. Then they meditate, meditate, meditate, meditate and attain the level of Arhatship.

One of the great bodhisattvas was once giving teachings on emptiness to five hundred Arhats. All five hundred Arhats started bleeding from the mouth and nose and died right there and then. They could not handle hearing that everything is emptiness. *The Heart Sutra* says, "No path, no attainment, no non-attainment." Then Shariputra came and said to the bodhisattva, "Why did you do that? They had already achieved the level of Arhat. What have you done?" But he said, "Don't worry. They are dead, yes, and they have gone to the lower realms, but in their next life you look. They will be at the bodhisattva level because of the seed I planted through giving those teachings."

Then pointing to the thumb he said, "This is the motivation of those with superior faculties, the superior motivation, which is what? Pure bodhicitta." Pure compassion and wisdom. When these two are combined together that is pure bodhicitta. When you lack one of these, it is not pure bodhicitta. You must have the two combined; the compassion which looks to all mother sentient beings in samsara and the wisdom looking to the freedom from samsara. So Rinpoche said, out of these five, which motivation should we have? This one, he said, with a big thumbs up.

Most of the time quite honestly speaking we have the lowest motivation. We have fear of suffering and obstacles and attachment to excellent circumstances and qualities. Sometimes we might reach the third or fourth level, but then we fall down again. We never reach the highest level. This is some very simple advice from Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche. You can teach to

children like this. Just five fingers.

Then he told me that whoever you are, whatever practice you do, when you lack this superior kind of motivation that means you lack what? Enlightenment. Whatever practice you do, he said, don't ever think that when you do something small like chanting a single mantra that it is something small, insignificant. Never look at a virtue as small. The other thing he said was, "Never look at a small non-virtue as small either. A small fire can burn a whole jungle down, so never disregard small non-virtues thinking they don't matter."

One day after receiving teachings I was so happy and inspired. I had these big boots that my mother had bought for me in Singapore. As soon as the teachings had finished I put them on, took a cushion, and went up into the forest. I sat down and stared into the blue sky, Dzogchen style. Whatever Rinpoche had told me were the signs and experiences that should arise when one has mastered this practice I was experiencing. I was so happy! I picked up my cushion and ran back down to Rinpoche. I said, "Oh my God, Rinpoche! It says in the texts that it usually takes weeks and weeks to see these signs. I saw right away after just one hour!" Then he laughed and laughed and pointed out three things. The first mistake you have made he said is when the text explains that this experience will arise after one week, are you the kind of person they are talking about? Because in the text the person they are talking about is someone who has already totally completed shamata meditation, but you are not at that level. And you are too happy about your experience. That is wrong. The second thing he said is, "You are waiting for the experience to come. Because of waiting like that for an hour then your imagination creates that experience. It is not arising from meditation. It is merely your imagination. So you are wrong to wait for the experience." The third thing is that you are wrong to stop meditating and come down as soon as you think you have had the experience. You should stay there and do more and more whether the experience stays or goes. You need to complete the practice.

He told me a story about a meditator who was searching for a place to practice. He found a very nice cave in the mountains. When he sat down he said, "I am now going to make a vow in front of the Buddha, dharma, and the dharma protectors. Until I realise whatever needs to be realised I will not move from this seat. If I do move from this seat, may all of the dharma protectors kill me on this very spot." He took a vow, sat down, and meditated. My teacher said, "We need to have that kind of resolve, not come straight down as soon as some experience arises and start talking about it."

So when you look at these three pieces of advice, we usually make those mistakes all the time. We like to have good experiences and get very happy about them. Second, we lack diligence. When we gain experience, we become more lazy. We stop our practice. And often we are waiting in expectation for the experience, and sometimes because of that the experience does seem to come because the mind is so powerful, but that is not the real thing.

He said, "You need to train in awareness all the time." He wrote one advice to all of his students called *Mindfulness is the Mirror of the Mind*. He said awareness or mindfulness is the path of the bodhisattvas. Without mindfulness you are not going to attain freedom from your emotions, so he taught about how important mindfulness is, whether you are a practitioner of the Great Perfection or of Theravada. It doesn't matter. For any practitioner, it is vital to have mindfulness.

Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche advised me by saying, "This mouth is very bad. It is the source of all the world's troubles. It is a real trouble-maker. This mouth eats everything. If we stored up everything we have eaten in our life until now it would be bigger than a house. We talk, talk, talk, and all the bad things come out. This mouth makes you have disturbing emotions." When you keep this mouth quiet, forty percent of the emotions automatically subside", he said. Lies. Bad words. Rumours. Gossiping the time away. Chit

chat. Drinking beer and chatting away for hours and hours. "It is good to do silent retreat", he said. "That is very important."

He said it is very important to have a reminder. Our mind is very spoilt. So he told us the story of a great master who, before passing away, told his students to bring a stick and come to see him. Then he said, "Whenever you have bad thoughts like jealousy then hit yourself on the head with the stick. One bang for one bad thought. If you say bad things then hit yourself on the mouth. If you do something wrong with your hand for example then hit your hand." The stick becomes a reminder. Of course, mindfulness is your teacher, but nevertheless the punishment of the stick helps reinforce that. So Rinpoche said that it's very nice to apply mindfulness with a stick. It is good to do that, when you want to do that. If you don't want to do practice then why are you here? Why are you reading this? Honestly speaking. I am giving you a method that can help us to deal with our emotions.

Then Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche explained to me, "Don't waste your time." He said that all the time. "Do meditation." And he said to do meditation wherever you are. Don't restrict yourself to doing meditation only in certain places and times, so that you think you need to do meditation in some places and at some times, but don't need to meditate at others. Don't make that rule for yourself. Wherever you are, feel relaxed, meditate, and don't force yourself.

When you do meditation you should carry your guru's photo with you, because it instills some kind of fear in you. You feel like the guru's photo is looking at you saying, "Hey! Don't do bad things. Practice well. I am looking at you. You cannot hide from me." You have that kind of feeling and sometimes that is good I think. You feel shame. You feel diligence. You feel happy. Everything comes through that photo. For example, if I put Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche's photo near me in a place I can see I am pretty sure I am not going to do anything bad. I fear that the photo is looking at me. Keep it in mind, that the guru is all the time looking at you, like the Buddhas and bodhisattvas. How

can you hide from them?

To be continued...

CONSTRUCTION AT COOPERSTOWN



Construction at Rangjung Yeshe Gomde is underway! The centre's barn is being renovated to form a large shrine hall for teachings and twenty-five retreat rooms. These rooms will accommodate two people each so that a total of fifty people will be able to stay at the centre. As of now, the concrete floor is finished, and work is moving forward towards being ready for next summer's retreats.



UPCOMING EVENTS



Tsikey Chokling Rinpoche at Nagi Gompa Drupchen

H. E. KYABJE TSIKEY CHOKLING RINPOCHE'S 2011 TRAVEL SCHEDULE

3 - 13 June: Visit to Hong Kong

15 - 19 June:
International Phowa Retreat,
Johor Bahru, Malaysia

21 - 30 June: Visit to Taiwan

Sadhana Ritual Course Oct 17 – Nov 17, 2011

This year, the course will concentrate on the sadhana practices of *Trinley Nyingpo* and *Zabtik Drolma*. For more information, please email us at events@cglf.org.

Second Nine Yanas' Retreat in Nepal

This retreat on the Pratyekabuddhayana will be held in Nepal in 2012, dates to be confirmed. For more information, please email us at events@cglf.org.



Phakchok Rinpoche at the Nine Yanas' retreat at Riwoche monastery.

KYABGÖN PHAKCHOK RINPOCHE'S 2011 TRAVEL SCHEDULE

22 May:
Buddha Jayanti 2600 Seminar, Nalanda Centre,
Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia

3 - 13 June: Visit to Hong Kong

15 - 19 June:
International Phowa Retreat,
Johor Bahru, Malaysia

21 - 30 June: Visit to Taiwan

7 - 14 August: Nine Yanas' Retreat,
Rangjung Yeshe Gomde Cooperstown, USA

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO:
WWW.CGLF.ORG

SUMMER EVENTS CALENDAR FOR RANGJUNG YESHE GOMDE COOPERSTOWN

Art and Meditation: Learn to Bring Creativity into your Meditation and Meditation into your Creativity

July 23-29, 2011

In this program we will be exploring a meditative approach to art and the creative process. Learning the fundamentals of tangkha painting, a centuries old Buddhist art form, we will be guided by the highly accomplished Urgyen Gyalpo.

Urgyen Gyalpo is a monk in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition and has studied under the master tangkha painter, Venerable Konchog Lhadrepa in the Karma Gardi style. Having worked on many major projects in monasteries and temples in both the East and West, as well as being the head instructor at Tsering art school, we are truly fortunate to have this extremely talented and gentle monk be coming to teach us how to fuse mindfulness and creativity in order to produce beauty in our world.

Himalayan Fair

July 30-31, 2011

Two days of Himalayan Arts and Crafts

To be confirmed

A Himalayan Bazaar in your own backyard! Come experience the beauty of traditional Tibetan tangkha painting, take part in a yoga class, speak to a traditional Aryurvedic doctor, and enjoy the precision and artistry of Zen Archery. With lots to see, do, eat, and learn, the Himalyan Fair has something for everyone.

Medicine Program with a Modern Day Yogi

Aug 1 – Aug 6, 2011

Come purify body and mind at this week-long medicine and cleansing program. Learn about the ancient arts of Aryurveda, Thai Medicine, and Tibetan medicine from Dr. David Bliss and learn how valuable these forms of medicine and well-being truly are. Have a

personal consultation with Dr. David and enjoy the rejuvenating and preventative effects of traditional medicines. Also, enjoy daily guided yoga sessions with Zim Pickens, long-time practitioner and teacher of yoga asana.

Nine Yanas' Retreat

Kyabgön Phakchok Rinpoche

August 7 – 14, 2011

With the aspiration to give dharma students the opportunity to study and train thoroughly and genuinely on the gradual path, in 2009 Rinpoche began teaching a carefully arranged course on the nine yanas. This year's retreat will focus on the third of the nine yanas, the Bodhisattvayana. This may be the last year that people are guaranteed to be allowed to enter the course without having attended retreats on the previous yanas.

Special Event

Teachings with Ven. Khenpo Sonam Rinpoche

Aug 14 – 20, 2011

Khenpo Sonam Rinpoche, a Dzogchen teacher and great practitioner from the Taklung Kagyu lineage, will also be teaching from at Gomde Cooperstown. Dzogchen is the pinnacle of all of the Buddha's teachings and is the shortest most direct path to enlightenment. Khenpo Sonam Rinpoche studied under the previous Phakchok Rinpoche at Riwoche Monastery in Tibet. He is a tremendous practitioner and a blessing for all those who meet him. We highly encourage everyone to come to these teachings.

To register, go to www.gomdecooperstown.org or email us at programs@gomdecooperstown.org.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO:
WWW.GOMDECOOPERSTOWN.ORG**