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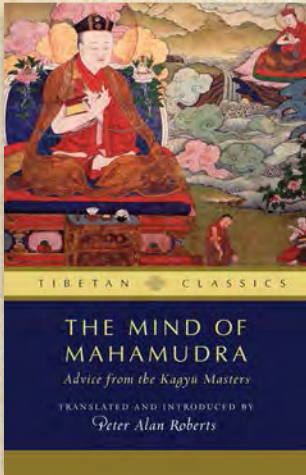
JANUARY - MARCH 2015

CPMT 2014 Meeting: Inspiration and Family Feeling at the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion

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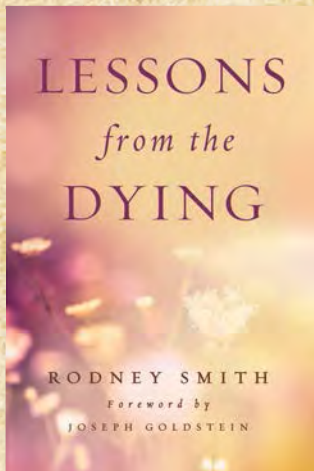
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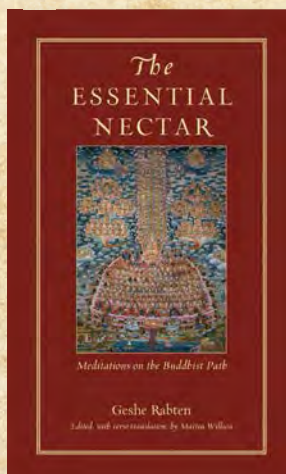
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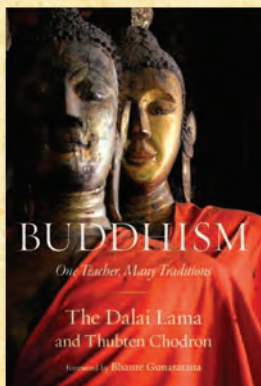
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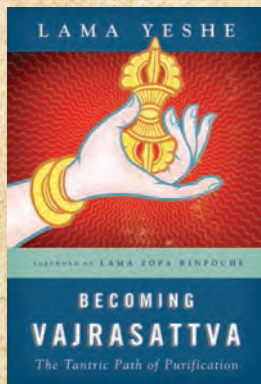
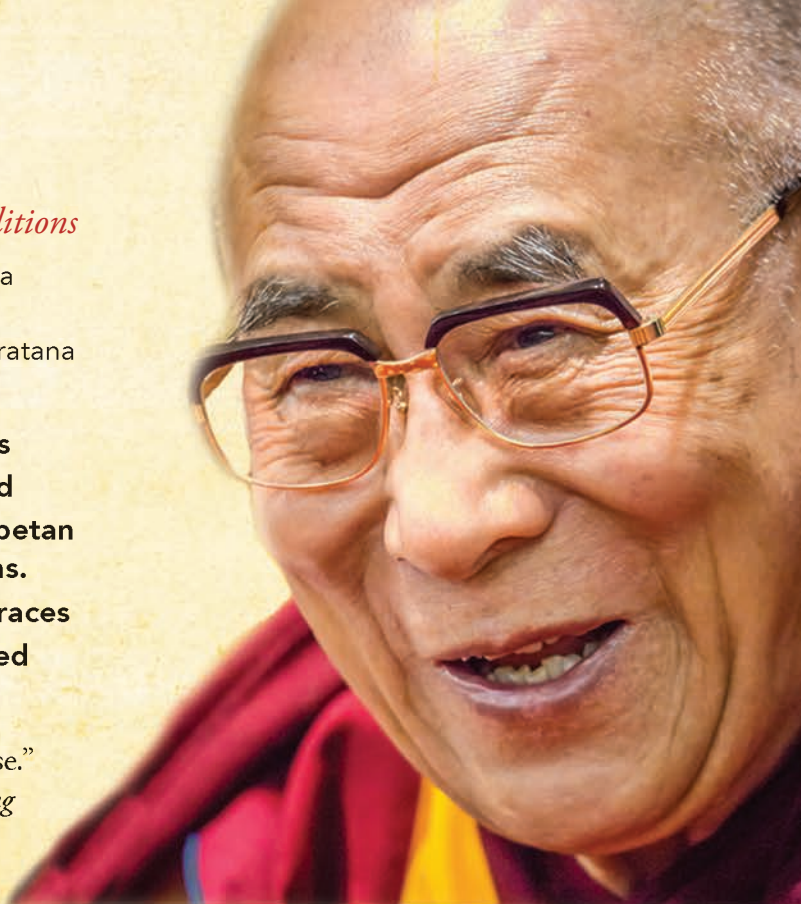
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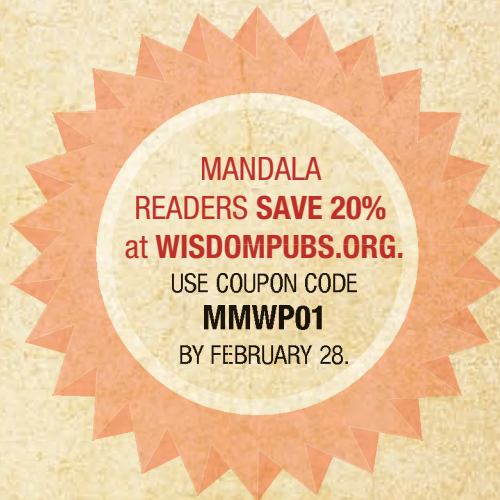
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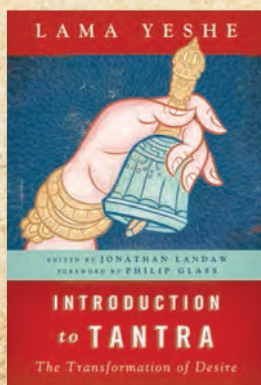
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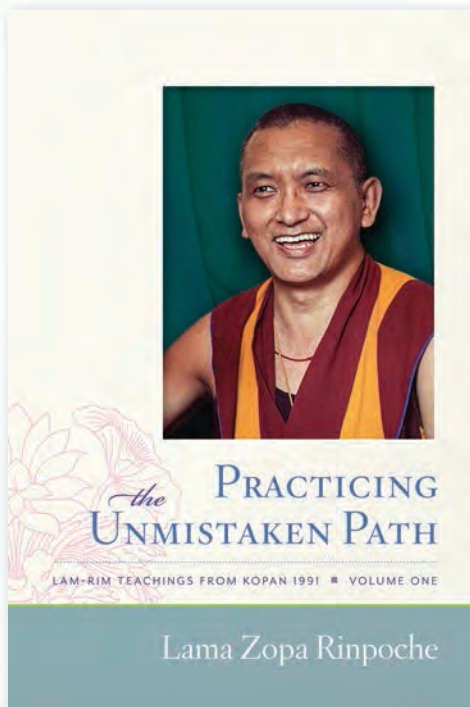
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Mandala publishes EXCLUSIVE ONLINE articles, photos and video each issue to supplement our print publication.

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COVER: Sunset on the third day of CPMT 2014, Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, Bendigo, Victoria, Australia, September 15, 2014. Photo by Laura Miller.

Dear Reader,

In this issue of *Mandala*, we focus on the week-long CPMT meeting that took place September 13-19, 2014, in Bendigo, Australia. I had the good fortune to be able to attend and experience first-hand the heart-warming energy of the international FPMT mandala. The sense of connection and community that I felt at the meeting and that I continue to feel working in FPMT International Office in Portland in the United States is one aspect of FPMT that makes it so special. We might be spread out all over the world, but we are practicing and doing our work in concert with each other. I hope we've captured some of that feeling in this issue.

As 2015 unfolds, we'll be making some changes to *Mandala* and to our online presentation of stories, updates and news. You may notice in this issue that we have moved all of the "FPMT News Around the World" updates and items to our online blog. We're very excited with the opportunities online publishing gives us for reporting stories and sharing news in a timely way. We will

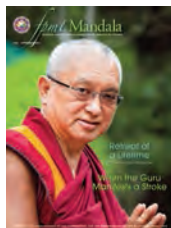
continue to expand and refine our online offerings and share these new developments in the next issue.

You can access all of *Mandala's* blog posts and the online content for each issue by going to our webpage: fpmt.org/mandala/. You can find all of FPMT's news and announcements, including updates on Lama Zopa Rinpoche and "FPMT News Around the World," by visiting fpmt.org/fpmt/news/. You also have the opportunity on these pages to sign up to receive our posts directly via email on a daily basis.

Mandala will continue to offer teachings, articles and interviews in print to inspire and support our readers' practice and nourish their connection to the international FPMT community. If you have ideas or suggestions for this, please feel free to write me at the address given below.

Love,
Laura

About Mandala



Mandala is the official publication of the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT), an international charitable organization founded more than thirty years ago by two Tibetan Buddhist masters: Lama Thubten Yeshe (1935-1984) and Lama Thubten

Friends of FPMT is a donor program composed of Friends working together to support FPMT's global activities.

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Mandala is published in January, April, July and October.

Zopa Rinpoche. FPMT is now a vibrant international community with a network of over 150 affiliate centers, projects, services and study groups in more than thirty countries.

Editorial Policy

Recurring topics include: Buddhist philosophy; Education; Ordination and the Sangha; Buddhism and Modern Life; Youth Issues; FPMT Activities Worldwide; Lama Yeshe and his teachings; Lama Zopa Rinpoche and his teachings; His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his teachings, among many other topics.

Writers, photographers and artists, both amateur and professional, are encouraged to submit material for consideration. *Mandala* currently does not pay for publishable content; we credit all photos and other work as requested.

Mandala is published quarterly and is available via the Friends of FPMT program. Additionally, the publication is supplemented by online stories published exclusively at: fpmt.org/mandala

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Lama Yeshe's Legacy: Taking a Broad View

More than 50 centers and projects constituted the international FPMT mandala in January 1983 when the Council for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (CPMT) met at Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa in Italy. Discussions focused on the recent registration of FPMT as a charitable organization and the formulation of its bylaws. Representatives from FPMT centers and projects greatly valued the communication and sharing that took place at the meeting. During the week-long meeting, Lama Yeshe gave a talk on FPMT's objectives, structure and function, which was later published in Mandala's predecessor, Wisdom No. 2, 1984. We've extracted the following from Lama Yeshe's talk as a reminder of Lama Yeshe's vision and to create an opportunity to reflect on how we are carrying it forward.

Why have we established the FPMT? Why are we establishing these facilities all over the world? I think we are clean clear as to our aim – we want to lead all sentient beings to higher education. We are an organization that gives people the chance to receive higher education.

We offer people what we have – the combined knowledge of Buddha's teachings and the modern way of life. Our purpose is to share our experience of this.

We know that people are dissatisfied with worldly life, with the education system and everything else. It is in the nature of our dualistic mind to be dissatisfied. So what we are trying to do is to help people discover their own totality and thus perfect satisfaction.

Now, the way we have evolved is not through you or me having said we want to do these things but through a natural

education. And it is not only we lamas who are working for this. The centers' resident geshe and the students are working too. Actually, it is you students who are instrumental in creating the facilities for Dharma to exist in the Western world. True. Of course, teachers help, but the most important thing is for the students to be well educated. That is why we exist.

When we started establishing centers there was no overall plan – they just popped up randomly all over the world like mushrooms, because of the evolutionary process I've just mentioned and the cooperative conditions. Now that all these centers do exist, we have to facilitate their development in a constructive, clean clear way; otherwise everything will just get confused. We have to develop properly both internally and in accordance with our 20th-century environment. That's why I've already put forward guidelines for how our centers should be –

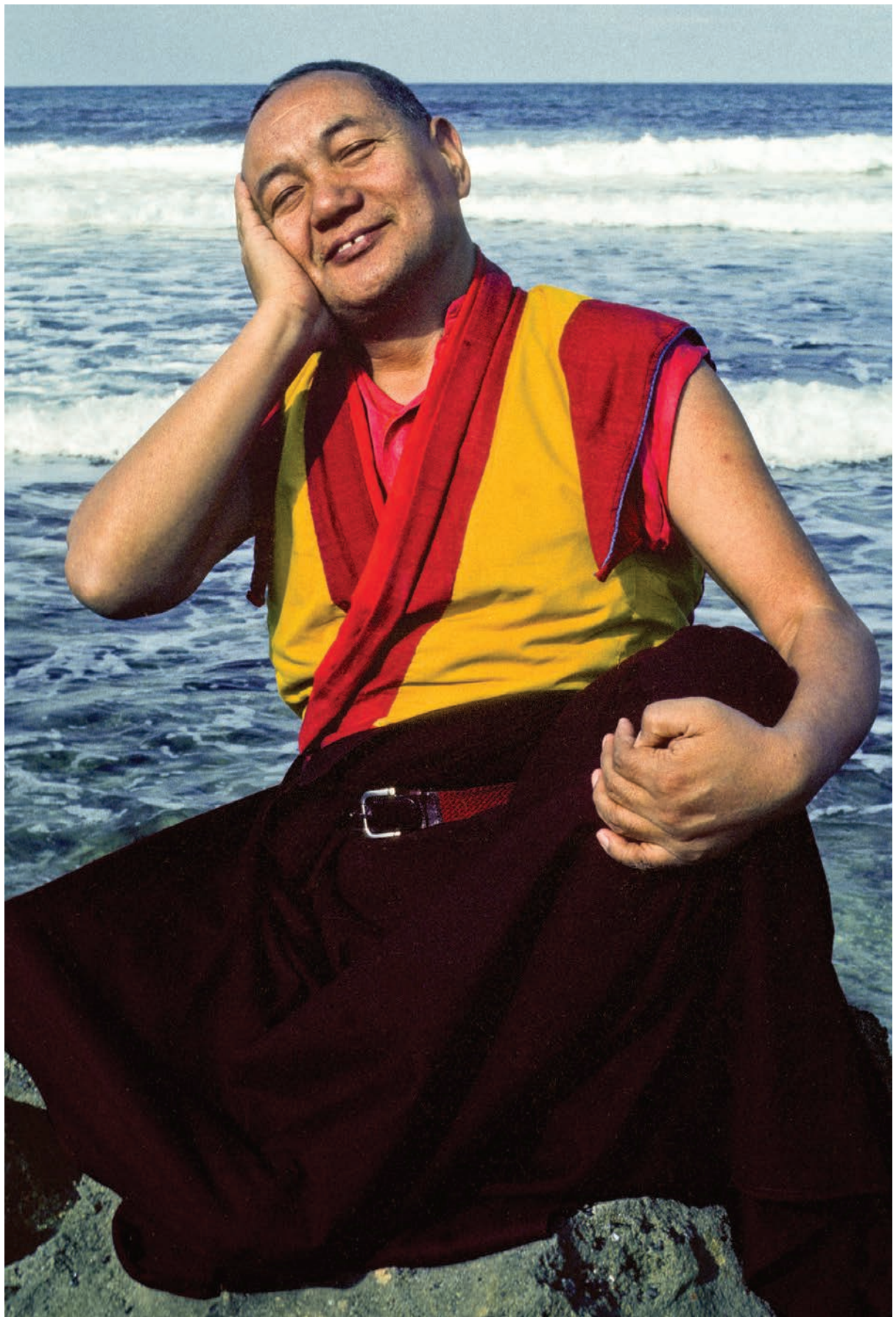
Our organization has grown naturally, organically. It is not "Lama Yeshe wanted to do it." I've never said that I want centers all over the world. Rather, I came into contact with students who then wanted to do something, who expressed the wish to share their experience with others, and put together groups in various countries to share and grow with others.

process of development. Our organization has grown naturally, organically. It is not "Lama Yeshe wanted to do it." I've never said that I want centers all over the world. Rather, I came into contact with students who then wanted to do something, who expressed the wish to share their experience with others, and put together groups in various countries to share and grow with others.

Personally, I think that's fine. We should work for that. We are human beings; Buddhism helps us grow. Therefore, it is logical that we should work together to facilitate this kind of

residential country communities, city centers, monasteries and so forth. ...

Now, the way to bring Dharma to the Western world is to bring the nuclear, the essential aspect of Dharma. Of course, you cannot separate the essence from the Eastern cultural trappings immediately: "This is culture; that isn't." However, what you should do is take the practical points of Dharma and shape them according to your own culture. In my opinion, you should be making a new kind of Dharma dependent on each different place and its social customs. Since we are Mahayanists, we have a broad



Lama Yeshe, Sicily, 1983. Photos by Jacie Keeley.

TEACHINGS AND ADVICE



Participants in the 1983 CPMT meeting. Standing, left to right, front to back: Garth Spiers, Michael van Walt van Praag, Ven. Connie Miller, Harvey Horrocks, Ven. Max Redlich, Nick Ribush, Ven. Thubten Gyatso, Dharmawati Brechbuhl, Paul Bourke, Philippe Penot, Roy Tyson, Margot Kool, Denis Huet; Seated: Alnis Grants, Lama Yeshe, Sylvia Wetzels; Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa, January 1983, Pomaia, Italy. Photo courtesy of Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive.

view and don't mind if Dharma takes different shapes. To bring Dharma to the West we should have a broad view.

Because we have so many centers, I can no longer direct them. Of course, at the beginning I had to direct the centers because the students were always asking, "Lama, what to do?" and we were small enough for me to always be in direct communication with them. But, eventually, we reached a point where I had to ask myself the question, "Am I a businessman, a Dharma teacher or what?" Hundreds of letters were coming in from all over the world; I had to say, "What is this? Should I spend my life answering letters and running centers?" I thought it was wrong for me to spend my life in business because this was not the best way to serve my students. I thought that the most realistic thing to do to benefit them and make my life worthwhile was to go the middle way instead.

So I began to cut down on administrative work. I even wrote to all the centers telling them that they were responsible to make certain decisions; that I could not decide everything and that it is too complicated and far too slow to have all the correspondence coming through Nepal. Therefore, I said we

should have a central office as the center's business point. Of course, I could still be consulted on important matters and could still make decisions on anything. I'm part of the Central Office; I can give my opinion. But it was not necessary to rely on me for everything. That's why I established the Central Office [now the FPMT International Office, based in Portland, Oregon, USA].

... Quite apart from the fact that I do not have time to do all this administrative work, there are many things to do with running a center that you can do far better than I. You can communicate with people from your own cultural background much better than can a simple Himalayan monk. All the legal and financial work – I can't do that either. Also, there are many positions to be filled in a center; the right people have to be selected for the right job. You students should do these things yourselves.

So, because all this administrative work was taking me so long, I passed many things on to the Central Office. There is a huge amount of this kind of work to do, that's why the Central Office is important. It facilitates communication both between the centers and me and among the centers themselves. You see, we do have the

human tendency to shut off from each other: “I don’t want you looking at me; I can see my own point of view, I don’t want to share it with you.” Each center has its own egocentric orientation: “We’re good enough; we don’t need to take the best of other cultures.” This is wrong. We have reached our present state of existence through a process of evolution. Some older centers have had good experiences and have learned how to do things well. Doing things well is not simply an intellectual exercise but something that comes from acting every day and learning how to do things until you can do them automatically. Thus it is good that the Central Office has a pool of collective experience so that all our centers can share in it and help reinforce each other.

We have to be able to focus and integrate our energy and store information in a clean clear way so that it can be readily accessed. We should make a structure so that we all know what information is there and how to get it. Without a proper structure, we’d go bananas! Even a couple living together needs to be organized so that their house is clean, there is the food they need and so on. In the centers, we are involved in hundreds of people’s lives; for some reason Dharma has brought all these people together. We are responsible to ensure that we do not waste people’s energy; therefore, we have to get ourselves together. This is why organization is very important.

Let’s say, for example, that one of the older students and I have started a center. We are impermanent; we are going to die. What happens when we are dead? We established the center; it has never been organized properly; should it die too? No, of course not. Even though our very bones have disappeared, the center should continue to function. But for people to be able to carry on in its work there should be clean clear directions as to what it was established for. If things are set up right, religious philosophies can carry on for generations and generations. We know this to be an historical fact.

If you think about it, from the point of view of culture, Buddhism is completely culture oriented; it is a complete culture, or way of life, from birth to death. Therefore, we are dealing with a very serious thing; we are giving people something that they should take very seriously in their lives. It is not just a one-week or one-month trip. We are offering something that utilizes Buddha’s method and wisdom in the achievement of everlasting satisfaction. That everlasting peace and happiness is what we are working for.

So we have a very important job; it is not just one person’s thing. For that reason I have to say openly to all our center directors that they should not feel they are working for Lama Yeshe – that’s too small. I am just a simple monk; you are working for me? One atom? No – you are working for something much bigger than just one man. You are working for all mother sentient beings. That is important. You should think, “Even if I die, I am doing all of these things for the sake and benefit of all other mother sentient beings.” That is why it is so important to us to have a clean clear structure and direction.

For me, this is very important. I don’t believe I am the principal worker and doing everything. No. I believe what Lama Je Tsongkhapa says in his lam-rim: All your success comes from other sentient beings. Thus, other sentient beings are capable of continuing our work, and what will enable them to do so will be having a clean clear direction – not a temporary, Mickey Mouse direction, but a clean clear one. Our aim then is to have a perfectly delineated structure so that even when we are all dead, still, as we wished, our Dharma centers will be able to carry on their work. I believe that human beings are very special. They are intelligent. If we write an intelligent constitution, record an intelligent system of direction, other human beings will be able to keep it going. That is why we have to have a structure.

... Our aim is clear; it is to educate people. Each center should have strong emphasis on education. The education system and program are essential for us to be successful. Why are we building communities? Because we have no home? No! We are not refugees; we have not started centers to house refugees. Thus it is important for each center to have a strong educational program and a spiritual director to conduct it. This is an essential part of our structure and must be there.

But I am not going to keep telling you things that you know already. Still, it is important that I clarify the reason for our existence and what we are doing. It is important work; we are not joking. We are real. Also, we are confident. I have great confidence in my involvement with Western people; I believe in it. I think that there are things that we can understand in common. We understand each other; therefore, we can work together.

Also, it is important for directors to have a great vision; they should not neglect their center’s growth. They should have a very broad view in order to be open to people. In many of our centers we find that already the facilities are too small. Of course, to build adequate facilities takes time and energy; but we should have a broad open view: “We would like to have things this way, without limitations.” Having a broad view is not forcing any issue but simply saying that if we have the opportunity to do various things, we’ll do them. You never know when somebody might come up to you and say, “I’d like to do something beneficial with my money.” At that time you can reply, “Well we have this project ready to develop,” and show that person your plans. If, however, you feel suffocated with what you already have and don’t have any vision of how to expand, you can’t show potential benefactors anything. Therefore, you should plan ahead with great vision and have everything ready to show people how you want to expand and improve your facilities. ... Remember – to bring Dharma to the West, we have to have a broad view.

From Lama Yeshe’s address to the CPMT meeting at Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa, Italy, January 1983. Edited by Nicholas Ribush and excerpted by *Mandala* for inclusion in this issue. To read the entire address, visit Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive (lamayeshe.com), Archive #337.

TEACHINGS AND ADVICE

Advice from a Virtuous Friend

'We Have Come a Long Way'

By Lama Zopa Rinpoche

Any good thing the FPMT organization has been able to offer and the numberless sentient beings have been able to receive – every understanding of Dharma we have and every Dharma practice we have done so far, every purification we have done and every merit we have collected – comes first by the kindness of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and second by the kindness of Lama Yeshe, whose holy name is difficult to express. First, we exist basically by the kindness of His Holiness, the only object of refuge for all sentient beings and the source of all the happiness of sentient beings. Second, Lama Yeshe, who is kinder than all the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the three times, is the founder of this organization. Even though many of you didn't meet Lama or hear teachings directly from him, he started the centers, including Chenrezig Institute. The purification of every single negative karma, the collecting of every single merit, the planting of the seeds of enlightenment, and every understanding of Dharma received from this organization – here at Chenrezig Institute, for example – also came from Lama, from Lama's kindness. This also applies to anyone who has met Dharma in any other center in the FPMT.

The organization has come a very long way. Like a baby growing up with a lot of life experiences and difficulties, it has now reached this high. [Rinpoche indicates a height of a foot or so.] Now there's so much more to go. With much hardship we have come a long way, a very long way, like on a road. It all started with the sincere hearts of the young students who came to Nepal and India looking for a spiritual life and a guru. During those times there was an explosion of Buddha sticks [marijuana], LSD and other things that break the fixed concepts of the materialistic mind and give you a chance to see something new and to have a new life.

It was started with the good heart. The students found the lam-rim, the heart of the 84,000 teachings of Buddha, meaningful. I'd just say a few words about lam-rim – not that I know anything about lam-rim. In my case, I would just repeat the few words of lam-rim I knew over and over: impermanence, impermanence, impermanence, lower realms, lower realms, lower realms, attachment, attachment, attachment. I didn't have any



realization, but I would just repeat the same things about attachment and karma and hell over and over to the people who came to Nepal. This is usually how it is in my case. Anyway, those few words repeated over and over did something for their minds. Somehow those few words benefited them, I think. Because it benefited them, showing them the real meaning of life and what you are supposed to accomplish and what you should abandon to be free from suffering, the students basically wanted to benefit the people in their own countries, so they started the centers. So, it was started with the good heart.

With the good heart, they continued with the organization, even though most of these young people weren't professionals and didn't have any experience of business. Some of them had not completed university. Others might have finished university but didn't have any work experience. However, with the good heart and with patience through many difficulties and hardships, they continued to benefit others. This is how the organization has grown up to now. Only a very few centers have dissolved in emptiness, like a deity and its mandala dissolving in the clear light. It's not sure when they will rise back up.

I think it's very good, because things were done with a



pure heart, and that's the most important thing. Whether or not things succeed, everything should be done with as pure a heart as possible. With compassion, you try to help as much as possible. Even though you might have very little experience, I think the most important thing is to do everything with a good heart. Because of limited facilities for people to come to listen to teachings or to do retreats and other practices, it has not been possible to spread the Dharma in a very broad professional way, in the sense of what could be accomplished by a wealthy business. Even though that is not happening and what we're doing is kind of simple, everything is being done with a good heart. We have developed and come a very long way and

much more experience of how to do things. Anyway, the most important developments are having more devotion to the Triple Gem and more compassion for sentient beings. Those two are very, very important and what make this life very meaningful. They are important for your own development, for you to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings, as well as for numberless sentient beings not to receive harm from you and to receive peace and happiness, including both temporary happiness and the ultimate happiness of enlightenment, from you. Generally speaking, I see these two things developing more and more, and I think it's the best thing.

Of course, being able to serve sentient beings in many different ways through the organization and the centers, is also an

*With compassion, you try to help as much as possible.
Even though you might have very little experience, I think the most important
thing is to do everything with a good heart.*

learned a lot during these many, many years. So, I think it's very good.

There has also been external development. We have come a long way. Many centers are now functioning more easily and people have

excellent thing. It really gives meaning to your own life and to the lives of the many other people in the center and of the many other people who come to the center. It's a really wonderful thing. So, I think that we're able to do many, many things because there

TEACHINGS AND ADVICE

has been the development of more capacity, more compassion, more knowledge, wider thinking, and the taking of more responsibility. I just eat, go to the toilet, and sleep, but I think the people in the organization, Lama's students, have developed more compassion, more devotion, more knowledge, and more experience to benefit others. That's why we're able to benefit others in all these many ways, even people in prison. In the prisons there are so many people who are taking the eight Mahayana precepts and have done many hundreds of thousands of Vajrasattva mantras and other preliminary practices. Many people have done unbelievable practice in prison. It's a great thing to be able to benefit them. Another big project is Essential Education [now known as Universal Education for Compassion and Wisdom], which is helping young people to develop loving kindness and peace. We are now also trying to make more materials available for them. We can really rejoice in being able to bring such great benefit to sentient beings in this world through this organization.

As I normally mention, by coming to a center, people come to know about karma, cause and effect; they come to know about negative karma, the cause of suffering, and merit, the cause of happiness. They come to learn the real cause of happiness. For example, reciting the names of the 35 Buddhas even one time has the power to purify many eons of various negative karmas that we always engage in. Not just many lifetimes but many eons of negative karma get purified. Reciting the names of the 35 Buddhas even once purifies not just all the negative karmas of this life, of past lives, or of many hundreds of lifetimes but many thousands of eons of various negative karmas. Sentient beings get unbelievable benefit just from this one practice: liberation from the lower realms and from samsara, and enlightenment. Even meditating on the meaning of the refuge and bodhichitta prayer, *sang gyä chhö dang tshog kyī chhog nam la* ..., plants the seed of enlightenment, bringing you closer to enlightenment, closer to liberation from samsara. This comes from just meditating on the meaning of this prayer, before you begin any actual practice. What the center can offer sentient beings is unbelievable.

Since this prayer brings incredible benefit to sentient beings, there's no doubt about the benefit from the whole of the lam-rim teachings, Vajrasattva meditation, and the various other practices. We are offering deep benefit to sentient beings from the centers and from the organization.

Giving people food, medicine, and shelter is very good and something we must do, but if we don't help them to change their mind, if we don't educate them about removing their negative karma and delusions, they will engage in the same negative karmas again and again. They will then again be born in the same place and experience all the same poverty and fighting again and again. Even if they are born as a human being in their next life due to another good karma, they will experience the same problems again

and again. Helping such people materially is a good thing to do, but it doesn't really remove the cause of their suffering.

Now, a Dharma organization like ours, especially a center like this, which offers not only extensive lam-rim teachings but extensive teachings on philosophy, brings unbelievable benefit. There is unbelievable benefit in just the lam-rim itself. It causes sentient beings to actualize the three principal aspects of the path, true cessation, and so forth. Just the graduated paths of the lower and middle capable being, just talking about the four noble truths, help them to remove the cause of suffering, their karma and delusions, especially the root delusion, ignorance, and to achieve liberation. They're able to learn and to leave imprints, and then able to achieve that in the future.

We are able to offer sentient beings unbelievable benefit, limitless skies of benefit. Therefore, we must rejoice all the time. All the staff of the general FPMT organization and of each center should remember this deep and extensive benefit that we are offering to sentient beings. We should remember this every day. You will then enjoy your life and see that your life is most meaningful there. As I usually say, there is a big difference between working in a factory and working at a center. Of course, you can get plenty of money working in a factory, but it doesn't spread Dharma. It doesn't teach Dharma to others; it doesn't educate others about how to get out of samsara and achieve enlightenment. Without talking about the extensive philosophical teachings, even the lam-rim offers this. There is a huge difference, like the difference between the earth and the sky, between working in a factory and offering service at a center. There's a huge difference when you think about the benefits that sentient beings receive, and it makes so much difference to your own life.

We have to do this together. As I often say, one person cannot do everything. One person cannot teach Dharma, translate, be the director, be the secretary and so forth. To do everything you need the help of all the staff: the resident teacher, the translator and all the rest of the staff. Together you can benefit other sentient beings in an extensive way.

Therefore, we must rejoice. Don't think only about the problems of the center. If you think only of the problems and don't think of all the benefits, you will then see only problems. If you think only of the problems, you will see only problems. If you don't think of all the good qualities you have, but only think of your faults, you then see yourself as totally black and become very depressed. It is the same with a center if you think only of the problems and don't think of the skies of benefit that come from it. ♦

Lama Zopa Rinpoche gave this teaching after a long-life puja held at Chenrezig Institute, Queensland, Australia, on June 21, 2006. Edited by Ven. Ailsa Cameron and excerpted for inclusion in *Mandala*. Find the full teaching on Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive (lamayeshe.com), Archive #1573.

The Words of Requesting and Offering to One's Own Kind Root Guru: Garsha Drink Offering

The "Words of Requesting and Offering to One's Own Kind Root Guru: Garsha Drink Offering" is a new drink offering practice from Lama Zopa Rinpoche made available by FPMT Education Services. This drink offering practice can be used when offering any drink such as tea, coffee, juice, soda and so forth.

1. TSHÄN TSAM THÖ PÄ NGÄN DRÖI JIG LÄ KYOB

Merely hearing your name guides me from the dangers of bad migratory beings.

SOL WA TAB NA NGÖ DRUB KÜN TSOL ZHING

If this request is done, it grants all realizations.

KA ZHIN DRUB NA KU SUM THOB DZÄ PA

If the practice is done according to the advice, it makes it possible to achieve the three kayas.

LA MA THUB PÄI WANG POR CHHÖ PA BUL

To the Guru, Possessor of the Mighty One [Buddha], I make offering.

2. MU GÖ DÜL KA DRO WA DRANG ME LA

To the numberless transmigratory beings, stubbornly ignorant and so difficult to subdue,

TRUL WA DRANG ME TRÖ NÄ DE CHHEN LA

What leads me and sentient beings to great bliss by emitting numberless manifestations

GÖ DZÄ GYÄL KÜN THUG JE THRIN LÄ DE

Is the compassionate action of all the Victorious Ones,

DA ME THA MAL LA MAR SHAR WÄI CHHIR

Because that manifests in the incomparable ordinary aspect of the Guru.

3. DU SUM GE TSHOG DE LEG CHI CHHI PA

The three times collections of goodness and happiness came from the Guru,

GANG LÄ JUNG NÄ KYAB SUM KÜN DÜ PA

Who is the embodiment of all objects of refuge.

MA NOR LAM TÖN LA MAR CHHÖ PA BÜL (SOL WA DEB)

To you, the Lama who shows the unmistakable path, I make offering (request)¹:

DE CHHEN LHÄN KYE CHHÖ KUR RO CHIG DRE

Mix my mind into one taste with the simultaneously-born great bliss dharmakaya,

KHA CHÖ CHHEN PÖI GO PHANG THOB PAR SHOG

And may the state of the great sky-enjoyment² be achieved.



*Lama Zopa Rinpoche having tea at FPMT International Office, Portland, Oregon, US, June 2012.
Photo by Ven. Thubten Kunsang.*

Colophon:

The first verse was composed by Kachen Yeshe Gyältsen and translated and amended by Lama Zopa Rinpoche, who felt that taking the Kachen Yeshe Gyältsen verses of offering to the Buddha and applying it to one's own Guru and praising in that way would be beneficial for one's mind. The second and third verses were composed by Lama Zopa Rinpoche. Rinpoche says: "I took a few words from the beginning of the Kachen Yeshe Gyältsen text, and the rest I wrote according to what I desired. By this, may sentient beings be able to see the virtuous friend as Buddha, the root of the path."

Dictated to and lightly edited by Ven. Ailsa Cameron and Merry Colony at Kopan Monastery, Nepal, November 25, 2013. Further corrections dictated to Ven. Sarah Thresher at Root Institute, Bodhgaya, India, February 2014, and lightly edited by her and Ven. Thubten Labdrön. Phonetics by Ven. Tenzin Dekyong.

Download the "Words of Requesting and Offering to One's Own Kind Root Guru: Garsha Drink Offering" for free as a PDF from FPMT Education Services through the Foundation Store (shop.fpmt.org).

¹ When you are using this verse to make requests, replace "I make offering" with "I make request."

² The outer sky-enjoyment (kachö) is the pure land; the inner sky-enjoyment is the clear light. The great sky-enjoyment is enlightenment.

Dharma Practice Dates

Buddha Days and full and new moons are auspicious days and good for practice. On these days Lama Zopa Rinpoche recommends taking the Eight Mahayana Precepts in addition to any prayers and practices we engage in.

Buddha Days

February 19 to March 5 – Days of Miracles
May 25 – Lord Buddha's conception (or birth)
June 2 – Lord Buddha's birth,
enlightenment and parinirvana
(or latter two)

Full and New Moons

(Tibetan 15th and 30th days)
January 4, 20
February 3
March 5, 20
April 4, 18
May 3, 18
June 2, 16

The FPMT Foundation Store offers for sale the LIBERATION calendar, a traditional Tibetan lunar calendar including auspicious days and more, produced by Liberation Prison Project: shop.fpmt.org.

According to Choden Rinpoche, one of Lama Zopa Rinpoche's teachers, observation of auspicious days should be according to the date in India, not the date in one's home country. Therefore, when Lama Zopa Rinpoche is not in India, Rinpoche celebrates Buddha Days and other auspicious dates according to the time in India.

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Inspiration and Family Feeling at the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion

The Council for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (CPMT) is the formal name given to the meeting of directors, spiritual program coordinators (SPCs), teachers and board members from FPMT centers, projects and services. The earliest meetings of this body, which consisted of active and committed senior students of Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche, took place in the mid- to late 1970s and early 1980s in Nepal, India, Italy and England. More recent CPMT meetings have taken place at Chenrezig Institute in Australia in 2000; at the former FPMT International Office location in Taos, New Mexico, in 2002; at Maitreya Instituut Emst in the Netherlands in 2004; and at Institut Vajra Yogini in France in 2009. The CPMT meeting returned to Australia in September 2014 and all sessions took place inside the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, which when completed, will be the largest stupa in the Western world.

The enormous shining white stupa incongruously rising out of the Australian bush greeted more than 110 representatives from about 60 FPMT centers, projects and services as they arrived at the CPMT 2014 meeting. The Great Stupa of Universal Compassion itself serves as a fitting representation of FPMT's aspirations – to establish and spread Dharma throughout the world in a vast way for the benefit of all sentient beings. The stupa in its current state reminded us that this is still a work in progress. Temporary carpeted square flooring had been set over the unfinished gravel floor. Cheery bright fabric banners countered the grays and whites of exposed beams, bare concrete and utilitarian walls.

Atisha Centre, Thubten Shedrup Ling Monastery, and the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion – the three FPMT centers that form a complex just outside of Bendigo, Victoria – jointly hosted the event, which was followed by a public talk by FPMT spiritual director Lama Zopa Rinpoche and a month-long retreat with Rinpoche. CPMT participants, many who traveled from the other side of the world, were welcomed by the event organizers and expressed excitement for the meeting. Lama Zopa Rinpoche attended and participated in many sessions. Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi, who serves as abbot of Kopan Monastery and resident geshe at Amitabha Buddhist Centre and sits on the FPMT Inc. Board of Directors, attended the entire meeting. And by the end of seven full days, participants reported feeling

the warmth of being surrounded by their FPMT family and the inspiration to redouble their efforts to actualize all of Lama Zopa Rinpoche's wishes for FPMT.

Local volunteers, event staff and organizers, and early arrivals spent the day before the meeting's start preparing the space inside the stupa. They vacuumed and wiped the construction dust off of more than a hundred chairs that would be used. A/V equipment arrived and a sophisticated arrangement of video cameras, speakers, microphones, mixers, computers and a larger projection screen came together. Volunteers set up meeting tables and arranged beautiful altars in front of the gigantic Padmasambhava statue, the life-size replica of the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace statue (the real Jade Buddha is currently touring the world) and a very large Chenrezig thangka. As the days passed, the offerings became more elaborate and beautiful. For the long life puja for Lama Zopa Rinpoche held at the end of the meeting, long garlands of flowers were hung from the unfinished metal framework above the altar and from around the upper levels. With the altars, tables and seating arranged, the space felt more like the fully realized gumpa and the organizational meeting place that it will become.

Many participants, especially those from Australia, commented as they arrived on the progress at the stupa since 2011, the year of the previous retreat with Lama Zopa Rinpoche in Australia. At that time, Rinpoche taught during



CPMT meeting participants and others gathered for a lunch break overlooking the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion during the public teaching given by Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Australia, September 20, 2014. Photo by Tom Kennedy.

the first two weeks inside a large marquee set up inside the stupa, which was still open to the elements. That was also when Rinpoche manifested a stroke. Witnessing both the stupa's march towards completion and Rinpoche looking so healthy was cause for many happy comments. Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi stayed at the just-completed new building at Thubten Shedrup Ling, which also houses the monastery's beautiful new gompa. Rinpoche made a habit of walking the path through the bush from the monastery to the Great Stupa.

The meeting's theme, "Preserving the Dharma Now and into the Future," was broken down into the key categories of studying and actualizing the path; creating and practicing effective leadership and management; and supporting the vision of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Lama Zopa Rinpoche. Each day of the meeting, which ran Saturday, September 13, through Friday, September 19, began with morning prayers and concluded with an evening practice. In between the full schedule offered a nice mix of presentations and small group discussions and had just

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enough time for casual conversations over meals. After dinner, senior students shared their “Wisdom Culture” stories, which included vignettes from their pre-meeting-the-Dharma lives and from the early days at Kopan Monastery, as well as of the trials and tribulations of serving Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche in the work of spreading the teachings of the Buddha. These evening sessions turned out to be a big hit – with lots of laughter and inspiration.

The meeting sessions, expertly overseen by meeting facilitator Sandra Stubbings, began with a talk by Lama Zopa Rinpoche and a presentation on FPMT organizational structure, which included a new proposal for an FPMT Advisory Council (see page 24). Another key topic was good local governance. At one point Ven. Roger Kunsang, CEO of FPMT and Lama Zopa Rinpoche’s assistant, very clearly laid out the rationale behind the discussions of governance.

“FPMT has existed for 40 years and some centers have valuable assets, representing a long investment of time and effort of volunteers and money given by benefactors, so there is a lot to preserve and protect,” Ven. Roger said. “Lama Yeshe put a lot of emphasis on the director but now we give more emphasis to the local boards – the legal entities. The board needs to know their responsibilities and role in protecting the center. In the future we will not be able to go to Rinpoche, so boards play a critical role. What supports the boards is the FPMT Handbook, which is based on actual experiences. Lama Ösel suggested people memorize it.”

Other important topics discussed were FPMT education programs and registered teachers (see page 26), the Five Pillars of Service (see page 27), Lama Zopa Rinpoche’s Vast Visions for FPMT (see page 32), FPMT Sangha (see page 28) and care for the aging, and preserving FPMT Wisdom Culture, which encompasses the key aspects of FPMT’s unique lineage, the wisdom and compassion taught by Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche that inspire students to joyfully practice Dharma and offer service.

As a break from the discussions and presentations and to provide more informal networking time, on the third day of the meeting, there was an outing to Hanging Rock, a stunning rock formation not too far from Bendigo. CPMT participants boarded two highway buses with sack lunches (and lots of cameras) for an afternoon adventure. The location provided lots of fresh air, exercise, social time and heaps of photos of smiling faces.

Perhaps the biggest challenge for meeting participants was keeping warm in Bendigo’s early spring weather. While the stupa was fully enclosed with many of its windows and doors installed, the cavernous space had no central heating. Space heaters surrounded the meeting area and helped dispel the chill, but extra blankets, shawls and warm coats were still called for at all times.



From top: Lama Zopa Rinpoche on the path to the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion with CPMT meeting facilitator Sandra Stubbings and FPMT Center Services director and meeting coordinator Claire Isitt, Bendigo, Australia, September 2014. Photo by Ven. Thubten Kunsang; Ven. Joan Nicell providing simultaneous transcription of Lama Zopa Rinpoche to those in the stupa while members of the A/V team broadcast video of Rinpoche live over the internet, Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, Australia, September 2014. Photo by Laura Miller.

With so many veterans of draftier and even less heated locations in FPMT’s past and present, the cold could be seen as only a very minor hardship.

Organizers received overwhelmingly positive feedback about the meeting. Participants highlighted Rinpoche’s regular presence as a particular blessing and also commented on feeling a recharged sense of inspiration. The small group discussions were also popular. The vast majority of participants said they would strongly encourage other center directors, SPCs and board members to attend future CPMT meetings.

More detailed day-by-day accounts of the meeting with many photos were published on Mandala’s “FPMT News Around the World” blog and can be read at fpmt.org/tag/cpmt-2014/.

Rinpoche on the Importance of the Gelug Tradition



Lama Zopa Rinpoche teaching during the Amitayus long life initiation during the CPMT meeting, Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, Australia, September 17, 2014. Photo by Ven. Thubten Kunsang.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche attended many of the CPMT meeting sessions, even taking part in some of the small group discussions. During the morning session of the meeting's first day, Rinpoche reflected positively on how the organization has grown and offered advice on a good motivation. In the afternoon, Rinpoche spoke on the significance of the Gelug tradition. In his far-ranging talk, Rinpoche shared some of his history and the history of the organization, discussed the Prasangika view of emptiness and praised Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings.

On the meeting's second day, Rinpoche had an open question and answer session. Andy Wistreich, an FPMT registered teacher from the UK and a board member of Land of Joy, asked Rinpoche about the work that needs to be done to support the long-term survival of the Gelug tradition.

In response, Rinpoche made a point about our overarching motivation. "We are responsible for enlightening the small ants crawling around," Rinpoche said. "To have them become

enlightened as quickly as possible, that is what we are responsible for. Every hell being, every hungry ghost, every animal, every insect, and every being in the ocean and in the ground which are so small that they can only be seen with a machine – we are responsible for all of them. That is why we have the FPMT. We are responsible for the happiness of every insect in the grass, to give them the happiness of future lives, liberation from samsara, and enlightenment. That is why we are meeting here. That is why FPMT exists. That is why you exist. That is why we are all gathered here – to fulfill that wish, that responsibility.

"The Dharma that the sentient beings who come into the center – the geshe, the monks and nuns, the lay students – learn, they teach to other sentient beings. They teach how to recite the *sang gyä chhö dang* prayer and how to take refuge and generate bodhichitta. When you say '*dro la phän chhir sang gyä drub par shog*' ('May I become a buddha to benefit all sentient beings') that includes not only dogs and cats, but every single ant, the birds flying in the trees, the worms in the road, the



Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi (in sunglasses) with Ven. Dorjee (left) and Ven. Sangpo walking to the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, Australia, September 18, 2014. Photo by Laura Miller.

numberless sentient beings in the oceans, the tiniest insects. Everybody is included, everybody. ‘To benefit all sentient beings’ includes your father and mother and your enemy. Nobody is left out. You dedicate your life to sentient beings – those most kind,

“The more we learn Dharma, then we have more wisdom. We learn as much as possible and then practice as much as possible and then we get realizations this life or in the next life. That is how to really develop Lama Tsongkhapa’s teachings.

“We are responsible for enlightening the small ants crawling around,” Rinpoche said.

“To have them become enlightened as quickly as possible, that is what we are responsible for. Every hell being, every hungry ghost, every animal, every insect, and every being in the ocean and in the ground which are so small that they can only be seen with a machine – we are responsible for all of them.”

most precious, most dear, wish-fulfilling sentient beings. Just to be able to recite that prayer, just to be able to *think about* (not the realization!) achieving enlightenment for them – wow, wow, wow – it’s amazing, amazing.”

Rinpoche then spoke about the work of the Sera Je Food Fund and of FPMT’s support of other Gelug monasteries. He talked about the importance of building gompas and having centers with the *Basic Program* and *Masters Program*. He mentioned translator training and having retreat places for realizations. Then Rinpoche stressed the correct view of the organization:

“FPMT is not a company or a worldly organization. It is not a political organization. FPMT is purely to serve sentient beings and that’s why we develop the organization and discuss how to serve better and better. Ultimately, FPMT brings sentient beings to enlightenment.

“Lama Tsongkhapa made the clearest commentary on sutra and tantra, what Buddha taught. By learning that, we are able to practice correctly like how Lama Tsongkhapa and Buddha practiced, and then we achieve correct realizations. That is what pleases Lama Tsongkhapa.”

On many other occasions during the meeting, Rinpoche offered advice and commentary on the topics being presented. On day five, Rinpoche gave preliminary teachings before bestowing an Amitayus long life initiation. Rinpoche also gave a closing talk on day six and taught during the long life puja offered to him that concluded the meeting. For the first time at a CPMT meeting, due to the hard work of the A/V team, Rinpoche’s scheduled talks were webcast live and video recordings of these talks are available online.

To watch Rinpoche’s talks at CPMT, visit FPMT’s Livestream page at new.livestream.com/FPMT/cpmt2014/.

FPMT'S CHARITABLE PROJECTS:



SUPPORTING LAMA ZOPA RINPOCHE'S VAST VISIONS:



- Building 100,000 prayer wheels, stupas and statues around the world
- Supporting all the main teachers of the Lama Tsongkhapa tradition and sponsoring annual debates
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- Supporting Sangha around the world
- Building hospitals and providing medical support for Tibetans
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- Liberating animals and offering practices for those who are sick or dying
- Translating Dharma texts, offering scholarships, and making Dharma available
- Sponsoring Dharma transmissions for the preservation of the Mahayana tradition
- Offering long life pujas for His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Lama Zopa Rinpoche



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*Small group discussion played a big part in the CPMT 2014 meeting. Robert Schwabe talking with Vens. Tenzin Tsapel, Tenzin Kunphen and Chantal Carrerot, Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, Australia, September 2014.
Photo by Laura Miller.*

An FPMT Advisory Council A Work in Progress

By Paula de Wijs-Koolkin

During the second day of the CPMT meeting, FPMT Inc. board member Paula de Wijs-Koolkin with Ven. Roger Kunsang introduced the idea of the FPMT Advisory Council. Here Paula describes the proposal and possible steps forward.

At the CPMT meeting in September, I was given the opportunity to present the work of a group of people who are mapping out the creation of an FPMT Advisory Council. This small working group, composed of Karuna Cayton, Peter Stickels, Stephen Meyer and myself, has been active since July. We are spread out over several continents and meet by Skype, often at strange hours of the day and night – 6 A.M. for some, 11 P.M. for others.

What was presented at the CPMT was not something final, but an expression of our thinking up to that moment. It was requested that the participants help us further by voicing their suggestions and concerns, so that their points of view can be taken into account as we proceed.

We are engaged in a creative process, which is exciting. However, we are aware that it is important to get the details right from the outset because the outcome can have an effect on many aspects of the organization for many years to come. Hence, the need for the working group to consider carefully every issue connected with the establishment of an advisory council.

Why set up an advisory council?

The growth of FPMT around the world brings with it a number of challenges and opportunities. On the one hand, there is the



challenge of providing guidance and support to centers with very different needs and at very different stages in their development. The “extension” of FPMT International Office through the development of more local support through regional and national coordinators is designed to help in this area. On the other hand, the growth in the number of centers, projects and services around the world has created a body of experience and wisdom we should be seeking to more effectively harness to help further the development of FPMT.

One of the main reasons for the proposal to establish an advisory council is born out of the recognition of this accumulated experience and wisdom that exists across our organization. Furthermore, we acknowledge the need to be prepared for the future, for a time when we will not have the many advantages of being able to rely on a teacher with the unique capabilities and wisdom of Lama Zopa Rinpoche. We feel that it is important that whatever is implemented concerning an advisory council is done so with Rinpoche’s full support and guidance.



What is the working group considering?

Here are some of the issues that the working group is looking at:

- As ultimately any recommendations from the FPMT Advisory Council would have to be considered by the FPMT Inc. Board of Directors, it would make sense for the council to report to the board and perhaps have a board member on the council or its committees.
- At the same time, the council must have the freedom to help determine its agenda, to work on issues brought up by centers, projects, services and individuals.
- We need to look at the key roles and responsibilities of the advisory council.
- It needs to be decided who the members of the council should be.
- How the advisory council members are appointed or elected and by whom needs to be made clear.

- How the advisory council could be funded is also an important issue. (Even with the possibility of remote meetings there will be expenses, and it will be necessary to budget for occasional face-to-face meetings.)

Participation at the CPMT Meeting

At the CPMT meeting, participants split into small groups to answer questions that had been created by the working group to obtain as much feedback as possible. The questions had to do with the issues mentioned above, but also included questions about expectations and concerns, and a request for suggestions about who should or could be on the advisory council.

It was encouraging to see the amount of thinking that went into the answers and comments that were produced, and we saw the challenges we face as a working group mirrored in the thinking of the CPMT participants. For instance, along with the concern that we do not just add a new layer of bureaucracy to the structure of FPMT was an appreciation for the support that the advisory council could offer.

Needless to say, the discussions that took place during CPMT will be considered very carefully in the process of developing recommendations.

Future steps

One of the follow-up steps mentioned at the meeting was to add a few more people to the group of four that had been working together until then. This has been accomplished with the addition of Ven. Tenzin Pemba, co-director of Cham Tse Ling in Hong Kong and member of the FPMT Inc. Board of Directors, and Yeo Puay Huei, a retired legal advisor and first director of Losang Dragpa Centre in Malaysia. Their experience and insights are most valuable in the process of understanding the ramifications of the potential FPMT Advisory Council.

We also stated that we will come with recommendations to the FPMT Inc. Board of Directors in March 2015 and present a suggestion for a charter for the FPMT Advisory Council. These recommendations will address clarity and understanding of vision, scope and authority; sources of adequate funding; and the creation of a solid basis for continuity – all points of concern expressed at the CPMT meeting.

This is a big task, but an exciting one. And we keep in mind that ultimately FPMT is a worldwide community of individuals working together to preserve the Mahayana tradition. We certainly hope that this work on an FPMT Advisory Council will be able to provide the best support to everyone involved and enhance the fulfillment of Lama Zopa Rinpoche's and Lama Yeshe's wishes.

CPMT Meeting Sparks Important Discussions for FPMT Education Services

By FPMT Education Services



From left: Tom Truty, director of FPMT Education Services, listening to feedback from small group discussions on education topics during the CPMT 2014 meeting, Australia, September 2014; Ven. Paloma Alba, François Lecointre, Olga Planken and Tara Melwani share ideas from the small group discussions on FPMT Education programs at the CPMT meeting, September 2014. Photos by Laura Miller.

On the second day of the CPMT 2014 meeting, FPMT Education Services director Tom Truty gave a presentation on the current state of FPMT Education Services, including information on how to find the most up-to-date materials on the FPMT.org website and Foundation Store; what FPMT International Office is doing to ensure that Lama Zopa Rinpoche's teachings are available in a variety of formats as quickly as possible to students; and what the four limbs of FPMT Education Services – translations, practice materials, training seminars, and study programs – do to preserve the Dharma and support students' practice.

During the presentation, Tom announced an exciting development: FPMT Education Services has been working with the Foundation Store to offer most FPMT Education prayer and practice materials as PDFs for free. This new system enables students around the world access to FPMT Education's plethora of prayers and practices for free while also providing the opportunity for students to donate what they are able during check-out.

As Lama Zopa Rinpoche has been commenting recently, within the FPMT organization, study is very good, but the time has come for students to gain realizations. FPMT Education has a strong foundation of practice materials, translations and study programs in place. What is needed now is committed students fully utilizing what has been developed. With this in mind, Tom asked CPMT meeting attendees a few questions: How have centers and teachers most successfully run FPMT Education programs? What have been the challenges? What can FPMT Education Services do

to better support implementation of programs so that students will graduate, teach and actualize their studies?

Small groups discussed these questions and provided valuable feedback to FPMT Education Services. One theme that was common among the discussions is that although many FPMT Education resources exist, students, as well as center directors, spiritual program coordinators, and teachers are not always clear on how to find what's needed.

A tremendous amount of work has been done over the past year with the education-related sections of the FPMT.org website (fpmt.org/education) and with the FPMT Foundation Store (shop.fpmt.org). All are encouraged to spend some time checking out these pages to understand all that is available to them.

During the meeting's third day, Tom was joined by Claire Isitt, director of Center Services, for a presentation on "Teacher Support and Development." Tom and Claire reviewed the teacher registration process, updated in 2011, and reported on how the process is working. They then announced that FPMT Education Services now handles teacher registration. FPMT Center Services, however, will continue to handle the appointment of resident geshe and teachers at centers. Energetic small group discussions on how to develop and support FPMT teachers followed the presentation.

The Education Services team at FPMT International Office is always happy to answer any questions you may have should you not be able to find the materials and resources that you are looking for. Please contact us: education@fpmt.org.

The Five Pillars of Service

On the fourth day of the meeting, Ven. Roger Kunsang introduced the Five Pillars of Service to which FPMT centers can aspire in order to engage their communities most broadly. Here we share an adaptation of his presentation.

The Five Pillars of Service come into existence based on Lama Zopa Rinpoche's Vast Visions for FPMT (see page 32). In the Vast Visions you see two things: the massive scope of FPMT's desire to benefit sentient beings and the persistent question "What more can we do to help others, to make a difference in the world, to remove suffering and achieve happiness?"

The Five Pillars of Service are:

- Dharma
- Universal Education for Compassion and Wisdom
- Social/Community Service
- Interfaith
- Revenue Generating Activities
(Compatible Business Opportunities)

An FPMT center might just be offering Dharma, which is excellent, as it is the path to enlightenment. However, the center could do more. Perhaps by hosting more activities to benefit their local community in a broader way. The five pillars are a way to start actualizing the Vast Visions at a local level, and ideally FPMT centers will develop their programming so that they offer something from each pillar.

Engaging the pillars in this way is likely to attract new volunteers and support, especially from those who might not want



Ven. Roger Kunsang addressing more than 100 CPMT participants, who are dwarfed by the size of Great Stupa for Universal Compassion's interior, Australia, September 2014. Photo by Laura Miller.

to get involved with specifically Buddhist activities, but would like to help with interfaith or social service projects instead.

FPMT centers should consider packaging their skills and interests to raise money to support their other activities. For example, certain centers could develop a health resort or wellness program for people based on looking after the mind as well as the body.

We hope to see these pillars in the centers so that we can continue to benefit others and become more helpful in our communities. We think that this will help our communities to better relate to and support our centers. It's natural that the more we help our local communities, the more they will contribute to the centers.

Universal Education for Compassion and Wisdom: The Second Pillar of FPMT Service

By the Foundation for Developing Compassion and Wisdom team

Following up on Ven. Roger Kunsang's introduction of the Five Pillars of Service at the CPMT meeting, we'd love to share how you can easily incorporate the second pillar into your center, project or service.

Many FPMT centers around the world are already using Universal Education for Compassion and Wisdom (also known as Universal Education) programs to support their activities, attract new audiences, and reach out to and work with local projects. Schools, prisons and hospices might not be open to a traditional presentation of Buddhism, but they are very keen to learn more about secular ethics and positive human values such as kindness and generosity.

Universal Education programs' contemporary and secular presentations make them accessible and suitable to a wide spectrum of students across different age ranges and backgrounds, including those of different faiths, or none.

"It is not possible for everybody in the world to become a Buddhist or Muslim or Hindu, or to follow the teachings of any religion," Lama Zopa Rinpoche explained in a 2011 interview. "But we need to bring some kind of method or education to the world for a better life, a better world and more happiness, to solve all the problems by addressing the cause of unhappiness. Universal Education, which Lama Yeshe started, is so important because it is something that everybody in the world can accept and understand. I see Universal Education as more and more important."

The Foundation for Developing Compassion and Wisdom (FDCW), the organization responsible for



Linda Gyatso, the new director of the Foundation for Developing Compassion and Wisdom, describing Universal Education for Compassion and Wisdom at CPMT, September 2014. Photo by Laura Miller.

CPMT 2014 MEETING

developing and promoting Universal Education programs, suggests these four ways of including Universal Education at your center, project or service.

1) Host or Attend Our Learning Programs

FDCW-recognized learning programs are designed to encourage participants to access their own inner compassion and wisdom, and to provide practical tools that can be immediately put to use in their daily life. They feature exercises, meditation practice, brainstorming and discussion, video, music, and the creation of personal action plans to explore and develop human values.

Moreover, students who are parents or community leaders, or work in education, youth work, health care, social care or leadership have found Universal Education programs very useful, as they offer a secular and contemporary way of taking their learning and applying it in their respective environments.

Visit FDCW's website to find out about upcoming trainings, or get in touch to find out how to host a workshop at your center.

2) Start a Children and Family Program

If you are motivated to set up a children's program at your center, there are wonderful models. Many FPMT centers have successfully used the *16 Guidelines*, a Universal Education program which uses 16 human values such as "generosity" and "forgiveness" as its basis.

One example is Kadampa Center in North Carolina in the United States. They started a children's group over 10 years ago that has now grown into five different groups that are key parts of the center's schedule. The fact that the material used for the Universal Education groups is secular means that families from various faiths, or none, are able to join the activities. The group also allows students who are parents to participate in the center's activities, secure in the knowledge that their children have somewhere wholesome to go,

akin to Sunday school. It has also attracted new families to the center, drawn to participate in the program.

3) Run a Family Camp

If you have adequate facilities and a dedicated team of helpers, a family camp could be an inspiring addition to your annual schedule. It will open doors to new local families looking for an activity that enables them to spend time together doing something meaningful and fun.

The prospect of running a camp for children and adults can seem daunting, but Françoise Normand from Education Universelle France recently inspired a group of FPMT students at the FDCW workshop after the CPMT meeting by giving them a clear outline of how it can be done: from getting the team in place all the way to the daily schedule and suggested activities for different ages. She shared her experience of setting up the *1,2,3 Bonheur* annual camp at Institut Vajra Yogini in France, which has attracted participants from the nearby towns who had never been to the center before and are now regulars of the camp.

Contact FDCW to request samples and tips from Kadampa Center, Institut Vajra Yogini and other FPMT centers that have started family summer camps and children's programs using Universal Education as inspiration.

4) Keep Updated

Have you considered a center member becoming the Universal Education representative at your center? The Universal Education representative could keep abreast of FDCW news and updates via the quarterly newsletter and share the most relevant information with all students via notice boards or newsletters.

For more information, get in touch with FDCW via the website: www.compassionandwisdom.org

IMI Sangha Meet and Learn

During CPMT 2014

By Ven. Chantal Carrerot, director of the IMI

The International Mahayana Institute (IMI) is composed of FPMT's monks and nuns. IMI Sangha have made invaluable contributions to building the international FPMT mandala over the years, serving as the organization's "pioneers." As of today, IMI has 280 Sangha members in 29 countries who are in retreat, studying, teaching and offering service.

During the fourth day of the CPMT meeting, participants heard from Ven. Chantal Carrerot, director of IMI, and Drolkar McCallum, IMI member services assistant, about the history of IMI Sangha and the many opportunities that exist to offer them support, including building projects on three continents. Participants had the opportunity to reflect on how they've seen IMI Sangha benefit centers, projects and services and rejoice in these activities. Ven. Chantal shared more about the meeting and the retreat afterwards with Mandala.

Previous to the CPMT meeting, I attended the celebrations for the 40th anniversary of Chenrezig Institute in early September and met the nuns of the Chenrezig Nuns Community (CNC) in Eudlo, Queensland, Australia. It was important for me to visit CNC and also later to visit Thubten Shedrup Ling Monastery in Bendigo to get a direct experience and a feel of these Sangha communities. I have visited nearly all the places where IMI Sangha reside, but it was my first visit to Australia and the two IMI communities located there.

Forty Sangha from more than 10 different countries attended the CPMT 2014 meeting. The CPMT meeting was very fruitful because it was a very special opportunity to connect to the rest of the FPMT community. The feedback we received from the participants revealed the need for more open communication and for promoting interaction between the Sangha and lay practitioners. Also, it was clear that there was a need for more transparency on the financial support given to the IMI. We are keen on working to fulfill both of these needs.

Drolkar McCallum was delighted to see so many nuns and monks attending the meeting. She is new in the job of IMI member services assistant and was happy to match faces with names after exchanging months of emails. Drolkar and I presented the IMI Sangha portion of the CPMT meeting. The small group discussions afterward were very inspiring with people offering practical ideas that can be implemented to support the Sangha in the future.

One IMI member, Ven. Tenzin Tsapel, who is also director of Golden Light Sutra Center in Darkhan, Mongolia, found the CPMT meeting very good. She mentioned that it's very important to come together from all over Rinpoche's mandala to discuss how to move forward, network and continue to develop our FPMT family feeling.

As far as the Sangha is concerned, the month-long retreat after the CPMT meeting was even more important because many more Sangha attended, affording us the opportunity to practice together and convene two important meetings.



Lama Zopa Rinpoche and IMI Sangha members during a small group discussion at CPMT 2014, Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, Australia, September 2014. Photo by Laura Miller.

The Senior Sangha Council, which oversees the general orientation of the IMI and usually meets on Skype, met in person. We decided to try a new model for the organization, with monks and nuns connecting to the IMI through a local Sangha entity, instead of directly to the IMI office. Shortly after, this plan was submitted to and discussed in a general Sangha meeting. People were keen to discuss the topic, and they came out with many inspiring ways on how to implement this idea. It appears that Australia will be at the forefront of this new development.

For more on the International Mahayana Institute, visit imisangha.org.

Preparing for Aging and Death

On the CPMT meeting's fifth day, participants took up the topic "Care for Aging Staff and Students." Ven. Thubten Damcho from the Chenrezig Nuns Community and Isabel Arocena, the Spanish national coordinator, led the session by sharing their experiences with the topic.

Ven. Damcho described the four key areas that Sangha in Australia have identified when facing concerns about illness and death. The areas are health care, accommodation needs, financial assistance and help with Dharma practice. The conclusion of her presentation was that the level of support and type of support vary from individual to individual, with many factors coming into account, and at this point, most of that support is being arranged by the individual.

When the discussion was opened up to others to share, participants offered many practical suggestions and ideas. Doing what you can to be prepared now was a recurring theme and included suggestions like having a will, an advanced care directive, and power of attorney taken care of. Suggestions were made about having a specific "Dharma Will" that explains to family and friends your wishes for prayers and practices while dying and

afterwards. Similar ideas included having a list of current practices and commitments and even a recording of yourself reciting them should you become unable to remember or to say them.

Participants also shared anecdotes of positive experiences working with hospitals, hospice and funeral directors to make the most beneficial and appropriate arrangements possible for fellow students as well as for geshe after they have passed away. Other ideas included centers having a Liberation Box, which is a collection of materials assembled under Rinpoche's guidance made available through the FPMT Foundation Store, and knowing how to use it when students approach death. Centers can also identify within their community people who are available and willing to assist with spiritual care during the dying and grieving process.

Many were surprised by how many small and easily accomplished things could be done to prepare for death. The session ended with participants having a shared sense of inspiration to take responsibility for making these relatively simple and practical arrangements for themselves and to continue working within their communities to help others when death draws near.

Impressions of the CPMT Meeting

Mandala asked CPMT meeting participants to reflect on their experiences. Here's what we heard.

It was an unbelievable blessing to attend the CPMT 2014 meeting in Bendigo. In the first few days in Atisha Centre, the conditions were a little harsh. The weather was ice cold and we had to adjust to our stay in caravans with no heaters and with only outdoor toilet facilities – but we had a good time anyway.

CPMT started the day after we arrived, the daily program starting as early as 6:45 A.M. with Ven. Gyatso leading us in prostrations and morning meditation to set the right motivation for the entire day.

FPMT upholds what it stands for, preserving the Mahayana tradition and supporting Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche's projects and vast visions. Engaging in group discussion and review sessions was extremely beneficial. Members across the globe shared their successes, difficulties and their experiences in solving these problems. The concept of the five pillars has already been implemented in Losang Dragpa Centre and should be carried through all FPMT centers.

We also had our first South East Asian regional meeting with our regional coordinator, Tara Melwani. Those present were from Malaysia, Singapore, Mongolia and Taiwan.

Those of us who have the incredible good fortune to be here working to fulfill Rinpoche's Vast Visions look forward to this task with joy in our hearts. We look forward to the next CPMT meeting and hopefully in a country with a warmer climate! Finally, a big thank you to all of the CPMT organizers and volunteers that made the meeting possible and to Atisha Centre, the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion and Thubten Shedrup Ling for their warm hospitality.

*Candy Tan, spiritual program coordinator
Losang Dragpa Centre, Malaysia*



Malaysian representatives to the CPMT meeting (from left) Sally Ong, Pik Pin Goh, Selina Foong and Candy Tan at Atisha Centre, Bendigo, Australia, September 2014. Photo courtesy of Candy Tan.

To have attended the CPMT 2014 in Australia was pretty much the best decision I've made so far this year. Of course, I thought about this very carefully. When you are living in Europe, more specifically in Vienna, Austria, inevitably you ask yourself questions like: Should I really make such a long and expensive journey halfway around the world "only" to be at a meeting? Does this make any sense? Well, the answer is very clear: YES!

For me as a very new center director, this week was a wonderful and incredibly inspiring experience that I never expected. To see how big FPMT really is, how many people tirelessly are working for Rinpoche's vision, and especially how harmonious and extremely friendly the global FPMT family is was just wonderful. This and all the great information and input have given me a tremendous boost of energy for my job at Panchen Losang Chogyen in Vienna.

*Stefan Seidler, director
Panchen Losang Chogyen Gelug-Zentrum, Vienna, Austria*

Australia is a long way from California. Although Land of Medicine Buddha is *endlessly busy*, our spiritual program coordinator and I made the trek. The meeting was amazingly productive. A rare and precious opportunity to be of service and get support.

One story. At one point in the meeting we broke into small groups to discuss what Wisdom Culture meant to us. I had removed the top from my coffee mug. At the same time, the table I was sitting at got moved. Coffee eruption! Coffee all over me, my bags, my neighbor's bag and the table. Ven. Roger leapt up and asked, "What does Wisdom Culture mean to you right now?" Seems that he was looking for an unedited natural response. I laughed and responded, "That someone will help me." In the next moment, Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi handed me napkins from his table and someone at my table was apologizing for moving the table.

What did I mean when I said, "That someone will help me"? I meant that we learn about compassion. Through receiving teachings and practicing meditation, we develop our ability to have helpful and wise reflexes. Problems (like coffee spilling) inevitably occur, and we learn to rejoice in the opportunities that problems offer. No shame, no blame – big love for ourselves and others.

At any meeting I might have found people ready to help, but at an FPMT meeting I knew I could count on it. The most esteemed teacher in the room came to help. From Khen Rinpoche's side there was immediate and effortless wish to assist.

Happily (at least *this* time) I didn't get upset or reflexively blame someone else for my problem. Perhaps a bit of wisdom is sinking in! I rejoice in seeing how this "problem," albeit small, brought opportunities to practice compassion and warm-heartedness.

*Denice Macy, director
Land of Medicine Buddha, California, US*

The Great Stupa of Universal Compassion simply cannot be captured in pictures. Those folks are doing unbelievable big work. So inspiring. Go there before you die, and if you die, get your ashes interred there. It's win-win either way.

The event was full of seeing old friends, meeting new people, making firm friends, being totally aware of how rare it is to spend time with big-hearted, sincere people trying to bring about something extraordinary. And Rinpoche himself was engaging, funny, disarming, charming, by turns firm and soft, visionary, expansive, unbelievably kind and utterly focused on helping others – humans, animals, all beings.

And the result? Re-invigorated, refreshed, re-inspired – with huge gratitude to Rinpoche and the organizers and the hosts (that is BIG work) and to the Jamyang Buddhist Centre London board for sending me as the London representative; to the kind sponsor who made it possible for them to do that; and to all who try to bring about the wishes of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Lama Zopa Rinpoche. Wow! Wow! Wow!

*Mike Murray, spiritual program coordinator
Jamyang Buddhist Centre, London, UK*

As a new director, it was an honor to attend the CPMT 2014 meeting. The meetings were inspiring and heartwarming. It was amazing having Lama Zopa Rinpoche's presence at almost all of the sessions. A few of my favorite moments included Ven. Sangpo Sherpa climbing into caves and posing like Milarepa at Hanging Rock; Ven. Sarah Thresher singing songs of Milarepa into caves at Hanging Rock; Ian Green's presentation on the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion and the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace; taking a tour of Thubten Shedrup Ling with Ven. Gyatso; sharing a camper van with Wendy Cook thanks to Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive so I didn't freeze camping; and the most meaningful, having two opportunities to talk to Rinpoche during the tea breaks. ♦

*Felicity Noël Keeley, director
Milarepa Center, Vermont, US*



Ven. Holly Ansett takes in some fresh air and wide horizons during the CPMT outing at Hanging Rock, Victoria, Australia, September 2014. Photo by Andy Melnic.



Ven Sangpo Sherpa as Milarepa at Hanging Rock, Victoria, Australia, September 2014. Photo by Sarah Brooks.



Felicity Noël Keeley at at Hanging Rock, Victoria, Australia, September 2014. Photo by Tom Truty.



Mike Murray and Maarten de Vries chatting during a tea break at the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, Australia, September 2014. Photo by Laura Miller.

Actualizing the Vast and Inspiring Visions of Lama Zopa Rinpoche

During the month of May 2007, Lama Zopa Rinpoche was in retreat at Kachoe Dechen Ling in Northern California. In a break time, Rinpoche began jotting down some of his ideas and wishes for the future of the FPMT organization onto a stack of small, colored Post-it notes. That afternoon, Rinpoche explained these ideas to Ven. Roger Kunsang, Rinpoche's assistant and CEO of FPMT, and Ven. Holly Ansett, assistant to Ven. Roger. These visions from Rinpoche were in addition to what FPMT was already accomplishing due to the work of FPMT's most precious founder, Lama Yeshe. The Post-it notes and Rinpoche's subsequent commentary came to be collectively regarded as the framework for Rinpoche's long-term "Vast Visions" for FPMT.

The FPMT organization has already made progress on many of the visions that Rinpoche identified. Some projects still need to be developed and some have not yet started. The Vast Visions are ambitious and may take many lifetimes to actualize, but Rinpoche has created a far-sighted roadmap for the organization to create an incredible amount of merit and benefit innumerable sentient beings long, long into the future. FPMT International Office is currently keeping track of the progress of these visions and cultivating the resources needed for the projects to flourish.

Rinpoche's Vast Visions fall into four general categories. We offer this outline of Rinpoche's clear vision for the future of the FPMT organization in order to rejoice in what has already been accomplished and to make prayers for the success of all of the Vast Visions.

1. Offering Service to His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Lama Zopa Rinpoche stressed that he wanted "the organization to support His Holiness, offer service to His Holiness. This is the quickest and most vast way of benefiting sentient beings."

In particular, Rinpoche requested that we offer support through:

- supporting the projects of His Holiness;
- sponsoring public talks with His Holiness;
- hosting interfaith dialogues.

In 2014, His Holiness blessed and taught at Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa in Italy. In 2013, Maitripa College hosted His Holiness for "Spirituality and the Environment," an interfaith public event focused on environmental stewardship. While in

Portland, His Holiness taught at Maitripa College and toured FPMT International Office. His Holiness also was hosted by Tushita Mahayana Meditation Centre in Delhi, India, in 2013. In addition, each year many FPMT students and centers are involved in sponsoring and supporting a variety of conferences and public teachings with His Holiness worldwide.

2. Holy Objects for World Peace

"My wish is for FPMT to build many holy objects everywhere, as many as possible," Rinpoche said. "Making it so easy for sentient beings to purify their heavy negative karma and making it so easy for sentient beings to create extensive merit. Which makes it so easy to achieve the realizations of the path and so easy to achieve liberation and enlightenment."

Of the more than 20 visions shared by Lama Zopa Rinpoche, five relate directly to holy objects. These holy object visions include:

- constructing 100,000 stupas;
- assembling 100,000 prayer wheels around the world (and under the great oceans);
- creating huge thangkas for display during festival days;
- building many Padmasambhava statues for world peace;
- erecting 1,000 large statues of Maitreya Buddha.

Many FPMT centers, projects and services worldwide have already completed or are working on holy objects in accordance with Rinpoche's wishes. And for the stupas, prayer wheels and Padmasambhava statues there are projects managed by FPMT Charitable Projects that keep track of the creation and progress of these holy objects as well as generate and disperse funds to assist



His Holiness the Dalai Lama with Lama Zopa Rinpoche at Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa, Pomaia, Italy, June 2014. Photo by Matteo Passigato.



in their realization. To date, 49 stupas, 12 prayer wheels, 11 large thangkas, 18 Padmasambhava statues and 105 Maitreya statues have been completed.

We still have many holy objects to create to reach Rinpoche's goal – just 99,951 stupas, 99,988 prayer wheels, and 895 Maitreya statues to go!

*Nine-foot Padmasambhava statue at De-Tong Ling Retreat Centre, Kangaroo Island, Australia.
Photo courtesy of De-Tong Ling Retreat Centre.*

3. Supporting Practice and Realizations

"Anybody who dedicates their life to achieving lam-rim realizations with the goal to liberate numberless beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering and to bring to enlightenment, this is what I regard as the most important thing in the world," Rinpoche remarked.

Rinpoche encourages practice and the obtainment of realizations through the following Vast Visions:

- taking care of ordained and lay students;
- supporting monasteries and nunneries;
- establishing retirement opportunities for long-time students;
- sponsoring 100 million OM MANI PADME HUM retreats;
- supporting the completion of nyung nä retreats;
- encouraging recitations of the Golden Light Sutra;
- establishing retreat centers;
- creating comprehensive FPMT education programs;
- providing scholarships to devoted students.



Sangha attending Light of the Path retreat, Black Mountain, North Carolina, US, May 2014

4. Social Services

"[It is good for FPMT] to benefit extensively other sentient beings by offering various social services, such as those that bring loving kindness and peace to youth using Universal Education methods, religious interfaith activities which bring peace and happiness and extensively benefit others by spreading Dharma," Rinpoche added. Rinpoche identified several areas through which the organization can focus on addressing various social issues.

Rinpoche asked that Universal Education for Compassion and Wisdom, which already offers a secular system of inner learning that enables children, young people and adults to lead a happy and meaningful life and to be of service to others, continue and expand.

Rinpoche also requested that the organization develop the following Vast Visions:

- different techniques rooted in Dharma for healing others;
- assist young people with meditation and encourage them toward volunteer work;
- programs to educate parents on how to bring up children to be good human beings;
- Buddhist drug rehabilitation projects;
- social services to the elderly;
- hosting interfaith events to promote religious harmony;
- benefiting animals in any way possible, including animal blessing events in FPMT centers around the world.

VAST VISIONS

As an incredible example of the work being done for animals around the world, Amitabha Buddhist Centre and Ven. Tenzin Drachom (Fred Cheong) have liberated over 200 million animals to date!

The Most Essential Practice

Rinpoche also offered a final “most essential practice,” a piece of advice which ties Rinpoche’s many visions together:

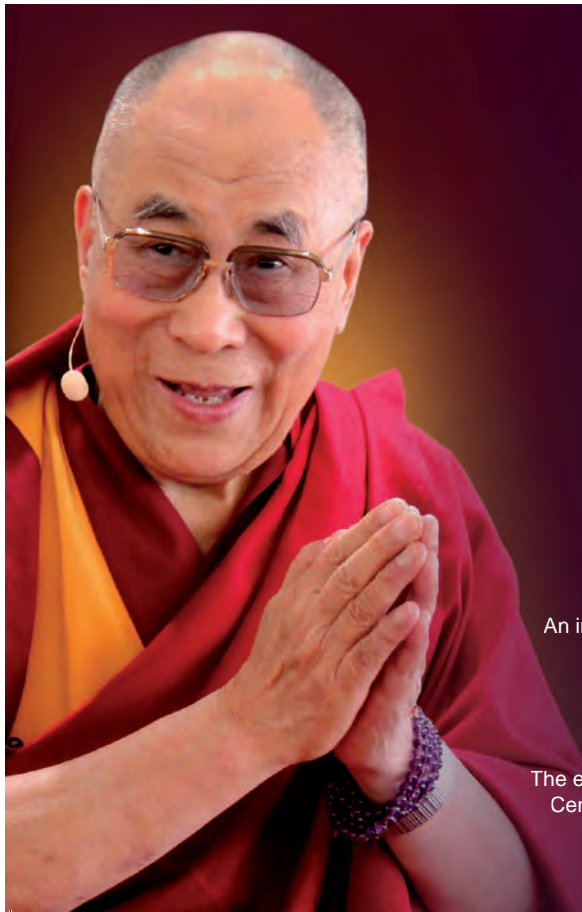
“The conclusion is for all the people to practice the lam-rim, which is the heart of Dharma. Especially to try to put all the effort to live with bodhichitta motivation, in particular to have kindness to others, which is the most essential practice. Aiming to have the realization of bodhichitta as our main goal, of course based on guru devotion.”



*Children practicing mindfulness, Tara Redwood School, Soquel, California, US
Photo courtesy of Tara Redwood School.*

The Vast Visions are ambitious and may take many lifetimes to actualize. They also are still evolving and being clarified. To take part in one of the Vast Visions, please explore the various projects that have been established to support them. Supporting these projects helps actualize Rinpoche’s wishes, and as Rinpoche commented, many people getting involved at a smaller level makes large projects possible. ♦

For more information please visit: fpmt.org/fpmt/vast-vision/.



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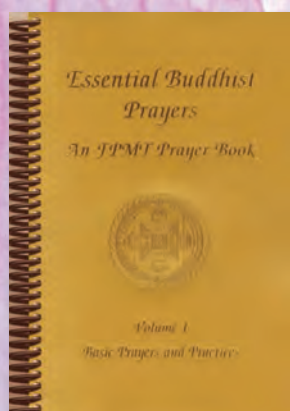
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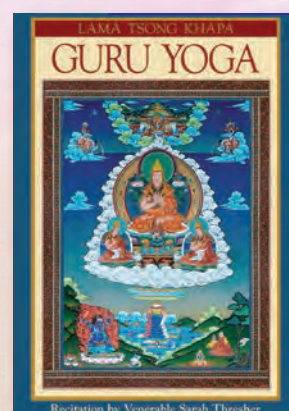
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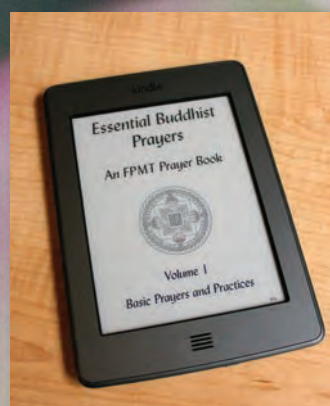
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Strong Connections: Dakini Dance Offerings during Long Life Pujas for Lama Zopa Rinpoche in Australia

Two long life pujas for Lama Zopa Rinpoche served as culminating highlights for the CPMT 2014 meeting and the month-long *Bodhicaryavatara* and Rinjung Gyatsa retreat, both held at the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion in Bendigo, Australia. The CPMT long life puja, offered on September 19, and the retreat puja, offered on October 23, were beautifully arranged and featured dakini dance offerings, an ancient tradition.

Kathy Vichta coordinated the first long life puja. She explained how after Lama Zopa Rinpoche manifested a stroke in 2011, Khadro-la (Rangjung Neljorma Khadro Namsel Drolma) advised that FPMT centers include the dakinis' request to the lama in the long life pujas arranged for Rinpoche. "She recommended that we should not just do the verses as we had always done," Kathy said, "but have dancers in full costume. This is relatively easy at Kopan Monastery, where the monks are trained and they have the costumes on hand. It is a little more daunting in Australia, but we started planning with joy."

The first job was finding the costumes. "After trying to borrow them from centers who had done this part of the puja before, we ended up ordering a complete set, in gorgeous five colored brocades, through Ani Fran at Kopan," Kathy said. Next, dakinis needed to be cast. Cynthia Karena stepped up and contacted local students and daughters of students to find a group of dedicated young women to take on the roles.

"Ven. Tsomo from Land of Medicine Buddha in California was invaluable, sending us training videos and instructions. And with the additional fantastic help from Vajrayana Institute's Ven. Chokyi, things were underway!" Kathy recounted. "Ven. Chokyi and Ven. Tsomo and the young women practiced hard for ages to get all the movements perfect and meditated together to make sure the motivation was clear. It was a powerful preparation and all of this was reflected beautifully during the actual puja."

All of the young women who offered the dance said they felt honored to be asked to participate and brought strong determination and focus to learning the dance and keeping a correct motivation. The particular dance the women learned was adapted from the Kalachakra ritual dance from the tradition of Namgyal Monastery in Dharamsala, India.

"Once I got the moves, I was really focused on feeling the dance and trying to channel the White Dakini," shared Rommy Fisher, the White Dakini in the first puja. "This was definitely

easier said than done. I tried to forge a strong connection with the White Dakini by bringing her into my day-to-day living to give me strength when I faced challenges, hoping that this connection would then resonate on the day of the long life puja."

Several of the dancers had to overcome obstacles at home, school, work and with their health in order to attend rehearsals and the pujas. Simone Mitchell, who was the Red Dakini in both pujas, lives six hours from Melbourne, where the early rehearsals took place, and has a young family and a business, but she managed to make it work. "[At first] my thoughts were about myself and my own performance. This quickly changed. When my motivation shifted and I realized the dance was for others and Lama Zopa Rinpoche, my obstacles cleared. The dance became easy and very powerful for me," Simone said.

The women all credit both the practice of the dakini dance and their connection with each other as being very helpful for overcoming their respective obstacles. "We felt that great purification was happening for all of us as a result of offering something of such great merit to Rinpoche," explained Emily Kostos, the Blue Dakini in the second puja and a back-up dancer for the first. "My self-cherishing thoughts became very apparent during the training, and I saw with more and more clarity how this created so many problems for me. Our director, Ven. Chokyi, was always there to remind me of bodhichitta through the actions of her body, speech and mind."

"Learning the dance was a profound psychological process. The five dakinis must work together in absolute unison to make the dance powerful," said Simone. "We all connected in the end in the most powerful way. I would call them sisters now."

"In terms of connecting into the meaning of the dance, it was really about exploring my relationship with Lama Zopa Rinpoche. After being a student online for a couple of years, this was my first opportunity to meet him, and to be able to do so in such a special way was amazing," explained Bec Llewyn, who stepped in a couple of weeks before the second puja as the Green Dakini when another dancer had to step down due to a final exam being scheduled for the same day. "Overall the dance came to be a way to establish from my own side such a strong connection to Rinpoche, as well as a way to offer thanks for all the guidance he has offered."

On the days of the pujas, the dancers meditated together before going up to the gompa in costume. "The anticipation of



Clockwise from top: Lama Zopa Rinpoche with the five dakinis during long life puja, Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, September 19, 2014. Photo by Kunchok Gyaltsen; Dakini dance offering during long life puja, September 19, 2014. Photo by Laura Miller; The five dakinis walking towards the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion for the long life puja for Lama Zopa Rinpoche, September 19, 2014. Photo by Cynthia Karena.

waiting at the stupa door and then entering into the dance state had an unequalled intensity. From a point of great silence, we came into actualization with our bells and *damarus* in call and response to the cymbals and drumbeat inside the gompa,” recalled Celeste Clayton, who was the Green Dakini in the first puja and the White Dakini in the second. “Due to the mystique of the costume, where only our lips and hands could be seen, we

could no longer be identified as individuals. We were manifesting dakini energy, moving beyond ordinary appearance.

“Once in movement there is the fluidity of the dance that owns you, carries you through. We were truly existing within the moment of the ritual. Somewhere in the space between the sounds of the ritual instruments, the concentration of each lotus step and the devotion from our hearts, we were traveling with the inner and outer deity.”

REJOICE!

"People were quite overwhelmed as they moved gracefully in unison up the central aisle towards Rinpoche to then kneel before him, requesting him to return to the pure lands with them," Kathy Vitcha said. "They remained there, tied to the throne by five colored khatas, right through the tsog offering. We all marveled at how long they could stay so still. And then, finally accepting that Rinpoche would stay in this realm for our benefit, they left." As each dakini made her way out of the gompa, she received offerings from the sponsors of the puja.

"I experienced the realization that we are powerful beyond our wildest dreams," recalled Simone as she reflected on her

experience during the long life pujas. "I can tell you, the energy was extremely strong and overwhelming. I actually found becoming the Red Dakini a tad uncomfortable and distressing. It's a confidence and power that is beyond our perceptions of gender, class, race, position, etc. It was so new to me to feel this way. My self-cherishing thoughts and concept of who I was disappeared. I felt light and blissful and full of clarity and white light. ... I feel extremely blessed this happened."

Many thanks to Cynthia Karena for helping with this story.



Sangha and students listen intently while Helen Patrin, Drolkar McCallum and Tara Melhwani read the "Praise to Kyabje Thubten Zopa Rinpoche" during the long life puja for Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, Australia, September 19, 2014. Photos by Kunchok Gyalten.

During the long life puja at the end of the CPMT meeting, regional coordinators Helen Patrin, Australia; Drolkar McCallum, North America; and Tara Melhwani, South East Asia, read nine pages of praise to FPMT spiritual director Lama Zopa Rinpoche submitted by FPMT centers, projects and services from every region where FPMT is active. The tribute to Rinpoche profoundly touched those in attendance. We share here the opening lines:

Praise to Kyabje Thubten Zopa Rinpoche on the Occasion of the Long Life Puja at the CPMT Meeting

*"You lions among humans,
Gone to freedom in the present, past and future
In the worlds of ten directions,
To all of you, with body, speech, and sincere mind,
I bow down."¹*

Always and forever we are in prostration at your holy lotus feet, Kyabje Thubten Zopa Rinpoche.

We offer this praise to you Rinpoche, on behalf of all of your disciples throughout the world. We offer this praise on behalf of all sentient beings, who wander like blind children at the edge of the perilous cliffs of samsara, certain to fall to our deaths without your guidance.

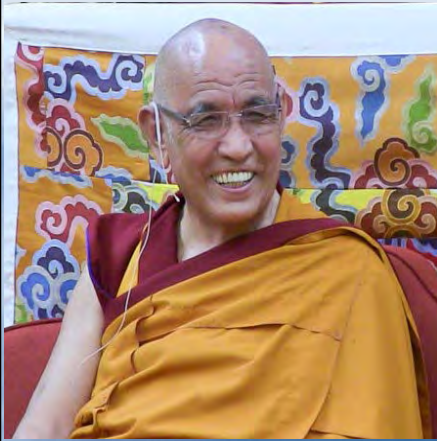
We offer this praise in connection with this long life offering ceremony, with deep, sincere and fervent requests that you remain stable like a vajra in this lifetime for the benefit of all beings.

Please remain with us, never separated, and continue to guide all sentient beings and the FPMT organization. ...

You can read the complete "Praise to Kyabje Thubten Zopa Rinpoche" with this issue's online content at fpmt.org/mandala.

¹ "King of Prayers," verse 1, FPMT Education Services, 2008

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REJOICE!

Rare Oral Transmission of the Golden Light Sutra



From September 26 to October 10, Lama Zopa Rinpoche gave a rare oral transmission of the 21-chapter version of the *Golden Light Sutra* to 250 people during the month-long *Bodhicaryavatara* and Rinjung Gyatsa retreat at the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion in Australia. Rinpoche commented that by receiving the transmission and reciting the text oneself, “You are taking care of your life – present and future up to enlightenment. ... The whole world benefits.” Having the complete transmission is considered to increase the power of recitation 100 times. Rinpoche’s oral transmission also was part of the live webcast of the retreat. And Rinpoche told students that those who watch the live webcast or even listen to the video or audio recordings also receive the oral transmission of the sutra.



Lama Zopa Rinpoche teaching at the retreat in the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, Bendigo, Victoria, Australia, October 2014.
Photos by Ven. Roger Kunsang.

Rinpoche encouraged students to create merit in relation to the text, drawing from the sutra's own suggestions. For example, Sangha and lay students at the retreat organized daily processions leading Rinpoche into the gompa at the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion. One such procession on October 1 included 40 center director and spiritual program coordinators. Everyone in the long procession held an offering – incense, one of the auspicious offerings, flowers – or played cymbals or conchs. “It was a very beautiful, slow procession,” Ven. Holly Ansett shared. “The procession is because in the *Golden Light Sutra* it actually says that however many steps you walk to invite the lama who gives the oral transmission of *Golden Light Sutra*, you create that many causes of enlightenment.”

Both while at the CPMT meeting and during the retreat, Rinpoche took special time to emphasize the power and benefit of reciting the sutra, asking Ven. Sarah Thresher, a long-time student and FPMT registered teacher who has taught in the FPMT centers in Mongolia, to explain the transformation that occurred in the aptly named Golden Light Sutra Center in Darkhan, the country's third-largest city.

Ven. Sarah told the story of how the city of Darkhan when she first visited had been “a desperate place” and how objects

would be stolen from the center. Rinpoche advised her to help students read the sutra and to distribute the text publicly. Printed copies of the sutra in Mongolian were hungrily received, with people pleading for their own copy. Many people recite the sutra daily, and since then, Darkhan has transformed into a prosperous place. “Everything that the sutra says will happen has done so in Darkhan,” Ven. Sarah said. “The weather is better, rains are coming at the right time, winter is no longer so bitter. There has been incredible economic prosperity in the city since the distribution of the *Golden Light Sutra*.” ♦

FPMT Education Services has collected the video and audio segments of Rinpoche giving the oral transmission of the *Golden Light Sutra* and a trove of other resources related to the sutra. On a special set of pages, students can download the text of the sutra in 14 different languages, including a miniature version suitable for wearing on the body; read some of the benefits of reciting the sutra as taught by Lama Zopa Rinpoche, including advice given at the Australia retreat; report completed recitations for count; share experiences related to the sutra; and post their questions about the text:

fpmt.org/education/teachings/sutras/golden-light-sutra/

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“The practitioner and benefactor offering food create the cause to achieve enlightenment together.” - MILAREPA



Obituaries

Lama Zopa Rinpoche requests that “students who read *Mandala* pray that the students whose obituaries follow find a perfect human body, meet a Mahayana guru and become enlightened quickly, or be born in a pure land where the teachings exist and they can become enlightened.” While reading these obituaries, we can also reflect upon our own death and rebirth, prompting us to live our lives in the most meaningful way.

Advice and practices for death and dying from Lama Zopa Rinpoche are available in the Foundation Store (shop.fpmt.org).

Geshe Lhundub Sopa, 91, died in Oregon, Wisconsin, United States, August 28, 2014, of natural causes

By Rodney Stevenson



Photo by Kalleen Mortensen

Geshe Lhundub Sopa passed away quietly at Deer Park Buddhist Center on August 28, 2014, and remained in clear light meditation for seven days. He was 91 years old. Geshe Sopa was a profoundly gifted teacher and one of the world’s foremost scholars of Buddhist philosophy. He was the founder of Deer Park Buddhist Center and also a Professor of South Asian Studies at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where he served for close to 30 years.

The only child of Tibetan farmers, Geshe Sopa was drawn to a religious life at a very early age. He took his novice vows when he was eight years old and

entered the local monastery, Ganden Chökhör. Ten years later, he made an arduous journey over high mountain passes in bone-chilling weather to enter Sera Je Monastery, where he soon demonstrated that he was a scholar of the highest caliber, an undisputed master of Lama Tsongkhapa’s teachings.

Geshe Sopa’s attainments at Sera Je were so notable that he was selected at a surprisingly young age to be one of the debate examiners for His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s Mönlam Geshe degree examinations. At the time, Geshe Sopa had not yet obtained his own Geshe degree; he did so three years later, earning the designation of the first among all degree recipients. When Geshe Sopa debated His Holiness, he focused on “buddha nature” and “opening the buddha lineage.” Three years later, after they had escaped from Chinese-occupied Tibet, His Holiness said that it was time for Geshe Sopa to go to the West to open the buddha lineage there.

At the request of His Holiness, Geshe Sopa accompanied three young tulkus who came to the United States in 1962 to study English. They lived in a small Mongolian Gelug monastery in New Jersey, where Geshe Sopa met Professor Richard Robinson, who had recently started a Buddhist studies program at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Invited to join the program, Geshe Sopa moved to Madison in 1967 and remained in the area for the rest of his life.

In the early 1970s, a small group of students came to Madison to ask Geshe

Sopa for teachings. Some had been traveling in South Asia and met two very skilled Buddhist teachers in Nepal – Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche – who advised them to go to the United States to study with their teacher. Others, who met the same two teachers in Indiana in the United States, were given the same advice. Shortly after these students came to Madison, Geshe Sopa established what was to become Deer Park Buddhist Center. His wish was that Deer Park would be a place where the authentic teachings would be carried far into the future.

Over the years, His Holiness and many of the most accomplished Tibetan Buddhist masters frequently came to Deer Park to visit Geshe Sopa, teach courses, and confer initiations. In 1981, His Holiness gave the Kalachakra initiation at Deer Park. This was the first time the initiation was offered in the West.

In addition to being a renowned religious leader, Geshe Sopa was a noted academic. Geshe Sopa was originally hired by the University of Wisconsin as a teaching assistant for a Tibetan language course. Those who hired him were apparently unaware that he was one of the world’s most knowledgeable scholars of Tibetan Buddhist philosophy. A colleague later commented that hiring Geshe Sopa to help teach Tibetan was like hiring the Pope to help teach Latin. When the breadth and depth of Geshe Sopa’s scholarship became known, he was

invited to join the faculty and in due course promoted to full professor.

Geshe Sopa was a teacher of students and a teacher of teachers. As a university professor, Geshe Sopa introduced hundreds of undergraduate students to basic Buddhist concepts and trained a generation of doctoral students who continue to advance Tibetan Buddhist scholarship at several universities

throughout the world. As a religious teacher, Geshe Sopa opened the path to students from around the world and gave teachings to some of the world's most advanced practitioners. Geshe Sopa was the teacher of Jangtse Chöje Lobsang Tenzin, the former abbot of Gyume Tantric College; three abbots of Sera Je Monastery; Lama Yeshe; Lama Zopa Rinpoche; Yangsi Rinpoche, the founder

of Maitripa College; and many others.

Geshe Sopa was a very humble person who brought joy and wisdom to thousands of his own students, and who, through students like Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche, brought hope to millions throughout the world. Those who knew Geshe Sopa Rinpoche miss him very much and pray for his swift return.

Words of Truth for a Speedy Accomplishment of the Prayer for a Swift Return of Geshe Lhundub Sopa

By His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Translated by Sherpa Tulku and Rodney Stevenson

*Supreme Teacher who sees and explains, as it is,
dependent arising that pacifies fully
the mind that sees subject and object as dual,
all accomplished one, please bestow good fortune here.*

*Losang, victor who spreads the life-force of teachings
held in the tradition of Seventeen Pandits,
skilled Land of Snow charioteer, with your lineage,
please bestow your blessings to accomplish our prayer.*

*The four kayas achieved, you spontaneously
accomplish the welfare of ourselves and others;
armed with patience, you spread teachings of the Sun's Friend,
peerless venerable guru, we beseech you.*

*As Buddha's teachings decline, little left behind,
just common words for explanation and practice,
you hold Dharma scriptures and realizations;
possessor of true meaning, please quickly return.*

*By study and reflection you crossed the ocean
of sutra and tantra's subjects hard to fathom;
endowed with correct view, samadhi, and ethics,
noble virtuous teacher, please quickly return.*

*By the infallible two truths of existence,
and specifically due to the activities
of Hayagriva and the protector Chamsing,
may this heartfelt request be quickly accomplished.*

Note: In verse one, "Supreme Teacher" and "all accomplished one" are epithets for Buddha. In verse two, "Losang" (Losang Drakpa) is Lama Tsongkhapa. The "Seventeen Pandits" are the Nalanda Masters: Nagarjuna, Asanga and so forth. In verse three, "spontaneous" and "patience" are the translations of "Lhundub" and "Sopa" respectively. "Sun's Friend" is an epithet for Buddha as Siddhartha was born into the Ikshvaku dynasty, which is also known as the Solar dynasty.

Colophon:

The great Geshe Lhundub Sopa having recently passed away, his disciples, including the incomparable Jangtse Chöje Lobsang Tenzin; Geshe Tenzin Dorjee, Lhundub Sherab, Lhundub Chowng, other monks and the students of Deer Park Buddhist Center; monks of Sera Je Tsangpa Khangtsen and Shang Ganden Chökhör Monastery in Tibet and Nepal; Tulku Lobsang Gedun Tenzin; Khentru Lhundub Chöden; and members of the Frank Tsou and Helen Du family, requested that I compose a prayer for his swift return.

Aside from that, because of our own deep connection as guru and disciple, I intended to write a prayer for his swift return. Geshe Lhundub Sopa was a member of the lineage of scholars coming from the 94th Ganden Tripa Lhundub Tsöndrü, who was highly regarded by my predecessor, the 13th Dalai Lama. I have very clear memories of the debate with Geshe Lhundub Sopa on the topic of buddha nature during the noon session of the Madhyamaka and Prajñāparamita sections of my Geshe examination at the Great Prayer Festival in Lhasa. After coming to India, he did not fail to do anything that I asked of him.

Composed by the Buddhist monk, the Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso, Tibetan Royal Year 2041; the 13th day of the 8th month of the 17th Rabjung Cycle Wood Horse year; October 6, 2014, by the Western calendar.

Translated by Sharpa Tulku and Rodney Stevenson with great devotion and fervent prayers for Geshe Lhundub Sopa to quickly return.

OBITUARIES

Ven. Lobsang Chokyi, 55, died in San Francisco, California, United States, August 10, 2014, of cancer

By Ven. Tenzin Chogkyi



Ven. Lobsang Chokyi took her last breath on Sunday, August 10, 2014, after a four-year battle with cancer. Chokyi had been clear about her wishes for the time of death ever since her diagnosis. Brian Halterman and I, who were the agents for her healthcare wishes, were able to fly out to be with her for the last two days of her life, and help her through the death process, along with her housemate, Ven. Palmo, and Dharma friends Michelle Stewart and Emily Hsu.

It was an amazing process – we were able to leave her body undisturbed for two and a half days, until the time that Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Geshe Dakpa, resident geshe at Tse Chen Ling in San Francisco, said that it was appropriate to move her. For the duration, we were able to do prayers and practices around the clock and were receiving advice from Geshe Dakpa during the entire process. The cremation was on the afternoon of August 13, with Geshe Dakpa leading Chokyi's assembled friends in Medicine Buddha puja.

Chokyi was born Catherine Elizabeth Lambert on October 8, 1958, in Washington, D.C. She was raised in Fairfax, Virginia, the youngest of two brothers and two sisters. After high school, she attended George Mason University, and spent a seminal year abroad in Bath, England.

After college, she developed her skills as a bookkeeper by working at the Women's Community Bakery and the Wilderness Society in Washington, D.C. It was during those years that she and I met through mutual friends in 1982.

Chokyi moved out to San Francisco in 1988, and worked as a bookkeeper for CRIA, an organization devoted to halting US involvement in the internal affairs of Central American countries. After some years, she began working as a bookkeeper for Jean Nelson, a relationship that continued on and off for more than 20 years.

In 1991, she trained as a massage therapist, and it was in massage school that she met her close friend Brian Halterman. She also trained as a doula in the mid-1990s. She was also a very talented photographer.

I took Chokyi to her first talk by Lama Zopa Rinpoche in 1995 in San Francisco. In 1996, she took refuge and bodhisattva vows with Khensur Lobsang Tsephel, and later that year attended the month-long Kopan course in Nepal. She took a year off in 1998 and 1999 to focus on her Dharma practice, attending the Kopan course again, teachings with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Bodhgaya, and doing a three-month Vajrasattva retreat at Tushita Meditation Centre in Dharamsala.

She was ordained by Choden Rinpoche in May 2000, and became the director of Tse Chen Ling one month later. From that point on, she devoted herself to Tse Chen Ling in many capacities, as director, SPC and as a teacher.

She will be sorely missed by this community for her warmth, loving smile and ready laughter.

Ven. Chokyi is survived by her sister Kristie, brothers Kirk and David, her nieces Vanessa and Emily, her nephew Jason, and of course her many students and friends all over the world.

Ven. Losang Dekyi (Jean Woolard), 78, died in Adelaide, Australia, August 20, 2014, of natural causes

By Kimball Cuddihy

Ven. Losang Dekyi died at 1 A.M. on August 20, 2014, in Adelaide after a short two-week illness. She was 78. She had some health issues but was about to embark on a short trip to Europe, and had just completed a month-long retreat in Western Australia.

Ven. Losang Dekyi was born Jean Woolard on the outskirts of Melbourne, Victoria, in 1936, where she and her brother were brought up by her mother in considerable hardship. Her older brother, who worked in the merchant navy, supported her to gain a teaching qualification in domestic science. She moved to Kangaroo Island to take up a position as director of Kingscote Preschool, after holding a variety of teaching positions.

She met the Dharma through a study group associated with De-Tong Ling Retreat Centre on Kangaroo Island. She served on De-Tong Ling's committee for a few years, including a stint as treasurer. She entered a formal program of Buddhist studies at Chenrezig Institute for five years with Geshe Tashi Tsering, achieving a distinction. She was ordained at Chenrezig during that time. She completed many, many group retreats, including the Mahamudra retreat with Lama Zopa Rinpoche in Adelaide. On her first day of attendance, when Rinpoche entered, he went straight up to her, singling her out of some 200 people

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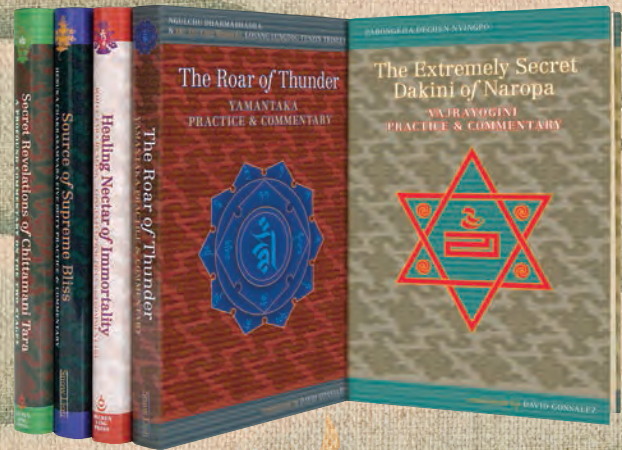
A commentary to the longevity practice of White Tara

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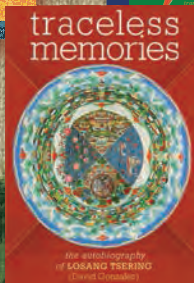
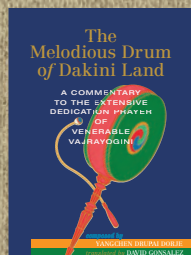
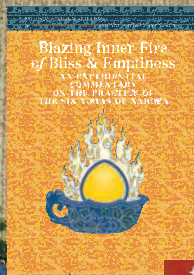
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and establishing a personal connection. For the last few years she has attended annual retreats at Geshe Loden's center in Western Australia.

For many years she was part of a small practice group that met weekly in Kingscote. Her commitment to studying the Dharma has been an inspiration to us all on Kangaroo Island. She was well prepared for her death, having studied the lam-rim deeply, particularly guru devotion, precious human rebirth, and death and impermanence. She focused especially on these and felt she had begun to gain some real insight into them.

It was clear to all how much her practice had transformed her, and she had much gentle wisdom to share. We are sorry to lose her, and we will miss her a lot.

Graham Dyer, 51, died in Grange-over-Sands, UK, April 5, 2014, of a heart attack

By Andy Weber



Graham always wondered what he would do when he grew up, which is a sign of a true searcher for the meaning of life.

I came across Graham in 1984 in the form of a punk singer in the band the "Funking Idiots." He was a multi-talented and immensely gifted soul, who after joining one of my art courses, eventually became an artist under my guidance for five years. In that time, he produced some stunning artwork in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. Sometimes the student excels the teacher, and often I was envious, even left speechless by his work. What patience and what vision and craftsmanship it took to execute such detailed fine work!

Personally, I never witnessed Graham get angry or raise his voice. Only once I heard he lost the plot when his young son Zeno, then two years old, found a pot of liquid gold and tried to help by finger painting on a just completed Vajrasattva thangka. It took Graham a week to remove the unwanted pure gold.

After painting a stunning Medicine Buddha and a large thangka of the Eight Medicine Gurus, he decided to go a step further to really help people by becoming an acupuncturist and a tai chi master and teacher. Finally, he became a cabinet maker.

He excelled in everything, but always had a hard time making decisions. But once made, he gave it his all.

Sally, his devoted wife, chose a bamboo coffin instead of a wooden one as Graham would have probably moaned about the joints and workmanship.

Death came unexpectedly while buying treacle tarts in a bakery. It was a surprise for us all, and probably Graham too, as he looked strong and healthy and lived a frugal life. Many of us prayed for him and wished him well on his new journey. The greatest present he left for all of us, Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike, was the deep impact and realization that death might strike at any moment.

Loo Kim Bok, 69, died in Penang, Malaysia, May 6, 2014, of cancer

By Daniel Yeoh



Loo Kim Bok, who became deaf and mute in his childhood, actively helped Chokyi Gyaltsen Center since its inception. When Chokyi Gyaltsen Center moved to its current premises in 2008, he stayed to become a caretaker for the center and had the good karma to meet Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Choden Rinpoche, Khensur Rinpoche Lama Lhundrup, His Eminence Ling Rinpoche and other visiting lamas.

Loo Kim Bok helped offer hundreds of bowls of water daily, and later he learned how to set up offerings for pujas. At first, we used sign language by pointing at the Medicine Buddha altar to signify Medicine Buddha puja, the Tara altar for Tara puja, and the Lama Tsongkhapa and lineage gurus altar for Lama Chöpa. Later on, he learned by looking at the Dharma calendar.

When Geshe Deyang became the resident teacher of Chokyi Gyaltsen Center, Geshe Deyang had a lot of interactions with him and became very close to him. It seemed that Loo Kim Bok totally understood Geshe-la's sign and body language, and during pujas, he was always ready to act upon Geshe Deyang's



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very subtle body language that was only apparent to him and no one else.

Although the sound of his chanting came out quite differently, he really put effort into reciting mantras and attending pujas. We are extremely happy that especially for the last five years of his life, he had the opportunities to collect extensive merit and meet our super lamas.

Everyone in Chokyi Gyaltsen Center misses him a lot, especially Geshe Deyang.

Chitra Ramgoolam, 52, died in Chesham, UK, May 24, 2014, of cancer

By Ali Waldegrave



On May 24 our dear friend and community member Chitra Ramgoolam passed away at home after a prolonged illness with cancer. She was fully conscious and supported by her husband Gerry, son Jamie and close family and friends. She was 52. A celebration of her life took place at the Chilterns Crematorium on May 30. Later in the year, Gerry and her brother Kishore will travel to India to scatter her ashes.

Chitra was born in the village of Isidore-Rose, Mauritius, on December 3,

1961, the sixth of seven children to Jawalprasad and Pooniawatee Ramgoolam.

Ramgoolam means “servant of God,” and inspiring and pure-hearted Chitra certainly lived up to her name-sake, loving and living to help others. Her long career as a health care practitioner began 30 years ago, although her natural healing abilities became apparent in her early years when friends and neighbors would benefit from the four-year-old’s therapeutic touch. A quiet rebel at heart, her interest in meditation started in her teens when, aged 16, she left Mauritius and traveled to Mount Abu in India to join her sister Mila, a nun in the Brahma Kumaris tradition. With her own ordination imminent, Chitra decided “I want to be in the world” and left to embark on a spiritual journey in India. It was during this time that she trained in Indian head massage and deep abdominal bodywork with the master B. Chowdhry.

In her early 20s, Chitra arrived in London with just a bag of clothes and, as ever, a strong motivation to help others. She set out to establish herself as a healer. In no time at all, she had found work in a post office to support herself while she continued her formal training, this time as a massage therapist under the guidance of Clare Maxwell Hudson. Shortly after she began her work with the London Lighthouse charity, now part of the Terence Higgins Trust. At a time when there was a huge stigma attached to HIV/AIDS, the Lighthouse was at the epicenter of the epidemic. Chitra would offer hands-on care in this often intense and emotional environment. She continued her training in reflexology and later traveled to Austria to study manual lymphatic drainage. Her training in craniosacral therapy enabled her to put a name to the healing art she had she had intuitively practiced since childhood.

It was during these busy years Chitra became a mother to Jamie. She adored her new son and managed to skillfully combine her role as a parent with her increasingly busy work life. Jamie would accompany his mum on home visits to patients. He described his mum as his best friend.

It was while working at the Life Centre in Notting Hill that Chitra first met her future husband, Gerry Cummins. They quickly became close friends. It was Gerry who first introduced Chitra to Jamyang Buddhist Centre, where she reconnected with Eastern spirituality. She often described Jamyang as her spiritual home. Her contribution to the center was huge. She began by assisting with the recording of teachings and in 2006 trained as a facilitator at Institut Vajra Yogini to support the work of Universal Education for Compassion and Wisdom. Chitra formed a strong friendship with Mike Murray – “my day husband” as she called him – and with Mike’s encouragement she began teaching meditation and facilitating workshops.

Chitra simply oozed integrity and grace. She had an enormous capacity for fun and a razor-sharp sense of humor. She disliked formalities and labels and when asked if she was a Buddhist she would reply, “Humanity is one, I will be a Hindu until I become a buddha.” She was very much at home in the center, and she brought a homey touch to the lives of the staff and volunteers with her legendary cooking.

Arthur Leonard “Len” Derby, 80, died in Bendigo, Australia, July 4, 2014, of Parkinson’s disease

By Peter Smith

Len died after a long battle with Parkinson’s disease. With his death, Bendigo’s Atisha Centre lost a much-loved member of its Dharma family. Len had the essential Buddhist quality – a good, kind heart.



Atisha Centre's co-founder Judy Green spoke for all Len's friends when she said, "He was a humble and gentle man and a generous friend to many, who lived the Dharma through a compassionate and meaningful life filled with constant small acts of kindness. He was a long-time and cherished member of the Atisha Centre community. His absence leaves a hole impossible to fill."

Len was born on April 12, 1934, in Bendigo. He joined the navy when he was 17 and served for 10 years. Len married Gwen Rigby, from the nearby rural area of Kingower. They had two girls, Heather and Maree, and three grandchildren, Ben, Leeza and John. After Len left the navy, he trained as a cash register repairer, later starting his own business, Bendigo Cash Registers. He was known throughout the city in this role.

In the early 1990s, Len took his turn with other students leading meditation in the original, small Atisha gompas. He also led relaxation meditation for Bendigo's Karuna Hospice Group in the city. Former Karuna coordinator, Bernice Smith, remembers Len as a quiet, committed worker, always willing to offer transport for patients and medicine deliveries and to visit men who were terminally ill.

At Atisha Centre, Len was usually among the first to arrive at working bees and took care of many of the small tasks around the center, from sweeping outside the gompas to directing traffic at open days. Karma yoga was part of his life.

Atisha Centre spiritual program coordinator Ruby Karmay said Len was a "gentle soul" who would appear at many Dharma events at Atisha Centre and the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion. "If he could help, he would," Ruby said. "He was enthusiastic and always perceptive to what was going on. He would watch, taking things in, seeing the humor and ridiculousness of samsara."

"When Atisha Centre's shop in the city was trading, Len was a regular visitor and willingly took care of the shop when the duty volunteer needed a break," Atisha Centre's Kathy Rice shared.

Some 20 years ago, Len had heart bypass surgery and, later, was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Atisha Centre member Maggie Wallace remembers Len as an "inspiring figure in many ways" and steadfast in his attention to Buddhism. "Despite his health problems, Len was always ready to have a talk and demonstrated great determination to get to meditation and teachings. He was always friendly and good humored when you met him, whether over a cup of chai or motoring around town on his mobility scooter."

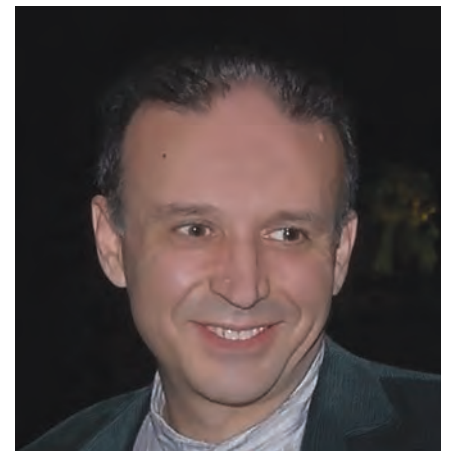
Another Dharma friend, Ronda Rodwell, echoed Maggie's words, saying, "Len impressed all with his commitment to Buddhist teachings and his determination to use his life for the benefit of others. It was a privilege to know him."

Len's body became old, but his mind was young, the result of some 25 years of teachings and involvement with Atisha Centre and the lamas. Ruby said Len had a very strong wish for a monk to be at his bedside after he died. "This happened

and all the appropriate prayers were said," she shared. "Len was a Dharma brother for many of us. We wish him a perfect human rebirth and to always meet with qualified teachers and become enlightened as quickly as possible. He will be remembered with affection always."

Dario Teseroni, 61, died in Fagnano Olona, Italy, August 20, 2014, of liver disease

Edited by Jon Landaw from material gathered by Jacie Keeley



The widely beloved Italian Dharma student, translator and former monk, Dario Teseroni, passed away after a long illness in the town of Fagnano Olona near Milan, on August 20, 2014. He is survived by Niki, his devoted wife of 20 years.

Dario was born in Milan on January 20, 1953. Although he experienced severe emotional deprivation from the time he was very young – his mother never accepted him as her child and his father died when Dario was only eight years old – Dario eventually managed to overcome these challenges. His ability to do so stemmed from the life-altering event that occurred when he was 20 years old, for it was then that he met the Dharma through his holy gurus: Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche.

Starting in the early 1970s, Dario spent many years at the newly established

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Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa in Pomaia. He would often say that those years at the Istituto – immersed in the Dharma and surrounded by the lamas, his friends and the beauties of Tuscany – were the best years of his life. Dario was a skillful translator from English to Italian, and in this capacity he often helped out at Centro Lama Tzong Khapa in Treviso, near Venice, translating for such highly-accomplished lamas as Serkong Tsenshab Rinpoche and Geshe Jampa Lodro, among others.

He also translated for a Tibetan doctor in Milan, and that is where he met his future wife, Niki. As Niki herself has written recently, “In 1994, I was very sick and Western medicine wasn’t proving effective for me, so I decided to see if the Tibetan doctor then staying in Milan could be of help. Dario was translating for the doctor and that was when I met him for the first time. So in one day I received a cure for my illness, met the Dharma, and found my true love. That was in January and by April we were together.”

Dario and Niki were to remain a devoted couple for 20 years and during that time worked on many projects together. They built from scratch a Dharma jewelry company that became very successful, with some of their creations appearing in many fashion magazines, including *Vogue*. And in 1998, when they learned that the Chinese government had given permission for the Gangchen Monastery in the Sakya district of Tibet to be rebuilt, they immediately arranged to sell their house in Tuscany to raise money for this project. On January 20 of the following year, on Dario’s 46th birthday, they went to Tibet to begin the reconstruction of this monastery.

In 2013 the couple returned to Italy after spending a year and a half in Colombia. On December 11 of that year he vomited a lot of blood and the

doctors discovered he had contracted the “silent” disease, hepatitis C, which had led to cirrhosis of the liver and then cancer. The doctors said there was nothing they could do for him, so Dario decided to try Tibetan medicine, which is often very effective in dealing with liver disease. At the very least there was the hope that this treatment might give Dario the time to accept his sickness and his death and transform them into the spiritual path. In a letter written June 11, 2014, Dario told a friend, “When I understood that the doctors were thinking I was a goner, I had quite a shock! Immediately meditation on death became quite real. It was quite good, because I had the time and leisure to make peace with my karma.”

Towards the end of his life, Dario’s body came to resemble that of a preta: he was nearly as emaciated as a skeleton, but his abdomen became enormously swollen. Despite the great pain he was in, he would often remark that what he was going through was purification. “Look at my body,” he told Niki. “This is preta karma, and I am offering it. I suffer, but I am able to keep my mind far from the pain.”

In his last months Dario also expressed great concern for his Dharma brothers and sisters. He felt that many of them, while still being Buddhist in name, no longer had faith that the Dharma could really bring about a fundamental and lasting change in their lives. But he knew from the experience he was having how effective sincere Dharma practice could be. Although he was suffering a lot and it was not easy to overcome such pain, he was successful in taming his mind. In this way he was able to defeat death, to make it part of the path. And so when he thought of those friends who seemed to have lost faith in the Dharma’s effectiveness, he became filled with the intense desire to help

them see how precious and powerful Dharma practice could actually be.

Towards the end, although he was in terrible pain, he found the strength to thank all the people who were taking care of him. As Niki wrote a few days after his passing, “Dario was using his last months as a deep Dharma practice. He was already a wonderful man, but at the end his mind was so light, kind, clear and compassionate that he was inspiring love in whoever met him, even in people who only spent a little time with him. And when he finally passed away, all the doctors and nurses of the hospital emergency unit gathered around him, crying. He had touched them so deeply that they repeatedly told me, ‘Thank you, to both of you.’”

The Dharma community on which Dario had relied throughout his adult life was there for him, at his passing. Lama Zopa Rinpoche had written a special mantra for him, and this was placed on his head and kept in front of his eyes. And during his last hours Niki recited his favorite prayer, the “Praise to the Twenty-one Taras.” Then, within 15 minutes of his passing, she was able to call a friend in India whose uncle was a respected lama from Lahaul. This great Vajrayogini practitioner immediately performed *powa* (transference of consciousness) for him.

Niki wrote the following about Dario, “He was not an easy person in the beginning, but he was charming, intelligent and good, and a Dharma guy. But in the last year he had become something different, something really special. He showed me how you can transform life and sickness and death into the path. He did not just tell me this; he showed it to me, and I could see the results with my own eyes.”

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David was named a Lama in 1992 and an *Acharya* in 2005.

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James "Jim" Alan Blumenthal, 47, died in Portland, Oregon, United States, October 8, 2014, of complications from cancer

By Namdrol Miranda Adams and Ven. Damchö Diana Finnegan, with special thanks to Jim's wife, Tiffany Patrella, and ex-wife, Sara Ritter, for their contribution

With deep sadness, we announce the loss of our dear friend and spiritual brother, Professor James "Jim" Blumenthal, who passed away in the early hours of October 8, 2014, at his home in Portland, Oregon, after a year-long battle with cancer. He was 47 years old.

Born in Los Angeles, California, to Dr. and Mrs. Jack and Susan Blumenthal, Jim grew up in Southern California. He completed his undergraduate degree at the University of San Diego and continued his education at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where he finished his MA and PhD under the direction of the Tibetan Buddhist scholar/practitioner Geshe Lhundub Sopa. His graduate studies focused on the work of the Indian teacher Shantarakshita.

Both in his career as associate professor in the School of History, Philosophy and Religion at Oregon State University (OSU) and as professor of Buddhist studies at Maitripa College, Jim displayed the rare combination of deep commitment to teaching and

rigorous engagement as a research scholar. Even more unusual, Jim was able to produce scholarly texts that were valued equally by the academy and by Buddhist communities. He published analytical and translation works on Indian Mahayana Buddhism based upon this research, including *The Ornament of The Middle Way: A Study of the Madhyamaka Thought of Shantarakshita* (2004) and *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* (2004). With Geshe Sopa, he completed a translation of the fourth chapter of the *Lamrim Chenmo* and was pursuing the publication of a translation of *Shantarakshita Madhyamakalamkaravrtti*.

Jim was a strong advocate for institutions of higher education that strive to integrate the knowledge base of Buddhist philosophy with meditative practice and service to the community. In 2004, Jim invited Yangsi Rinpoche to Portland, Oregon, to speak to interested persons. In 2005, Jim began working alongside Yangsi Rinpoche, Namdrol Adams and Angie Garcia on the founding of Maitripa Institute, soon to become Maitripa College, which seeks to embody those ideals.

"That he choose to teach, tired but cogent and engaging, just a week before his death was a testament to not only his love for teaching but also the commitment he felt to his students," Sara Ritter reflected. "Students eventually learned that almost anything they asked of him – short of changing their grade – he would try to do. He could also be single-minded and focused when he was working on a scholarly article or book. When I think of Jim, the image that most often appears is of him working at his desk at home, that hulking frame curled toward the screen like an 'S,' deeply absorbed. (Or he was maybe chatting with his baseball card collector buddies. That's very possible.) Having a rich intellectual life in philosophy was important to Jim, but it came a far distant second to being of benefit to others, and he chose his scholarly research, publications, and activities

carefully with that intention in mind. His work at Maitripa College, while also working full-time as a professor at OSU, was principally a commitment to service. I don't know how Maitripa would have evolved differently without him, but I do know that his influence is etched into every crevice of the place. I hope that, for many years to come, Maitripa students will see the shadow of a gentle giant and the echo of his laugh as they go about their work."

Jim first encountered Buddhism as an undergraduate in a philosophy class. He told friends later that upon completing a reading assignment on Nagarjuna's philosophy, he felt that he had finally found what he was looking for. In the fall of 1991, he traveled to Thailand in the company of his best friend, but continued on to Nepal on his own. It was during his time in Nepal that Jim first made a personal commitment to Buddhism and that his vision of becoming a Buddhist scholar started coming into focus. He underwent a formal refuge ceremony later with Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche.

"When Jim found Buddhism as a shaken, searching college student, he was deeply transformed," Sara shared. "Later in life, he would sometimes reflect on that searching young man and the gratitude he felt for how Buddhism had helped him. It was moving to witness. When Jim spoke with his teachers and sought their advice, he did so with a wellspring of faith and respect. If they recommended or taught a practice, he did it and kept whatever commitment it might entail with remarkable discipline. That was the practitioner in him. Solid. Devoted. Diligent."

His main teachers were His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Geshe Lhundub Sopa, Jangtse Chöje Lobsang Tenzin Rinpoche, Choden Rinpoche, Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Yangsi Rinpoche and Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche.

Jim's interest and commitments ranged far beyond his scholarship. He loved music – particularly jazz, rock,



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photo: His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Maitripa President
Yangsi Rinpoche, faculty, alumni, & the graduating class of 2013
at Maitripa, Portland, Oregon ~ Marc Sakamoto



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Jerry Garcia and the Grateful Dead. He traveled to more than 80 Dead shows in his youth and was known to sport tie-dyed shirts on occasion. He was also an activist for Greenpeace and was arrested 12 times on behalf of actions in protection of the environment.

In his youth, Jim played baseball in Little League in LA and loved both the game and collecting baseball cards. As an adult, he became a baseball card historian and was published in *Old Cardboard*, the card-collecting magazine. Jim was also a poet.

Jim was charitable to almost everyone who knocked on his door to ask for support, being sensitive to the task of fundraising for charitable causes from his days at Greenpeace. He gave generously to any organization promoting equal rights for the LGBTQ community or in support of the environment or liberal politics.

Jim was a man of deeply-held principles, but most highly valued integrity and loyalty. He was committed to the causes of Engaged Buddhism and social

justice. In a short video message he left behind for his son, Ben, he advised Ben to develop a good heart, do his best to help others and to live with integrity.

Jim was very close to his parents and brother, and was a dear friend to many. He was devoted to his family, his teachers, his friends and to helping the Dharma flourish in the West, particularly through Maitripa College.

Jim and his second wife, Tiffany Patrella, were married in June of this year. He is survived by his parents, his brother Tom, his wife Tiffany and his seven-year-old son, Ben, a child from his first marriage to Sara Ritter. He is also survived by his spiritual family at Maitripa College, composed of students, teachers, colleagues and friends who love him dearly and will hold him forever in their hearts. ♦

James Blumenthal was a regular contributor to *Mandala*. To read his stories, visit fpmt.org and search for his name.

As *Mandala* prepares for press, we are saddened to report the deaths of two other great Tibetan Buddhist masters. **Denma Locho Rinpoche** passed away at his home in Dharamsala, India, on October 23, 2014, at the age of 86. And **Khensur Jampa Tegchok** died in hospital in South India on October 28, 2014, at the age of 84.

We will print complete obituaries for both of these extraordinary teachers in the next issue of *Mandala*. For more, visit fpmt.org and search for their respective names.



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1. Publication Title: Mandala. 2. Publication Number: 019-514. 3. Filing Date: 09/19/14. 4. Issue Frequency: Biannually. 5. Number of Issues Published Annually: Two. 6. Annual Subscription Price: \$60 US Membership. 7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publisher: 1632 SE 11th Ave., Portland, Multnomah, OR, 97214-4702, USA. Contact Person: Michael Jolliffe. Telephone Number: 503-808-1591. 8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher: 1632 SE 11th Ave., Portland, Multnomah, OR, 97214-4702, USA. 9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor and Managing Editor: Publisher: FPMT, Inc. 1632 SE 11th Ave., Portland, Multnomah, OR, 97214-4702, USA. Editor: Laura Miller, 1632 SE 11th Ave., Portland, Multnomah, OR, 97214-4702, USA. Managing Editor: Laura Miller, 1632 SE 11th Ave., Portland, Multnomah, OR, 97214-4702, USA. 10. Owner: Full Name: The Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition, Inc. (FPMT, Inc.). Complete Mailing Address: 1632 SE 11th Ave., Portland, Multnomah, OR, 97214-4702, USA. 11. Unknown Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities: None. 12. Tax Status: Has Not Changed During the Preceding 12 Months. 13. Publication Title: Mandala. 14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: October-December 2014. 15. Extent and Nature of Circulation: 15a. Total Number of Copies: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months: 1593. No. of Single Issue Copies Published Nearest to Filing Date: 1522. 15b. Total Paid Circulation: (1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscription Stated on PS Form 3541: Average No. of Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months: 1101. No. Copies of Single Issue Published

Nearest to Filing Date: 1122. (2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541: Zero. (3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS: Zero. (4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS: Zero. 15c. Total Paid Distribution: Average No. of Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months: 1101. No. of Single Issue Copies Published Nearest to Filing Date: 1122. 15d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution: (1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541: Zero. (2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541: Zero. (3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through USPS: Zero. (4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail: Zero. 15e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution: Zero. 15f. Total Distribution: Average No. of Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months: 1101. No. of Single Issue Copies Published Nearest to Filing Date: 1122. 15g. Copies Not Distributed: Average No. of Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months: 492. No. of Single Issue Copies Published Nearest to Filing Date: 400. 15h. Total: Average No. of Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months: 1593. No. of Single Issue Copies Published Nearest to Filing Date: 1522. 15i. Percent Paid: Average No. of Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months: 100%. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 100%. 16. Total circulation includes electronic copies: None. 17. Publication of Statement of Ownership: If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the January-March 2015 issue of this publication. 17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner: Laura Miller, Managing Editor, Date: 09/29/14.

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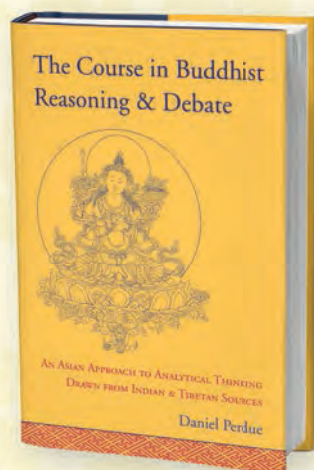
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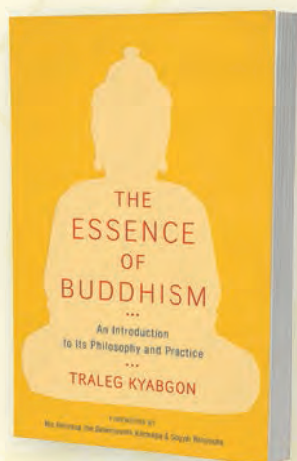
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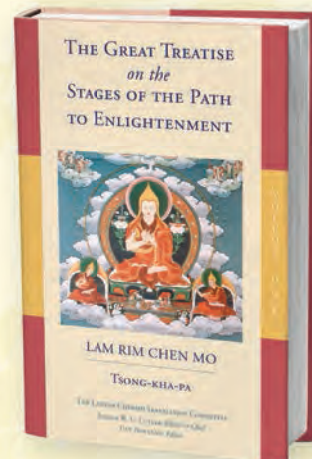
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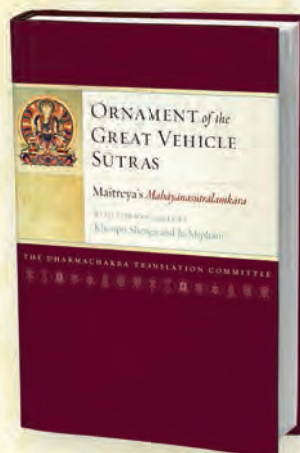
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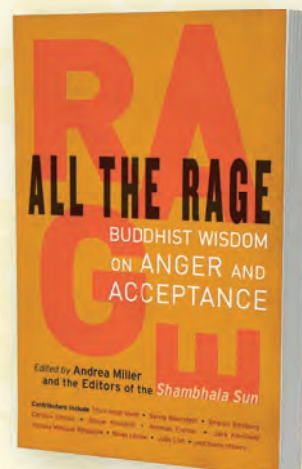
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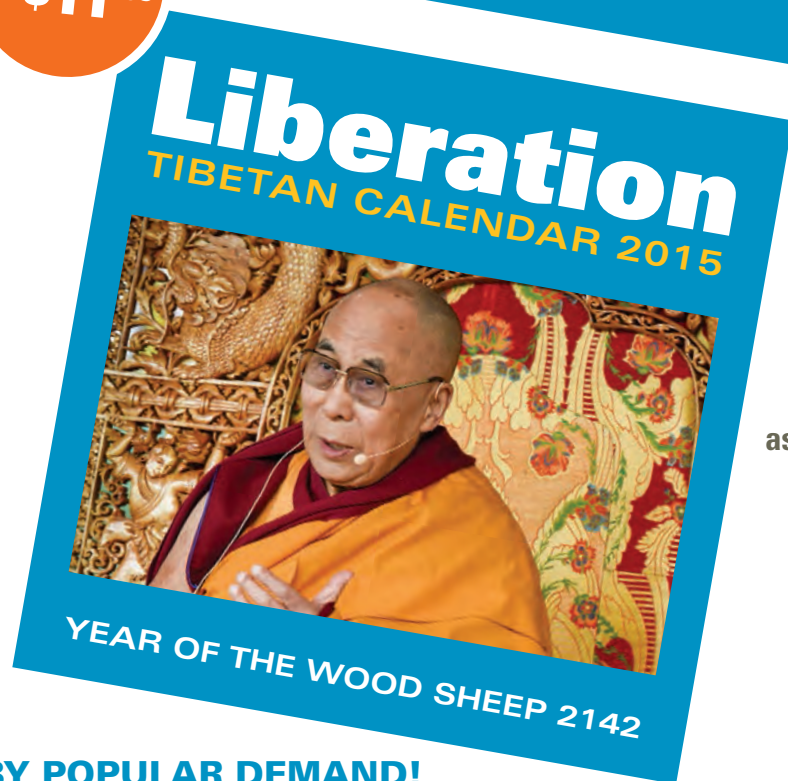


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