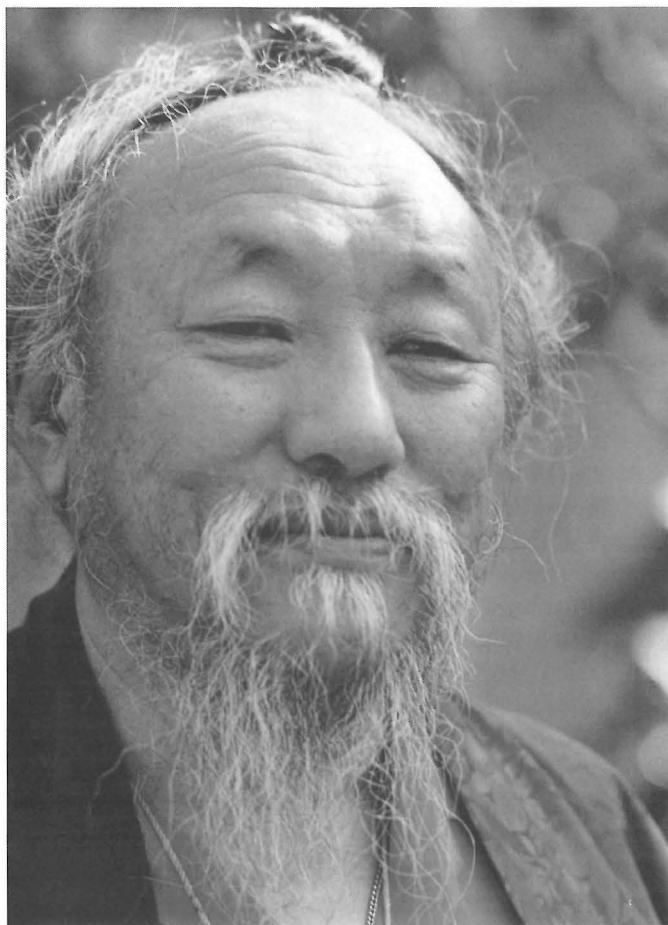

THE WIND HORSE



NEWSLETTER OF CHAGDUD GONPA

SUMMER–FALL 2003



H.E. Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche, 1930–2002

His Eminence Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche gave the following advice, regarding what to do when one's teacher passes away, in response to questions from students of the late Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche during a bodhisattva peace training at Rocky Mountain Dharma Center in the summer of 1989. Following Chagdud Rinpoche's parinirvana, while reviewing transcripts for a book, Lama Shenpen Drolma discovered this timely teaching and passed it on to the Wind Horse.

When the teacher passes away it's a bit like the sun setting. From where we stand it looks as if the sun has disappeared, but really the world has just revolved. Similarly, when the karma changes between a teacher and a student, we can no longer see the teacher even though he hasn't really gone anywhere.

When our teachers are here with us, they give us practices and mean for us to use them. That's the teacher's blessing, the teacher's gift. When we approach that gift with faith, that faith and the teacher's blessings unite and we accomplish realization. Our faith always has the capacity to unite inseparably with the lama's blessings, which don't disappear when the lama passes. It's like a hook and ring: the hook of the lama's compassion is always there if one can make oneself a ring through receptivity, effort, and faith.

The teacher has two aspects: the symbolic teacher who lives with us, helps and teaches us, and the absolute teacher that is our own true nature. Now it appears to us that there's a separation between the teacher and ourselves, but in fact the symbolic teacher's wisdom nature and our own absolute nature are inseparable. Through faith and practice this fictitious boundary dissolves and the truth of our nature, which is none other than the lama, dawns in our experience.

If we are receptive there can be a great lesson in the teacher's passing. When the Buddha Shakyamuni passed into nirvana, he did so in order to demonstrate the nature of impermanence to his disciples. If we realize that we, too, are subject to impermanence, this can motivate us to quickly accomplish our practice.

The students' karma and samaya are interdependent with the teacher's long life and swift return. It is important that the students not fight and argue with each other. What binds them together are the common goals of fulfilling the teacher's wishes and seeking enlightenment. The teacher holds them, his mind's children, as if they were his own, and aspires that they help others to overcome suffering and reach the same high goals.

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A Letter from Chagdud Khadro

Dear Sangha,

After so many years of serving as Rinpoche's typing fingers and the English grammarian for the Wind Horse letters, I am surprised that this one has proven so difficult to write. This is not due to a lack of something to say, but rather to not knowing where to begin. Rinpoche's parinirvana last November 17th, which also marked our twenty-third wedding anniversary, was the culmination of so many of his teachings—on impermanence, on illusion, on meditative mastery at the moment of death, on guru yoga, and most of all, on the nature of mind itself.

Although I was privileged to be at his side during his physical transition, many others received Rinpoche's final transmissions in equally powerful and personal ways. Distance as measured by miles mattered not at all. As various sangha members have shared their experiences with me, I am again and again amazed at the pervasive brilliance of a great master's mind when awareness finds release from the frail sheath of the body. For me, this remains Rinpoche's most profound teaching, one that instills strong confidence in the face of uncertainty and death.

Rinpoche remained seated in a state of meditation for more than five days after his last breath, with no signs of physical deterioration whatsoever, then was taken from Brazil to Nepal. Ceremonies were conducted during the traditional forty-nine days at his retreat center near Parping, Nepal; at Khadro Ling in Brazil; and at Rigdzin Ling in California. Prayers and butterlamp offerings were performed at many other centers, in the West and in Asia, supported by the prayers of many high lamas.

Though sorrow at the loss of the warm, physical presence of our beloved teacher cannot be adequately expressed, these ceremonial proceedings had their own healing power. We rejoiced in the generation of merit, prayed that extremely positive interdependence would be established for the next Chagdud Tulku and the continued activities of the Chagdud sangha, and delighted in the remembrance of Rinpoche's own love of butterlamp and tsok offerings. Rinpoche seemed palpably present.

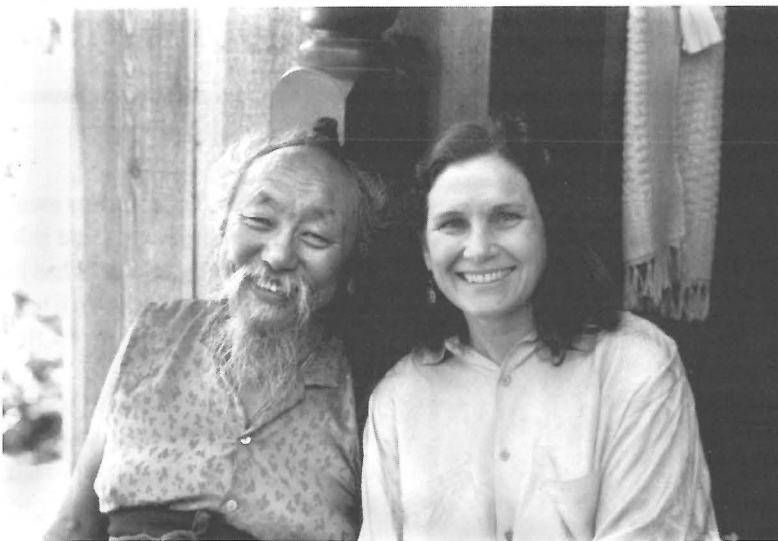
H.E. Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche once remarked on Rinpoche's courage in teaching Westerners. He held back nothing—not the highest view, not the details of method, not the ordination of those he thought could sustain others through the lineage teachings, not the empowerment of those he thought could practice. In his transmission he took risks, sometimes teaching beyond the level of intellectual comprehension and meditative

realization of his students, but with faith that their minds would ripen over time. If they floundered in doubt or confusion, or if they held tight to some lesser level of practice, he would urge them on with his famous, "Keep going!"

Rinpoche's teachings always rested on several key points, nevertheless: bodhichitta, impermanence, and the dreamlike illusion of existence. Even with longtime students who had heard these teachings over and over again, or sophisticated audiences

who resisted hearing them at all, he would return to these points with conviction and enthusiasm. He loved the basic teachings, which he illuminated with his wonderful stories and radiant personality. All those who took Rinpoche's teachings to heart—by now, thousands of people—hold the seeds of transformation and liberation.

In the moving, prescient teaching Rinpoche gave Trungpa Rinpoche's students after Trungpa's parinirvana (see cover),



Rinpoche and Khadro at Rigdzin Ling

Rinpoche said that when a lama passes away, practitioners maintain their vajra samaya with their teacher by upholding the meaning of dharma in the world and helping others gain access to the teachings of the dharma so they too can overcome suffering and attain enlightenment. In Nepal I spoke with Matthieu Ricard, whose furtherance of Kyabje Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche's activity has been extremely inspiring. When I asked him how he accomplishes so much, he said he was driven by his responsibility not only to prevent diminishment, but also to propagate Khyentse Rinpoche's activities. "And I can't bear to waste time and opportunity," he added.

One thing that has become especially clear to me recently is that Rinpoche mapped out great avenues by which his lamas and his students can fulfill their part in upholding and making accessible the precious dharma; these include practice lineages, translations, artwork, ceremonies, and sacred architecture. All of these activities are interdependent, all surge forth from the heart of our precious teacher, and all accomplish the two benefits, for self and others. All provide extraordinary arenas in which to tame and train the mind. I can only marvel at the richness of Rinpoche's legacy and aspire to honor it as fully as possible.

Chagdud Khadro

Khadro Ling, Brazil
June 2003

Blessings of the Dzogchen Lineage

H.E. Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche led twenty-one dzogchen retreats in the West. The first, in 1982, was held in Williams, Oregon, and the retreat activity included the creation of a twenty-two-foot-high Guru Padmasambhava statue. Teachings and morning sadhana practice, beginning at 4:00 a.m. were followed by a quick breakfast at 7:00 and then almost nonstop work until late at night. Great Perfection meditation was integrated into the statue work, which was completed in three weeks. Rinpoche liked to integrate dzogchen training with intense dharma activity. He believed that beyond ordinary physical and mental limitations, practitioners could discover a spaciousness that would allow them to receive the direct transmission of the dzogchen lineage blessings.

In July 1985, retreatants refined and repainted the statue. The skullcup of nectar, which had been filled with amrita (alcohol consecrated into nectar) during the first retreat, was removed from Guru Padmasambhava's hand and placed in Rinpoche's retreat cabin. Shortly afterward, Rinpoche's wife, Chagdud Khadro, entered the room and saw a puddle surrounding the skull cup. Khadro recounts that at first, she was extremely upset because she suspected that one of Rinpoche's dogs had desecrated the sacred object. But then she noticed a lovely sweet smell pervading the entire room. Tasting a drop of the liquid, she realized it was amrita that had overflowed from the skull cup. It was then that Rinpoche, who was moved to intense and tearful prayer by this obvious sign of blessing, wrote the following poem:

*Manifest existence is the primordially pure realm of the
Glorious Copper-Colored Mountain.
Immutable self-awareness is Padmasambhava of Odiyan.
Awareness-energy is the gathering of heroes and dakinis.
Wisdom's illusory display is the play of enlightened action.
OM AH HUNG VAJRA GURU PADMA SIDDHI HUNG
Without looking, the view's own bare face is seen.
Without meditating, indwelling wisdom is recognized in
its own ground.
Without contriving, action is spacious and inherently
liberated.
Without trying, the fruition of the three kayas is actualized.*

Like a Wide-eyed Child in a Temple

"Wonderful!" Rinpoche exclaimed after viewing the documentary video, *Our Drubchen*, created by Brazilian filmmaker Flavia Moraes in collaboration with the children who attended the *Essence of Siddhi* drubchen at Khadro Ling in 2001.

In their own words, the children explain various aspects of the ceremony, and Rinpoche contributes comments of his own. In a particularly moving scene, Rinpoche invokes long life blessings by circling a longevity arrow above his head. The video was recorded in Portuguese and has subtitles in English, German, Spanish, and Italian (the English version, on DVD, will be available through Tibetan Treasures). All proceeds will be offered toward the Padmasambhava Palace Project at Khadro Ling.



Chagdud Rinpoche, Sophie La Husen-Bair, and Lama Norbu filling the Guru Rinpoche skullcup at Rigdzin Gatsal

Rinpoche's teaching (continued from page 1)

In any group of people there are always difficulties. Even if you put holy statues in a bag and try to take them somewhere, they will clank together. Nevertheless, it's essential to recognize that conflict between students is an obstacle that makes it impossible to accomplish the teacher's wishes. Discord disrupts practice and causes a domino effect, creating obstacles to enlightenment.

To follow a teacher the sangha must be of one mind. This is imperative to accomplish the teacher's wish for the preservation and increase of the dharma. If the students can accomplish this, the teacher's blessings will remain unobstructed; both the students' practice and the teacher's wishes will be fulfilled, benefiting all beings.

A pot of clear water will naturally reflect the sun and moon, but if that pot is filled with sludge that reflection is lost even though the sun and moon remain where they have always been. It is crucial that the students practice strongly, respect each other, and remain close. Despite the small differences that might arise between sangha members, they should join together working to fulfill their teacher's highest aspirations. In this way, any difficulties will naturally be resolved.

So the students need to do what the teacher has asked. It won't work to simply pray repeatedly for his return. If each student's commitment truly reflected the teacher's wishes, he couldn't help but come back. This collective commitment, like a clear pond of water, will naturally create the conditions to reflect the sun of his existence.



Fulfilling Rinpoche's Enlightened Intent

Building the Padmasambhava Palace

At the end of his life, H.E. Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche was working on plans to build a replica of Padmasambhava's Palace on the Copper-Colored Mountain. He had mentioned the project to his students over the years, but conditions favorable for beginning work did not arise until shortly before his parinirvana. Chagdud Khadro and Lama Trinley interviewed several Chagdud Gonpa lamas regarding Rinpoche's remarks to each of them about the project.

Lama Trinley: In 1992 Rinpoche and a few sangha members visited a stupa in Bhutan that had an elaborate inner chamber like that of the proposed palace. After we had offered Guru Rinpoche tsok and toured the stupa's interior, Rinpoche briefly expressed the wish to someday build such a palace. Ten years later, four days before his parinirvana, he finished an Amitabha statue for the palace. What was your understanding of his intention?

Jigme Tromge Rinpoche: His Eminence Chagdud Rinpoche, as we all know, was always tirelessly engaged in dharma activity through his body, speech, and mind to benefit all beings. During his lifetime, he created many places that offer tremendous information that leads beings onto the path of enlightenment. A few times in the past, in our conversations Rinpoche casually mentioned the Padmasambhava Palace, but there was nothing in his conversation that indicated he had a strong desire to actually do it. However, just before he passed away, in a conversation with him about the newly purchased property, he discussed the Padmasambhava Palace again, this time with very strong enthusiasm. This conversation gave me some indication that this was the beginning of the end of the activity of his current life.

Chagdud Khadro: For many years we had wanted to purchase the land adjacent to Khadro Ling. But it was owned by an old pig farmer of German descent, as stubborn as they come. He wanted one thing, a piece of land that had water, which was owned by one of Rinpoche's students. No amount of money could substitute for that land. Eventually Rinpoche himself acquired the student's land and negotiations took a whole different turn. In the end it was a win-win situation with everyone happy with the deal. Then Rinpoche's plans for the Padmasambhava Palace became serious.

Lama Tsering: It was very inspiring to me, seeing Rinpoche's joy when he acquired the land for the Padmasambhava Palace. He had waited for many years, and finally he was able to purchase it. I didn't even know he had planned to build a palace on it. I was in retreat at the time and he called me to ask me to work out the astrology for the land transfer. I was actually quite surprised at his excitement.

In terms of the actual project, we, as Rinpoche's students, have a responsibility to complete his unfinished work. You would do this for anyone who had entrusted you with responsibility for their work, in order to honor their memory. But this is especially true with Rinpoche, who dedicated his life to benefiting others through his activities.

Now, as we wait for Rinpoche to manifest again, we as his students have an opportune time to make great merit through our offerings. And this is only when we consider our personal relationship to the lama as his students, never mind the infinite benefit that will accrue for a limitless number of beings. Seeing the palace representing Guru Rinpoche's pureland, seeing that vital space of Guru Rinpoche's blessings, will be of immense benefit. Even someone flying over it in an airplane will be affected. We may build it to create virtue and serve our lama but the scope of this project to benefit beings is immense.

As a result of Rinpoche's activities, the hundreds of people who visit Khadro Ling each week are exposed to Tibetan Buddhist art, ritual, and teachings. It was important to Rinpoche that these people make some connection to the dharma. As we saw in his last Wind Horse letter, he was very concerned about the degenerate nature of these times—the political situation, the negativity in people's minds, and the impending wars. Rinpoche wanted to build this palace as a means to help.

Lama Sherab: Rinpoche didn't say much to me about the palace, but I know he wanted to do it. He was reading a Tibetan book, about another palace in Tibet, that explained the number of statues, their size, and everything. At first he had thought to build the *Lha Khang* in this style. But after it took its present form, he decided to make the Padmasambhava Palace smaller, but with very detailed artwork.

Rinpoche wasn't quite sure about the size. The different levels of the palace are in exact proportions. I think people will be able to go inside at least the first level but in the drawings he made, the top floor was quite small.

At first it had seemed to be just an idea, something to do in the future, but when we bought the land above the temple the idea became stronger to him. He said it was the place to put the palace. So the Guru Rinpoche Palace was still in the early planning phases when he left us.

Lama Norbu: Rinpoche had tried for so long to get that land. The first thing he said when he got it was, "Now we are going to build the Guru Rinpoche Pureland Palace." He was so joyous about it.

While he was in retreat, he and Alan had started making the statues. He was building them as fast as he could. He had figured out a quick method to replicate parts of statues by cutting Styrofoam blocks and then covering them with clay and cement. When I asked him why he was making them he said they were making 133 statues to go in the Padmasambhava Palace. He worked on them during the final days of his life. He had made Tara, Guru Rinpoche, and Amitayus. The last one he made was of Amitabha. When I arrived for the p'howa retreat the Amitabha statue was being painted.

It was so amazing at the end. He was inexhaustible, unobstructed, even by his pain and physical difficulty.

Chagdud Khadro: I confess that when he first told me about the

palace I felt daunted, and wondered how it could be accomplished, how it could be financed, and how such a tremendous project could be completed in his lifetime. But fortunately Rinpoche, who never fettered himself with my doubts and hesitations, had drawings made and continued to discuss the project with other students as he pored over descriptions of palaces that had been built in Tibet, Sikkim, and India.

After Rinpoche's transition, however, I developed a fervent desire to carry the palace project forward. Tentatively, I expressed this aspiration to the lamas who had journeyed to Khadro Ling—Jigme Rinpoche, Lama Sonam Tsering, Lama Gyatso, Lama Jigme, Lama Tsering, and Lama Norbu—expecting them to be skeptical that it could be accomplished after Rinpoche's transition. Instead they immediately began to participate, going over the drawings and outlining the consecration ceremonies, which will be central to the creation of the palace.

The consensus among the lamas was that there could be no more appropriate place to enshrine Khadro Ling's portion of Rinpoche's relics.

Jigme Tromge Rinpoche: When Guru Padmasambhava left Tibet, he promised that he would appear before whoever thought of him. "Whoever thinks of me, I will appear." Whoever sees the Padmasambhava Palace is actually making a connection to Padmasambhava's pureland. And that connection will stay with that person's mind. Every time one simply thinks of Padmasambhava—even though they might not actually see him—their minds will be blessed. Not only that, whoever sees the palace will also think of Chagdud Rinpoche, so they will receive his blessings, as well. Thus there is huge benefit and merit in building the Padmasambhava Palace, and it is extremely important for us to take this project closely to heart because it was our guru's last wish. Fulfilling it is our duty as his students.

I will take full responsibility for providing the relics to put inside this precious palace. However I can be of service, I will be honored to do it.

Lama Tsering: I am anxious to see this Guru Rinpoche Palace as a repository for Rinpoche's relics and have offered to help sponsor the stupa that will be placed inside. The design and details of that stupa are in Jigme Rinpoche's hands, but I have offered to help in whatever small way I can. I had such attachment to Rinpoche's physical presence that this is a really personal thing for me. When I was able to sit with his body at Khadro Ling in those first days following his passing, I felt immense blessings. Rinpoche was so kind. He gave us so much. He gave me everything. So when I think about supporting his projects, the palace is where my heart goes.

Chagdud Khadro: Lama Tsering presented the palace project at the Tara Drubchod during the last week of Khadro Ling's forty-nine days of ceremonies, and the Brazilian sangha responded very gen-

erously. Lama Tsering and Lama Norbu themselves made a large contribution—about \$20,000—toward the stupa inside the palace that will contain Rinpoche's relics. A few weeks later Lama Drimed donated to the palace all of the offerings he had received during the annual Rigdzin Ling ngondro retreat. Rinpoche himself had set aside a personal fund for the palace, and for a certain period I am contributing every category of offering that I receive to the project. Dedicating the merit to those who have offered sustains my confidence and gives me joy in the creation of splendid interdependence with the blessings of Guru Padmasambhava and of Rinpoche.

The palace building and Rinpoche's stupa can almost certainly be constructed using the donations we already have. The artwork is another matter. This will require substantial offerings, talent, and effort to complete. The statues will be sculpted in Brazil with the intent that the artistic training involved will be passed on to new generations of dharma artists.

The other morning I was reading the book about the palace recently built in Tibet, the same book that Rinpoche had been studying. Oliver Boldizar had made a rough but very useful translation of it. As I read the lists of statues, of relics, of ceremonies, of roofs and portals, the immensity of the project overwhelmed me for a moment. Can we really do this? But then I went to morning puja and Oliver and Lama Chimed, a Katok lama and a fine artist who is in residence at Khadro Ling, had prepared a schema of the mandalas of wisdom beings—the nirmanakaya

mandala of Guru Padmasambhava, the sambhoghakaya mandala of Avalokiteshvara and the Twenty-One Taras, and the dharmakaya mandala of the lords of the five buddha families with Amitabha in the center and Kuntuzangpo above.

The arrays of the "great eights" were named and placed—the eight emanations of Guru Rinpoche, the eight bodhisattvas, the eight rigdzins, and the eight deities of the eight commands of sadhana practice. Guru Rinpoche's twenty-five disciples and his wisdom consorts were present. Our fierce and diligent protectors guarded the perimeters.

Suddenly I felt an intense longing to bring all these names into artistic images, to consecrate the images into sacred presence, and to make their sacred presence accessible to whoever entered the palace, either physically or mentally. And I knew it was possible for us to do so, step-by-step, with faith, patience, and vision, relying on Rinpoche inseparable from Padmasambhava.

Contributions for the palace will be handled through the Chagdud Gonpa Foundation. Contact Kim at Rigdzin Ling for further information (530) 623-2714. Contributors are welcome to specify the specific mandala of statues (see palace diagram) for which they would like their offering to be used.



*The Amitabha statue completed last fall
by Chagdud Rinpoche*

Reflections on Rinpoche

An interview with Lama Sherab Drolma

Lama Sherab was very close to Rinpoche during the last few years of his life, serving as administrator, translator, caregiver, and attendant. Recently she was ordained as a Chagdud Gonpa lama. During the January 2003 dzogchen retreat at Khadro Ling, Lama Sherab spoke with Lama Trinley about her personal experience of Rinpoche's passing, his activities, and his legacy to us all. Some remarks Lama Sherab made during a teaching she gave to sangha members at the retreat have been included as well.

Lama Trinley: When I arrived at Khadro Ling in January, it seemed that many of Rinpoche's large projects here had just been completed just before he passed away. The butterlamp house, the Akshobhya statue, many large prayer wheels, the stupas, and the murals in the Lha Khang were all nearly finished. With all that he had accomplished here, do you think maybe he felt that it was okay to go?

Lama Sherab: I don't know about that. Rinpoche still had many things he wanted to do. He was planning the Akshobhya garden around the statue. He was going to begin work on a large Dudjom Lingpa stupa in January. He had promised Cara he would build a Guru Rinpoche statue on her place. There was the retreat land being developed in Uruguay, where he had been talking about going next. And there was the Padmasambhava Palace that he was just starting the statues for.

Rinpoche died working. I always knew it would be that way because he would never stop. I worry about everything at the Gonpa and I see how much Khadro holds here, but when Rinpoche left, he had so much more responsibility than we do. There's no comparison. Yet even with all his students who relied on him and his wife in retreat he didn't hesitate to go because he wasn't attached to anything. He was so generous in serving sentient beings and yet he had no attachment.

His death, for me, was a lesson in impermanence because he didn't die slowly—he just said, "I'm going." It was like he had stepped on to an airplane, waved goodbye and then the doors closed. He was completely conscious.

I think about all his activities which we will of course continue with, but at the same time I keep remembering the moment he died and I tell myself, "Don't have attachment because this is all just a dream." That was the main lesson I got from his death.

There was no time to get to the hospital. Even though I was desperate, thinking I had to do something, I knew we couldn't do anything. I don't know how to explain it but it was an active death, not passive. Rinpoche was like that, always active and doing

things fast. So his death was like, "I'm just going to change my body." In fact, sometimes he would say to me, "It's time to change bodies."

Rinpoche had talked about "going" for most of the past year. So he knew. We didn't think so, perhaps because we wanted him to stay longer. When he had dreams that indicated he was going to die, he told us not to pray anymore for his long life but so that obstacles would be removed for his next reincarnation. He had dreams of being a baby and having a mother. Sometimes he dreamed of looking for a house in a different place and he was alone—these dreams indicated to him that he was going to go soon.

I used to ask him, "What do I do when you die? Should I try to save you?" He would never answer—not say anything, just be quiet. Sometimes I would ask him if he knew where he was going to be reborn and he wouldn't say anything. So I think he knew something but he didn't want to say.

Lama Trinley: Rinpoche's health was quite unstable in the later years of his life. As his personal attendant, how did you work with that in your own practice?

Lama Sherab: As a nurse I knew that Rinpoche's heart condition was very serious—like a time bomb that could explode any minute. I told him that if this happened at Khadro Ling it would be over, because we are so isolated. But in his last few days he had

seemed very strong. Two days before we had walked all around the Akshobhya statue planning landscaping and he hadn't had any pain. And then it was like it had to be. I didn't expect it would be any different.

To witness Rinpoche's passing was to witness his realization. After his body stopped moving—what we call death—the experience was that he was everywhere. There was a very strong and perceptible presence, and a source of great openness, peace, and bliss. During that whole time, through all the difficult experiences of dealing with the media, finding a way to preserve the body, transport the body to Nepal, etc. there was always this experience of great bliss—the certainty that he was not separate from us for even a moment. When I came down to the shrine for the first time, seeing the sangha was seeing Rinpoche. Wherever I looked, he was there.

I have never felt that he has died in the usual sense because whenever I think of his teachings, his words, his advice, then he is alive. It's just that his body is no longer here. His teachings and



activities are the real Rinpoche. We are so fortunate to have been given so much. Whenever I'm doing practice when I'm trying to watch my mind I think, Rinpoche gave me that. He gave us so much. He gave us everything. Even those students who knew him only for a short time were given everything.

I miss him a lot, seeing him and hearing his voice. Of course we know his Tulku will come back but Rinpoche will not have the same body. He's probably not going to be that cute, charming guy who liked to dress up in his red hat and sunglasses. He might be a severe monk. We are not going to have that emanation anymore—because that was just one.

Lama Trinley: When you met Rinpoche, did you know right away that you had a strong connection?

Lama Sherab: When I met Rinpoche in 1992, I was looking for a spiritual path. My first impression was that I was seeing somebody from a completely different world. I remember that I had great respect for him and also that whenever he would come into the room, I would cry. I had been very Catholic my whole life and although some of the Buddhist ideas were very different, at the same time they were very familiar to me. I really trusted that what Rinpoche said was right and true and when he gave a Tara empowerment I had a feeling this was something was really good. I didn't understand any of what he said but the damaru, the bell, the tsok, everything just made sense to me.

We started to do Tara practice in Belo Horizonte and the next year Rinpoche came back to build a Guru Rinpoche statue there. Someone was needed to drive him and Khadro to the statue site every day. I was able to take time off from work and I understood English well enough to communicate with them. So for two weeks I drove and served them their meals every day; it was during this time that I grew close to both Khadro and Rinpoche. I really loved that. I think it was the best time I had ever had in my life. When they went on to São Paulo I decided to go along to serve them there, and that was it. I took ngondro teachings, started my ngondro and began to follow him everywhere.

When he bought this land in 1994 he asked me, "If I move to Brazil will you come to the South?" I said, "No doubt. Just tell me when you are coming and I'll be there." In July, 1995, Rinpoche moved here and began to develop Khadro Ling. I grew in so many ways over the next seven years. I was extremely shy, rarely spoke, and had difficulty relating to people. Working with him meant I had to do it all. I had to sit in front of 400 people and translate. What I had tried to develop through therapy, Rinpoche developed very swiftly, just by having me around him and serving him.

Some of us in the sangha were closer to him, taking care of his personal, human needs. Those that didn't, might think, "How lucky they are to be close to him, serve him tea..." As if being close to him meant that our practice would miraculously improve. But it's not really like that. I sometimes think that the students physically close to him are the worst ones and that they need that closeness to improve. In the past eight years I didn't do a lot of formal practice. I was not always able to keep my mind focused or cultivate pure motivation. I was not always able to see the illusory quality of everything. Sometimes the gonpa seemed very solid and I created nonvirtue by believing in this solidity. So, just being near Rinpoche doesn't necessarily mean enlightenment. To

serve him creates merit but it doesn't excuse us from the need to change our mental habits—to practice in order to progress.

The longer I knew him the more I saw his great compassion, generosity, and patience with his students. Sometimes I had trouble understanding how he could keep listening to certain difficult people. I had little patience translating and wondered how he could be so patient. But when I realized that it came from his compassion and generosity it helped me to have more patience.

I was not always able to say yes to Rinpoche. Sometimes I would fight. Sometimes it was difficult to do what he asked me to, but deep inside, in a more subtle way, I never doubted that he was the answer to everything that I've searched for, that he could lead me to spiritual realization. It was a gift of life to meet him and be with him. To be able to translate for and serve him was my good karma—maybe his bad karma, ripening. For me, nothing better could have happened.

I think sometimes Rinpoche was a little concerned about who would support Khadro because he knew he was going to go before her. I always told him, "I think I am tied to both you and Khadro. There is no place to go, nothing else to do." So there was this very strong karmic connection not just with him but with her as well.

Lama Trinley: When Rinpoche moved to Brazil, I asked Khadro how Rinpoche would finance his projects there. And she said, "Rinpoche has never worried about money because whenever he needs it, it comes."

Lama Sherab: When we started the Lha Khang we didn't even have the money to finish it but it just kept coming. It was really amazing, his merit. And now here at Khadro Ling we have this big place, full of people.

We usually have many visitors at Khadro Ling on Sunday afternoon. Last Sunday, I happened to look out at the stupas and the temple and as I did so, I put myself in the place of a tourist—a non-Buddhist person living in this part of Brazil—and I had the thought, "This is a really nice place." For people coming here who have never been exposed to Buddhism this is something really wonderful, because it is so completely different. Rinpoche gave this gift to Brazilians.

Lama Trinley: I had always looked at tourism here in a very ordinary way, but now, I think I understand what Rinpoche was doing in making Khadro Ling so accessible to the Brazilian public through media coverage and tourism.

Lama Sherab: That was what he wanted to do—to provide people with some connection. Now the thought is to put some of Rinpoche's relics in the Guru Rinpoche Palace. The people from town were very sad when Rinpoche's body was taken to Nepal. So I think for his relics to come back to Khadro Ling—to Brazil—is going to be a big deal. It's going to be nice.

Lama Trinley: How do you feel you can best serve Rinpoche at this time?

Lama Sherab: When he was in retreat the month before he left, I asked him, "Rinpoche, how are we going to hold all of this—all your activities?" He said, "Just do practice. That's all you need to do, your practice."

Practice by the Days of the Moon

The phases of the moon correspond to the subtle male and female energies of the body and increase the benefit of practice on certain days of the lunar month. Specific practices shown are done at Chagdud Gonpa centers, but other practices are appropriate as well. Even keeping a mantra commitment on these days generates powerful virtue.

July

- 6 First Quarter Moon: Tara Day
- 8 Tenth Day: Guru Rinpoche Day
- 13 Full Moon: P'howa
- 20 Last Quarter: Tara Day
- 22 Twenty-fifth Day: Dakini Day
- 28 New Moon: Varasattva

August

- 4 First Quarter: Tara Day
- 6 Tenth Day: Guru Rinpoche Day
- 7 Birth of Guru Rinpoche
- 11 Full Moon: P'howa
- 19 Last Quarter: Tara Day
- 21 Twenty-fifth Day: Dakini Day
- 27 New Moon: Vajrasattva

September

- 3 First Quarter: Tara Day
- 5 Tenth Day: Guru Rinpoche
- 10 Full Moon: P'howa
- 18 Last Quarter: Tara Day
- 20 Twenty-fifth Day: Dakini Day
- 25 New Moon: Vajrasattva

October

- 2 First Quarter: Tara Day
- 4 Tenth Day: Guru Rinpoche Day
- 9 Full Moon: P'howa
- 18 Last Quarter: Tara Day
- 20 Twenty-fifth Day: Dakini Day
- 25 New Moon: Vajrasattva
- 31 First Quarter: Tara Day

November

- 2 Tenth Day: Guru Rinpoche
- 8 Full Moon: P'howa**
- 16 Last Quarter: Tara Day
- 17 Parinirvana of Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche
- 18 Twenty-fifth: Dakini Day
- 23 New Moon: Vajrasattva*
- 30 First Quarter: Tara Day

December

- 2 Tenth Day: Guru Rinpoche Day
- 8 Full Moon: P'howa
- 16 Last Quarter: Tara Day
- 18 Twenty-fifth: Dakini Day
- 23 New Moon: Vajrasattva
- 30 First Quarter: Tara Day

*Eclipse of the sun; practice is multiplied 10,000 times; **Eclipse of the moon; practice is multiplied 1,000 times

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