

Reflections on Sambodhi Dharma Sangha

Following the Meditation of Buddha Boy

**by
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ISBN 978-1-105-25734-6
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to the Bomjan Family, the Yomjan Family, Waiba Family, Ngima Dawa Tamang and family, Panit Maharjan, with special thanks to Peyto Yellin for his time and patience in editing this book. And thank you dear, dear Ram Bomjon – Dharma Sangha Google Group and its founder, Brad Grace. Special thanks to Semyon, eTapasvi.com developer, also to Barry Ryder and Rahul Tiwary for helping me to understand better Sambodhi Dharma Sangha's life and words.

Thank you to everyone who offered their support while this book was being made. Without your help, this project would have been impossible.

Deep gratitude to my family who has patiently stood by me for so long. May the sentient beings nearest to my side also be happy. May they be free from conflict and suffering. Thank you, dear family.

Photographs by Andrea Good, Sugma Waiba, Panit Maharjan with old photos courtesy of the Bomjan Family. Painting on page 37 by Jack Good.

Dear Readers,

Palden Dorje is now known as Sambodhi Dharma Sangha.

Beyond the costs of publishing, all the proceeds of this book go towards Sambodhi Dharma Sangha's projects, volunteers' living expenses, and natural habitat protection of the Holy Jungle of Halkhoriya and the Holy Site of Ratanpur.

Please see eTapasvi.com for an update on projects and accounting. Donations may also be sent directly to the Sangha via eTapasvi.

Thank you very much for your support and encouragement,

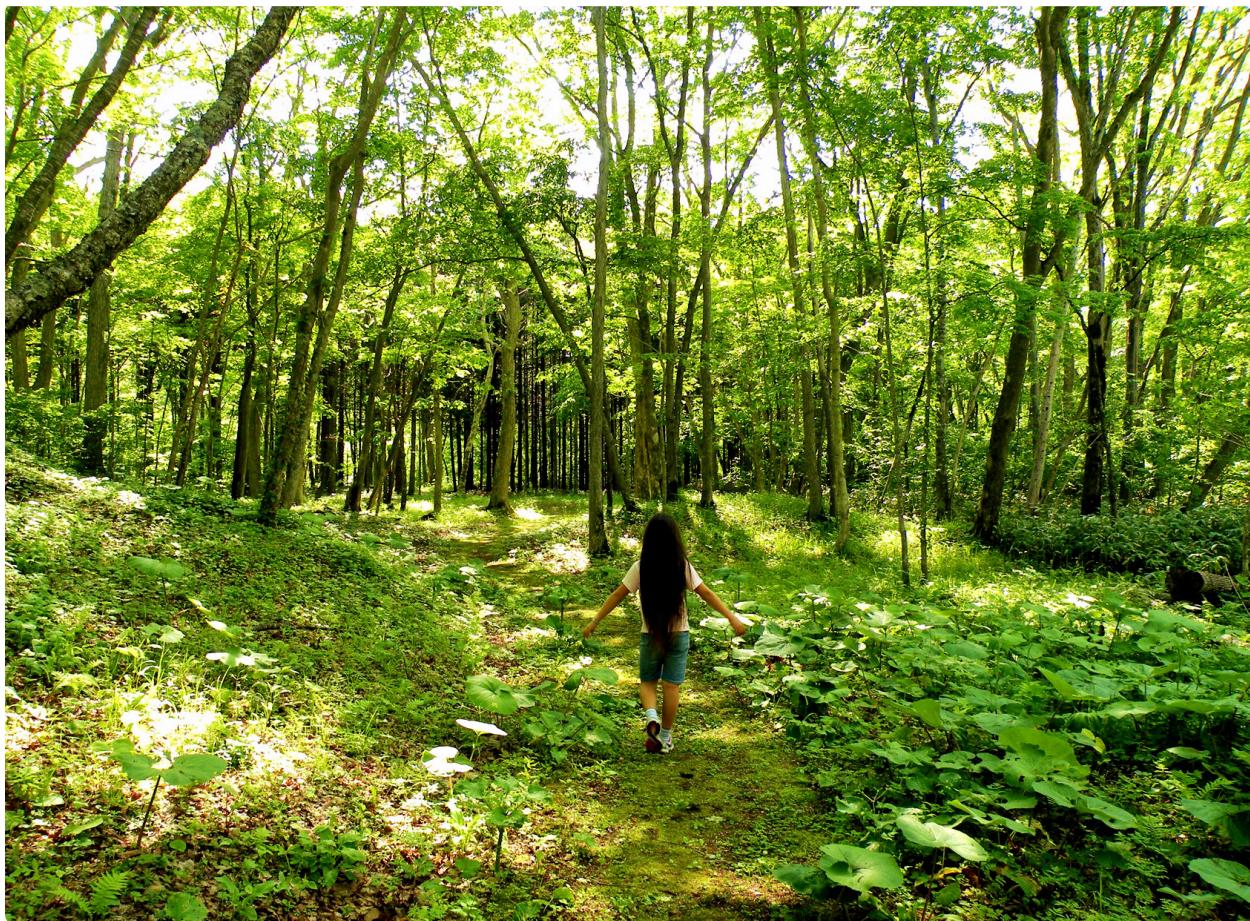
Andrea Good

Dedicated to the happiness of all sentient beings

And for Fred, with whom I wanted to share this story the most.

*There, beyond thoughts, in the stillness
Nirvana is brief...and eternal,
But in your day you have a longing,
A longing to be with me.*

*Know that I share that same longing with you.
Know too, that this longing is in the next person
you see,
For we have been separated,
Yet we are one.*





INTRODUCTION

Buddha Boy

In May of 2005, the drastic decision of a 15 year old Nepali boy to meditate for six years in the open forest without food or water grabbed the world's attention. Thronging crowds began to gather as word spread about a miraculous boy who maintained a deep meditation under extraordinary conditions. Some even speculated that he was a reincarnation of the future Buddha, known as Maitreya Buddha. The media nicknamed him Buddha Boy.

Born in Nepal on April 10th, 1990, Ram Bomjon was the son of poor rural farmers. He grew up with his family in a small village in the Bara District of southern Nepal at the edge of the Halkoriya Jungle. His village of Ratanpuri was just 150 kilometers away from Lumbini, the birthplace of Buddha. With his roots in the Tamang culture of Nepal his family was devoutly Buddhist. His father was also lay practitioner within the Sakya order. As is the custom in this tradition, Ram was given a Buddhist "refuge" name, Palden Dorje. While growing up, most people around him called him Ram. Since beginning his forest meditation, people no longer use the name Ram but respectfully refer to him as Palden Dorje.

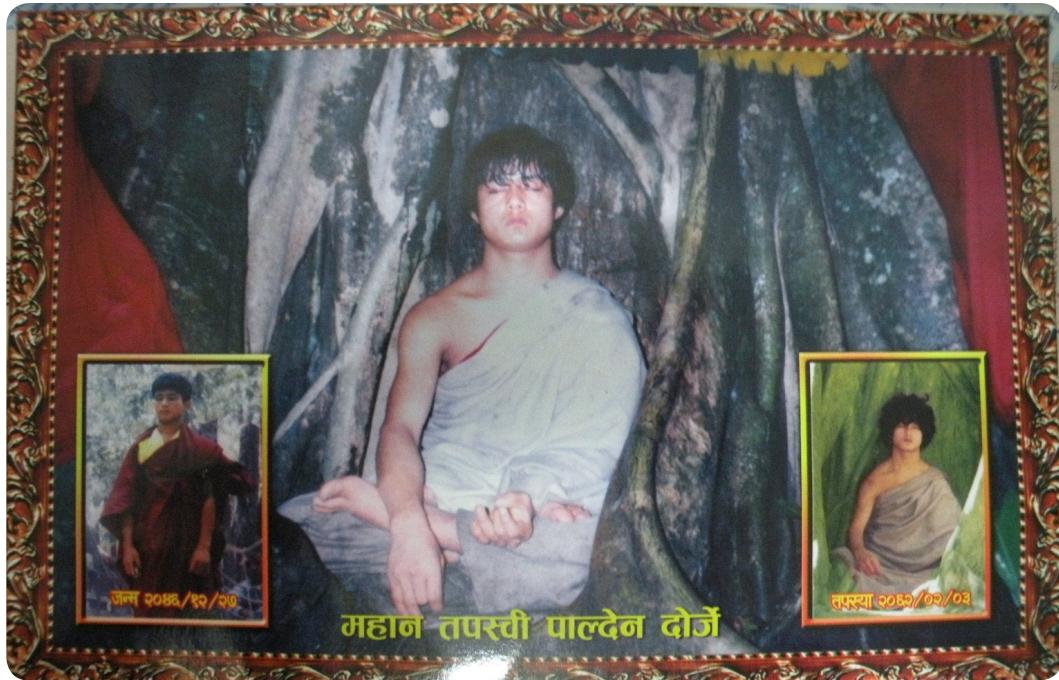
At a very young age, Palden Dorje exhibited an extraordinary talent in the art of meditation. He became a monk while still in elementary school and went on to receive a monastic education. Early in 2005, when he was fourteen, Palden Dorje was residing at a monastery in Pokhara, Nepal. Suddenly he became critically ill. The monks had to return him to his home in Ratanpuri to recover from an incapacitating illness. Who could have guessed that on his recovery he would slip out of his house in the middle of the night to begin a six-year long meditation?

In 2006, Palden Dorje became the focus of global media attention when, several months into his meditation, he was featured in a documentary on the Discovery Channel entitled "The Boy with Divine Powers." Word was beginning to spread that he was meditating in the open forest without sustenance or relief. Discussion and speculation was stirred up around the world concerning the legitimacy of this young boy's intense meditation. The whole idea even invited ridicule for his family and those closely associated with him. There were speculations of fraud and conspiracies. Suspicion was deepened when it was learned that there was a committee of local villagers who were chosen to protect him. It was rumored that they would draw a curtain around him at night, leaving the viewer only to speculate as to what was actually happening during those hours. There was also a circus-like market selling food and souvenirs that had developed around his formerly secluded tree. This further fueled the speculation about unscrupulous motivations behind the scenes. Although the documentary crew filmed the young meditator without a curtain for four days of continuous meditation, they could not definitively prove or disprove his followers' claims. But after the completion

of the program the crowds continued to grow. People began to refer to Palden Dorje as "Guru" and "Rinpoche." In a strife torn country like Nepal these stories resonated with many people.

Disconcerted with the amount of attention he was receiving, Palden Dorje made a surreptitious escape with the help of his brother Shyam and sister Rajkumari into the jungle and remained hidden for ten months. This served to embolden his critics who thought he had given up and abandoned his meditation. But it turns out that he had just moved to a more secluded spot. When he was found the crowds again returned. In order to maintain his solitary meditation, a small underground room was built and a perimeter fence was put in place to keep the crowds at a distance. Palden Dorje then forbade the public to enter his new site except on occasions when he would give public blessings.

Eventually, some semblance of order began to take shape around this young meditator. A stupa, or sacred shrine, was built near where he was meditating. The "committee" was better able to manage the large crowds. Attendant monks and volunteers helped to provide direction and stability during the proceedings. Palden Dorje soon emerged from his underground "bunker." He has even given occasional public speeches. All the while, his meditation continued.



Pilgrimage

Until spring of 2007, I knew nothing of these events as I rarely watched TV. My European parents had discouraged me from doing so, and my disdain for television had become a habit. Yet I was soon to find out about Palden Dorje through the internet. The more I found out about Palden Dorje's story the more intrigued I became. As I searched through the articles and news groups about Palden Dorje I began to sense the genuineness of this boy's commitment to his path. Despite being an American Catholic-raised housewife with two children, I became inspired by this young boy's meditation. As if pulled by an invisible string, I would even go so far as to fly to Nepal and spend 9 days at his side. This was unlike anything I had ever done before and the journey proved to be one of the most meaningful experiences of my life.

In the fall of 2008, I set out alone on a pilgrimage for Nepal. Upon reaching the jungle, I took my place near Palden Dorje as a volunteer helper. He never said a word to me, but we seemed to be in continuous conversation. I can only describe this as "Heart Language." This kind of communication does not feel like ordinary mind chatter. Heart Language is more like feeling the presence of compassionate awareness that is both gentle and luminous. When the ordinary mind quiets down, the heart opens up and some form of communion can be silently established. An opening occurs where healing can take place and inspiration can flow in. I wouldn't go so far as to say this book is a product of "automatic writing", though it did flow easily onto the page without interruption. I'm sure there are some discrepancies, but somehow I feel honestly that this book was meant to be.

This book was mainly compiled from my journal, emails to friends, and some spontaneously inspired writings. It is not so much a narrative about Palden Dorje as it is about my own journey and how his inspiration comes through to me. Of course my perspective is filtered by my Catholic upbringing and my personal understanding of Buddhism. But I have felt the calling to share these stories as a part of my own spiritual journey and also with the sincere wish that they may benefit others along the path.

Coming from such a different religious background, I should have little business writing this book. It should be written by the lamas around Palden Dorje who understand the essence of Buddhism. While some would claim that Buddhism is a philosophy compatible with any religion, it is not, strictly speaking, compatible with the Catholic Dogma. It is also not compatible with many other religions, as it disowns any notion of a creator God or a created universe, which is fundamental to most of the major faiths in the world. Furthermore, faith is the cornerstone of most religious practice. But in Buddhism, we find that blind faith is not acceptable. All teachings should be questioned and verified through direct experience. Certainly many would think these differences to be insurmountable.

I had my fair share of hearing about the miraculous while I was growing up. When I was 14, my parents went to Medugorje to see the apparitions of Mary that were taking place ominously before the outbreak of the civil war in Yugoslavia that was to devastate the country. Mary appeared to six young visionaries every day at 3:00 in the afternoon. The children would kneel, and it would be as if someone had turned the volume off of their voices as they would begin their daily discussion with Our Lady. She would tell them that terrible things would occur within the Church and in the world. On the positive side, she would tell them that the day was approaching when religions would be brought together as one.

When I announced my intention to go to the jungle of Nepal to visit a young boy meditating under a tree, my family was dismayed. My devoutly Catholic father, who had lost one of his daughters to cancer in July of that year (2008), described it as being even sadder than my dying. To lose one daughter was bad enough, but at least she was in good hands. Now I was really lost.

I myself did not know where I had gone wrong, so to speak. I had an active prayer life and spiritual practice was the basis of my daily life. Was it my choice of partner that had led me so astray as far as being a Catholic was concerned? I had married a Japanese man 20 years ago.

My husband was wary of religion to say the least. He had nearly been hooked by two “dangerous cults” and he was worried lest I might be overly influenced by any religion. I had only ever heard him pray once. It was over the body of a dead sparrow that we had found in the garden. He had said something long in Japanese in a very monotone voice. Later I learned that it was a Buddhist prayer called Hannya Shingyo, or the Heart Sutra.

Many people in our modern societies have given up on religion and do not understand or trust any spiritual teaching. For many, science has taken the place of religion as a central way of explaining the world. These people are usually wary of anything that has an air of the mystical or spiritual. They only respect what is measurable and grounded in logic. Some people also see religion as a tool of oppression and conflict. As in many parts of the world, throughout time, many wars are justified by religious teachings or caused by religious differences. Can we ever reconcile these conflicts and inherent contradiction of beliefs? Where does that leave the rest of us who still value a religious or spiritual life? Could we ever feel safe in our religion? Could we join a group and trust it?

Today many people find being affiliated with a religion makes them feel like embarrassed members of an exclusive club. This was certainly a feeling I sympathized with. Like many people I was distancing myself from my own religion. Yet I knew that convert-

ing to another religion would simply bring up the same feelings. Out of this confusion, I found the need to transcend religion and go beyond. Perhaps it was these words which attracted me to the Buddhist Heart Sutra mantra:

OM GATE GATE
PARAGATE
PARASAMGATE
BODHI SVAHA

If it was translated into English, this mantra could read something like:

GO BEYOND BEYOND,
FAR BEYOND,
FAR FAR BEYOND,
AWAKEN AND TRANSCEND!

In today's rapidly changing and multicultural world, this awakening and transcending of boundaries seems to be exactly what we all need!

Spiritual practice appears to be as natural to humanity as music and language. Even if we disregard dogma, our being would be truly poor without reaching for the divine within us, whether it be God the creator, the Holy Spirit, or Buddhahood. Whatever label is attached to the divine essence, this state is the realization of pure love, truth and joy which can bring genuine happiness and fulfillment to our lives. Many spiritual teachers have taught the validity of all spiritual traditions or the unity of all paths to one truth. At this time, we also have unprecedented access to the teachings of all the world's major religions. So it feels natural to be curious about other paths and explore other traditions.

For me, Buddhism seemed to present a practical and simple regime to cultivate this awakening. It encouraged reading to stimulate the mind, meditation to enhance the spirit, and physical exercise to tune and balance the body. After 8 years of following this regime, Palden Dorje entered my life. When the student is ready, the teacher arrives. I was ready but I don't think I imagined how young the teacher would be! The inspiration came and I was certainly moved by this young meditator who, perceiving the suffering of world, spent his formative years under a tree in order to find a deep understanding of truth in this life. The death of my sister had brought home to me how little time we had in on this earth. So long as there was breath within me, I felt inspired to pursue my heart, and my wish was to meet the real Palden Dorje.

CHAPTER 1

Our “Meeting”

In the early part of 2007, I was sitting at an internet café in Japan. I do not have the internet at home, because I know it would take up too much of our precious time. I had learned to use the internet for legal reasons. A car accident in the beginning of 2004 and pressure from my husband had led me to take up a long legal battle with a fleeing insurance company in the United States. Because of the complexity of the case, no lawyer would touch my case, so I was forced to be pro se and take on the case myself. The internet provided all the knowledge I needed. The case became somewhat infamous. I even found reference to the case in a Covergirl magazine article from England, and the Himalayan Times.

In all honesty, I was not the type to be a lawyer and my heart was not really in it. Going to court to call people, guilty, fraudulent, and negligent for the sake of being an obedient spouse was running against my grain. So to allay my static feelings I took up a little prayer to keep myself sane while I worked my way through this drab legal maze. In Japan there is a well known Buddhist prayer called Hannya Shingyo, or the Heart Sutra. It is one of the only prayers that I have heard my husband recite. Even my children had learned this prayer so I began to memorize it myself. But, being curious by nature, I decided to go a step beyond my family. I would learn the meaning as well.

It became my pet project to take a little time off of legal research and look up the meaning of the Heart Sutra. I had the Japanese down pat; I had recited it all the way from Tokyo to Las Vegas on a turbulent flight with Korean Airlines.

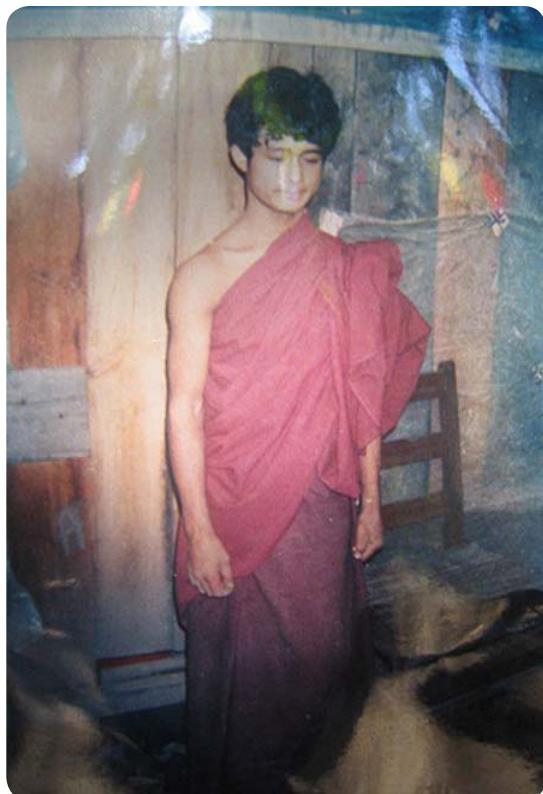
Although these points could be debated by scholars, I have been told that the Heart Sutra, came to Japan via China and from China via India. It is like the table of contents to all the speeches made by Gautama Siddhartha in India 2500 years ago. And it was first written in Sanskrit.

Sanskrit? Now that is a language I would like to hear! I thought, that being raised Catholic I knew some Latin, and Sanskrit is to Buddhism as Latin is to Catholicism. I searched the words Sanskrit and Heart Sutra and came up with the name Imee Ooi, a contemporary Malaysian artist. There was a video on You Tube of Imee Ooi’s Heart Sutra in Sanskrit. It was really beautiful to hear. On the side, next to her video, there were other related videos: meditation music, Buddhist chants, the Lotus Sutra, etc. I clicked on a video entitled “Buddha” and there on the screen was something unexpected. It looked like a giant mushroom under a tree. Careful observation proved my mushroom to be a boy who was so still that the hair had grown over his face. It shocked me at first. Then, Imee’s song echoed in my mind and suddenly it seemed as if the boy came to life and was talking, and the words were the Heart Sutra in Sanskrit. Not only was he talk-

ing, but he made sense. For the first time I felt I might be grasping the real essence of the Heart Sutra. An intense feeling of peace and inspiration filled my body. It was a feeling hard to describe, although later I would hear others say the same thing: it felt like falling in love for the first time. Yet one could not quite understand why. At first glimpse, there was certainly nothing obviously appealing nor sensual about the boy. He was dirty, bedraggled, small and childish and you could not even see his face. What was this indescribable magnetism that he seemed to exude?

I downloaded Imee's song onto my player and printed out a picture of the boy. The next day I took a walk in the mountains with my music and my picture. I kept walking... I walked for three hours.

When I returned I was not hungry. My family wasn't sure what to make of me. I did not eat or drink over the next three days. At night I meditated in the full lotus position. I had never sat at any length of time in full lotus before, especially not recently with my back injury from the accident. This was odd, to say the least. I have never been more than a day without eating. Yet it was easy. I never imagined something like that could be so effortless. On the fourth day, I went back to eating normally, and was no longer able to sit in full lotus, though I began to train myself to do so.



After this experience, I started to gather all the information I could on Buddha Boy. He was born in a small village in Nepal. At age fifteen he had astounded the world by announcing that he intended to meditate under a tree for six years. The amazing thing was that he seemed to be accomplishing this without food or water or even taking a break to relieve himself. I learned that his name was Ram Bahadur Bomjon, his Buddhist name being Palden Dorje, and that he had been the subject of a Discovery Documentary. For ten months he had meditated nonstop before thousands of spectators. He then disappeared into the jungle for another 10 months saying that he wished to be alone. He had eventually been found and his family had begged him not to disappear again. He did disappear once more, and then returned. According to a Nepali news report of April,

2007, he requested to have an underground meditation room made for him. The timing of the article had coincided with my strange three days.

My information gathering was top secret. I didn't wish my family to think I had gone crazy. Yet I could not stay away, and soon I noticed that someone had started a Google Group about him. The timing seemed odd, as I realized that Buddha Boy had already reached the zenith of his fame in 2005 and then there was almost no news of him after his disappearance in the jungle. Why this strange attraction?

Palden Dorje emerged from his underground meditation. He gave a speech. After his speech, he announced his intention to meditate under the tree again, but this time, no spectators please. He told everyone to go away and leave him alone.

It took awhile before a transcription and translation of the speech was available. There was much speculation and discussion about the tone of his speech. Then, once the text was available in English we all had a chance to contemplate the meaning of his words. It turned out to be a mature statement with layers of meaning that showed his sincere commitment to his practice.

Here is the speech as translated from Nepali by Raju Gurung:

A Message of Peace to the World

MURDER, VIOLENCE, GREED, ANGER AND TEMPTATION HAVE MADE THE HUMAN WORLD A DESPERATE PLACE. A TERRIBLE STORM HAS DESCENDED UPON THE HUMAN WORLD, AND THIS IS CARRYING THE WORLD TOWARDS DESTRUCTION. THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO SAVE THE WORLD AND THAT IS THROUGH THE DHARMA, (UNDERSTANDING THE COSMIC LAW OF EXISTENCE). WHEN ONE DOESN'T WALK THE RIGHTEOUS PATH OF THE DHARMA, THIS DESPERATE WORLD WILL SURELY BE DESTROYED.

THEREFORE, FOLLOW THE PATH OF THE DHARMA AND SPREAD THIS MESSAGE TO YOUR FELLOWS. NEVER PUT OBSTACLES, ANGER AND DISBELIEF IN THE WAY OF MY MEDITATION'S MISSION. I AM ONLY SHOWING YOU THE WAY; YOU MUST SEEK IT ON YOUR OWN. WHAT I WILL BE, WHAT I WILL DO, THE COMING DAYS WILL REVEAL.

HUMAN SALVATION, THE SALVATION OF ALL LIVING BEINGS, AND PEACE IN THE WORLD ARE MY GOAL AND MY PATH. "NAMO BUDDHA SANGHAYA, NAMO SANGHAYA." I AM CONTEMPLATING ON THE RELEASE OF THIS CHAOTIC WORLD FROM THE OCEAN OF EMOTION, ON OUR DETACHMENT FROM ANGER AND TEMPTATION, WITHOUT STRAYING FROM THE PATH FOR EVEN A MOMENT. I AM RENOUNCING MY OWN ATTACHMENT TO MY LIFE AND MY HOME FOREVER. I AM WORKING TO SAVE ALL LIVING BEINGS. BUT IN THIS UNDISCIPLINED WORLD, MY LIFE'S PRACTICE IS REDUCED TO MERE ENTERTAINMENT.

THE PRACTICE AND DEVOTION OF MANY BUDDHAS ARE DIRECTED AT THE WORLD'S BETTERMENT AND HAPPINESS. IT IS ESSENTIAL BUT VERY DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND THAT PRACTICE AND DEVOTION. BUT THOUGH IT IS EASY TO LEAD THIS IGNORANT EXISTENCE, HUMAN BEINGS DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT ONE DAY WE MUST LEAVE THIS UNCERTAIN WORLD AND GO WITH THE LORD OF DEATH. OUR LONG ATTACHMENTS WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY WILL DISSOLVE INTO NOTHINGNESS. WE HAVE TO LEAVE BEHIND THE WEALTH AND PROPERTY WE HAVE ACCUMULATED. WHAT'S THE USE OF MY HAPPINESS, WHEN THOSE WHO HAVE LOVED ME FROM THE BEGINNING, MY MOTHER, FATHER, BROTHERS, AND RELATIVES ARE ALL UNHAPPY. THEREFORE, TO RESCUE ALL SENTIENT BEINGS, I HAVE TO REALIZE BUDDHA MIND AND EMERGE FROM MY UNDERGROUND CAVE TO PERFORM VAJRA MEDITATION. TO DO THIS I HAVE TO REALIZE THE RIGHT PATH AND KNOWLEDGE, SO DO NOT DISTURB MY PRACTICE.

MY PRACTICE DETACHES ME FROM MY BODY, MY SOUL AND THIS EXISTENCE. IN THIS SITUATION THERE WILL BE 72 GODDESS KALIS. DIFFERENT GODS WILL BE PRESENT, ALONG WITH THE SOUNDS OF THUNDER (TANGUR), AND ALL THE CELESTIAL GODS AND GODDESSES WILL BE PERFORMING THEIR WORSHIP (PUJA). SO UNTIL I HAVE SENT A MESSAGE, DO NOT COME HERE, AND PLEASE EXPLAIN THIS TO OTHERS. SPREAD THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE DHARMA AND RELIGIOUS MESSAGES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. SPREAD THE MESSAGE OF WORLD PEACE TO ALL. SEEK A RIGHTEOUS PATH AND WISDOM WILL BE YOURS.

Despite all the odds, I could not rid myself of the feeling that he was for real. The funny thing was many in the group had the same feeling. We knew we were being illogical, so we whiled away the time laughing at our own seriousness.

Palden Dorje was an obsession. It seemed he was with me 24 hours a day. There was the "you are not alone" feeling at all times. Soon my Palden Dorje time overtook my legal research by leaps and bounds.

One of the owners of the Google Group asked me to become moderator and later co-owner. I became friends with Sugma, a Nepali residing in Portugal who was the nephew of a well-known committee member, Uncle Waiba. Before long I was attending to Palden Dorje's biography and tracking English news concerning Palden Dorje. We all wanted to go to Nepal to meet the real Buddha Boy, and I suggested we have a game of it, seeing how real we could make our travel plans. Oprah Winfrey was having a special about how to make Vision Boards, and I made mine. I guess it worked.

CHAPTER 2

The Silent White Bang

About ten years ago, I woke up at four in the morning. There was a silent white bang. I sat up in bed. Nothing would ever be the same again. The night before this I had been listening to a tape of Neale Donald Walsh reading his famous book, Conversations with God. A friend from India had lent them to me, and I had been listening to the author read his book to keep me company while housecleaning. There was one sentence that somehow must have wedged itself into my consciousness. I paid little attention to it at the time, and I don't even remember it ad verbatim; but God had said, "I tell you this, you will never really understand what I am saying unless you know that there is only one of us."

That night I went to sleep. No special dreams, no astral projections, no kundalini, nothing to herald the sudden shift of consciousness I was about to have; just a silent white explosion as I awoke in the dim light of the early morning. Within this flash I realized beyond all doubt: there is only ONE of us. This understanding was illustrated in my mind by the image of a little girl named Sandy who had been at my school. She shared my birthday. Now I knew: I was Sandy, and Sandy was Andy, and likewise for the rest of the world's population. It was that simple. I thanked my Indian friend by phone who was thrilled that I got it.

This did not mean that I was now an enlightened being; far from it. I still got lost on the way to the post office. I still forgot my shopping list. But a new awareness changed my perception of the world. Whenever I spoke to someone I felt openness and a heart connection, like embracing a good friend. I felt the closeness and connection that comes from seeing our common divinity.

I noticed that before this I had always felt there was a hole in my chest that seemed to be continuously sucking and pulling like a miniature black hole. It felt like hunger but in the wrong place. When I was with friends, it was almost imperceptible, but when I was alone, it pulled at me and made me feel incomplete.

Living in Japan away from my home in America, the hole felt like homesickness. In spring it felt like unrequited love. In the summer it was the feeling of apathy. In the fall it was the bittersweet feeling of aging. In the winter it felt like missing an old friend. No matter who or what the object was, the empty feeling was the same. I recognized that it came from within me.

How could I fill this hole? I thought the answer must be in communication. Even before the internet became so ubiquitous, I wanted to be on it. When cell phones came out, I wanted to have one. My husband said that these things were detrimental to our health and wealth. He flatly refused to have such things around the house. He was as adamant as my father had been about the television, who despite being a television producer, would rant against the “devil machine.” I did not see machines which facilitated communication as evil. But if I could not use them, I would have to resort to another method.

Now I could see that all of humanity was held together within One Soul. This understanding is available to anyone who is able to experience this perception. The way to this perception has been taught in many religions and demonstrated by many masters. I knew that this understanding also has the potential to arise spontaneously in anyone at anytime, even if for a brief moment. So it was not as much shocking as it was comforting to be seeing and feeling this way. Since others have tapped into the One Soul then so could I.

One way I like to think of this experience is as if the One Soul was a telephone operator. Then we can see that each one of us could be like a person on a telephone at the end of a telephone line. We don't have to leave our bodies or individual consciousness and go somewhere else to have this experience. It is more like being open to something that is already there. We just need to pick up the receiver.

If the other side is willing, open and aware, some kind of two-way communication should be possible via the One Soul. The higher the consciousness of the user, the easier it should be to communicate. This requires no other technology but what is already inherent within us.

Now if we can understand this metaphor of the One Soul as some kind of telephone operator that can connect seemingly separate conscious experiences then a door to all kinds of possibilities and perceptions will open. As a nexus of collective consciousness with a higher perspective than our seemingly isolated individual experience, we would be able to better perceive the connection between all events we experience throughout our life. The events in our lives are known to the One Soul throughout many dimensions of time and space, and this would potentially include events that were beyond our conscious experience. I began to see that this type of awareness was possible, even if it was for just a fleeting moment.

It seemed to me from what I could grasp that the One Soul was not a God in the sense that we often like to imagine in picture books: a male creator who expects praise, and punishes if we are not good. It is more of a timeless energy which is all pervasive, a blissful awareness. This energy spreads out and in places clusters into stars, planets, matter, life, sentient beings... Buddhism does not use the term soul as is done in other traditions because they believe that to do so would impart the illusory idea of a separate existence. There are endless ways to debate this point but that is better left to the Khenpos and Theologians. One essential element that seems to be common to all discussions of a soul is the importance of the breath and its association with the animating principle of the body. Whatever the case, the question of "what constitutes a soul" remains one of the timeless mysteries of the spiritual path. From my point of view, I now conceive of the soul more as a local cluster-of-the-all-pervasive-energy with the power of perception.

It is scientifically understood, through the study of DNA, that our physical entities are more or less the sum of all our experience throughout our ancestral history. This is in accordance with Buddhist thinking that our beings are conditioned by our past karmic actions. But just as our DNA does not always express every gene, so too does much of our Karma remain latent and unrealized. This has been described as the "free will" factor in many religions. In Buddhism it may be thought as an opening to transcend our karma. If sentient beings could not transcend their karma, they would not be capable of spiritual evolution.

In order to find out the source of a DNA sequence, it is necessary to unravel it. Likewise, in order for us to clarify our own energy and become aware of our entirety, it is necessary to unravel ourselves. Our actions create karma, so we have to slow our actions and become intensely aware of our sensations. This is one of the reasons for meditating. As we unravel ourselves, or see that the "self" never really was anything but a cluster of energy shifting continuously with impermanent sensations. We can then become aware of our connection with the all pervasive energy. Like a spider tugging on a web can sense how many flies she has caught, we can begin to perceive other clusters of energy that have become stuck in our web. Once our web is clear only the all pervasive energy remains. Consciousness of the all pervasive energy is communion with the One Soul.

I understood that the hole within me was created by the illusion of separation which caused this yearning to be connected, to be loved. I understood that this illusion is present in most sentient beings, and that it is the core of all suffering. Our belief in the separateness of our physical body leads us to unnecessary suffering at birth, and throughout our lives in the shape of various afflictions, until we get old, sick and die. When, in fact, we are never separate from the divine. The web of energy that connects us with the divine can never be cut. Our true self is indeed timeless, all pervasive, and ever present. This is what I mean by Paramatma or what the Buddhists might call the Tathagatagarbha, or Buddha Nature. Once the awareness of this seed has been planted firmly in our con-

sciousness it can begin to blossom into true enlightenment. It can effectively pacify the root of suffering by dispelling the illusions of separateness. Thus it helps to overcome the fear of transitions inherent in birth, old age, sickness and death.

This understanding has become even clearer to me since knowing Palden Dorje. I can only suppose that his intense meditation is sending strong vibrations to all sentient beings, encouraging us to go beyond our present paradigm, to take up spiritual practice, and open our awareness to the all pervasive energy that converges within our heart. By focusing on the impermanence of our problems and the realization of the non-self, we are able to shift the world's thinking away from the ego and transform our planet by connecting spiritually to one another through the Paramatma. After seeing Palden Dorje's picture for the first time, I became more aware of him hour by hour, day in and day out. Perhaps he is a symbol for me of our connection to the Paramatma.

Now when I stop and listen to my heart I feel the presence of the One Soul. This presence evokes the Heart Language and sometimes words come flowing out:

It is time to pause in our active lives, to slow down, stop and let the One Soul shine through us. As we awaken to our oneness, we can recognize that each of us has the power to realize our talents and strengths and the progress of one can help everyone.

Not one of us is unnecessary. We are all precious, and as we are connected, there are no real castes, no social orders. Would you say that your eye is greater than your nose, or your ear? Wouldn't you rather take care of your whole body than cut off parts of it? We can go beyond religious single-mindedness and be tolerant of all views. Rather than let our opinions separate us, we can enjoy the freedom to observe each other in our perfection.

Thoughts pull us apart, but our heart draws us together. We have different viewpoints according to our upbringing and our culture. What is acceptable behavior in one part of the world is shunned in another. What do we have in common?: love, compassion and wisdom. I have learned through observation that spiritual practices of some form or another, according to the individual, are essential. One may have practices in many areas, whether it is yoga, meditation, prayer, abstaining from certain things, or a combination of all of these things.

Why are these practices essential? It is because they form a basis for disciplining the mind. The untamed mind is our only real "enemy", whereas the tamed mind is our greatest ally. The tamed mind allows the life force to manifest its love, compassion and wisdom; whereas allowing the untamed mind to run our lives is the ultimate form of imprisonment and suffering for human beings. The untamed mind, having been subjected to all the stimuli of a materialistic world, can block the clear energy that continuously flows through us and the universe. Unity is blocked through negativity and uncertainty. Unity, being blocked, creates

the illusion of separation. Perceiving this illusion becomes the basis for ego. From here, ego can become a separate identity.

The ego desires to exist as a separate entity, to be independent and in control. Its main objective is security. Provoking fear and uncertainty are its primary means. In this way an ego continuously uses scare tactics to remind us of our physical frailty; the need to arm ourselves with material wealth or the respect of others in order to insure our survival. It urges us to continuously think ahead; either berating our hearts because of foolishness in the past or confusing our minds with false feelings of nostalgia. It always dramatizes our relationship with others by exaggerating our perceptions.

Thus being rooted in the past or future prevents us from being grounded in the present. Get back to now. Be present. Be open. Be a channel and let the perfection in its wholeness flow through you. In your presence, all will be supplied to you. That's the way it works.

CHAPTER 3

The Meditation Begins

Here is a story from the Heart about how Ram Bomjon, became known as Palden Dorje Rinpoche. The following account is strung together from various details that were known about him and his early years growing up in Nepal and India.

It is said that the whole village could hear Palden Dorje give a sharp cry when he was born on April 10, 1990. It was the full moon. His mother, Maya Devi, had married at 12. She had 5 sons and 4 daughters. Born Ram Bahadur Bomjon Tamang and baptized Palden Dorje, he was her third son. When she was in her pregnancy, she found she was unable to eat meat without becoming ill; and Palden Dorje, even as a small boy refused to eat meat.

Little Palden Dorje always had a longing, a longing to express who he really was, though he felt at times he was not quite sure who he was. Ever since Palden Dorje was very small, it was his wish to get to Lumbini. Sometimes he would set out on foot in the direction of Lumbini. Somehow he felt that if he could reach this spot it would solve this mystery. He was an avatar, this much he knew, and he had evolved through many thousands of lifetimes. He could do something special, and he was supposed to do something special. But how to achieve that was another problem.

He would wander far from his house seeking the garden of Lumbini, only to realize that he must return, or his family would worry too much. Much to his family's dismay, there were times when Palden Dorje's wanderings would take him so far that it took a few days to return. A young boy should not wander out into the jungle; but in the jungle he was happy, and

he felt closer to his purpose. He saw monks who meditated and performed blessings, and he felt that this must truly be the way to help the world. Each little blessing, each moment spent in meditation was a step closer to smoothing the chaos that he saw on this earth.

Palden Dorje would see people sacrificing chickens and other animals to gods for good luck, but he questioned these practices. How could the horrifying pain of these animals do anything to pacify a god, unless that god was evil? He found this torture to be unacceptable. He would beg his neighbors not to consider sacrificing any of these dear lives for their own benefit.

Since Palden Dorje was only a little boy, many scorned his advice. His elder brothers would tell him to mind his own business, but he could not forget the pain of these helpless creatures.

Thus he found peace in the forest away from the sacrifices. He would imitate those monks that he saw: the Buddhist monks who valued all living things. He would find a tree that he really liked and make offerings to it, and walk circles around it saying the mantras that he heard the monks say, and sometimes making up his own.



Then he would sit down and meditate. Palden Dorje simply closed his eyes and it seemed that he became oblivious of the time. Then sometimes a family member would come in search of him, and insist that he come home because his parents were worried. If only he could be free of these fetters, he thought.

Soon he was able to become a monk himself. His teacher Som Lama taught him the benefits of meditation. He went to a monastic school and joined a cricket team and was soon elected captain of the team. It seemed strange for him to compete in this way, as he found it hard to really enjoy this competitive spirit. If only everyone could all win at once, he thought wistfully. It seems sad that there has to be winners and losers. He felt sorry for the losers even though it was only a game.

By the time he reached 5th grade, he was no longer interested in school. Palden Dorje's mind was so involved with the prospect of his real purpose, he had little time for the seemingly pointless facts and sums that school tried so hard to teach him. He thought that school was missing the point and going off on an endless tangent. By involving the mind, and glorifying the mind, education was forgetting the essence of being. Outside, nature was inviting him to walk in her beauty and breathe her fresh air. Palden Dorje felt a hole in his heart when he was not with her, treading her ground with his bare feet and feeling the earth. In the forest, he was part of the forest and the space around the forest.

If only all people could know and understand the wonder of life, if only they could be free from their suffering, and their conflicts, if only they could be happy. If only he could go out to each and everyone and tell them to walk outside, to go within their hearts, to get out of their minds and to recognize their ultimate connection with everything around them. If only each could see the peace that really is and go beyond the dramas that people make up about themselves.

What is this thing called the self, after all, but a bundle of aggregates, nerves and illusive thinking? But take a tree, solid and unmoving, unmoved by the turmoil we create around her, she purifies us and gives us air to breathe. Palden Dorje wished that he could be like that tree. Unmoving, he would give energy to those around him and purify the world. "Let me be like a giant tree, feeding on the sunshine and circling the earth with my purifying energy, I would seek out other trees and we would strengthen each other and purify and pacify this chaotic earth," he prayed. Humans would cease to kill, cease to be angry, cease to want more than their share, and each would become happy in their giant natural forest, through which comes the sunlight, the air, the earth and the beauty of the Dharma, the natural law of life preservation.

"Please, may the world be free from suffering and free from conflict. May it be happy. May I be a tool to bring about this new world which is free from suffering and free from conflict. May we bathe in nature, and may we be soaked in golden light. May we be happy." From a heart of Maitri, or friendship, this was Palden Dorje's ultimate wish.

"Just as a Bodhisattva gives up the bliss body in order to remain in this world until all sentient beings are purified, so I shall remain on this earth until the last of these worldly beings are evolved. Help me in this task," he thought. Deep within his heart he felt he could hear an answer to his plea: "The more we are unified in this wish, the more this vision is likely to become reality. Spread the purification. Feel this love, feel this compassion and be moved to give it to those around you, thus will all be attended to."

Palden Dorje's friend Prem has always been at his side. They were very different, but Prem represented the people of the world to Palden Dorje. Hot tempered and impatient, Prem would attempt to entice him into joining his trickery. When Palden Dorje refused Prem would hit him and later, full of remorse, he would apologize. One day, they were playing tag around a stupa, and Prem was brandishing a sickle. Unfortunately they bumped into each other head on and Palden Dorje got cut just above his eyebrow. Prem rushed him home and he was taken to a doctor to get an herb application to heal Palden Dorje's forehead. Once they were home again, Palden Dorje's mother beat Prem soundly. Poor Prem was devastated. He was human, lonely and in need of love. Palden Dorje was full of love and forgiveness and only too happy to give it to him. Later, they both became monks together.



Prem

Prem was a couple of years older than him, but they always did everything together, including going to India to increase their knowledge of the Dharma. Their teacher set them to meditate in an enclosed room for a month. This was one of Palden Dorje's happier memories as the prospect of being able to meditate uninterrupted was a luxury he had never really had with his family. They were always worrying about his whereabouts.

They were passed food each day, which Prem awaited eagerly, but Palden Dorje found to be an unwanted interruption. Something inside of him told him that he could probably meditate without food, and his body actually seemed to desire to do so. One day, Palden Dorje told himself, he would be truly free, free to meditate as long as he wished, without interruption. Then he would go out into the world and out into space and further out into the universe. He would help to pacify the energy that reaches the earth and meeting other beings who would help to fulfill his purpose.

This month passed very quickly, and they were released. He had proved himself to be a great meditator. His teacher was proud of his outstanding talent. He told him that he could finally make the excursion to Lumbini. Imagine Palden Dorje's joy at the prospect of finally realizing one of his dearest dreams. Maybe Lumbini would help him to understand who he really was. His mother, whose name was Maya Devi, the same as the great Shakyamuni's mother, had often told Palden Dorje how strange he was. Maybe he was a Buddha reincarnated. Lumbini would tell him for certain.

So they went to Lumbini, and Palden Dorje's peers were restless, going this way and that. All Palden Dorje wanted was the chance to meditate at this spot and contemplate what past life he could have had. Maybe he could remember being with the great Shakyamuni in a past life. It seemed he had only just begun to meditate when his teachers told him it was time to go. It was here that he decided not to go back with everyone. Palden Dorje felt there was little else they could teach him. Yet he still felt pulled by some deep seated purpose so instead he went on to Dehudrun in India, to join a different monastery. Maybe this monastery would be able to teach him the great meditation skills he needed to acquire in order to further progress in his training.

At this monastery he was given the name, Dorje Chhiring Lama after taking his Bodhisattva vows. He studied Tummo, the inner heat meditation. Practicing this powerful yogic discipline gave him a deep awareness of the inner energies of the body. It could help to protect him, keep him from hunger and thirst, keeping him warm in the winter, and help him to radiate with spiritual light. With this meditation he would be able to control his elements of working and elements of thinking and speaking, and rise above normal existence so that he might become a universal peace traveler. After learning what he could in Dehradun, Palden Dorje, now fourteen years old, traveled to Pokhara, Nepal.

While in Pokhara, and shortly after his initiation into the practice of Tummo, he became mysteriously ill. He was unable to relieve himself or to walk and his appetite was greatly diminished. Feverish and unable to move, Palden Dorje was put on the bus home by his teachers. Though his family took him to see doctors, they were unable to find out why he was ill.

He knew in his heart that it was a transition, but there was little he could do but stay in bed until whatever it was passed. As the days and weeks went by, he reached his fifteenth birthday. Soon after, he felt an urging in his heart: "The time has come. The time for your meditation has come. Go out into the forest and begin. Do not worry. All will be taken care of."

Palden Dorje stumbled out of bed that night and slowly went down the steps of his small house. He was thin and emaciated from his sickness, and his body still felt hot with a temperature. Walking very slowly he went towards the ravine, hoping that no one would try to stop him. Crossing the ravine, he walked further down the path towards the forest near the

river in Ratanpuri. He got to the forest and sat down to meditate. He lost all track of the time and did not return home.

The next day he saw a little boy from the neighboring village, so he nonchalantly waded into the river as if to wash. Emerging from the river he picked a mango and began to eat it, not actually feeling hungry, but again in an attempt to behave normally so that the boy would lose interest and go away. However, the little boy came up to Palden Dorje and said, "I thought you had disappeared!"

"Have I?" he answered. "You'd better go home, and be careful not to touch me." And the boy ran off. Soon he returned with Palden Dorje's brothers and sisters in tow. His sister Mannu cried and told him to come home at once. Palden Dorje said he would later. His little brother Shyam and his nephew stayed with him to make sure he would. He casually began to join them in their games as if nothing were amiss, though he knew in his heart that he was about to begin his life's purpose; a six year meditation that would lead to his enlightenment and transformation.

Slowly he attempted to release himself from their play, hoping again that they would lose interest in him. However they were persistent and they kept watching. There was nothing further Palden Dorje could do except send Shyam on an errand so that he could begin.

"Alle (little brother), could you run to my house and fetch me my robes, my beads, a picture of Buddha and some fruit?"

Palden Dorje's little brother thought about that and looked as if he would protest, but on second thought, since his brother had been sick, he decided to oblige him and ran off.

Now was his chance. While he waited for Shyam to return, he sat down in the grass and began to talk to his heart so that he could gauge how he was really to begin. Palden Dorje spoke out loud. "What shall I do?" and answered himself as he felt he was being answered: "You shall meditate for six years, and in that time you shall achieve enlightenment. You will do this to achieve the cessation of suffering and peace for all sentient beings. You shall assist the evolution of this earth. You shall become a Buddha, as you in your highest form already are. Now you are human and are still weak, but you shall meditate and transform yourself. You shall not need sustenance while you do this, for you will be sustained with the nectar of amrita. Slowly your higher being and this existence will come together and unite into one being."

As he spoke he realized that other relatives had come and were watching young Palden Dorje as if he were some sort of spectacle. "He must be delirious." Palden Dorje heard someone say. He wondered vaguely if this were so, for his body did actually feel very hot, but this thought was soon suppressed with a certainty that this was exactly what was supposed to happen.

With his eyes closed he used his third eye to chase the little pictures that were forming of their own accord in his head. They seemed to start at his forehead and run downward: faces, objects, plants, shapes, animals. He did not name them; he simply observed them as they tumbled down and within. Palden Dorje did not release his concentration but followed them relentlessly... and then there was a whirring sound and it seemed as though he were almost beside himself, not quite here nor there... Which was the real him? It didn't matter. His body grew hotter and hotter and his consciousness seemed to leap forward and then shot through the darkness. There was a funnel of light. There it was: the jyoti or light and he let it explode within himself, pouring it through his eyes, ears, nostrils and mouth, and then pushed it out through all the pores in his skin. At last, he was free!

But then CRASH! There was a thunderous sound as a cold hand grabbed him. At the same time he heard a scream, "Ayaaaa! Oooow! I've burned myself!" His whole body leapt in great shock and opening his eyes Palden Dorje found himself in the evening light on the grass surrounded by family and relatives. His elder brother was nursing his hand. It was his voice Palden Dorje had heard scream in pain.

"You'd better not touch me again, jojo," he said.

"Come on, alle," his big brother Gangajeet said. "Let's go home now. You've been sitting here for hours like some kind of retard. You better go home and go back to bed."

"No." Palden Dorje had never felt so resolved in his life. "If I go home now, either you or I will die. I'm going to meditate for six years until I reach Buddhahood. I have to find a good tree."

"You are serious..."

"Yes, will you come with me to find a good tree? Then you will know where I am and you can tell mother."

CHAPTER 4

Going Home

My friend, Sugma, in Portugal informed me that Palden Dorje would be making an appearance to bless people in October of 2008. I was determined to go. I made what plans I could. It seemed my plans were to become very complicated as I received word from the States that I had an important meeting to attend to at the end of September. Not to be deterred, I planned around it. I would spend three days in the States, and, not returning home I would go straight from Tokyo to Singapore, then Malaysia and on to Nepal. I didn't know how to get to the jungle or where to stay in Kathmandu, and my plans were making me feel very vulnerable.

I made a last minute check with my friend in Portugal. Three hours later I received a message. Palden Dorje had changed his plans and was now going to make his appearance in mid November. What a relief! I had surplus time in the States and opted to go home to New Mexico. It would be good to see the family after the loss of my sister.

When I arrived in Santa Fe, I felt I would like to meditate. Near my house is a Zen Center, so I walked there. One of the people there greeted me. "You are just in time for the 5:30 meditation," she said.

I went into the Zendo and sat down for my meditation. There were three locals at my side. A few minutes later, a very interesting person came into the Zendo. His head was clean shaven and he wore Buddhist beads. He could have been a Japanese monk. I felt that I was being urged to talk to him. An hour later we completed our meditation and I went to the kitchen to get a drink of water. There was the man again. This was my chance.

"Excuse me, where are you from?" I asked.

He looked up and smiled. "I'm from Nepal."

What incredible luck! I thought. "Sanchai hunuhuncha? How are you?" I tested my Nepali.

"You speak Nepali!" He said happily. "Why? Where are you from?"

"I'm from Japan, actually, but I live here too." I replied.

"Ahh, ogenki desuka?" He returned my greeting in perfect Japanese.



“And you speak Japanese! I spoke Nepali because I manage an internet site about a boy who meditates under a tree in Nepal. Do you know Ram Bahadur Bomjan?”

The man laughed, “Of course! I am a Tamang!”

The Tamangs are a mostly Buddhist ethnic group in Nepal. Their language is not written, and so it is impossible to find any lessons in Tamang on the internet. Of course I had checked. Palden Dorje is a Tamang. For me, meeting Mr. Dawa Tamang constituted a small miracle.

“Do you speak Tamang?”

“Of course, and Nepali, and some Tibetan, German and Italian as well.”

“And English and Japanese.” I added. “Amazing. Where do you live?”

“In Kathmandu. I have a house called Family Homestays. You can stay there too!”

The next two weeks found me learning useful phrases in Tamang and Nepali from the Tamang family in Santa Fe. During that time, Mr. Dawa Tamang told me many amazing stories, some of which I am including in the next chapter. I was truly blessed to make his acquaintance. We have continued our friendship and our communication ever since. Spending this special time each day with the Tamangs convinced me that I was meant to go to Nepal to meet Palden Dorje, and that, in his own way; he was preparing me for the journey.

CHAPTER 5

Mr. Dawa Tamang's Story

Ngima Dawa Tamang was born in a small isolated village in Nepal near the foot-hills of the Himalayas. His parents would be bewildered should any plane or helicopter go by in the sky, and often someone would be blamed for angering the gods on such an occasion. The native language there was Tamang. The language had no written form, and the children did not go to school.

When Dawa was nine, he became a mountain trekker, often mistakenly referred to as a Sherpa, which is actually the name of another minority ethnic group. He worked carrying the luggage for teams of people who wished to ascend the Himalayas.

He did not really understand where these teams of people had come from, and why they were often very different in appearance and attitude from the people in his village. He thought that they were from a neighboring village that was called "America", and another one called "Japan." He could not fathom that these people actually came from places that were very very far away.

One day, a nice lady on one of the teams took him aside and attempted to explain where she had come from. She drew a circle in the sand and said, "This is our world." He was incredulous. How could it be a circle? "Here is Nepal and here, over many mountains and a great ocean is America." His world changed that day. You could say it was a great shift in his consciousness!

Another time, when Dawa was 14, he fell ill while on one of the expeditions. The team decided that he would deter them. Someone came and, handing him the few coins that was his salary, told him to go back. In his condition he could go nowhere, and was left alone with one pot to keep him company. He managed to pick the surrounding nettles and make a soup out of them which kept him alive for the next 18 days. It was then that another expedition team came upon him and rescued him. Dawa's life changed after that.

Dawa, who had no access to education, determined to follow each group's leader as closely as possible and learn their language. Thus, always a couple of meters behind, he would make the sounds he heard them make into little songs in his mind, repeating them over and over again. Then, listening for the conditions in which they were used, he slowly mastered many languages, although he never learned to write them.

The Japanese had been the kindest to him. Whereas in most cases, he was not allowed to summit the mountains he trekked on; only the Japanese teams had permitted

him to summit their mountains, and to even summit first. He never forgot their magnanimity. His beautiful Japanese reflected the respect he had for this nation.

In Nepal, arranged marriages are the most common. Love-marriages are frowned upon as the root of all quarrelling. One way that love marriages were achieved was this: if a man failed to get the permission of the bride's father, he would abduct the girl and escape to the jungle and keep her there for a month which would make him her legal husband. Dawa, already in his late twenties, was almost planning on escaping from marriage altogether. His heart was set on being a monk one day. However, his mother wished that he be married. So he was introduced to Hiu Maya and they are happily married to this day.

Not long after, their daughter Pema was born. Unfortunately, all was not well and she struggled to stay healthy. By the time she was two, their daughter Pema was on the verge of death. She required a heart transplant. Dawa went to the best doctor in Nepal for a consultation. The doctor said that operating on the girl would not be worth the cost. She was, after all, only a girl anyway.

Dawa was moved by great compassion and could not let his daughter die. Unable to write, he made many tapes which he sent around the world to his international community. He raised enough donations to take his wife and daughter to Milano for Pema's operation.

Here, Dawa was introduced to Catholicism and was even able to visit the papal summer residence, Castelo Gandolfo, and to see Pope John Paul II. (When I was 16, I had done the same thing with my mother, and so I knew exactly what and where he was talking about.)

Three nights before his daughter's operation he had a dream. In that dream, a lady in white appeared to him and addressed his full name and spoke Italian to him. (Dawa told me this and spoke the following words to me in Italian.)

"Ngima Dawa Tamang, you are worried because your daughter is to have an operation, but do not fear. The operation will be successful, and she will be able to walk and lead a healthy life." With that the beautiful lady disappeared, and the operation was indeed successful.

The Dawa family spent ten months in Italy and frequented the Catholic Church. Dawa wondered whether or not he should convert to Catholicism, but Buddhism was very dear to him, and he had been brought up saying the mantras of the Shakyamuni Buddha, meditating and making prostrations.

Dawa returned to his village. He was not aware that his absence had created many rumors. He was rumored to be rich as he could go abroad when his fellows could never dream of affording such an expedition.

On Holi, a Hindu festival when people throw colors at one another to celebrate the onset of spring, Dawa was playing with some children and they were throwing colors at each other. It was then that Dawa thought he had been hit very hard on the cheek with a bag of red paint.



He could not imagine how it could be so painful when he received two more slashes of searing pain on his shoulder and arm. He turned to see that three gang members stood by him holding knives in an attempted robbery. Fear made him run for his life, and reaching his front door he collapsed unconscious.

Then he had a beautiful feeling. He found he could suddenly expand as wide as he wished to, and then shrink into something tiny. The next thing he knew he was flying over the Himalayas and a great palace stood before him. The wonderful gates lay open as he rushed towards them at great speed. He had never known such joy when, all of the sudden the gates slammed shut and he awoke in a doctor's room in extreme pain with his worried looking wife, Hiu Maya, standing over him.



His initial feeling was disappointment at having been saved. Then he realized that all things happen for a reason. He must still have some important reason for being on this earth.

After this experience he determined to help and educate orphans, especially girls, and he again petitioned for donations and built a school with a dormitory for chil-

dren. Furthermore, he found his assailants and succeeded in inviting one to his house as he did not wish the family of the youth to suffer. The young man, ashamed that he was shown such compassion, apologized earnestly. He then gave up his past affiliation with his gang and became a taxi driver.

Dawa's story did not end here. Years later when Pema was ready to go to college, Dawa decided that she should go to America. He would accompany her and managed to find a Buddhist foundation, the Upaya Zendo in New Mexico, which would take him as a volunteer while his daughter attended the University of New Mexico, my alma mater, in Albuquerque. It was this Zendo in Santa Fe that was built in the very place my best friend and I had played so often as children. Here, Hiu Maya came to join him from Kathmandu and they lived in a little trailer on the grounds of Upaya.



Hiu Maya was pregnant again, and the doctor had told him the baby would almost certainly not survive. In fact they may as well save themselves a lot of pain and have it out now. The baby, worse than Pema in 1992, had serious heart defects, and without the heart beat of Hiu Maya, was a foregone conclusion. What should he do? He almost felt suicidal. This time he sent email to all his friends, asking for their earnest prayers. Then he prayed to Palden Dorje, to Buddha, to Manjushri, to Amitabha, to the Divine Mother and to all the celestial help he could think of.

On January 3, 2008 the day the baby was to be born. A helicopter and 14 staff members waited to immediately carry the baby off to a bigger hospital if possible. If she was to survive she would need an immediate heart operation. Then another operation would be needed two months later, and yet another two years after that.

For the first time in his life, Dawa witnessed the birth of his child. And never did his prayers let up. The baby was pulled out and it cried lustily. The nurses washed it off and he was given the duty of cutting the umbilical cord. Dawa begged the doctors to let Hiu Maya hold the little girl, as her life may be short. They agreed and let the parents hold the baby, and immediately the baby began to suckle.

"It must have some strength left from its mother's womb," the bewildered doctors said. "But now we must put it in an incubator and check it." They watched an hour, two hours, three hours, a day, two days and three days; yet the baby showed no sign of the heart defects that had been ascertained by several physicians before. On the last day, the Tamangs were allowed to take little Mary Dolma home. The doctors agreed that they had witnessed a miracle.

I have never seen such a well behaved baby in my life. I never heard her cry in the eight days I spent visiting with them. So I bowed once again to Dawa and said that each and every day I had seen his family had been a true blessing.



CHAPTER 6

The Earth is My Witness

"Here is a good tree."

They had been walking for some time. Palden Dorje's brothers had followed him with the stuff they thought he would need: his robes, offerings and a box for donations as is the custom when a monk meditates. When they reached the tree, Palden Dorje settled down in the position he thought best for meditation.

Palden Dorje admired Shakyamuni Buddha, and one of his favorite stories from the Buddha's life was when the evil spirit, Mara, asked him why he was meditating, and if he really was meditating or just pretending to meditate? Palden Dorje knew that these would be some of the questions that people would dog him with above all. So Shakyamuni, with one hand on his knee with the thumb and middle finger pressed together, and the other hand pointing to the ground proclaimed to the evil one: "As the Earth is my witness, I have been meditating here to gain enlightenment." Hearing this, the Goddess of the Earth, Prithivi emerged waist upwards from the ground and gave witness to this fact.

So, Palden Dorje took this position with his thumb and middle finger pressed together and his other hand pointing to the ground, for whatever people might say, the Earth is Palden Dorje's witness. He had begun his 6 year meditation. This resolution made him feel confident and protected. However, he told his brothers that no one was to disturb him, especially after midnight, and should anything of the kind occur, that he might have to meditate for 20 years.

Palden Dorje's brothers left him in the distance to get some sleep, a number of other people had followed them, and further in the distance three boys who were up to no good.

When everyone had retired, these young men came with a stick to poke at him. He did not complain, because he knew that the Earth Goddess Prithivi was protecting him, and so he relaxed and let them have their way. They soon got bored of attempting to annoy him, and decided to make off with the donation box instead.

The next morning, when Palden Dorje's brothers found the box gone, they set out to look for the three young men. They did not have far to go. One of the boys, after getting into an argument with the others in front of the other villagers was overcome with remorse and came to confess. They returned the box with the money and apologized.

Palden Dorje changed trees two more times to find some privacy, but someone would see him, and soon, all the villagers would come to find him. By this time the family was very nervous. The last thing they wanted was for Palden Dorje to meditate 20 years instead of 6 which was bad enough already. They built a small fence about him and decided that they should take turns staying on watch, at least from a distance.

His brothers told him how much his mother was worried. He was too young, she had said. He must not stay out here exposed in the jungle; there were dangerous animals and harsh weather. Any number of terrible things could happen to the boy. He assured her he would be alright, and he gave his next oldest brother six pipal leaves to take to her. It was the best he could do to give her something to depend on. "Take these leaves and keep them in your care. As long as they are safe, you will know that I am safe too." With these leaves, Palden Dorje was able to give his poor mother some small comfort.



CHAPTER 7

Panit, the Cameraman

I promised Dawa I would stay a few days at his house (which was about a 15 minute walk from Boudhanath) with his lovely family. So I went well ahead of the 10th of November in order to insure that I would be able to do so. I also needed to have time

to prepare for the jungle. Dawa, Hiu Maya and the baby were still in Santa Fe, but Hiu Maya's little brother in law, Pasang kept the house in order. Although he was still in his early twenties, Pasang, was tremendously thoughtful. He did an excellent job keeping the visitors and the family happy. I was about to settle down in the lap of luxury when Panit contacted me.



Panit was the best friend of Sugma, my friend in Portugal. Panit told me that we would be leaving first thing the next morning. I protested to no avail. Panit was adamant. We would have to bring the camera and the gear into the jungle early to make sure we were set up in time for Palden Dorje's speech on the first day.

I told him he'd better come over at once then, so I could prepare for the jungle. He got on his motorcycle... but I didn't realize that he lived quite far away, and it was three hours before he arrived. Panit was a man of thirty with a delicate frame and a beautiful smile. He spoke in a gentle voice, unsure of his English, which was actually quite good.

Dawa's 12 year old son and niece accompanied us on our walk to Boudhanath to get a few supplies for our journey. Panit said that I would need a sleeping bag and a flashlight. I found a light sleeping bag and thought it was ideal for the hot jungle. The flashlight we bought on the street from a blind man. It was an interesting flashlight that was also a lighter on the other side. There was no battery. It was run on lighter fuel. I was to sorely regret not having bought a thicker sleeping bag with a proper mattress.

The next morning I woke up at three o'clock as was my habit of late, I was not quite sure why this was so. I needed time to do my Tibetan Rites, prostrations and meditation. When I went to the jungle, I was to find I was exactly in sync with everyone else, who did basically the same.

At six o'clock, Dawa's favorite taxi driver was waiting in the living room to take me to the bus station. He was a young man and he gingerly sipped his tea at the dining table which Pasang had provided. We had an Indiana Jones-like ride through the dirt roads of Kathmandu where traffic signals were unheard of. People and animals were simply honked out of the way. I arrived at the Balkhu Bus stop to be immediately surrounded by young men who wanted to know what I needed to pay for. It was a relief

when Panit showed up. Our bus ride to the Halkoriya Jungle in Bara District would be six hours and cost approximately four dollars. It was not a bus, to be exact, it was a jeep. There were 10 passengers and the driver.



At the station, I had my first experience with a real Nepali toilet which had no toilet paper but only a water hose instead to clean oneself. I was grateful I had read the children's books about India in our local library which had explained how to use them. I called them the manual washlets. In Japan we have automatic washlets which squirt water at you from underneath when you press a button, like a bidet. The seats are heated and these toilets take up the majority of the monthly electric bill. Here was the ecological alternative. I was glad for the opportunity, as the bus breaks would be rural, and perhaps only men would be brave enough to relieve themselves.

During the long road trip Panit and I had a broken seat to sit on. At first I sat in front and Panit sat next to me by the window. But we soon found out that the seat tipped up so Panit and I changed places. This was a good balance. I must have weighed a good deal more than he did. By the end of the journey, the seat had collapsed altogether and the man behind us asked us politely to take the seat off of his foot.

It was fall in Nepal, so I was surprised to see that there were cherry blossoms in full bloom. Panit told me many wonderful stories on the way down, and reminisced about how he and Sugma had made this trip on a motorbike, calling this route the Palden Dorje Road.



I was amazed to see buses going by with so many people on top of them. Safety was not a priority in this country. Transportation was shared with as many as possible. What I hadn't realized until I heard a knocking sound on the roof of our jeep was that we had more than our original passengers aboard as well.

We were dropped off on a road junction with jungle huts to one side. The last leg of our journey was made by bicycle; an elderly man pulled what looked like a rickshaw, with the two of us and all our luggage down a small dirt path through the jungle.

CHAPTER 8

The Crowds

Palden Dorje's story continued ...

Palden Dorje's meditation began to draw a lot of attention. What he had hoped would be a private and secluded meditation in the jungle proved to be impossible. If he were just sitting under a tree, he might have escaped notice, but what seemed to really bother everyone, and make them extremely curious was the fact that he was not eating.

It seems funny that in this busy world where laziness is disgraceful, the act of doing absolutely nothing (physically) suddenly made one the greatest show on Earth. Coming to see Palden Dorje was like coming to watch the grass grow. Surely people would tire of it. But that did not happen. A fifteen year old boy sitting under a tree and not apparently doing anything 24 hours a day grabbed everyone's attention, and more and more people came to watch. They wanted to see the local bodhisattva who didn't eat or drink. In Tibetan Buddhism, just a glimpse of a bodhisattva is believed to bring blessings and good luck.

Even though Palden Dorje did not see that his life had been particularly eventful, everyone wanted to know exactly who he was, and why he was meditating. All he really understood at the time is that his heart was telling him to meditate and to meditate for six years at least. Palden Dorje was like an egg that was not quite sure what it was going to hatch into. He just incubated in his nest.

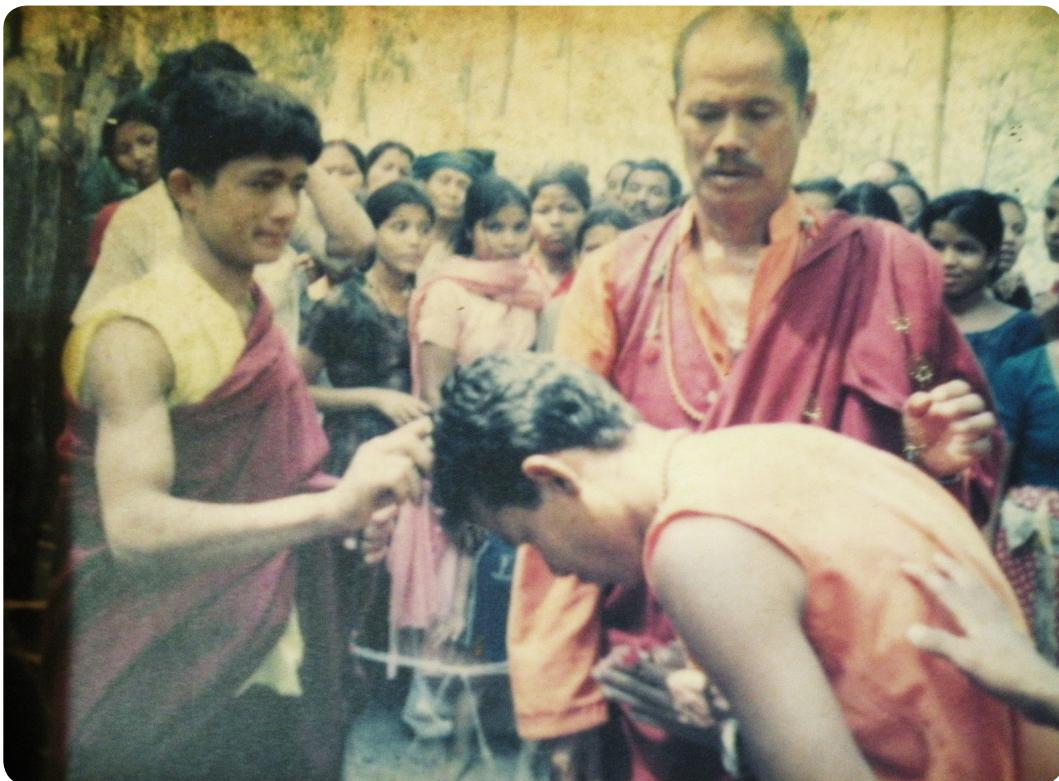
As he meditated he was given more and more insight as to who, what, when and why. He was following the path of the Buddha. So, he knew that he had to do something to wake up the people in this world from their delusionary thinking and bring the Dharma back to them, thus freeing the world from the extraordinary suffering that it was enduring. With this goal in mind, he knew there was only one thing that could be done. Like Siddhartha, he must meditate until he understood the way to end the suffering. His meditation would teach him so that he could teach others.

Meanwhile, everyone wanted to watch. Although Palden Dorje had trekked deep into the jungle, people came as close as they possibly could in cars, buses and on motorbikes, and



then walked the rest of the way. Stalls were set up. Every opportunity to make money from the crowds was taken. Where people gather, so do the merchants. They sold pictures of Palden Dorje, DVDs, story books, necklaces, lucky charms, sweet breads, food and drink. What had been a holy endeavor was now a market place.

Palden Dorje's eldest brother, Gangajeet, was concerned by the disturbance created by so many people as Palden Dorje had asked him to protect him for these 6 years. As long as they kept a certain distance, Palden Dorje did not think there was much harm in their coming. He told Gangajeet to let them come and watch if they liked.



Rumor spread all the way to the government offices of what was happening in the jungle, and the police forces came out to inspect the commotion. If Palden Dorje's committee was setting up some sort of fraud, they said, everyone would go to jail! Some of the officers stayed to see whether Palden Dorje was really meditating and not eating. They seemed satisfied that his family was telling the truth.

The person who was most uncomfortable with all of this was Palden Dorje's mother. She desperately wanted him to eat and behave like a normal boy. Often the excitement would prove too much for her, and she would break down into tears. It must be terribly unnerving when one's own child won't eat, but Palden Dorje had to continue in his quest.

Palden Dorje was even told at one point by his Bhagavan (the guide in his heart) that he may eat if he wished, but he decided to continue on his course without outside sustenance. Eating was an interruption. When he entered his meditation he began to live on what I call “tree time.” Trees are hundreds of years old, but they do not experience their life as being so long, because everything about them is sped up. According to one of Palden Dorje’s spiritual directors, Kamal Lama, every time Palden Dorje enters his meditation, life on the outside goes into fast forward. Days go by like minutes, and months, go by like days. It doesn’t seem to him as though much time has gone by at all.

On the other hand, his meditation takes him into all sorts of other time dimensions, including those showing him the many lives he has had in the past; his connections with everyone else, right down past the void to when all were just Jyoti, the spiritual light where eventually all return. So Palden Dorje meditated while the crowds, ever growing, looked on.

CHAPTER 9

Uncle Waiba’s House and Tapa’s Dream



We arrived at Uncle Waiba's house near the site. Uncle Waiba was one of the top committee members and the uncle of my friend in Portugal, Sugma, who I had come to know through the Google group. Sugma had a business in Portugal, but was missing Nepal and the jungle terribly. Due to visa difficulties, he had left his wife and daughter behind in Kathmandu. (I would meet Sugma's wife at Uncle Waiba's the next day.) Sugma was very pleased that I would be able to go in his place and accompany his best friend, Panit to the jungle to take documentation for him, and he arranged with his uncle to let us stay with him for however long we wished. I asked for only one night as I looked forward to staying in the jungle near Palden Dorje, where I could have the full force of the experience.



Uncle Waiba's house was on stilts. It reminded me of the rebuilt Jomon villages I had seen in Japan. Electricity was turned off regularly in Nepal, and water was taken from wells and pumps outside of the house. Toilets were likewise out-houses. They did however have satellite TV.

Uncle Waiba was a big company boss kind of man. "I used to be a bad person." He said of himself. "But after knowing Palden Dorje, I quit smoking, drinking, eating meat... everything. He changed my life!" He and his wife were now fervent devotees of Palden Dorje.

I was fascinated by the little room beside the living room. It was the first time I had seen Palden Dorje actually venerated as a Bodhisattva. There was a frightening looking picture of him as he was found after his disappearance in the jungle, with his hair growing over his face. In front of that there were candles and flowers. Yet in this room I felt a tremendous peace, and I knew for the first time that I was physically close to him.

The jungle was the perfect temperature and the air was quiet and inviting. I sat down in front of the shrine to meditate after my long journey. Then I felt a call. "Come, approach."

"How far is it from here to the site?" I asked Panit.

"About six kilometers through the jungle."

“How long would it take to walk?”

“We don’t have to walk. Raju is here and he will take us on his motor bike and we can be back before dinnertime.”

I was so glad to meet Raju. He looked more Indian than Asian. He was very friendly, and I loved his habit of saying “Yes, yes!” to every question I had, even when I was requesting information. I prevented myself from asking questions like: can we all fit on the bike, and do we need helmets? I did not wish to appear nervous, and in truth, I wasn’t. All three of us got on the bike and we were off onto a dirt track winding between trees.



Anyone in their right mind probably would have been nervous, but I cannot begin to describe the ongoing feeling of safety I had throughout the whole journey. It was as if I were being hugged by an angel, or ensconced between its wings. I always had a warm and wonderful feeling.

Panit began to talk to me. He and Raju sported a pendant around their necks that I had never seen before. They were like little black marble squares with colors melded into them that were made out of some unknown material.

“We should get one for you too. Palden Dorje made them. He made 120 for his committee members.”

“How?” I asked.

“We don’t know. But only people who are fully vegetarian can wear them.”

“I’m vegetarian ...well... except I do eat fish and eggs.”

“No fish or eggs.”

I decided right then and there that I would quit.

“My family is sure to be upset with me, but I would gladly quit for Palden Dorje.”

I wasn’t aware exactly how upset they would be with me, but I kept to my decision.

"The first time I met Palden Dorje, I didn't think I'd have to give up meat, but the night I got his blessing, I had meat for dinner, and then my toenail came off, just like that," Panit explained to me. I did not know how to react to that piece of information.

"Raju," Panit said, changing the subject. "I remember when Sugma and I were on this path on our bike, and it was the time that Guruji disappeared. Then we saw this scary looking old man walking with a stick and long matted hair. It was just after sunset, and then we got totally lost and were going around in circles for about 15 minutes; we even saw elephants and we were so frightened. It turned out that the old man was actually Palden Dorje! I'll never forget that!"

We traveled several kilometers on the dirt path through the forest. Then we reached a wide ravine. On the other side there was a hill with a clearing beneath it. There were two log cabin-like shelters with dirt floors, one on top of the hill where the lamas would stay, and another near the entrance which would be for Palden Dorje's family. There were three long shelters with just a roof and plenty of fresh hay on the ground for the other devotees. Tents and stalls were being raised in the ravine by merchants and food sellers.

We got to the site where we were introduced to Palden Dorje's big sister, Rajkumari. She smiled as I greeted her in Tamang, the words that everyone would be having me say for the next 10 days, "Lhasoo, Phyafulla, Lhasoo!" Hello, dear, hello. She brought Raju, Panit and me into the family cabin and served us hot water. I was thrilled and could hardly believe that I was really here with Palden Dorje's sister who was also his most trusted helper.

I was introduced to a Korean man who lives in Canada, Mr. Mun. He was in charge of constructing the shelter for the Tibetan Lama's to do their ceremonies. We also were introduced to the president of the committee, Mr. Bahadur.

"I don't really have any money personally," Mr. Mun said. "Palden Dorje tells me where to get what I need for the materials. I want to build a monastery here."

"That's fine." I said, "But make sure you don't have to cut down the trees." Mr. Mun smiled.

"Can we see where Palden Dorje is?" I asked Mr. Bahadur.

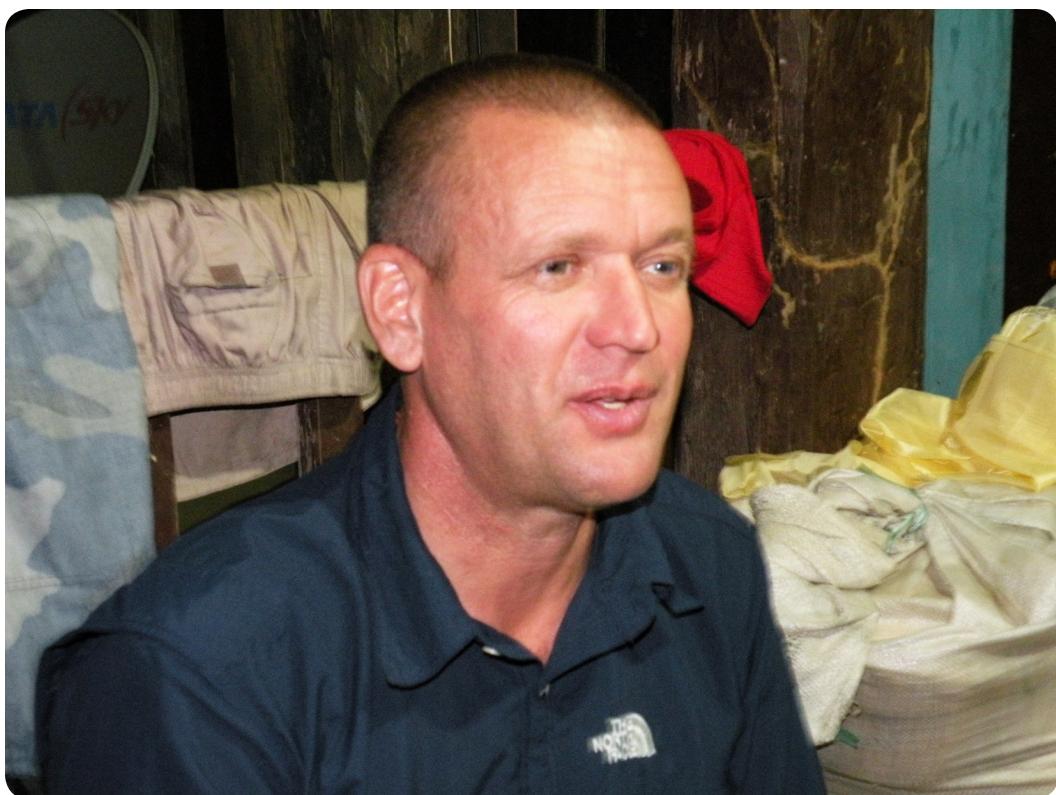
"Well, we are not allowed to see him directly yet, that will have to wait until Monday morning, but would you like to see the entrance and exit gates?"

We walked around the complex which was surrounded by a barb-wire fence. To circle the whole thing would be almost three kilometers, I was told. I could hardly believe I was so close to Palden Dorje. I couldn't see him, but he was meditating right inside this fence and could probably hear us talking. The volunteers were decorating the entrance and the exit gates in red with white writing on it.

It was with some reluctance that we got on the motorcycle to return to Uncle Waiba's house before it got too dark. But when we got back, Uncle Waiba introduced us to Palden Dorje's youngest sister Ranjeeta, a girl of nine with an engaging smile. She was studying at the school nearby and she stayed with the Waibas.

While waiting for dinner, which was usually cauliflower and potatoes with dhal and rice, an interesting man appeared. He was French, a healer, and a disciple of Sai Baba. His name was Tapas.

Tapas lives in Puttaparthi, one of Sai Baba's Ashrams. He had come all the way to the jungle in Nepal because of a dream. He had dreamed of a Buddha with a stupa over his head. He explained that a stupa represents the mind of a Buddha; and that was the



meaning of the stupa over his head in his dream. Tapas went on to say that Palden Dorje had achieved a very high level of awareness. Uncle Waiba also appeared in his dream inviting him to see the Buddha Boy. One of his acquaintances had given him a little brass stupa, and he had interpreted this and his dream to mean he should take the stupa to Palden Dorje. Palden Dorje meditated next to a Stupa, or a chorten as it was called on the site, and if a picture were taken at the right angle, one could imagine that he had it over his head!



Tapas said he had another dream which was about a person with an eagle over its head. He knew it was linked with the dream he had the day before. It was the light figure of Palden Dorje, which he saw in the dream. The eagle meant a free spirit. I carried pictures of my family with me to show people should they ask about my family. My daughter made friends with a black kite, which is a large bird of prey, near our home. The eagle sounded familiar, and I showed him my daughter's picture.

I suspected that I was supposed to meet Tapas. I realized later that this was because I had in my heart asked Palden Dorje for a healing. Tapas was to be that healer. The next day, Tapas said to me, "I see you need a healing. I can help you if you like." I said I would be very grateful. He is one of the most profound healers I have ever met, and I have met many. I was truly blessed to meet Tapas.



CHAPTER 10

Snakes and the Naga

Humans have always had a love-hate relationship with snakes. Snakes can be poisonous and deadly. They can also be seen as magical beings, filled with mystery and magic. Stories and artwork depicting snakes can be found in many cultures across the world and throughout time. In most cases they are shown as symbols of power and wisdom. In some cases, they are portrayed as symbols of evil. Their symbolism is closely paralleled with that of dragons.

We can see many examples of snakes in prehistoric art and the art of ancient cultures. The snake symbolism was associated with fertility and renewal as in the growth of a spiral or the example of a snake shedding its skin. The Jomon people of Japan thousands of years ago, depicted snakes on their pottery. Careful observation of this pottery reveals that snakes played an important role in their culture and were revered as ancestors. Isis was said to have created a snake to wrest the rule of Egypt from Ra, which then became one of the pharaoh's symbols of power. In the biblical story of Genesis, it is the serpent which tempted Eve into eating from the Tree of Knowledge. Another biblical story tells how Moses gained an audience with the Egyptian Pharaoh. As a display of power, Moses' rod

was changed into a serpent, but “Pharaoh’s magicians could do the same.” Jesus’ Mother Mary is sometimes depicted crushing a snake beneath her foot.

In many Eastern religions, such as Hinduism & Buddhism, snakes are usually shown as positive symbols of wisdom. For example, the Naga are snake-like beings that possess magical powers. The Nagas are capable of shape-shifting, and can be benevolent or malevolent beings. They are considered as being somewhat different than snakes, their tails are not as sharp for one, but the word Naga is often used for snake.

In Buddhism, the seven-headed Naga King Muchilinda spread his massive hood over the Buddha for seven days during a hailstorm. Legend has it that this same Naga King taught Nagarjuna, the founder of the Madhyamika school of Buddhism, the Heart Sutra in its original form as the Great Prajnaparamita Sutra which used to be one million lines of metered verse.

There are four main accounts concerning Palden Dorje and snakes or Naga. The first account tells of how Palden Dorje’s mother had a dream of a snake a few days before he began his meditation. In this dream, she saw a large snake facing northeast. This snake had a flower on the top of its head. Three days after she had this dream Palden Dorje began his meditation.

The second is that shortly into his meditation, a great drought occurred in his region. When he was consulted he said that two Naga would solve the problem, they only needed to be asked. This is because Naga also are considered to be water gods. When the people asked the Naga for relief, the drought ended within a few days.

The third account tells of Lamas who asked Palden Dorje how he survived so long without food or drink. He replied that he was given “nourishment” – by two Naga on either side of him. Was he possibly referring to Ida and Pingala, the two energy channels crossing each-other along the middle channel Sushumna? Ancient books on yoga also describe techniques that can lead to the activation of the gentle flow of inner Amrita (nectar of immortality), which is capable to sustain the physical body of the yogi.

In the fourth account, a poisonous snake slithered into his meditation area. When his committee members tried to violently dispose of it, Palden Dorje jumped up from his meditation, picked up the snake to fling it over the fence and was bitten in the process. His family begged to take him to a doctor. He refused and returning to his meditation began to sweat profusely. He showed no further signs of having been poisoned. He later said that in his meditation he had encountered the naga god Shesha, and that the snakebite was intended to intensify his awareness. Many believe that this event heralded Palden Dorje’s enlightenment.

CHAPTER 11

The Jungle and Palden Dorje's Family

The next day we went into the jungle with all our luggage on a motorbike. I spent the day talking to Palden Dorje's friends and relatives. I felt an affinity with his family. I taught Ranjeeta and Shyam how to make origami cranes.



Shyam is Palden Dorje's 16 year old brother. He is very serious about memorizing his Tibetan prayers and chants, and considering his age is really very good. His voice is exactly right for the rhythmic chanting. His sister Rajkumari made fun of his voice, but I think she did so because she too was impressed.

Rajkumari is presently in charge of most of the affairs. She is under the direct orders of her brother, Palden Dorje. Though only twenty, it is her job to arrange for all the food to be made, the right ceremonies to be prepared for, and how to handle the donations.

The newspapers were always very

focused on this point, however, at present there is little or no savings. Most of the money has been spent on the committee's food and for building

shelters. During the time we were there I saw well over 200 volunteers participating. The monastery that the committee set out to complete is still less than half done, as funds have run out as of the writing of this book.



Manu Kumari, 19, is fascinated by America. I said she should go there and be a Dharma talker. As soon as she masters the language, I'm sure she would be very good. As the sister of Palden Dorje, there would certainly be a lot of people who are interested in her experiences.



Babula is 13. He reminds everyone of what Palden Dorje was like when he was that age. He has grown his curly hair, and is always full of energy. I am sure Palden Dorje was not as bouncy as he is! He eats at top speed, and is always there to add excitement to any gathering.

Deepak, a handsome man in his twenties, is Palden Dorje's cousin. He is always very thoughtful. He speaks English well and is more than happy to volunteer his energy for a good cause.

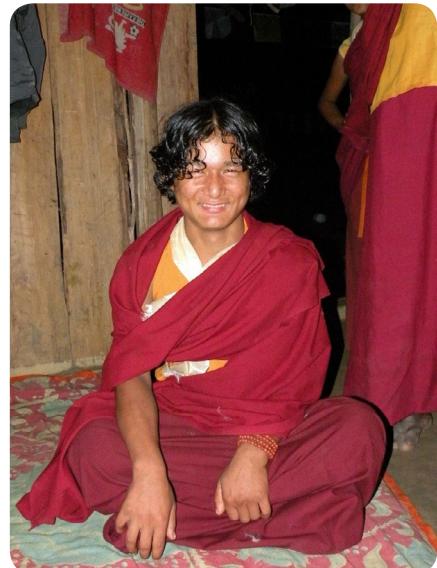
He and I went around the complex picking up the litter left behind by pilgrims together. We had many discussions about our beliefs and opinions.



He and I went around the complex picking up the litter left behind by pilgrims together. We had many discussions about our beliefs and opinions.

Gangajeet is the eldest at 31. Palden Dorje assigned him the role of personal protector when he began his meditation. Gangajeet well understands the transformation that has taken place in his brother. He is very good at explaining. He reads English nicely. He is often concerned about the whole situation, as I think he feels a great responsibility, which he certainly did not consider would be his role a few years ago. I found him to be a most considerate and compassionate person.

I was fortunate to be able to spend the first two nights with Manu, Rajkumari, Deepak and Shyam. For us it was a bit like a slumber party as we talked into the candlelit night, sometimes laughing loudly. I had them teach me to chant some mantras. They taught me a little Nepali and Tamang and laughed when I couldn't distinguish the difference between the words for arm and goat. Manu said she liked my hair color. I hadn't the heart to explain to her that it came out of a bottle, my real hair being already an iron gray.





For me, it was hard to believe that I was spending this time with people who for the past two years had been only a legend to me. Even Prem came and joined us.

CHAPTER 12

Meditation and the Heart Sutra

Meditation begins with the four letters m-e-d-i. This is significant because effective meditation is about establishing a medium, as in balance. I mean this statement intuitively not etymologically. If you were to have a graph showing the ups and downs, pros and cons, haves and have-nots, then meditation is the line in between everything. It is the straight and narrow middle path. What Buddhism teaches is the right point of view and how to cultivate this right point of view in order to achieve the ultimate freedom, which is realized through absolute balance. One has to be centered, the dot in the middle of the circle.

This is why the Heart Sutra is one of my favorite sutras. It is like a list of titles for a whole library of books. It is a list of keywords, each having been expounded upon in great detail by the Shakyamuni Buddha and then these works were abbreviated into

the Heart Sutra some time later. The Heart Sutra is a list of statements that are pointing directly to the profound nature of reality, saying it's neither this nor that, enlightenment is indefinable yet still realizable.

Here is one translation that I found while in Japan:

Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra
(A short version)

THE BODHISATTVA AVALOKITESVARA, WHILE PRACTICING THE PROFOUND Prajnaparamita,
CLEARLY SAW THAT ALL FIVE SKANDHAS ARE EMPTY, THUS OVERCOMING ALL SUFFERING.

SARIPUTRA,

FORM IS NO DIFFERENT FROM SPACE,
SPACE IS NO DIFFERENT FROM FORM,
FORM IS JUST SPACE,
SPACE JUST FORM,
SENSATION, PERCEPTION, VOLITION AND CONSCIOUSNESS ARE ALSO LIKE THIS.

SARIPUTRA,

THIS IS THE EMPTINESS OF ALL DHARMAS:
THEY NEITHER ARISE NOR CEASE,
ARE NEITHER DEFILED NOR PURE,
NEITHER INCREASE NOR DECREASE.

FOR THIS REASON WITHIN EMPTINESS THERE IS NO FORM,
NO SENSATION, PERCEPTION, VOLITION OR CONSCIOUSNESS;
NO EYE, EAR, NOSE, TONGUE, BODY OR MIND;
NO SIGHT, SOUND, SCENT, TASTE, TOUCH OR THOUGHT
NO SEEING...EVEN NO THINKING;
NO IGNORANCE NOR END OF IGNORANCE...EVEN
NO AGING AND DEATH, NOR END OF AGING AND DEATH;
NO SUFFERING, ORIGIN, CESSATION OR PATH;
NO WISDOM AND NO ATTAINMENT.

BECAUSE NOTHING IS ATTAINED,

BODHISATTVAS MAINTAIN Prajnaparamita,
THEN THEIR HEART IS WITHOUT HINDRANCE, WITHOUT FEAR;
ESCAPING UPSIDE-DOWN, DREAM-LIKE THINKING,
AND COMPLETELY REALIZING NIRVANA.

ALL BUDDHAS OF ALL TIMES MAINTAIN Prajnaparamita,
THUS ATTAINING Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi.

HENCE KNOW, PRAJNAPARAMITA IS
THE ALL-POWERFUL MANTRA,
THE GREAT ENLIGHTENING MANTRA,
THE UNEXCELLED MANTRA,
THE UNEQUALED MANTRA,
ABLE TO DISPEL ALL SUFFERING.

THIS IS TRUE, NOT FALSE.

THEREFORE PROCLAIM THE PRAJNAPARAMITA MANTRA.

RECITE THE MANTRA THUS:

OM GATE GATE PARAGATE PARASAMGATE BODHI SVAHA!

At first glance, anyone might become very frustrated and say, well then what is it for goodness sake! If there is no suffering, what are we all complaining about? If there is no enlightenment or attainment, why are we going through so much trouble with all our spiritual practice? Why meditate? But there is really no understanding and no not understanding...yes it will get on your mind's nerves! This is a desirable beginning. It is designed to make the mind have a little break down. Then the heart can slip in... between the cracks! The heart needs the void to make it heard; otherwise everything else will interrupt it. Silence is golden.

What the Heart Sutra is saying is that everything in its original state is nothing, or no-thing, as everything is inter-related. Since within the absolute view there is no essential thing, no fundamental substance that can be possessed or lost, there is nothing to gain and nothing to lose. Once we can become aware of our original state, we are free from all worries and concerns; past and future, hope and fear can drop away. This state is the prajnaparamita or the other side; it is also the right here and right now, just as it is.

Our mind is constantly filled with materiality, but this material is illusory, because it came from the vastness of the infinite potentiality and is inherently unstable. Our conceptual awareness leads us to believe that what we see, hear, and idealize will always be there. When we cling to this illusory perception of permanence we are subject to all manner of suffering. The Heart Sutra is asking us to go beyond all of our concepts about how we believe the world is, or what reality is, and to directly glimpse the truth of our situation, unclouded by hope or fear, seeing with naked awareness.

Because of the inevitable difficulty with letting go of our habitual perceptions beginning a meditation by contemplating the Heart Sutra can be a helpful technique for helping to unlock this deeper level of awareness.

The approach to meditation is to wait for everything to unwind naturally, not forcing it. Just by waiting for each aggregate to finish what it was doing and relaxing into our basic mind-state, the layers of illusion can begin to become transparent. You may wait for the mind and ask it, “Have you got anything else to say?” This is an excellent conversation stopper, because the mind has never been asked this question before, so it will start to stammer in confusion at the sudden attention. The mind is not used to attention, it usually chats away nonstop without ever considering whether or not you are really listening. If you are listening and you stop to acknowledge the fact that the mind is chatting, you have established mindfulness. The mind stops and next the ears seem to grow sensitive, and every little sound seems to take on an extra dimension.

With more advanced meditation techniques, such as Tummo, it would be here and after a few breathing techniques that one would start to activate the chakras and awaken to the higher perceptions. As this book is only introductory and it is beyond my scope of knowledge to describe Tummo in detail, those who wish to learn these more advanced techniques should seek out a qualified teacher and the appropriate materials to study. You may wish to explore the life of a woman named Alexandra David-Neel (1868-1969). She studied the art of Tummo which helped her survive when she was once lost in the Himalayas. She describes this body heat control meditation in ten mental stages in one of her books.

There are many different techniques and schools of meditation but they all share one basic point: cultivate mindfulness of direct experience. In order to do this, one must be aware of how one feels right now. Feeling the tingly sensations throughout the body, or being aware of how the lungs feel as they expand and contract, just being present. In the beginning, you often need a simple point of focus to return to, such as a stone or the body's breath.

Kamal Lama, Palden Dorje's chosen Khenpo (instructor) suggests that one watches the pictures and shapes that form behind the third eye, the point just above and between your two eyes. He suggests that one should not attempt to name or judge these images, just observe, otherwise your concentration may be broken and your discursive mind will start to pipe up saying, “oh look, it's a fork,” or “it's a helicopter.” Then names and stories about everything begin to crowd your awareness in an attempt to take over the show. Don't name things, don't judge yourself, just watch and keep returning to the present moment.

One may start with a simple short session and then work up to continuously practicing this. At some point, though maybe not in every meditation, you may get a tunnel of light rushing towards you. Take the light and pour it into your whole body letting it flow out through the eyes, the ears, the mouth, the nostrils and then every pore in your skin. Remember that this may happen, and it may not, it doesn't matter. After a good

deal of practice, meditation becomes second nature because mindfulness has been cultivated, and simply closing your eyes will bring you back to that fundamental awareness.

CHAPTER 13

Thunder and Caterpillars

I could hardly wait to meet Palden Dorje, and the afternoon on the day before his first blessings, the 9th of November, I sat down in front of the exit to meditate. It was then that I first saw Babula. He and a little cousin whizzed happily by me climbing through the barbed wire to go to see his big brother. I envied the ease with which he had access to Palden Dorje.

As I meditated further, I saw monkeys playing in the jungle. How free everything seemed to be. I liked this place. And yet it was here that I was also to get myself into trouble. But I will describe how that happened later.

On the 10th, I felt an urge in the middle of the night to return to this spot to meditate again. This first night the stars and the moon were shining brightly. It was so beautiful and peaceful. I came to the gate and sat down in front of it and meditated.

About an hour must have passed, and I began to feel bored and restless. Reaching into my coat pocket I fished out my MP3 player. Well, on a night like this, it would be good to listen to Imee Ooi singing Om Mani Peme Hum, I thought. Having broken my meditation, I was listening to this when there was a great clap of thunder in the distance near the complex and away from the site. Odd, I thought, on a starry night like this. I continued to listen...when next I felt a large spiny



caterpillar crawling on my neck. Reaching back I plucked it off of me and tossed it into the bush. I get the message, I thought, and quickly trotted off back to bed. My fingers were filled with needles.

The next day, I told several people, including Kamal Lama, Palden Dorje's present teacher, about my misadventures that night. Some asked me whether I hadn't got a rash, as the caterpillar I described was actually poisonous. I had no side effects.

The following night, who knows why, I felt the urge to go back and meditate again. This time there were guards on the site. Two lamas were asleep near the exit, definitely in order to keep an eye on me. I did not wish to raise any suspicions and so instead of making a quick exit, I casually sat down to meditate again just to assure them that I meant no harm, which was true.

After my hour was up, I went back to my shelter and went to sleep. The next morning my friend berated me. "Why did you go there?" She asked me roughly. I thought she meant the exit gate and I apologized...but apparently there were rumors that I had ventured into the complex. Another lama told me that I mustn't go to the complex. I was a little indignant that they would react to my harmless activities thus, and I was on the verge of expressing my opinion when, once again, a spiny caterpillar was crawling up my back.

I repented and went to apologize to Rajkumari for causing problems. At first, this was taken to mean a confession, but after some explaining the committee finally believed that I had not entered the complex. I told them that if they didn't, they should ask Palden Dorje whether or not I had been in the complex. I realized how very frightened they were of anyone entering the complex at night. Remembering the clap of thunder I had heard and the caterpillars, I took this fear not as an attempt to hide suspicious activity during the night, but at face value.

They told me a scary story about a foreign woman who, with strange inclinations, had once trespassed at night to be stared down by Palden Dorje. Kamal Lama later described to me how they teach young meditators to stare down evil spirits. Several people very seriously told me that a layer of her skin had melted, and that she could not lie down for ten days. Since I now had my own experiences, I was inclined not to entirely disregard this story although it did sound somewhat exaggerated.

It brought home to me what I had forgot; that I was in a jungle where the rules of living were quite different from what I was used to, and that each event was translated by the local people in a very different way. The truth of our vulnerability struck me further when two days later we found a tick in Rajkumari's ear. As an aromatherapist, I was the only one at the time with any tools to help her. The tick had already made quite a nest in

her ear, and she hadn't told any of us about it until the pain became intolerable. The next day, her elder brother took her to the nearest doctor, two hours away by motorcycle.

I confess I wondered what Palden Dorje was making of all this, if anything. If he was omniscient, as everyone said he was, then he must know about his sister's predicament. ...Or had I been the healer called to the scene this time?

CHAPTER 14

I Finally See Palden Dorje

After the morning's ceremony we all walked to the entrance gate, and then it became quite a rush as everybody tried to push through. "Lamas first, lamas first," was

the cry. Then it was the volunteers, and we were able to go in. I was very nervous, and was hoping that I wouldn't faint or do something unbalanced. Buddhism was about maintaining one's equilibrium. I wasn't quite sure how that was done.



Tapas walked with me telling me to calm down. Oh, was it that obvious? I was glad for his company, if a little embarrassed. We got to the center, and I saw the chorten for the first time. It was more beautiful than I could remember in the pictures. And then from the side, I saw him, looking like a big sleepy lion. He had much more impact than I imagined he

would. It seemed that I was looking at something really big, although he was really just a boy who was smaller than me. Somehow he seemed to cover a great expanse. This was the person who “came to me” in Japan to teach me the real meaning of the Heart Sutra.

I shuddered. “Be calm.” Tapas said from behind. Finally I stood before him. I looked directly at him, and he at me, and I had no way of knowing what he thought. He gently took my kata from me and tied it around my neck. Tapas later posted the picture. I was surprised when I saw it. It did look like he knew me. I then went and sat down nearby to observe what would happen next.

At noon, after a certain amount of blessings had been done Palden Dorje arose from his pedestal and climbed down and walked towards the microphone to make a speech. Kamal Lama did the introduction. His voice was gentle, but the loud-speaker was terrible. It was a great big dented cone hanging in the tree.

Then Palden Dorje chanted, and it was hard to tell where the voice was coming from. His formerly boyish voice had developed into a man’s. The chant sounded more Theravadan than Mahayanan, although I was certainly no expert in the matter. I did not recognize it at the time, although later when in Malaysia getting my Dorje and Dilba blessed, the monk’s song sounded familiar. We waited and he began his speech.

I noticed that he paused and looked distraught. There was an uprising in the audience. One woman stood up and began to yell something and shriek at the top of her voice. Oh, dear, I thought. What on earth was going on? He began the speech again. I wished I knew what he was saying.

He paused and whispered something to Kamal Lama. Kamal Lama started to say “hello, hello” into the speaker and talk to the sound people. For the third time he began his speech. The reporters smirked and mumbled, “He’s forgotten his lines!”

The odd thing was; he had not forgotten his lines at all. I replayed the recordings I had made to find that he had said the speech ad verbatim from beginning to end, three times over. When I reviewed my film, I noticed he was not memorizing a written speech; for all appearances he was channeling. He was in complete control of his voice, just as he controlled his thoughts and all his bodily actions. In this way his performance had been most unusual. Ignoring protocol, he had repeated his eight minute speech three times over, almost as a sutra, making sure that everyone listened.

His voice was flat to remain in control of his *gyanendria* and *janindria*, the elements of physical and mental activity which keep him in his present state. His speech contained vital information which no one but himself had decided to say, and I know it

to be even beyond Kamal Lama's comprehension, who was undoubtedly the most intelligent man on the site.

It was after the speech was finished that mayhem broke loose. The entire crowd wanted to be blessed, and there was no way of adequately lining them up. I was set on one side to keep people from climbing through the fence to cut through whatever line did exist. I found that if I were tense, I would be crushed, whereas if I relaxed my whole body, people did not push.

Finally someone took my place. Palden Dorje was back on his pedestal and some people tried to force him to place the kata around their necks, but he did not give in, and deftly ignored their supplications for lack of time to deal with such a throng. Palden Dorje's elder sister Rajkumari and others were standing behind the pedestal. She invited me to sit down, and there I sat, leaning against the pedestal, back to back with the world's greatest meditator, but with no chance of actually meditating!





CHAPTER 15

The Way to Receive Blessings

It was apparent that Palden Dorje wanted to bless everyone. The more who came to him, the happier he seemed. There were people arriving of many different religious beliefs and castes. The young and the old, men and women came by the thousands to be blessed.

Yet some were daunted by the apparent restrictions when coming to see him. I felt at times as if we were going through an airport inspection! First we had to remove our shoes and go in barefoot, then remove our belts if they were leather, and our wallets... not to worry...they were returned promptly intact at the exit. We had to write number tags for the people with luggage to assure they received the right bag. The pilgrims were encouraged to abstain from alcohol, tobacco or meat for at least one day. Despite it being the general custom to leave money near a yogi, Palden Dorje forbade any money to be left near him. For me it was a secret joy to once have had the opportunity to pluck some stray coins off his white robes and throw them to the ground.

When I returned to Japan and later described to our Google group the tight security, one of the most long-time posters, was disconcerted: "Why the restrictions? Isn't he being a little judgmental? Someone of his power should be able to handle these things."

Palden Dorje isn't being judgmental, I explained. I'm sure he would happily do away with any restrictions, only his experience has taught him otherwise. First of all, he is not judging us, he is simply observing what works and what doesn't work towards the goal he has in mind, which is to reach a higher stage in his evolution and overcome the causes of suffering which in turn will help us to do the same.

Eating meat and using leather involves taking the lives of other sentient beings. These things produce karmic debt and give off a negative vibration. Palden Dorje has through his meditation and training achieved a very high vibration. His vibrations move at such a frequency as to produce heat from his body, which is why his face is often glowing. He has explained to the lamas and his family that he is more or less in between the physical world and the energy world. When confronted by things of a negative vibration including artificial stimulants, money, negative thinking etc., the wavelengths of these objects interact with his wavelengths and literally slow him down. In order to increase his vibrations and raise his energy he must do a special breathing technique which resembles nothing more than yawning! He can go into a long yawning spell with repeated yawns for hours on end until he restores his vibrations. He doesn't appear to mind this, however it can slow down the blessing process, and it is a little uncomfortable for the people who have come such a long way for his blessing only to find that he appears to be bored by their company! So it is important that restrictions be adhered to for the ideal conditions for blessings to occur.

Neither is this process only about affecting him, but also the visitor who brings the negative vibrations. Suppose one was to approach him in a state of low vibration; that person's vibrations would likewise mix with his producing unpleasant side effects known as karma. (This is discussed in chapter 16.) For example, if you are wearing leather shoes, you might get a wound or pain in your feet. If you have been drinking, you may display some behavior which you would rather not be seen to do. If you have been eating meat, you may feel terribly nauseous or get a stomach ache, etc. This is not unusual, and practitioners of energy healing note similar results in their patients.

What's wrong with money, some may ask. Isn't it just a piece of paper? Technically speaking, that is the correct assessment. And money can be good when used with the right point of view which is that we are taken care of and that there is always enough. Unfortunately, this point of view is rare in today's world. Most people fight about money, separate because of money, want money, are attached to money, some may even steal or kill for money. In short, it exudes a strong feeling of lack, and once again, interacts with his vibrations.

If you can handle money, well, good for you! However, it is easy and straightforward in Palden Dorje's situation to just request that he be free from this karmic entanglement. He doesn't really have any use for money. He has in the past requested a monastery or a stupa to be made, but he knows that things will be taken care of in divine timing. So you don't need to be overly concerned.

So, if in the future you wish to attend Palden Dorje's blessings, you know what to expect. Now that you know what not to bring, the next question is what should you bring? Some people bring offerings, and this is good, especially if those offerings have a deep significance to the bearer. Here the thought, not the price is important. When bringing offerings, the bearer follows her heart.

What Palden Dorje dearly loves is when people bring things to be blessed that they will then give to other people. He wishes that his blessings to be spread far and wide. One day I brought him my address book to be blessed. He looked very pleased. I realized that this was an even better idea than I had planned, for not only would all the names of the people within be blessed, but those names yet to be inscribed. Others followed suit by bringing the names of their relatives on pieces of paper to be blessed. The next time I go, I am planning to bring another empty book!

Generally, as is the custom of the religion of the region, people bring what is known as a kata, a white or cream colored scarf, to be blessed. The kata is made of silk and tends to shed thread very easily, symbolizing the nature of impermanence. Usually the lama who does the blessing then takes this kata and places it around the bearer's neck. Sometimes there was such a throng of people that Palden Dorje had no time to do this, and the bearer had to be content with his simply blessing the kata with his dorje. When these conditions occurred, the committee requested that the bearer put the kata around his or her own neck before leaving the circle. Some people, believing that they were entitled to special treatment, become very persistent and paused with their kata outstretched to him. This is not the person's Buddha nature, it is the ego, and he was quick to chase it away. He would even crumple up the scarf and toss it on the bearer's head. (People are often in need of a little wakeup call.)

Bringing kata to give to other people is highly recommended. When receiving the kata, it is good to wear it as long as possible and then to hang it somewhere so that the air may be purified by its vibrations. There are many items which may be blessed: bracelets, necklaces, pendants, photographs. I also brought the camera filled with the pictures for this book to be blessed. I thought that would be another good way to proliferate his blessings by the printing of the pictures.

Palden Dorje's committee requested that people come quietly, and that they not speak directly to him. People were instructed to keep their head down and to not look at him directly. In fact, he does not approve of these instructions, but this is the custom. It also allows for blessings to take place smoothly with the least commotion. It is perfectly acceptable to look at him once having left the circle. Who knows, your eyes may meet! More than often he smiles when they do.



CHAPTER 16

Blessings and Karma

Some people note that their lives go through a considerable shift after receiving blessings from Palden Dorje . This is because the person's lifestyle is redirected to the pure path of the Dharma. Sometimes the shift can be so sudden that people refer to it as punishment. Purification may be a better word.

Karma is something that most of us have in one form or another. Karma is like a ball, if you throw it into the air, it must come back to the earth. That is the law of gravity. Thus with karma, if an action has an effect on the receiver, then eventually it must have an effect on the doer. This is the law of karma. Any action whether judged good or bad comes back to the person or being that initiated the action. (What goes around comes

around.) Many are familiar with the golden rule: do to others what you would wish done to you. Put more accurately: what you do to others, you do to yourself. This is because we are all one, and so there is really only one doer and one receiver, but because we are multi-dimensional, the effects of our actions are often stored in many different places and times. This is called karmic debt. Karmic debt often refers to the result of unfortunate choices made in the past. If a person, on the other hand, judges the situation accurately and acts accordingly, this results in merit. Merit may also be accumulated over time to purify (or counterbalance) one's karmic debt.

Karma can occur quickly or be drawn out over a length of time. The problem with drawn out karma is that by the time these effects do take place, the persons involved have already forgotten the reasons for the karma. It would be better if a person were clear of such obstacles as old karma and would then be able to learn directly from each new karmic event as it occurred in a timely manner. I call this timely ripening and removal of karmic obstacles "house cleaning." When Palden Dorje blesses someone, stimulates the energy that results in a good house cleaning. For those who wish to read a more detailed description of the ripening of karma, Buddhaghosa's "Path of Purification" outlines twelve kinds of karma. House cleaning might also be described as the upgrading of karma.



The best kind of blessing for a person is not to get something, but rather to get through something. In this case it is their karma. Wouldn't it be good to have your karma quickly so that you can purify your life and move on to the next step? Surely, this is the best kind of blessing. However, the prospect of suddenly having one's karma cleared through a major karmic event can be quite scary to most, so contained within the blessing is the added benefit of a calm mind. This is affected by the merit you have obtained by coming to receive blessings. The person becomes the eye of the storm. Though the winds are raging about them, they themselves are calm, and when it is all over, there are beautiful pristine blue skies. Would you call this a punishment or a blessing?

CHAPTER 17

The Grasshopper

On the second morning I received my blessing and retired to the side, when a lama next to Palden Dorje called to me and said, "Come, come and stand right here." You can imagine I was a little surprised but delighted to find myself standing right next to Palden Dorje. I was so pleased that I went on standing there for the rest of the day.

It was during this time that the newspaper interviewers came (see chapter 19) and I was able to witness Palden Dorje's complete authority. Palden Dorje meant me to witness that interaction. But he also had a few other things for me to note. One was his dorje. (See chapter 18) He kept turning it slowly in his hand and glancing at me, sometimes with a rather exacerbated look as if to say, "Look, don't you see?" I didn't see, and I made rather a fool of myself when I got the wrong idea. But again, the answer would come later. I just went on standing there never noticing the other lamas' disapproval.

At the height of the day, there were many people and Palden Dorje had no time to place the kata around everyone's neck. We were instructed to motion to the devotees to put on their kata before leaving the circle. But the devotees seemed to be too absentminded to get our message, so at one point I placed the kata around someone's neck. Palden Dorje glanced at me in playful surprise, and the other devotees seemed to like the idea that this alien being (myself) place the kata around their necks for them, so everyone started to hand their kata to me. What an odd situation, to be standing next to Palden Dorje, he doing the blessing and I placing the kata around their necks. My lama disapproval rates were increasing, but Palden Dorje showed no sign of dismissing me. I began to feel a little uncomfortable, though blessed!

The next day, the lamas surrounded him. I was banished from the inner circle and told that no person must ever stand to the right of Palden Dorje, because it means that I am his superior. I was shocked. I had no idea.

Feeling somewhat mortified, I retired to the far corner of the compound and knelt down, sitting Japanese style to contemplate this. Palden Dorje always spoke to me through my heart with a silent language of ideas and feelings, and so I felt him say, “Don’t worry, you don’t have to be close, I am everywhere.” At that point a large grasshopper jumped on my arm. I looked at it. It looked at me. And I felt very comforted.

Just at that moment a man of about 40, perfectly normal looking, broke through the lines of people and prostrated himself before me holding up his kata to me above his head. The lamas all looked on in surprise. Palden Dorje beamed at me with a big smile. Not being able to touch the kata (that was for Palden Dorje) I put my hands on the man’s head and blessed him, and he returned to his place in line. I was so touched I broke down into tears. There were many such occasions where I was thus overcome. And this is odd, because in Japan I almost never cry.

Where ever you are, and whoever you are, you are worthy.

We are one.

CHAPTER 18

The Dorje

For many blessings and rituals you may notice that Palden Dorje is holding a small ritual implement called a Dorje. Dorje is a Tibetan word meaning alternately diamond or thunderbolt. It is also the source of his Dharma name, Palden Dorje, or “Glorious Diamond.” Dorje is equivalent to the Sanskrit word Vajra which has origins in ancient Hinduism. It is the root of the word Vajrayana, which is the main path in Tibetan Buddhism. This principle is also at the heart of the Sakya lineage with whom Palden Dorje has studied.

The Dorje or Vajra has many symbolic meanings which can be elaborated on in depth. But in the context of Palden Dorje’s blessing it can be thought of as a spiritual scepter, or a ritual weapon, used to pacify the ego. True to its name, it can be used to clear away the veils of ignorance, or overcome other obstacles, that prevent us from awakening and realizing our essential nature.



A typical Dorje is generally made of brass and has a core post surrounded on both ends by what appears to be the closed blossom of a lotus. The number of petals on the end of this implement can vary from two to nine. These petals can be said to symbolize certain essential truths in Buddhism such as The Unity of Absolute and Relative Truth, The Three Jewels, The Four Noble Truths, The Five Buddha Families, The Six Paramitas, The Eight-fold Path, and so on. The core is usually said to represent Nirvana or Sunyata, as in the essential nature of reality.

Palden Dorje carries a special kind of Dorje. It is bright silver and has only three petals, which he calls the blessing of the three Buddhas. Rajkumari briefly mentioned that this dorje signified the Kunchu Suma, a term meaning the three deities. It is likely that she was referring to Amitabha, of the past, Shakyamuni of the present, and Maitreya of the future. In a more traditional interpretation this arrangement could symbolize the

Three Jewels: Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. To me, the concept of the Three Jewels bears a strong resemblance to the Christian Trinity. You could also compare them to the fundamental concepts of mind, body, and spirit. Many spiritual principles come in threes.

The counterpart of the Dorje is the Dilba, which is Tibetan for bell. This often has a Dorje like shape on its handle. The Dorje is male, and the Dilba is female. The Dorje is carried in the right hand and represents compassion while the Dilba is carried in the left hand and represents wisdom. Often lamas in the Vajrayana tradition will meditate carrying these two holy objects, twisting one while ringing the other. These objects are highly energized, especially when used in combination.

As I have said, Palden Dorje employs the Tummo method of meditation, which heats his body up to extreme temperatures. It has been rumored that, at an early stage of his evolution, while he was using the Dorje and the Dilba in combination with Tummo, he began emitting sparks from his body. It is likely that he was not really aware this was happening as he was blissfully ensconced in his meditation.

On one occasion, according to the Discovery Documentary, "The Child with Divine Powers", Palden Dorje even exploded into fire. This event was said to have been witnessed by as many as 60 onlookers and was even captured on video. The fire encompassed the tree and his caretakers ran away in fear. However, his brothers remained, and, once the fire died down, they ascertained that Palden Dorje was still meditating unscathed. All his clothes had burned off. Instead of coming close to him, for fear that he would be annoyed at the interruption, they ran for the camera. When he "descended" from his meditation, he was initially surprised to find himself surrounded by fire, and was worried about the tree. He attempted to continue his meditation, but also considered calling for help to put the fire out. Luckily, the tree was damp and showed little sign of burning so, resuming his pose, he continued to meditate. Understandably, considering his state of attire, the video they took was kept from the public for almost two years until he said that it should be seen. He said that the Dharma should be available to all.

CHAPTER 19

Dealing with the Reporters

While I was standing with Palden Dorje during the procession of blessings, every committee member came and went at will; for lunch breaks, toilet breaks and water breaks. However, Palden Dorje never tired nor moved from his seated lotus position. Still youthful, he exhibited an athletic build and an artistic flare in the brandishing of his dorje.

When the crowds were few enough, he was playful, unexpected, sometimes serious, sometimes looking nonchalant, and sometimes displaying a smile such as the world could not resist. When the crowds were vast, which they were in my last three days, the queues ran all the way down the old river bed and well into the jungle for few kilometers. He would cheerfully bless all and finish everyone like clockwork. His deliberate and repeated actions would surely give any athlete carpal tunnel syndrome, but he showed not the slightest sign of slacking.



As I have said before, there were rigorous checks at the gates to the compound as Palden Dorje appears to exhibit an “allergy” to money, leather, drugs, and people who have been eating meat or drinking alcohol. This allergy takes the form of a yawning spell that can go on for several hours continuously while he utters “hai” in radar like attempt to reconnect with the higher dimensions that support him. He shows no attempt to hide this behavior. Such a spell occurred twice in the nine days I was there. After my return home, our group had a lengthy

discussion about the implications of a yawning spell, when one of our members, presented an authoritative essay on the benefits of “integrated yawning” and how it works to cleanse the entire body of toxins.

Once, with a wave of the back of his hand, he promptly dismissed two men who had been drinking from his presence. He refused to bless them. Furthermore, he has given strict instructions that no money is to be left near him. Money has often, through circulation, picked up unfortunate vibrations. He insists that no donations shall ever be forcefully taken and that his picture is never to be sold to pilgrims, only given away. These injunctions are generally ignored by the young boys who peddle his picture outside the compound. It has also previously been ignored by the committee who sold tickets for the puja in 2007. Likewise, they initially charged an entrance fee to see him meditating in 2005. The president of the committee recalls that Palden Dorje was quite upset about the committee's behavior, and asked that they not repeat it. There were still con-artists trying to catch the occasional absent-minded pilgrim, and there was also a donation box at the entrance, where I found donations being encouraged, though no amount specified. I suppose it was no worse than the basket which makes its way around any church service. I was informed that the donations went towards the food and living expenses of the volunteers, among which I was one of more than 200.

At one point, Nepal ABC News came desiring an interview; they claimed to have permission from his elder sister Rajkumari. I told them that if this were true they must return with her in their presence. I doubted their claims as no one except family members, Prem, and two lamas, Kamal Lama and his old teacher, Som Lama is allowed to direct any speech at him. They later managed to find Kamal Lama and return with him.

Kamal Lama was in fact called to be in the committee by Palden Dorje when he himself had no idea who Palden Dorje was. Palden Dorje had told committee members that they were to go to Kathmandu and seek out a man by the name of Kamal Lama. He had then come to the jungle to meet Palden Dorje for the first time, and had been very favorably impressed by this young man.

The reporters had written on a piece of paper approximately 6 questions and Kamal Lama came up to Palden Dorje with the paper. The committee seemed perfectly at ease as the cameras proceeded to film this encounter with Kamal Lama. Kamal Lama carefully read the questions to Palden Dorje. As this was my second day with Palden Dorje, I confess, I suspected that Kamal Lama might whisper to him appropriate answers. But this never happened, not in the least.

With a flip of his fingers, Palden Dorje twirled the Dorje into pencil position and brought it down with a thump on the notebook. "Hudaina," ["That's not possible."] He said in a very authoritative voice. And continuing in Nepali; "I do not answer political questions, as to the remaining, I answered them in my speech. If they failed to hear the answers, then they must return on the last day and listen again. Is that clear? Now, open the next page and write down what I have just said." And Kamal Lama, smiling rather abashedly proceeded to do so. I was standing directly to the side of Palden Dorje and

witnessed this display of power in awe. Palden Dorje showed that he was far older than his physical age.



CHAPTER 20

The Seeds of Negative Thinking and the Cure

Most suffering occurs because people do not recognize the causes of suffering. They are not able to pinpoint exactly why they have got into their present situation; they only know that it is an unpleasant one.

The one of the most common causes of all suffering is greed. Where does greed come from? Somehow the person's natural understanding of the Dharma has been blocked. Why do I say natural? Because most living things on this earth, apart from humans, go about their daily business of preserving life perfectly normally. They are not actually thinking "I want more, this is not enough." They take what they can when they can and don't put much extra consideration into it. "Is tomorrow going to be a good day? Will I get enough food to eat? I hope it's not as bad as yesterday when so and so did such and such..." This is definitely human thinking, and unfortunately, there is so much to think about today and so much information, that humans have become a cerebral mess.

When so much information is continually being processed, humans lose their trust in the present. This is because at some point, the human mind seems to go beyond its usefulness and take over completely.

The mind becomes over-active with its ongoing discussion. It attempts to enslave body and spirit to it by engendering negative emotions based on a contrived reality, or a personal drama, as it is often called. Intuition, creativity, and the natural intelligence of non-attached love take the back seat. This in turn leads to the feeling of lack. The mind has narrowed thinking down to the brain with only the tools of language, logic, and will. These products of the mind are either amplified or suppressed by our mental filters and personal dramas. They are subsequently disconnected from reality.

Once our spiritual connection is cut, it is like severing an artery that brings blood to the heart. The human must depend on brains and brawn alone to preserve its life. "If I'm not clever about this situation, I will not have enough. I won't be able to pay the bills or make a living. I will be forced to lead a life of poverty. I must have a good education and a lot of money. Or I must be strong enough, smart enough, or attractive enough." But somehow it is never enough. This feeling of lack breeds greed, hatred, delusions of all kind. The person, who is now entrenched in these negative patterns of thinking, spends all day plotting clever ways to get rich or dominate others. Immersed in fantasies, they are left to wallow in mundane and ceaseless suffering.

Rich and poor, strong and weak, intelligence and ignorance are all relative states of mind that are forever linked. That means, there cannot be rich unless there is also poor, strength without weakness, and intelligence without ignorance. So, there will always be someone on the other end of the scale, someone higher or lower than us, someone richer and someone poorer, etc. And this is reflected back to us as ceaseless dissatisfaction and discomfort of all kinds.

There are poor people who may not be inclined to use their brains all the time, but they can see those who do, and naturally wish to have what the others have attained. They see the college graduate, the big business man, the famous star, and wonder why they have so little while everyone else seems to have so much. This also breeds a feeling of lack. There are so many people with too much, that there doesn't seem to be enough to go around unless the haves can be forced in some way to share with the have-nots. This in turn engenders revolution and war, etc...

Those who have used their brain power to achieve their goal, which is usually measured by how much money they have acquired, also begin to be quite proud of their achievements. These achievements decorate that person adding greatly to his ego. But supposing something happens and the person is not given the appreciation and esteem he feels his right to have, or his possessions are taken away, he then becomes a very angry person and his whole life- is thrown off balance.

This is what is meant when Buddhism exhorts people to walk the middle path. The Dharma prevents us from setting ourselves up for failure and suffering. The Heart Sutra rids us of comparative thinking and centers us so that we are content with our lot and trust in our innate wholeness. We will always have exactly what we need, neither more nor less. There is no sense of lack, and thus no greed. No greed and therefore no pride. No pride and no pride to be hurt, thus no anger. No anger and therefore no need to hurt anyone. The Dharma says that everyone is taken care of, exactly according to their needs, but there is one condition for this to be true in a beneficial way, the Dharma needs the permission and trust of the person.

What can you do? Start with these powerful affirmations:

We are one with all beings through the infinite wisdom and compassion of the Universe. This oneness is found in the center of my being, the gateway of my heart. I trust that the Universe will take care of me in the most ideal way and inspire me to live in accordance with divine wisdom and compassion, for the benefit of all beings.

When you embrace prayers or affirmations such as this, you will find that because you are centered, as the eye of the storm, nothing can throw you off balance. You are immune to suffering even when its causes are presented to you through other people. So follow your heart, and it will set you free.



CHAPTER 21

The Right Point of View

Palden Dorje said in his first speech: "I have to realize Buddha Mind." This could be paraphrased as: "I have to develop the mind of a Buddha." or "I must manifest the Buddha Mind." Either way, he is talking about having the right point of view. Right should be understood here in its broader sense, as complete, whole, or skillful. It is "right" because it is coming from the higher perspective of the One Soul. This view is based in the transcendent awareness of Dharmakaya. It can see the greater patterns within the complexity of every moment and it is not limited by ego-centric fixations or habitual reactions.

How does one become the eye of the storm? How can one remain calm when all around is chaos? How can one keep from being angry when someone else is angry? It all depends on your point of view. There are billions of points of human views in this world both regarding physicality and spirituality. This is good. This is how it should be. As I have said, this is why the world is so wonderful. Wouldn't it be dull if everyone had exactly the same point of view?

This world is essentially a creation or a conglomeration of the multiple points of views of all the sentient beings and life forms that exist on it. Each of us is positioned in a different place; each of us therefore meets different situations, encounters different environments, and is a mix of parents who also had different experiences. We are small and large in comparison to one another, and likewise the space we occupy appears in different sizes. So each and every one of us is entirely individual, and yet we are all the same stuff. We are physically made of this earth: mostly carbon, oxygen and hydrogen. Spiritually, the same life force is in us. From there it is just levels of physical and energetic concentrations. We also have multiple levels of consciousness of which we are not aware.

If there is a consciousness of the One Soul which envelopes all of us, you can imagine that things would appear quite differently from what we can see. If the One Soul is simply too big, we may appear insignificant, but if the One Soul, or Buddha Mind as put forth in Buddhism is all-encompassing and conscious of all levels it is logically omniscient. However our own point of view, in an unenlightened state, is inherently limited according to our awareness of what is around us.

When the veil of the individual as a separate self is present, your world is a mirror reflecting only what you think and what you are. Your world is entirely individual, and even though you see exactly the same picture on a TV, your interpretation of each news program, each drama, comedy, and commercial will be entirely individual to your point of view.

Does that mean reality, which we thought to be an evident truth, is actually relative? Yes. From our perspective, not only is it relative, but it can also be considered an illusion. That is, we make things up based on our inherently limited perceptions. (Discussed in Chapter 24) It is not so in the Buddha Mind which sees the unity or mundane and ultimate reality. If there is an all-encompassing One Soul which can perceive ultimate truth, in our relative perspective we make up the parts which enable the One Soul to perceive multidimensional reality. Thus all levels of consciousness need to exist. We take turns exhibiting these levels of consciousness, and when suffering occurs, we find the cause and prevent further suffering from occurring. In order to gain understanding of the cause, we are able to access the absolute truth of the One Soul. All we have to do is listen carefully. This is usually accomplished through the meditative state. So the One Soul has access to us, and vice versa.

Now, modern devices such as television and the internet enable us to perceive humanity as never before. The borderlines between people, cultures and countries have been obscured as we have instant access to many people all over the Earth. Many of us have also perceived that suffering has reached an intolerable scale which makes it necessary for humanity as a whole to wake up from their illusion. Our ignorance, hatred, and greed have only exacerbated suffering while placing our whole planet in peril. In order to transmute the skewed emotions and distorted perceptions that are at the root of our suffering it is helpful to contemplate the difference between perceived and absolute reality.

We spend most of our lives trapped in our own limited perceptions. We are pushed around by our thoughts, feelings, impulses, and desires. We fortify ourselves with justifications and reasoning in order to prop up our conceptually created identity. Meditation can help us begin to step out of our habitual patterns of behavior and directly taste experience, unfiltered by concepts. Once we are capable of seeing a larger perspective, beyond our typically limited viewpoint, we are better able to perceive and then to change those thoughts and behaviors that can cause suffering.

With the right point of view, one will recognize easily that it is not possible to argue with someone about what is true and what is false, what is appropriate or inappropriate. We can also understand that when a person is angry, he is not describing you, but what is within himself. So you don't have to lose your sense of presence when faced with another's illusion. Yet one should also listen with humility. Remember, or imagine, that this person was also once your mother or father, and he is scolding you that you may improve. Be grateful and say "thank you" for his consideration. You need not be stained by the opinions of others, but neither should you cause them distress by blindly ignoring them.

Since you experience this life on Earth according to your reflexive consciousness you can experience a more spacious and peaceful life by opening your awareness to your transcendent self which is beyond your physical body. You can find a deeper peace once your mind is a true vessel of the One Soul or Buddha Mind. Through the Buddha Mind, we also realize our body means nothing to us once we have graduated from it.

We cultivate the right point of view through recognizing the truth about our world and its relativity. To this end we practice insight meditation and chanting such as the Heart Sutra or other mantras. Remember that in this brief time on earth, we share this temporary state of being physically present. But it will end sooner or later. That makes it ever more precious.

Within each of us is the life force of the One Soul, the Buddha Mind.

Assuring that each and every one of us is loved and treated well will raise your spirit to new heights. Because you recognize our oneness, you add to the size of your spirit in this recognition.

This is compassion.

The wider you are, the more you encompass.

The more you encompass the more you understand.

The more you understand the more you can add to others.

The more you add to others, the greater they become!

And soon we are all overlapping and raising our being to even greater heights and greater frequencies.

We spill out into the universe realizing who we truly are.

What joy!

If you are interested in practicing insight meditation, Vipassana meditation is a very good method to investigate. This is perhaps the method that will bring us closest to understanding what Palden Dorje calls the “meditational point of view” which is essential to overcoming the unwholesome karma on this Earth. (See his speech of November 22, 2008.) Insight meditation helps us to realize impermanence, non-self, and the unsatisfactory nature of transitory phenomena.

CHAPTER 22

Uncertainty

Each day in the jungle, our schedules went like this. There was no electricity, and only two water pumps. One could not reasonably stay up too late at night for lack of light. (And I learned my lesson about attempting a midnight meditation!) So we went to sleep fairly early, after the lamas had finished their chanting. But in the morning, we were very busy. Not just me, but almost everyone had a regime of chanting, yoga, and meditation. The monks were already banging their drums and clashing their cymbals at three in the morning. Then in the early dawn people would wash at the pumps. So, in this context, three was the normal time to wake up.

Luckily, I was used to it, because I had been waking up at three every day for the past two months to do my regime. In this way I felt as though once again, either Palden Dorje or the One Soul had prepared me. But, on the other hand, when I really thought about it, things seemed almost too neat and tidy. He didn't eat, drink, or go to the bathroom. He communicated across continents nonverbally. He seemed unbearably wonderful to look at. He assumed mythic proportions in comparison with any other human being I knew. I was bubbling and babbling like a child. What if this were all wrong? My mind wished to put a stop to all this ecstasy and sedate it with normal expectations.



On my second day, amidst my joy, I found my mind in a battle with him: "Hey, we can't see you till eight o'clock in the morning, and then we have to leave you alone at five o'clock," I thought, "I bet you eat and drink...no, you don't?" Palden Dorje spun around suddenly and gave me a wary look. I felt reprimanded.

Things became worse when next I felt myself expecting something to happen to prove to me once and all that he was the Bodhisattva I had come to see. He looked at me again and then started turning his Dorje in his hand. I looked very carefully at it. It was a bright silvery white with three prongs on both sides. Then something amazing seemed to happen. Whenever a pilgrim would bow her head, he would touch it with the Dorje and a clear liquid would trickle down her forehead like a little waterfall. There must be something inside the Dorje, I thought. My excitement heightened as he blessed hundreds of people and each time the liquid would pour forth. Where was it coming from? There couldn't be all that liquid in the Dorje, and it can't be coming from his hands, although he did sweat quite a bit. I lined up to be blessed again to see if it would happen to me, and I was quite sure, yes, there was a clear delicate oil on my head.

At the end of the day I excitedly announced to the lamas that the Dorje must be miraculous. Kamal Lama laughed casually and said, "Yes, the Dorje is very powerful...if you have seen something special, you are very lucky!" Soon quite a group of people gathered around me as I told my story. Panit, the cameraman, said to me quietly, "Andy-ji, the lamas are pouring blessing water on the pilgrims near the chorten." I dismissed this statement without a thought. "No, no, Panit-ji, this is different," I insisted, "It is a very fine oil, I know because it was on my head too, and I did not go by the chorten...it's not water..."

The next morning I had forgotten what Panit had told me and I rushed excitedly to my post near Palden Dorje. Then I noticed for the first time two lamas stationed near the chorten pouring water on the pilgrims. In a split second I experienced a variety of emotions: shock followed by fury; fury at myself and at Palden Dorje, who had done nothing; disappointment followed by supreme embarrassment. What had I done? What an absolute and total fool I was. The sweat of my own forehead I had seen to be a very fine oil. How could I ever explain how stupid I had been and apologize for it? If you remember things were made even worse that morning as it was the morning I was banned from the circle! So you can imagine how complicated my feelings were becoming that morning until I was saved by a grasshopper! (See Chapter 17)

As I look back on my journey, I see that this was another important occasion when I learned something the hard way. It seemed as if Palden Dorje was consciously present in all these moments, and if I hadn't felt his presence I may have not been able to recover from the shame. Whether his presence was imagined or real, it enabled me to continuously step back and see myself from his perspective. The perspective of a bo-

dhisattva was ever patient, ever forgiving, and never judging. Our experience simply divulged what was already present within us. In my case it had been suffering caused by unclear thinking. These experiences lead me to write the following for others so that they may be spared the harder path:

What does uncertainty feel like?

It can start as a subtle form of suffering. There is emptiness in the heart, and then a sinking feeling in the stomach. If one unwittingly allows certainty to swing unchecked into uncertainty, this can plunge one into such depths that it can be life-threatening.

These questions may arise in your mind:

Am I deceived?

Am I deluded?

Am I proud?

Am I stubborn?

These questions may be appropriate, but their conclusions can often be painful. If you decide that the answers to these questions are yes, you will berate yourself saying: "How stupid I am! How did this happen?" Darkness may descend upon you as you feel shame, anger, and grief. Now, having realized that you are suffering, it is important to proceed to the next path, finding the cause in order to address it and stop the suffering.

You may start by asking yourself these questions:

What were my expectations

Was I attached to the result?

At what point did my dissatisfaction with the results throw me off balance and plunge me into uncertainty?

Yes, you have noticed that certainty and uncertainty are at opposite ends of the scale, but do you remember where we are supposed to be?; in the middle, of course.

Now, dear reader, you may find this the ideal time to consider several things you have been told about Palden Dorje's lifestyle:

- He doesn't eat or drink.
- He doesn't relieve himself.
- He meditates all the time.

Given what you know about this world, how believable is that? The average person would be perfectly in their rights to dismiss the above statements as absurd. Here are some points that may be presented unfavorably to the above statements:

1. He is seldom seen at night.
2. A French reporter apparently filmed him eating fruit and sleeping, at the height of his fame.
3. If anyone were to attempt to imitate him, they would probably fail as it is generally considered to be impossible not to eat or drink.
4. Healthy people have to move about to stay healthy.

The following points may be presented in favor of the first three statements:

1. He has 11 people in his immediate family, and no one has denied the above statements or presented evidence for their not being true.
2. At times he is surrounded by thousands of people, and no one has evidence to the contrary.
3. Discovery Channel has filmed him for four nights. He never moved.
4. The films of him eating and sleeping are not available on the internet, and therefore may be hearsay.
5. There have been other documented cases of people not eating or drinking.

Upon considering this, in order to know the truth you would have to come to Nepal and have witnesses sit next to him 24 hours a day for some time. Now, because he wishes to meditate undisturbed, he would not permit you to do that. You are left with

a dilemma. There is no real way of knowing whether he does or does not eat and drink and whether he is really meditating. However, he has several thousand people who trust him implicitly. What would become of these people if they were to see him actually eating, drinking and sleeping like a normal person? They would, of course, be thrown off balance, and some of them may even be plunged into the depths of despair, and he would fail in his purpose to help them stop their suffering!

But something like this could happen. There is always the possibility. So what should you do with the information that he doesn't eat? Do you believe it, disbelieve it or stay balanced?

In the collection of Buddhist sutras known as Anguttara Nikaya, the Buddha has this advice about uncertainty:

DON'T GO BY GOSSIP AND RUMOR, NOR BY WHAT'S TOLD YOU BY OTHERS NOR BY WHAT YOU HEAR SAID, NOR EVEN BY THE AUTHORITY OF YOUR TRADITIONAL TEACHINGS.

DON'T GO BY REASONING, NOR BY INFERRING ONE THING FROM ANOTHER, NOR BY ARGUMENT ABOUT METHODS, NOR FROM LIKING THE OPINION, NOR FROM AWE OF THE TEACHER AND THINKING HE MUST BE DEFERRED TO.

INSTEAD, WHEN YOU KNOW FROM WITHIN YOURSELVES THAT CERTAIN TEACHINGS ARE NOT GOOD, THAT WHEN PUT INTO PRACTICE THEY LEAD TO LOSS AND SUFFERING, YOU MUST THEN TRUST YOURSELVES AND REJECT THEM.

The important thing is not what he does or doesn't do – this is the method that works for him – it is what you do and what results you achieve by putting your beliefs into practice. Don't be thrown off balance by blind faith, be forever aware of the presence or absence of suffering and loss, and judge accordingly. If suffering and loss continues, it is time to change directions.

Likewise, the Buddha has this to say:

DRESSING IN ROUGH AND DIRTY GARMENTS, LETTING YOUR HAIR GROW MATTED, ABSTAINING FROM EATING MEAT OR FISH, DOES NOT CLEANSE THE ONE WHO IS DELUSED.

You might understand that if Palden Dorje is deluded, his path will not work for him. But, if he knows what he is doing and is achieving his purpose, then he should continue. You must also judge your own path accordingly.



CHAPTER 23

The Way

Now that we have discussed the effects of uncertainty, you would reasonably wish to know what Palden Dorje teaches. As I have said, this way is not to be followed blindly, but should be put to the test. Does it increase or decrease your suffering?

Of course, you will also need to consider the feelings of those around you. If his way is incompatible with your society – you are faced with either accommodating your ways with theirs, or finding a society that agrees with you. If the society that you risk alienating is your family, then you need to consider the amount of suffering or loss that you will incur by following this way.

As you remember, I am Catholic, and so I will use my own understanding to illustrate this point. Jesus said very plainly, “I am the way.” But he also said, “He who would

come to me must hate his family.” But did he really mean that we should separate from our families? There are at least two meanings in this statement. One meaning is that if you strictly follow the way, you are going to alienate your family. He went on further to say that he did not bring peace for father would turn against son and vice versa. These are harsh words, but they are said because they are the truth. The other meaning is connected to another statement: “Love your enemy.” This should bring our love into a balanced perspective. It is natural that many of us love our families and hate our enemies.

But the above statements mean that we should not attempt to benefit our families without considering the welfare of others, and that we should treat our enemies as we would our families. This is the Christ consciousness or for Palden Dorje it could be called the Avalokitesvara Consciousness!

If we have also turned our families into our enemies, then it is important to turn them back into our families. We must stand up to our difficulties with the full force of presence and calm abiding. How can you put the rest of the world in order if your own abode is a mess? Our families are the most difficult people of any to convince. If you can handle your family, you can handle anyone!

Why is your family so difficult? They know you as a struggling human being. Your family has seen you learn to walk. They have changed your diapers, in a literal as well as a psychological sense. They have corrected your mistakes. They have consoled your tears. They have looked after you when you were ill. They have seen you mature with all the ups and downs of puberty. So they have seen our vulnerabilities.

Interestingly in our past lives, (or in our DNA memory, if your beliefs prefer) we have been in similar associations with every living human being – so it is good to remember that we should treat everyone with the same care as we treat our family members. We are one, and we came from one.

Palden Dorje has stated that he wishes to eventually free all beings from their Samsaric bondage. This is also the Buddhist vow of the Bodhisattva. Careful observation will help us to learn the way to avoid bringing suffering to others, and if they are willing, to teach them how to be free from their delusive thinking. Always look within to gauge these results. Do you feel pain somewhere lurking in an overlooked part of your body? What does that pain indicate? Recognition of suffering and the causes of suffering lead to finding a way to stop the suffering. If you are a conscious person, you will use that wisdom to show others your example.

Palden Dorje teaches his Sangha to adhere to the Pancasila, or the five personal vows not to harm, steal, lie, participate in sexual misconduct, or take mind-bending substances. The following affirmations can also be helpful in cultivating the right state of being:

1. I take care of myself. I cultivate health and well being and ensure that I do not add bad karma to my life. This may also include the following precepts:

- a. I avoid using products made from animal skins.
- b. I do not use stimulants or intoxicants which damage my thinking facilities. This means no alcohol, drugs or smoking.
- c. I avoid the intake of dead animals. (Dairy products do not come under this precept.)
- d. Food eaten should likewise be free of chemicals which damage nature or take the lives of insects.
- e. Food should be taken as needed and not wasted.
- f. Thanks should always be given for these gifts from nature.
(In Mahayana traditions, thanks can vary from a long Tibetan prayer to simply saying: Om Ah Hum.)

2. I have a spiritual and physical practice. Some of the most ideal combined forms of these would be: yoga, sadhana, prostrations, prayer, affirmations, chanting, mantras and meditation are all very good. (Each of these practices will benefit your own mind, body, and spirit as well as attuning you to the greater whole.)

Here are some affirmations you may wish to add to your own:

3. I seek to minimize the suffering of those around me; not necessarily by action but by presence.
4. I do not participate in any act that threatens or takes the life of another sentient being.
5. I release all worries and know that the One Soul will show me the right action in divine timing.
6. I realize that all living things and beings are inextricably connected to me. We are the same essence. Therefore I treat everything around me as I would myself.
7. I read books and listen to discussions about spiritual matters and the Dharma.

You may further test these affirmations by observing any unnatural fear or excitement that may arise in you while you contemplate or practice them. If this happens a dif-

ferent approach is recommended. Always ask yourself whether this way is leading to the cessation of suffering. Is the suffering only temporary or longstanding? Am I maintaining my inner peace? Are the people around me benefitting from my actions and/or presence? If you are unsure about this, the following affirmation repeated at least once a day will be of great help:

I know I am one with my infinite Universal Being. From this Being I receive energy and perfect direction. I am always taken care of in divine timing.

My aim in life is to bring happiness, health and peace to all those around me. I complete this aim in divine timing.

I am ever conscious and compassionate towards all those with whom I come in contact and each benefit by my presence.

All this is achieved through my connection to the One Soul.

Write it down on a piece of paper and hang it up where you are sure to see it often.



CHAPTER 24

Drama

As you remember, I felt very foolish after having made up a story in my mind about the Dorje and coming to believe it. Why had I deemed it necessary to see a miracle? Because I wished to support the drama that I had come to believe without ever questioning the reasons I had for believing it. I deserved to have my kata thrown at me! But it was not necessary, I had trapped myself. My ego wished to make myself the co-star of a fantastic unfolding story, and this desire was deterring me from seeing what was really happening which was actually far more beautiful than anything I could concoct. If only I could see it with clear and unimpeded vision!

Shakespeare said that the whole world is a stage and that we are all actors on this stage. In a sense, he is right. But there is also a warning about taking this statement to heart. If we allow ourselves to be continuously creating a drama, we will produce much suffering.

Consider the basic theme of most dramas. In the case of the comedy, A gets B. In the case of the tragedy: A loses B. In both comedy and tragedy, the process that brings us to the end is attachment to a result. Character A must show an unusual attachment in order to grip the audience. In short, A is unbalanced.

So, in order for dramas to be really gripping there must be contrast. This contrast takes the form of good guys and bad guys, beauty and horror, humor and sadness, boredom and excitement. The audience becomes addicted to the worldly stimulation that glaring opposites produce, and the brain goes on a roller coaster ride that it can't get off.

Eventually, even after a movie ends, drama continues to be created in your mind. You become the character in a movie, and the more tumultuous your mind the crazier your creation. Then this creation may turn into a sort of persecution mania and you actually start to attract persecutors into your reality. You will find yourself surrounded by unpleasant people who are out to get you – or if you are addicted to romance, you will find your heart being broken time and again. If you must watch drama, see a harmless comedy, if it exists, because laughing is good for you

Though this precept does not generally include religious plays, Buddhism tells people not to watch too much drama, if any. This is because it really will take over your mind, and then your mind will take over you. Many people have said that 9-11 was an ideal example of this. Remember there is no us and them. There is only we, and we are responsible for the world we create. Do not allow your mind to be a director of drama.

Many people see Palden Dorje as the central figure of a great drama just as I did. But if you come to see him, you might be surprised. There is nothing very unusual about him (apart from the fact he is wonderful to observe!) That is because he disciplines his mind, so he is calm and balanced. He wishes you to be calm and balanced too.

News is drama. You have heard the expression “No news is good news.” This sentence contains two meanings. One is: the fact that no news has been reported is a good thing. The other is: only bad things get reported. More than often this is true. The audience, ever ready for excitement, is bored by good news.

When a reporter comes to do a report on Palden Dorje, he is often disappointed. First, as I have pointed out, there is no way to ascertain whether or not the claims about Palden Dorje’s not eating and so forth are correct. Therefore no accurate reports can be made on that topic. The reporter sees a perfectly healthy looking boy who is calm and balanced. There is really nothing to report. Where is the story? Where is the dark side to this pretty picture? If the dark side does not exist, it is easier to make one up than to admit to a less interesting truth. In some cases, there are connotations of a cult in the making. More often, the whole scene becomes the center of some massive case of fraud. The news has to say, “It’ll all end in tears, we told you so.” They seem to want us to believe that doubt and cynicism will always prevail.

Don’t allow your mind to believe it is edifying itself by being news-savvy. If following the news produces unnatural fear and uncertainty or projects you into an endless spiral of drama; now is the time to change the channel, and the course of your life.

CHAPTER 25

The State of the Earth

So many people are often asking what’s going to happen to our Earth. Once again, beware of drama. There are always people who want to talk about the end of the world. Religious societies who dwell upon the end of the world are also often targeted by officials as being the distinction between having “healthy religious views” and being a cult. This is because such ideas when given to the deluded may increase the suicide rates within that group. It is not good to go about saying “the end is near”, because that won’t get you very far and usually only increases the level of personal or collective fear.

Life on Earth is precious, and it is a singular opportunity for all of us. Being in physical form means you can meet all kinds of different beings and perhaps help them in some way or another. When you are in spiritual realms, the law of attraction is un-

avoidable. What do I mean?; time lag and gravity. When you are physical you can make choices in slow motion, and each takes time to deliver, whereas in the spiritual world each effect to each choice is instantaneous. If you want a virtual ice-cream cone, it will appear immediately in your hand whereas on Earth you will have to walk to the store to buy it. This goes for negative thoughts as well. In the spirit dimensions, if you think you are in Hell, you are, whereas it takes a good deal of negative thinking to produce the same effect on Earth. This is why it is so important to discipline the mind during this precious time on Earth. In the spirit realm, you will inevitably be with others who think very much like you. You have heard the expression “birds of a feather flock together.” On Earth you can have families who consist of very different kinds of people, especially when you start out. As your life progresses, you will find that you are more and more in your element.

Therefore, being here and now on Earth is a fantastic opportunity to discipline the mind with a view to thought manifestation. So, what about the Earth itself? What will become of it? Some people say that it is supremely arrogant of us to think we have any say in the matter. Is it? You know you can access the Buddha Mind. Would it be insincere to say, “It’s up to you!”?



CHAPTER 26

Earth Cleansing

Next, you may like to know what you can do to facilitate the evolution of our Earth. This is most important. Your own part in this is vital! Many in Palden Dorje's Sangha might imagine that he has everything under control, so they can just leave it to him.

There is a certain amount that he can do, yes, but never without the cooperation of all of you! Each one of you has talents and specialties which make you an integrated part of the whole. The interesting thing is that you are also "whole" already within yourself. So it is like a lot of wholes forming an even greater whole. (This is discussed in the following chapter.)

"What can I do?" Thank you so much for asking this question. Remember the question might be more accurately put "Who can I be?" You can be the ideal expression of who you really are! Before undertaking any project, always ask yourself, "Is this the ideal expression of who I really am?" Then you will know whether or not you should undertake it. Whatever you do, it should be with complete mindfulness, as a meditation. Any chore can be transformed into your ideal expression this way.

Beyond mindfulness of your ideal expression, you may add affirmations and visualization on an even grander scale. Start by visualizing your own ideal being. You can help by being aware of the feelings in your body and focusing your attention on dissolving the pain. Accept yourself just as you are. Once you have stabilized this view and you feel at peace then work outwards towards your family, house, neighborhood, city, country, and Earth! Why stop there? You can spread out into the solar system, the galaxy, the cosmos... and the universe! Now this may sound rather vague. On the other hand it may give the ego a dose of megalomania and ruin the whole effect! If you don't know what to visualize, simply affirm your wish that each being is peaceful and healthy. This will produce the appropriate state of mind.

Here is a short Buddhist prayer that expresses this view:

MAY ALL BEINGS HAVE HAPPINESS AND THE ROOT OF HAPPINESS.

MAY ALL BEING BE FREE OF SUFFERING AND THE ROOT OF SUFFERING.

MAY THEY NEVER BE SEPARATED FROM THE HIGHEST BLISS WHICH IS WITHOUT SUFFERING.

MAY THEY COME TO REST IN THE GREAT EQUANIMITY WHICH IS FREE FROM ATTACHMENT AND AVERSION TO THOSE NEAR AND FAR.

As Palden Dorje is meditating on the salvation of sentient beings, he is also calling each and every one of you to awaken to your highest expression. This is the path that frees all sentient being from suffering. This is also the path of the Bodhisattva that works to help others along the way.

Here are some Bodhisattva activities that you might find beneficial:

1. Practice meditation. You can help most of all by taking a little time each day to meditate. Remember that the One Soul is accessible to you in your meditation. If you have a group of friends who enjoy meditating, many people find it easier to meditate in a group, because the calmness forms a synergy. Others will find it easier to meditate alone. Do whatever feels right for you.
2. Practice using visualizations. For example, during meditation you might perceive that the Earth is surrounded by a gray belt of polluted emotions and karma – it looks very similar to smog over a big city. You can help by visualizing that grayness disintegrating and becoming crystal clear.
3. Connect with Nature. We have discussed the lack of grounding that humans have today, you can balance that by taking walks in nature and by communing with her.
4. Communicate. You can help by constructively talking about your concerns and working on ways of resolving the blockages that are holding yourself and others back. When you get insights don't hesitate to share them with others.
5. Cultivate patience. One way to do this is to reflect on the statement: "This too shall pass" in the context of both happiness and sadness. Learn to trust that everything will become clear in time. Right now you are exactly where you need to be.
6. Cultivate all of your positive qualities. Increase your own wisdom, compassion and energy by committing to practices that cultivate each of these qualities. There are so many ways. You will just need to find a path that is right for you.
7. Develop empathy. Look at yourself from another's point of view. Consider the feelings of others. Tonglen is a special meditative practice that can help to develop this quality.
8. Maintain a healthy body, mind, and spirit. In addition to the standards, try to learn about your chakras and how to keep them healthily activated. This can help to develop your awareness and enhance the health of your whole being.

9. Practice gratitude. Give thanks for each lesson that the moment teaches you. Your overall awareness is most precious! In this, we can exchange our love and grow together. Then everyone can find their own unique expression of divine inspiration.



CHAPTER 27

The Whole Parts of the Whole

What is Palden Dorje doing when he meditates? Since he has stated that he wishes to achieve Buddhahood for the sake of freeing sentient beings from suffering, obviously he is not employing meditation for the same reason as we might. In today's world, we often say the reason we might meditate would be to allay stress. But if one meditates 24 hours a day, stress is unlikely to be a factor; otherwise Palden Dorje would be meditating to relieve the stress of meditating which is silly. Palden Dorje is faced with an interesting dilemma, he wishes to reach Buddhahood to save sentient beings, but Buddhas are not able to purify or save others. Each person has to do it for themselves. So what is the point? The point of meditating for him is to gain energy, and that energy will transform his being into omniscient clarity. Having reached omniscient clarity, his purpose is to show others the way to do the same. How is this possible? It is possible because we each already contain the information of the universe within us, we just don't always remember how to access it. We are whole parts within wholes.

Today most of us are familiar with the concept of DNA. Our DNA contains information that can tell us about the whole human race when read by an expert in the field. Any one of us contains millions of strands of these vital building plans. These tiny plans in turn form a living being. Each one of us literally has access to all that our ancestors have been and done up until the present. In turn, each one of us, when put together, form an even larger entity called humanity. All living creatures and the material around us put together form the Earth. The Earth put together with the Sun and the other planets form the Solar System. The Solar Systems form the Galaxy. The Galaxies form the Cosmos and the Cosmos the Universe. From the smallest to the largest, the integrated information of the whole is contained within any given unit.

That is why each of us is both a whole being and part of a larger whole at the same time. We are whole parts! The concept of whole parts is more easily understood today by modern society because of the advent of the internet and cell phones. The information of the whole can be gathered through any single computer or cell phone.

The internet provides all the knowledge that the world has put into it through many machines over time. If your computer and computer network is high quality, this knowledge and expression is accessible to you nearly instantaneously. If the computer or local network is not so good, or the country in which you live places restrictions on its content, the receiving is slow.

Likewise, your bodies and the societies in which you live can be compared to the processes of these computers and computer networks. You have access to the whole, and, in a sense, any point in time and space is the whole. Yet there are billions and trillions of parts, each making up the whole at the same time. When you add a photograph, an article or an opinion to the internet, the entire net is changed accordingly with the experience of the individual, and this enriches the whole even further.

We may also access the vast information contained within each one of us. Through meditation, we can become like the expert who can read DNA. When we clear the obstacles from our mind it is like optimizing the various components of your personal computer; the awareness of our contents and surroundings can be increased exponentially.

Here you can also better understand the need to discipline your mind. What do you get when you access the internet? Many people complain about spam, endless email, advertising, and rude imagery affronting their senses. Other people are addicted to mindless surfing. This is one reflection of the mind state of those who are creating the internet through their collective expression.

Yet there is a way to assure that the internet is used as an ideal expression of who we really are. That is by disciplining our use of it, by focusing on the goals we had in mind when we turn on our computers, and filtering out the information that makes us unhappy and restless. If we are feeling overwhelmed we need the discipline to stop what we are doing and regain our stability.

The discipline of meditation provides us with many techniques for regaining this homeostasis such as following the breath and expanding the field of present awareness. Likewise if we cultivate awareness, concentration, discipline and lack of attachment we can recognize discursiveness as it arises. We can optimize the contents of our mind to better access the ever-present Buddha Mind, or omniscient clarity. When we pay attention to each moment and each relationship, they all become opportunities for awakening.



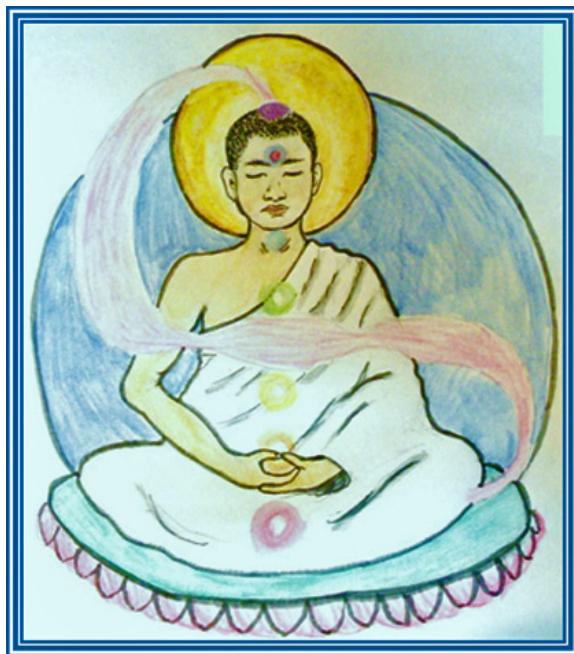
CHAPTER 28

Liberation

Palden Dorje says that he is meditating to rescue sentient beings from suffering. Many of us laugh and say that is not possible. What is one boy sitting under a tree going to do for the rest of us? Besides, even Palden Dorje said Buddhas can't purify other people, all they can do is teach!

Two hundred years ago, our world did not have a single light bulb. When Edison set out to make a light bulb, he failed so often that it took him years, and people said that it couldn't be done. But once the light bulb was created, you could say the whole Earth evolved, not because everybody became instantly able to make light bulbs for themselves, but because no one would have to go through the long process that Edison did to invent a light bulb from scratch again. It could be taught. The world then shone at night.

This is what Palden Dorje is doing on a spiritual scale. He is inventing the spiritual light bulb, which will shine in our souls and make everything clear. Although each of us will be responsible for obtaining that light bulb, he is going through this arduous process using the tools available to him, Tibetan Tantric knowledge. This will enable him to teach the process more easily without each one of us having to meditate for six to twenty years. But we don't have to wait until he has completed his journey to reap these fruits of knowledge. He is already calling us to join him in this expansive awareness. Once our spirits are clear of darkness, we will be liberated. What does liberation entail?



To be truly free, one must be free from the two greatest fears: suffering and death. Even in the spiritual realms, the greatest fears are confusion, suffering and birth. Confusion or murky awareness through the process of manifestation can cause a spirit to be almost glued into a dimension with no hope of escape unless it can change its patterns of awareness. This is why clarity over confusion is fundamental.

You remember the virtual ice cream cone? (Chapter 25) On the spirit planes, due to instant gratification, confusion could lead to very unpleasant experiences. Confusion is in fact the root of all suffering.

So, we can see that in disciplining the mind we focus on obtaining clarity. A disciplined mind lets the heart rule, and by the heart, I mean the center of communication with the Buddha Mind, the overall perspective. From the heart comes inner peace through clarity. Through clarity we lose our fears of suffering and death because we note the comparative brevity of these states when they arrive. Through clarity, our being exists beyond the states of birth, death and suffering, and confused attachment does not glue us to any undesirable realms of existence.

There are no pains from attachment in the heart, because the heart recognizes that it is already connected to everything as a whole part of the whole (Chapter 27), so there is nothing to become attached to. If there is nothing to become attached to, each situation is viewed correctly as a passing phase which poses no harm to the central being. Thus suffering is diminished. When death comes, this too is seen as a passing phase which poses no harm to the central being, and fear of death is eradicated. Once we truly understand this point then real freedom is close at hand.

CHAPTER 29

Compassion for Modern Society

The mother who sees her child crying because of sorrow inflicted by her own family is filled with remorse and compassion. She can remember when she was that child crying; crying because the world she knew and trusted was falling apart. The love her parents had for each other, the very foundation of the family, which she had taken for granted now revealed itself to have changed. Where could she turn? If there was no solidarity in her guardians; who could she trust?

Indeed here is the beginning of a great suffering, and yet the child shows great resilience as she regains her footing, she realizes that ultimately she must trust herself. Then a freedom is realized, and yet she has lost her mentors. Without a real teacher she is lost, and she struggles to make sense of the world around her.

So many people are in this situation today. It can be described as the great confusion, which leads to careless acts. Today there are more people whose senses have been dulled by such experiences in childhood. They comfort themselves by having ill-formed relationships that mirror the fall of their own family, by partaking in food that senselessly brings great suffering to other living creatures, and by further dulling their senses with chemical and visual stimulation.

In this society, movies, stars, money and drugs are worshipped. Yet how important are these things in truth? A brief meditation on these objects reveals them to be superficial and even deleterious to our lives. These things only end up enhancing our general confusion.

Can you feel all these crying children who then unwittingly set about on self-destructive paths? You can be the light to change this vicious circle.



In this way we can teach:

Not to kill animals

Not to kill time

Not to kill the mind

And through these precepts, we can deepen our respect for the world around us, and the world within us. Then we can change the negative above to the following affirmations:

I love my fellow creatures.

I am aware of each moment.

My mind follows my heart with accuracy.

CHAPTER 30

Meditating on the Heart Chakra

My little black hole in my chest was bothering me. As you might remember, I talked about the “hole” in my chest in chapter three. I see this as the core of human suffering created by the illusion of separation which causes this deep yearning to be connected, to be loved. Taking out a notebook, I wrote the following:

I have a pain in my heart – my heart chakra cries out in loneliness. Yet I know you are there to comfort me. My throat rises in tension as though it were about to cry, and the sides of my head toward the back pull in.

In my heart there is a heaviness. Again it is pulling in, like a black hole. I long to feel complete; I know I am complete; it just seems covered in this pulling feeling. What am I pulling? Why?

What is this longing to attach? Why am I attached to space? Oh, there is nothing that changes it. No, not even when I am with you, it is still there, what can mend this pulling?

If the pulling stopped, how would I feel?

Hush. More thinking will not solve the problem.

Leave it to me.

Let go... see?

It's gone!

And so it was!

CHAPTER 31

The Golden Hammer

Before I went to Nepal to see Palden Dorje for the first time, I wondered what kind of offering I should bring him, and again, being Catholic, I did not know what the Buddhist tradition might be. I wanted to give him something that would be definitely different and imbued with meaning. Then it came to my mind. I would give him what the three sages from the east gave Christ on his birthday: frankincense, gold and myrrh.

I am an aromatherapist, and, living in Japan, it seemed right that I should be coming from the east bearing these things. I procured a tiny bottle of frankincense and a tiny bottle of myrrh. What would I do for the gold? I looked around the room looking for some appropriate gold object. Opening a drawer, I saw a little gold Shinto hammer. It was a lucky charm that came with a little piece of paper with a fortune written on it that people drew from a box on New Year. There are several different kinds of charms, such as leaves, turtles, arrows and so forth. However this hammer was most appropriate because a dorje or vajra is also like a hammer used to chase away evil and bless people. Palden Dorje used his dorje to bless people. I read the fortune on it, and it talked about having a wide influence on people which was perfect, I thought. I decided that this hammer with the fortune was exactly what I wanted. So now I had my little bag with frankincense, gold and myrrh.

On the 13th of November, full moon, I presented my little bag to Palden Dorje. He accepted it silently and that was the end of it. Having returned to Japan, all my adventures in Nepal seem like some sort of magical dream. Yet this dream remains forever on my mind and Palden Dorje forever in my heart.

Yesterday, I found myself once again creating a little drama about Palden Dorje and I began to wonder what I had been in my past life that merited my meeting him. Palden Dorje seemed to be telling me not to wonder who I was. Had I already forgotten the Dorje drama I created? I vaguely wondered how many of these conversations I was making up or whether I could accept them just as they were... for some proof was always provided of their reality. As I took the subway I stared into the darkened window at my own reflection. Hmm, what shall I do about my hair, should I cut it or grow it out? I fell into a reverie about how I looked or should look. What kind of statement should my appearance make? Then I caught my ego trying to rebuild itself as the participant in a drama with the appropriate labels and accompanying costume. I turned away from the window and thought: don't try to make something of an illusion. I am but an essence, a continuum, and a corporeal life that begins and ends while the essence goes on. What could be better than that? I don't need you, Ego, and your endless layers of illusion. Get behind me. Silently I prayed that my ego would be crushed.

That afternoon, a customer came to me for an aromatherapy session. We discussed many things, and after about an hour or so, out of the blue, he said, "Here, take this." He handed me a little golden hammer. It was identical to the one I had given Palden Dorje! In my amazement, I stammered, "How on earth could you have known?" Much to my customer's surprise, I broke down into tears of gratitude.

Immediately after that I had a message from my dear friend Tapas from India. I responded and told him what I had just received. "A little gold hammer?", he wrote, "That is perfect for breaking the ego!"

CHAPTER 32

Farewell

When it came time to bid farewell to Palden Dorje for the last time, Sugma's little brother, Uman, Palden Dorje's little brother Shyam, and I were the last to leave that afternoon. Shyam went up to Palden Dorje and said, "Andrea is leaving." Palden Dorje nodded knowingly, and Shyam went under the great tree and emerged with a cream-colored kata with a knot tied in the end of it. Uman placed it around my neck and gave me the knot to hold in my hand. It contained soil.



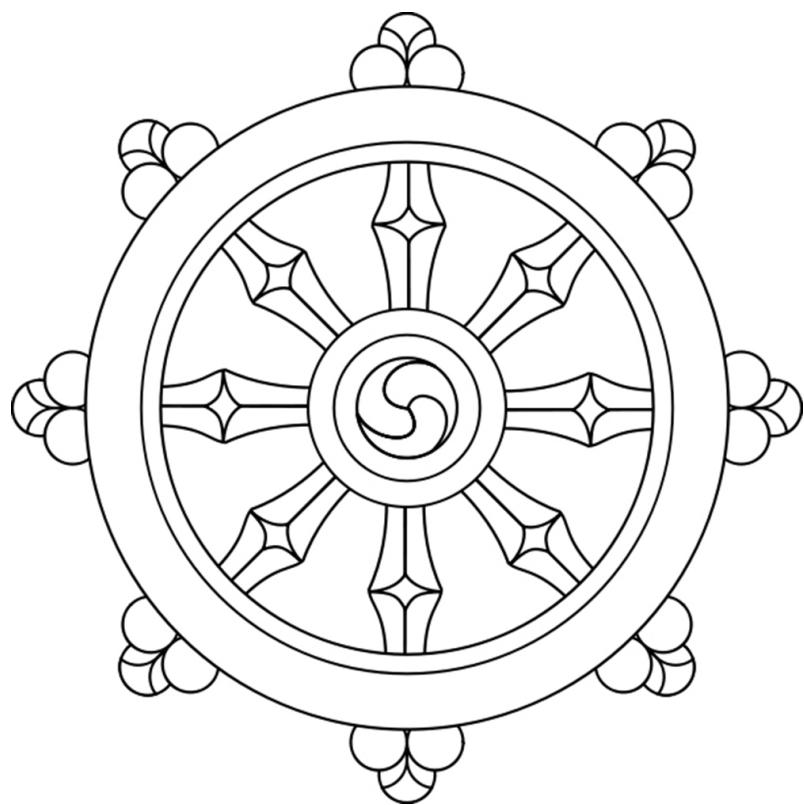
"This soil is from the old and new meditation sites," he explained. On this soil, Palden Dorje has sat for these three years."

"Thank you. Thank you so much."

Palden Dorje turned and looked at me for the last time, and I suddenly felt joy, not sorrow, for I heard in my heart,

"I am always with you."





APPENDIX 1

Palden Dorje Speeches

The following are a series of translations from Palden Dorje's known speeches as of the date of publication. The speeches have been translated from videos which are available online for all to see. There is no detailed transcript of these speeches currently available but rough translations were generously provided by Raju Mani Gurung and others. Additional text in this book was made possible through a community effort. Without this effort none of this would have been possible. However, these words have not been rigorously validated by scholars or experts and should not be viewed as an authoritative source. This text is either presented "as-is" or it has been "edited for clarity". We apologize in advance for any errors or omission that may be found here. Even though these translations are not perfect, we hope they can still help to illuminate some of the teachings that Palden Dorje has given. In the future, we hope to see a more complete presentation of this text for the benefit of all beings. We offer a sincere "thank you" to all the people who generously donated their time and energy to make these translations possible. Most of the original source materials can be found online. (paldendorje.com)

SPEECH GIVEN ON AUGUST 2, 2007

A Message of Peace to the World

*Bikram Sambat: 2064-04-17
Second meditation land,
Halkoriya, Bara, Nepal
Originally translated by Raju Mani Gurung*

MURDER, VIOLENCE, GREED, ANGER AND TEMPTATION HAVE MADE THE HUMAN WORLD A DESPERATE PLACE. A TERRIBLE STORM HAS DESCENDED UPON THE HUMAN WORLD, AND THIS IS CARRYING THE WORLD TOWARDS DESTRUCTION. THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO SAVE THE WORLD AND THAT IS THROUGH THE DHARMA, (*UNDERSTANDING THE COSMIC LAW OF EXISTENCE*). WHEN ONE DOESN'T WALK THE RIGHTEOUS PATH OF THE DHARMA, THIS DESPERATE WORLD WILL SURELY BE DESTROYED.

THEREFORE, FOLLOW THE PATH OF THE DHARMA AND SPREAD THIS MESSAGE TO YOUR FELLOWS. NEVER PUT OBSTACLES, ANGER AND DISBELIEF IN THE WAY OF MY MEDITATION'S MISSION. I AM ONLY SHOWING YOU THE WAY; YOU MUST SEEK IT ON YOUR OWN. WHAT I WILL BE, WHAT I WILL DO, THE COMING DAYS WILL REVEAL.

HUMAN SALVATION, THE SALVATION OF ALL LIVING BEINGS, AND PEACE IN THE WORLD ARE MY GOAL AND MY PATH. "NAMO BUDDHA SANGHAYA, NAMO SANGHAYA." I AM CONTEMPLATING THE RELEASE OF THIS CHAOTIC WORLD FROM THE OCEAN OF EMOTION, ON OUR DETACHMENT FROM ANGER AND TEMPTATION, WITHOUT STRAYING FROM THE PATH FOR EVEN A MOMENT. I AM RENOUNCING MY OWN ATTACHMENT TO MY LIFE AND MY HOME FOREVER. I AM WORKING TO SAVE ALL LIVING BEINGS. BUT IN THIS UNDISCIPLINED WORLD, MY LIFE'S PRACTICE IS REDUCED TO MERE ENTERTAINMENT.

THE PRACTICE AND DEVOTION OF MANY BUDDHAS ARE DIRECTED AT THE WORLD'S BETTERMENT AND HAPPINESS. IT IS ESSENTIAL BUT VERY DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND THAT PRACTICE AND DEVOTION. BUT THOUGH IT IS EASY TO LEAD THIS IGNORANT EXISTENCE, HUMAN BEINGS DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT ONE DAY WE MUST LEAVE THIS UNCERTAIN WORLD AND GO WITH THE LORD OF DEATH. OUR LONG ATTACHMENTS WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY WILL DISSOLVE INTO NOTHINGNESS. WE HAVE TO LEAVE BEHIND THE WEALTH AND PROPERTY WE HAVE ACCUMULATED. WHAT'S THE USE OF MY HAPPINESS, WHEN THOSE WHO HAVE LOVED ME FROM THE BEGINNING, MY MOTHER, FATHER, BROTHERS, AND RELATIVES ARE ALL UNHAPPY. THEREFORE, TO RESCUE ALL SENTIENT BEINGS, I HAVE TO REALIZE BUDDHA MIND AND EMERGE FROM MY UNDERGROUND CAVE TO PERFORM VAJRA MEDITATION. TO DO THIS I HAVE TO REALIZE THE RIGHT PATH AND KNOWLEDGE, SO DO NOT DISTURB MY PRACTICE.

MY PRACTICE DETACHES ME FROM MY BODY, MY SOUL AND THIS EXISTENCE. IN THIS SITUATION THERE WILL BE 72 GODDESS KALIS. DIFFERENT GODS WILL BE PRESENT, ALONG WITH THE SOUNDS OF THUNDER (TANGUR), AND ALL THE CELESTIAL GODS AND GODDESSES WILL BE PERFORMING THEIR WORSHIP (PUJA). SO UNTIL I HAVE SENT A MESSAGE, DO NOT COME HERE, AND PLEASE EXPLAIN THIS TO OTHERS. SPREAD THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE DHARMA AND RELIGIOUS MESSAGES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. SPREAD THE MESSAGE OF WORLD PEACE TO ALL. SEEK A RIGHTEOUS PATH AND WISDOM WILL BE YOURS.

SPEECH GIVEN ON OCTOBER 19, 2007
Command From the Bhagavan

*Bikram Sambat: 2064-07-02
Second meditation land,
Halkoriya, Bara, Nepal
Original translator unknown*

PRAYERS OF KUNCHU SUMA, THE THREE DIVINE BEINGS. PEACE AMONG ALL LIVING CREATURES. THIS MESSAGE IS DEDICATED TO THE SPIRITUAL WELFARE OF MANKIND. I SALUTE ALL RELIGIOUS SEEKERS, I SALUTE ALL MONKS, AND I SALUTE ALL RELIGIOUS SANGHA.

SINCE I HAVE RECEIVED A COMMAND FROM THE BHAGAVAN OF THE THREE JEWELS TO LIBERATE AND UPLIFT HUMANKIND AND THE CREATURES OF THE WORLD, I HAVE ABIDED BY THE PROMISE TO FREE THE TRANSIENT WORLD FROM THE OCEAN OF EMOTIONS, AND TO FREE THE WORLD FROM IGNORANCE; I HAVE BEEN CONTEMPLATING SINGLE MINDEDLY TO FREE HUMAN KIND AND ALL LIVING CREATURES.

ALL SENTIENT BEINGS WANT TO BE LIBERATED FROM WORLDLY SORROWS AND PAIN. BUT BY BIRTH THEY ARE NOT EQUIPPED AS HUMANKIND TO SEEK AFTER SPIRITUALITY AND BECOME FREE. THEY ARE ALSO PRAYING TO BHAGAVAN. THEY ARE GLAD TO BE IN THIS WORLD. HUMANKIND ARE CREATING TRADITIONS THAT WILL DESTROY THE ENTIRE HUMANITY AND LIVING CREATURES. IN THE NAME OF RELIGION; KILLINGS, VIOLENCE, ANGER, JEALOUSY AND DIVISIONS ARE BEING PROMOTED.

THERE IS ONLY ONE ATMA (*HIGHER SELF*); THIS HAS ONE FORM; THE HIGHER SELF OF ALL HUMANS IS THE SAME, ONLY THE TRADITION AND CUSTOMS ARE DIFFERENT. ALWAYS EMBRACE THE PATH OF MERCY, COMPASSION, NON-VIOLENCE, PEACE; THIS IS THE MESSAGE I WANT TO CONVEY TO OUR SOCIETY AND TO ALL THE CITIZENS OF THE WORLD.

A TRUE DHARMA, THE TRUE HUMAN DHARMA, WILL ALWAYS SEARCH FOR TRUTH. THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH IS THE ONLY BENEFICIAL WAY OF HUMANS. DESPITE THE EXISTENCE OF THOUSANDS OF PATHS; CHAOS, GREED, ATTACHMENT, ANGER, AND JEALOUSY HAVE IMPRISONED OUR SOCIETY AND HUMANKIND. IN THIS WAY THE WORLD IS HEADING TOWARDS DESTRUCTION. SO IT IS HIGH TIME THAT THE CITIZENS OF THE WORLD TAKE THIS INTO CONSIDERATION. HUMANS SHOULD NEVER FORGET THEIR ULTIMATE RELIGIOUS DUTY AND THEIR SOCIETY. REFRAIN FROM KILLING, VIOLENCE, GREED, JEALOUSY, ATTACHMENT AND EVIL CHARACTER. SHED THE TEARS OF MERCY AND COMPASSION; SHOW THE WORLD THE WAY OF LIBERATION.

AFTER WE DIE IT IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO RETURN TO A HUMAN LIFE. PEOPLE THINK THAT WE DON'T REINCARNATE AFTER DEATH. NO, WE RECEIVE A HUMAN LIFE DUE TO OUR VIRTUOUS WORK. WE EARN THE FRUITS DUE TO THE MERITS OF OUR WORK. NOW THE WORLD IS GOVERNED BY THREE FORMS. THE FIRST FORM IS GREED; THE SECOND FORM IS ANGER; THE THIRD FORM IS ATTACHMENT AND JEALOUSY THAT ARE RULING THIS WORLD. MAY ALL THE RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS CHANGE. ALL THE RELIGIOUS PEOPLE NEED TO FIRST FIND THE TRUTH, AND BY CULTIVATING MERCY, COMPASSION, NON-VIOLENCE, AND PEACE IN THEIR HEARTS, THEY NEED TO BEAUTIFY THE WORLD WITH THE WAY OF LIBERATION.

I WILL CONTINUE TO CONTEMPLATE AND MEDITATE ON THE LIBERATION OF LIVING BEINGS BY BEING FOCUSED IN MY PATH OF WISDOM UNTIL I FIND THE ULTIMATE FORM OF ENLIGHTENMENT, THE SAMYAK SAMBODHI.

I PRAISE THE ULTIMATE FORM OF ENLIGHTENMENT. MAY ALL BEINGS BE HAPPY.

SPEECH GIVEN NOVEMBER 10, 2008

Opening Speech for the 2008 Puja

Bikram Sambat: 2065-07-25

Second meditation land,

Halkoriya, Bara, Nepal

Translation by Andrea Good from the original texts provided by Rajukumari Bomjan with the cooperation of various members knowledgeable in Nepali and Sanskrit from the Palden Dorje Google Group and approved by the Tapoban Samiti run site: paldendorje.com

GREAT, GREAT VEHICLE OF VEHICLES

I TAKE REFUGE IN THE GREATEST OF ALL DHARMAS.

I TAKE REFUGE IN ALL THE MONKS

I TAKE REFUGE IN THE SANGHA OF ALL RELIGIONS

I GREET AND ALSO TAKE REFUGE IN ALL BUDDHA LINEAGES.

WATCHING FOR A FAVORABLE OPPORTUNITY, NOTING EACH SOCIETY, THE MENTAL STATE, THE COUNTRIES OF THE INHABITANTS AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN ORDER TO LIVE A LIFE OF DEVOTION AND PENANCE WITH THE INTENTION OF ATTAINING PEACE; I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DEDICATE MY OWN LIVING BODY AND WHOLE LIFE FOR THE SAKE OF SUFFERING SENTIENT BEINGS.

ONE DAY, IT WAS AN AUSPICIOUS DAY, AT WHICH TIME HE WAS SIX OR SEVEN YEARS OLD. THIS BOY CAME TO BE OBSERVANT OF SKILLFUL CONTEMPLATION. THAT DAY AT THE REQUEST OF THE GOD OF SLEEP, THERE APPEARED TO THE BOY A MAN IN A WHITE ROBE WHO WAS WAITING FOR HIM. HE HAD A WHITE COLORED BODY. RAYS OF LIGHT CAME FORTH FROM HIS BODY. THE GREAT MAN COMING FORTH GAVE A DARSHAN.

"HUMAN CHILD, YOU HAVE COME HERE TO SEE ME.."?" THE VISION OF THE GREAT MAN ADVANCING REMAINED WITH THE BOY. HAVING GIVEN THE DARSHAN, HE ASKED, "BOY, WHY HAVE YOU COME? WHO ARE YOU?" HE (THE BOY) WAS CALLED TO TELL THEM. SO THE BOY GAVE AN ANSWER. HE HAD GROWN TO BE A POWERFUL MEDITATOR IN THE TIME OF HIS PAST LIFE. AND THEN WHEN THE BOY WAS ABOUT EIGHT OR NINE YEARS OLD, A MIRACULOUS SCENE TOOK PLACE.

FURTHER FROM THE VILLAGE IN ANOTHER VILLAGE THERE WAS A DWELLING OF THAARU FAMILIES. ONE CORPSE WAS BROUGHT OUT FOR CREMATION FROM THAT PLACE IN THE VILLAGE TO THE BANK OF A SMALL RIVER. THE BOY WAS ROAMING NEARBY TOGETHER WITH A GROUP OF FRIENDS. SUDDENLY THE BOY CAUGHT SIGHT OF THE FUNERAL PYRE'S BLAZING FIRE. AT THE FUNERAL PYRE HE SAW A VISION OF LUMINOUS LIGHT WHICH APPEARED FORTH FROM THE CORPSE AND PENETRATED THE SKY. THE LIGHT WAS BLAZING IN YELLOW AND GREEN COLORED FLAMES. DAY BY DAY THE BOY BEGAN TO CONTEMPLATE MORE AND MORE THAT LIBERATION WOULD BE ACHIEVED AFTER DEATH IN THE SAME MANNER. THE INSIGHT OF THE PAST MEDITATION WAS ALSO DEVELOPED, AND THE LUSTROUS LIGHT OF THE CORPSE THAT HAD APPEARED ABOVE THE FUNERAL PYRE AND THE INSIGHT OF THE PAST MEDITATION REMAINED BLAZING IN HIS MEMORY DAY AND NIGHT.

GRADUALLY, AFTER UNDERSTANDING THE PATH OF MEDITATION, THE NEED TO BE ALONE IN A SOLITARY PLACE WAS INCURRED. IN THE BEGINNING, STARTING FROM THE SEVENTH CHAKRA REACHING UP TO THE BRAHMA CHAKRA, KLESHA (THE POISONS) AND MARA (EVIL) WERE DESTROYED AND INVISIBLE LIGHTS ENTERED INTO THE BODY. THE KNOWLEDGE OF MAITRI OF LOK (THE WORLD) AND ALOK (SPACE) HAS BEEN GAINED. UNLESS THERE IS AN ORDER TO GIVE THE KNOWLEDGE OF LOK AND ALOK TO THE BEINGS OF THIS WORLD FROM THE OMNISCIENT (PARAMATMA) WORLD HONORED ONE, THIS WILL NOT HAPPEN. FOR THE SAKE OF THIS WORLD I HAVE TAKEN THE FORM OF A BODHISATTVA AND AM REFRAINING FROM UNWHOLESOME DEEDS WHILE KEEPING THOUGHTS OF LOVING COMPASSION IN MY MIND, BEING CONSCIOUS OF SPEECH, NOURISHING THE SEVEN VIRTUES, STAYING AWAY FROM LUSTFUL DESIRE AND GREED AND KEEPING THE DHARMA.

THROUGH A VISION DURING MEDITATION, ONCE AGAIN, THE WORLD HONORED ONE (BHAGAVAN) SPOKE THIS COMMAND, "THIS TROUBLED WORLD STILL REMAINS IN IGNORANCE DUE TO DESIRE, GREED, TEMPTATION, AND JEALOUSY AND IS UNABLE TO GENERATE A COMPASSIONATE MENTAL STATE. HUMANKIND HAS CREATED POLICIES AND CUSTOMS WHICH ARE DESTROYING THE

DESCENDANTS OF HUMANS AND THE WORLD SOUL FORM. LET US HELP TO GUIDE (THEM) TO THE PATH OF PEACE." FOR THE SOUL FORM OF THE WORLD AND ALL SENTIENT BEINGS THE FIRST AIM IS TO RENOUNCE THE ESSENCE OF ONE'S OWN BODY, THE SELF AND ONE'S VOICE IN ORDER TO TAME THE MIND AND SPEECH BY DOING THE MANY ASANAS OF THE DHARMA WHILE ALWAYS BEING OF ONE MIND WITH THE DHARMA WHICH BENEFITS HUMANKIND OBSERVING WORLD PEACE FOR THE WELFARE OF ALL SENTIENT BEINGS.

I WILL ALWAYS SHOW THE PURE WAY BY DAILY ACTIONS OF GOOD CONDUCT, DHARMA AND MERIT. I ALWAYS TAKE REFUGE IN THE LIBERATOR. IN MY MEDITATION I AM CONTEMPLATING THE STATE OF WORLDLY WORRIES OF ALL CONSCIOUS BEINGS OF IMPERMANENT BIRTH BETWEEN THE EARTH AND SKY WHO LINGER IN THE OCEAN OF EMOTION. YET ALL SENTIENT BEINGS FORGET THAT THEY ARE UNDER THE SWAY OF WORRIES. BY GENERATING FEELINGS FROM THE HEART OF LOVE, COMPASSION, NON-VIOLENCE AND COMPANIONSHIP (MAITRI BHAVANA) ESTABLISHED IN PATIENCE AND DISCRIMINATION, I WILL CHANGE ALL THE WORLD AND LIVING CREATURES FOR THE BETTER, AND GUIDE THEM TO LIBERATION AND SALVATION.

IT IS NOT THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO KNOWLEDGE OF THE NOBLE TRUTHS THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSE FOR THE BENEFIT AND WELFARE OF ALL SENTIENT BEINGS. POLICIES, TRADITIONS AND RELIGIONS CHANGE AND ARE BEING CHANGED BY ALL BEINGS OF NOBLE DESCENT (THIS COULD ALSO BE A GENERAL REFERENCE TO RELIGIOUS LEADERS.)

ALL BEINGS OF NOBLE DESCENT ARE BEING LEAD TO DIVISION BY THE WORLD WITH THE WRONG FORMS OF POLICIES, TRADITIONS AND RELIGIONS. THAT IS WHY YOU NEED TO ACCEPT THE GOOD POLICY, STOP THE WRONG TRADITIONS AND CONSERVE ALL FORMS OF RELIGION.

THE FACE OF THE HUMAN EARTH IS ONE. THE ELEMENT AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUPREME SOUL IS ONE. THE WHOLE WORLD IS RELIANT ON THE SAME (SINGLE) ELEMENT. THAT SAME ELEMENT IS GOING TO DESTROY THE WORLD AND SAVE IT ... IF THE RIGHT GUIDANCE OF TRUTH IS ACCEPTED BY EVERYONE, THEN WE CAN LIGHT THE CANDLE OF PEACE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD PEOPLE WILL TOUCH EACH OTHERS' FEELINGS FROM ONE TO THE NEXT. I WILL GUIDE THE BEINGS OF THIS WORLD WITH MERCY AND COMPASSION FOR THEIR BENEFIT SO THAT HUMAN BEINGS UNDERSTAND THIS FEELING OF LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP (MAITRI) AND ARE FREED FROM THEIR THIRST AND ATTACHMENT BORN FROM IGNORANCE.

POLICIES AND CUSTOMS MADE FOR HUMANS BY HUMANS ARE DESTROYING HUMAN BEINGS, THEIR DESCENDANTS ALONG WITH THE WORLDLY SOUL FORM OF SENTIENT LIFE. SUFFERING IS IGNITED BY TEMPTATION AND HUNGER CONTINUES. BECAUSE OF WORLDLY GREED SUFFERING OCCURS. BEARING THE BURDEN OF SIN, THEY REMAIN RESTLESS AND IN AGONY. WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR HUMANS TO SUFFER? THERE IS A DILEMMA IN UNDERSTANDING WHAT THE REASON OF SUFFERING IS. WE ALSO DON'T WANT TO HAVE THE EXPERIENCE OF SUFFERING. THERE IS NOTHING IN THIS TRANSIENT WORLD THAT IS WITHOUT SOME FORM OF SUFFERING. ONE CANNOT BE HUMAN WITHOUT SUFFERING AFTER SUFFERING FROM BIRTH TO DEATH. SUFFERING HUMANS, BEING UNABLE TO FORGET OR RENOUNCE THOUGHTS OF LUST, SPEND THEIR WHOLE LIVES IN THE SUFFERING WORLD. THEREFORE, IN A WORLD RULED BY LAWS FILLED WITH THE INJUSTICE AND LIES, PEOPLE STRUGGLE WITH THOUGHTS OF DESIRE FOR PLEASURE. LIKEWISE, IN THE WORLD IT IS A DIFFICULT

THING TO LIVE BY THE DHARMA AND TAKE UP THE PATH FOR THE GOOD OF HUMANKIND. BUT WITH RELIGIONS, WHEN HUMANS DEPEND ON BLIND FAITH IT TURNS INTO EMOTIONAL DESIRE AND GOES INTO A CEASELESS WHIRLPOOL. FOR THE GOOD OF ALL BEINGS WHO REMAIN WEEPING WITHIN THIS OCEAN OF EMOTION, AS A BODHISATTVA, I WILL ALWAYS BE KEEPING THEM IN MIND, PRACTICING MEDITATION AND PENANCE AND WAITING FOR ALL THE BEINGS OF THE WORLD TO BECOME ENLIGHTENED.

MAY ALL BEINGS BE HAPPY.

SPEECH GIVEN NOVEMBER 22, 2008
Closing Speech for the 2008 Puja

*Bikram Sambat: 2065-08-07
Second meditation land,
Halkoriya, Bara, Nepal
Original translation by Mukesh Lama*

I HAVE TAKEN REFUGE IN GREAT GREAT VEHICLE KNOWN AS YAMPA DHARMA. I HAVE TAKEN REFUGE IN ALL MONKS. I HAVE TAKEN REFUGE IN THE SANGHA.

ALL SENTIENT BEINGS ARE IMPERMANENT. ALL PRESENT THINGS ARE IMPERMANENT. TRANSITORY INTELLECTUAL FORMS ARE RICH ONLY IN APPEARANCE. FROM THE CREATION OF HUMANITY, AND FOR ALL SENTIENT BEINGS, EVERYONE IS SUBJECT TO BIRTH, OLD AGE, DEATH, AND THE CYCLES OF IMPERMANENT EXISTENCE.

NOBODY CAN STOP THIS.

THE WORLD KNOWS THE PRESENT FORM, PAST FORM, ARHAT SOUL FORM, SUPREME BEING FORM, NON BEING FORM. THESE FORMS HAVE ALREADY MADE THE WORLD UNSTEADY. THE TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF MAITRI (LOVING KINDNESS) HAS NOT BEEN RECOGNIZED. THE SOUL MAITREYA KNOWLEDGE HAS ITS OWN GUIDANCE. BUT THE WAY OF THE WORLD IS NOT THE TRUTH OF THE SUPREME BEING. IT HAS NOT CHANGED IT'S PHILOSOPHY IN IT'S ESSENCE. BUT ALL PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION IS TALKING ABOUT THE SAME THING.

ALL HUMAN BEINGS HAVE NOT YET BEEN UNABLE TO ACHIEVE REALIZATION, REGARDLESS OF THEIR RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY (VEDA). SOME HAVE KEPT THE PRACTICES, SOME HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING THE RELIGIOUS GUIDELINES (VEDA) AND THEIR WHOLE LIFE WAS REPENTANCE. BUT IN ALL RELIGIOUS TEXT YOU WILL FIND A DIFFERENT PATH WHILE THEY HAVE THE SAME FORM IN ESSENCE. THOSE WHO GET GUIDANCE WILL BE SUBMERGED IN PRACTICAL AND SELFISH ATTITUDE.

BUT THE REAL GLORY BETWEEN SOUL AND SUPER SOUL WILL NEVER END. IF THE MAITRI KNOWLEDGE BETWEEN THE SOUL AND SUPER SOUL IS RECOGNIZED THE WRONG KARMA ELEMENT OF THE WORLD CAN BE DESTROYED. BUT THE WORLD IS SUBMERGED IN ITS OWN SELFISH AIM AND NOBODY CAN KEEP THE SEARCH OF SOUL AND THE SUPER SOUL (PARAMATMA) IN THEIR HEART.

TODAY THE WORLD IS IN NEED OF NON-VIOLENCE AND GUIDANCE IN THE FORM OF KINDNESS AND COMPASSION (MAITRI). THIS IS DIFFICULT TO FIND ANYWHERE. TODAY THE WORLD IS FRIGHTENED, TERRORIZED AND RESTLESS IN THE NAME OF MATERIALISM. IF THIS GENERATION OF WAR IS TO BE CHANGED, THE WORLD WILL NEED TO LEARN THE PATH OF MEDITATION (DHYANA MARGA).

I WILL BRING TO LIGHT THOUSANDS OF BUDDHIST TEXTS, BUDDHIST GUIDANCE THROUGH MEDITATION. IN TODAY'S WORLD, THE COMPASSIONATE UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN SOUL AND THE SUPER SOUL IF FADING AWAY. THERE IS WEAKNESS, AND PEOPLE HAVE LOST RESPECT FOR EACH OTHER. THERE IS LESS AND LESS SPIRITUAL DEVOTION BECAUSE WE ARE IN THE KALI YUGA. BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE CHASING AFTER MOMENTARY HAPPINESS THE COMPASSIONATE (MAITRI) FEELING BETWEEN SOUL AND THE SUPER SOUL HAS ALREADY BEEN FORGOTTEN. ALL MOMENTARY ADDICTION TO FORM PHILOSOPHY AND MATERIAL FORM PHILOSOPHY WILL LEAVE RELIGION PHILOSOPHY ONE DAY. BUT THE REPENTANCE OF OUR WHOLE LIFE WILL BECOME THE BLUE SKY FORM THAT COMES AFTER DEATH.

IF WE HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE OF MAITRI BETWEEN THE SOUL AND SUPER SOUL, BECAUSE OF ONE'S SPIRITUAL POWER, THE SUBTLE KNOWLEDGE CAN BE SEEN AFTER DEATH. I HAVE GAINED WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING THROUGH THE DIFFICULT PRACTICE OF MEDITATION. THE KNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE GAINED THROUGH DEDICATION WILL BE IMPROVED UPON BY PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE AS I PROGRESS.

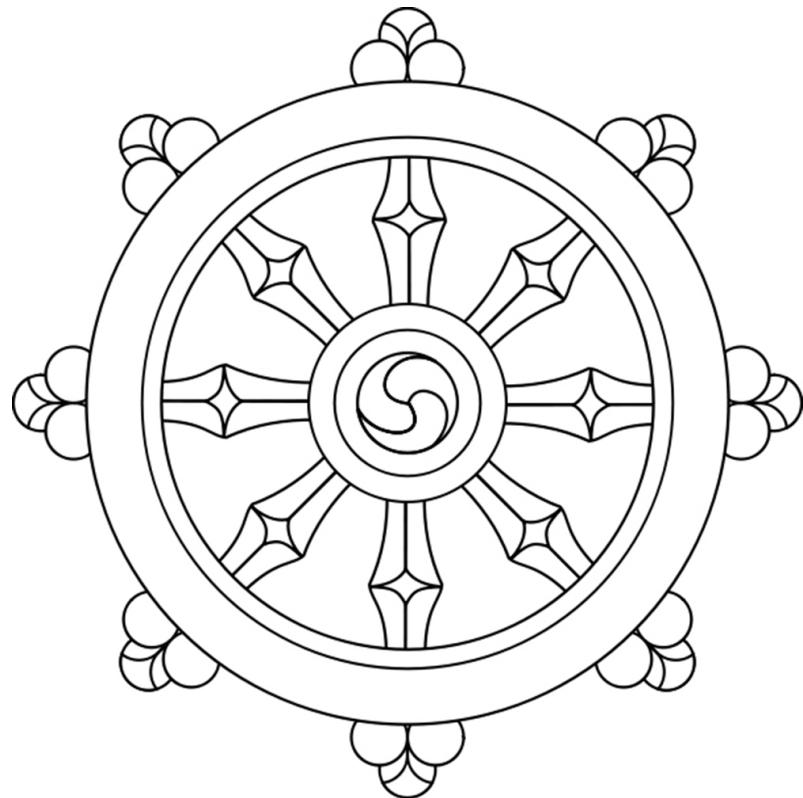
TO LIBERATE ALL SENTIENT BEINGS AS WELL AS TO SHOW THE WORLD THE WAY TO PEACE FOR ALL HUMAN BEINGS, MONKS, LEARNED MASTERS (KHEMPO), AND DHARMA FOLLOWERS, I WILL SPEAK ABOUT THE MAITRI KNOWLEDGE FORM OF PHILOSOPHY. UNTIL THERE IS ENLIGHTENED WISDOM BETWEEN ALL SENTIENT BEINGS, I HAVE ALREADY DEDICATED MY LIFE FOR THE SAKE OF HELPLESS SENTIENT BEINGS. THIS MAHAYAN, OR MAHA YAMPA DHARMA, IS NOT ONLY FOR MYSELF BUT IT IS FOR THE LIBERATION OF ALL HELPLESS BEINGS.

I HAVE BEEN MEDITATING WITH A LOT OF DIFFICULTY AND I HAVE BECOME THE GURU OF ALL DHARMAS, OR THE FIRST DHARMA OF ALL, WHICH IS SRAWAN DHARMA. SECONDLY, IS THE REALIZATION OF THE DHARMA OF THE BODHISATTVA, WHICH MEANS I HAVE BECOME THE GURU TO LIBERATE ALL HELPLESS BEINGS. I WILL HELP TO LIBERATE HUNDREDS OF JIMPHEN BUDDHA, WHICH MEANS MANIFESTING THE MAITREYA BUDDHA. HUNDRED JIMPHEN SEMKOI MEANS LIBERATING ALL THE SENTIENT BEINGS WHO HAVE THE FEELING OF MAITRI. THIS IS THE SECOND FORM OF PHILOSOPHY, MAHA YAMPA DHARMA, OR MAHAYAN YANIK.

WHILE LOOKING AT THE FORM PHILOSOPHY OF THE WHOLE WORLD FROM MEDITATION PHILOSOPHY POINT OF VIEW THE INSTANCE FORM WILL BE IMPROVED AND CHANGED. WHILE

CHANGING THE WHOLE SENTIENT BEINGS DON'T BE UNSATISFIED OR DO EVIL DEEDS. THIS IS THE FORM PHILOSOPHY OF THE WHOLE WORLD WHICH KEEPS CHANGING. IF PROPERLY GUIDED, HELPLESS SENTIENT BEINGS CAN BE LIBERATED. IF PROPER GUIDANCE FOR LIBERATION AND SIDDHI IS PROVIDED, THE WORLDLY KNOWLEDGE THAT LIBERATES THE HELPLESS SENTIENT BEINGS CAN BE REALIZED. THIS IS THE NON-SOUL (ANATMAN) MAITRI KNOWLEDGE WHICH LIBERATES AND GIVES MIRACULOUS POWER.

RIDDI SIDDHI - MAY ALL BEINGS BE HAPPY.



APPENDIX 2

A Tamang Biography of Palden Dorje

This is a document that was compiled by Sugma Waiba, Singha Yomjan, and Andrea Good in early 2008 for the paldendorje.com website.

INTRODUCTION

Praise to Om Namo Guru Buddha Gyani, Palden Dorje, who is now in his third year of meditation in the jungle of Bara District in Nepal.

The blessed Guru was born on the 9th of April, 1990 in the village of Ratanpuri, Bara District not far from Lumbini, the birthplace of the great Buddha Shakyamuni. He was born a Tamang, descendant of the Tamang Lamas who were renowned for their ability to go for long periods without food while receiving their prana through the practice of meditation. Legend has it that the Tamang lamas could fly and talk to trees, animals and birds. The lamas would befriend wild animals such as tigers, lions, bears and snakes and remain unharmed by them.

Blessings are bestowed upon Maya Devi Tamang, mother of Tamang Tulku Rinpoche, Ram Bahadur Bomjon. She has been the means of making the people of Nepal and of the world fortunate to witness the birth of such an incarnation as only occurs once in thousands of years.

BIOGRAPHY

Family and Childhood

Guru's parents are farmers. His mother, Maya Devi was married at 12. She had 5 sons and 4 daughters. Guru was her third son. When she was in her pregnancy, she found she was unable to eat meat without becoming ill. Guru, whom she named Ram, would not eat meat. He would leave the house for long intervals from an early age. Guru was always pleased to see a lama or a holy person and fastidiously imitated them. He often seemed to be lost in thought and spoke little. Whenever someone spoke to him, he would reply with a smile and would treat people of all ages equally.

School and Religious Education

He took his studies seriously and rarely played with other children, choosing instead to remain alone. Guru refused to fight, and was always calm. He spent his time reading scriptures, meditating and worshipping the pipal tree which seemed to bring him joy.

Seeing this behavior, Guru's father sent him to study the scriptures of Lama Chhyoi with Samden Lama in their village. After that Guru decided to embrace a religious life. He was taken to be educated by Som Bahadur Lama who lived at Sudha. Som Bahadur Lama said the following of his ward:

"He was obedient. He never said 'no' to my word. He was friendly and sociable and he received education in that manner. He used to say frequently that his attention was much more drawn towards meditation than towards reading books."

He was granted the initiation of "Pancasila." In Sanskrit, this word means "five principles", or virtues. In Buddhism, it is a initiation consisting of five vows. These fundamental vows are taken by both lay practitioners and monastics alike. They are as follows:

1. One must not kill animals (it is preferable to be vegetarian).
2. One must not steal.
3. One must not lie.
4. One must not think negatively about others.
5. One must not take intoxicating substances.

Guru was initiated along with a group of nine other students. Guru refused to have his hair cut before the initiation, which was the common custom. It was after this initiation that Guru began to use the name, "Palden Dorje."

It was the custom for the initiates to meditate for up to a month in a cave. Som Bahadur Lama was surprised at the ease with which Guru seemed to adapt to the situation requiring little sustenance. It was then that he realized that the boy had a natural talent for deep and prolonged meditation.

After completing his Buddhist education for two years, all nine initiates went to Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha, for sightseeing. Palden Dorje seemed utterly taken by this place and it seemed to deepen his religious resolve. The other eight initiates returned but he refused to return. Instead, he went to Dehradun to further his religious education with the Gurus of Dehradun and later returned to the beautiful lakeside city of Pokhara.

Illness

Here it was that Guru became ill, and was unable to move his lower body. Distressed, his teachers sent him home to recover. During this time, Guru implored his family not to sacrifice any animals or take any alcohol otherwise further complications would arise. He got better, but was still limping when he disappeared from his home the night of May 16, 2005.

Guru Disappears

When his mother became aware of the situation, she alerted the village, and everyone joined in the search for him. A local boy claimed to have seen him when he was shaking a mango tree. Guru had come up and picked up a mango, and stepped fully clothed into the river.

“I thought you had disappeared,” the boy remarked to Guru.

“Have I?” Guru replied. “You’d better go home, and be careful not to touch me.”

The boy ran home to tell his story, but nobody believed him at first. Guru’s relatives went to the ravine. Guru smiled at them when they found him as was his habit. They told him to come home.

“I’ll go home at four o’clock.” Guru said.

His family decided it would be wise to keep an eye on him, and so some of his siblings stayed with him. At four o’clock, he picked up a couple of mangoes and began to eat one. He told his little brother to bring him water, rice, his lama robes, a rosary and a picture of Buddha. His little brother obeyed. Guru’s sister came to tell Guru to come home at once. Seeing how emaciated he looked from his previous illness, she cried and begged him to come home. Guru told her to stop crying, and she went home.

Meditation Begins

Then Guru, sitting in a meditative posture seemed to go into a trance. He began to ask himself questions and answer them out loud. The other villagers came and told Guru to stop being silly and come home. They feared he must be ill or crazy. When Guru’s older brother touched him, Guru’s body became exceedingly hot and turned red.

"Please leave me alone, or one of us may die." Guru said. "If anyone disturbs me or my things at midnight, I will have to meditate for 20 years, but if all goes well, I will meditate for 6 years."

Then Guru, followed by his brother, and at a distance by the villagers set out to find a good meditation place in the forest. His parents insisted he take some food and water with him. Finally, he reached his destination at 11:00 AM on May 18, 2005. This was the day the villagers of Ratanpuri celebrated Buddha Jayanti. He settled himself under a pipal tree, having offered 10 kinds of fruit to the picture of Buddha.

About 30 villagers saw where Guru was meditating, and they left an offering of over a thousand rupees as was the custom at Buddha Jayanti. On that night at 12:00, some pranksters came to disturb Guru and steal the offering. They quarreled over the money, and later accused each other later in front of the villagers. Having confessed, they asked Guru's forgiveness.

So Guru left the first meditation place and went north on the 24th of May, 2005. At that time he gave six pipal leaves to his second elder brother telling him to keep them in oil. He said that as long as his family kept the leaves, all would be well. His relatives cried when he left.

Again the villagers were concerned about Guru's whereabouts, and in the late afternoon, a cowherd had seen him in his new meditation site. The villagers sent some of his family to go and bring him home. But Guru refused and moved to another pipal tree in the east.

Guru told his family that he must continue to meditate at all costs. He drew a boundary around his meditation area, and the villagers and his relatives built a fence for him. More and more crowds gathered at the site, so Guru ordered that a hut be built and sealed with plastic on all sides wherein he remained for 15 days. After that Guru said, "I have received some energy so that I may now meditate under a tree outside." Then there was a terrible drought in the village. Guru told them to pray to a snake god and after 5 days, it started raining.

In the 75th day of meditation, he opened the eyes and asked his elder brother to call him by the words "Om Namo Buddha Gyani". He returned to his meditation. Since that day he was addressed as "Om Namo Buddha Gyani" (Salute to the one who knows Buddha.)

On August 18, 2005, Guru called together his friends who were lamas. They asked him how it was that Guru was surviving without water. Guru replied that two snake gods protected him from either side. That day Guru also changed his clothes and wore a white cloth called Ngag.

Shesha Naga and the Snakebite

On November 6, 2005 the snake god Shesha Naga granted Guru an audience that Guru might achieve the level of a Bodhisattva. Shesha Naga then bit Guru and Guru's body was poisoned. Guru sweated more than two liters while he continued to meditate, and thus he overcame the poison. Guru's followers believe that on that day he was enlightened, for the Bodhisattva has the ability to survive attached to a tree, soil and stone, to digest snake poison, to be unaffected by the wind and to understand the language of all creatures.

On November 8, 2005, Guru told the people that he did not have the energy of a Buddha, and he asked them not to publicize him as an incarnation of Buddha. On November 11, 2005 a bright light appeared shining from Guru's head. His followers cried with joy and became even more fervent.

"Leave me in peace, and there will soon be peace in the country," Guru said.

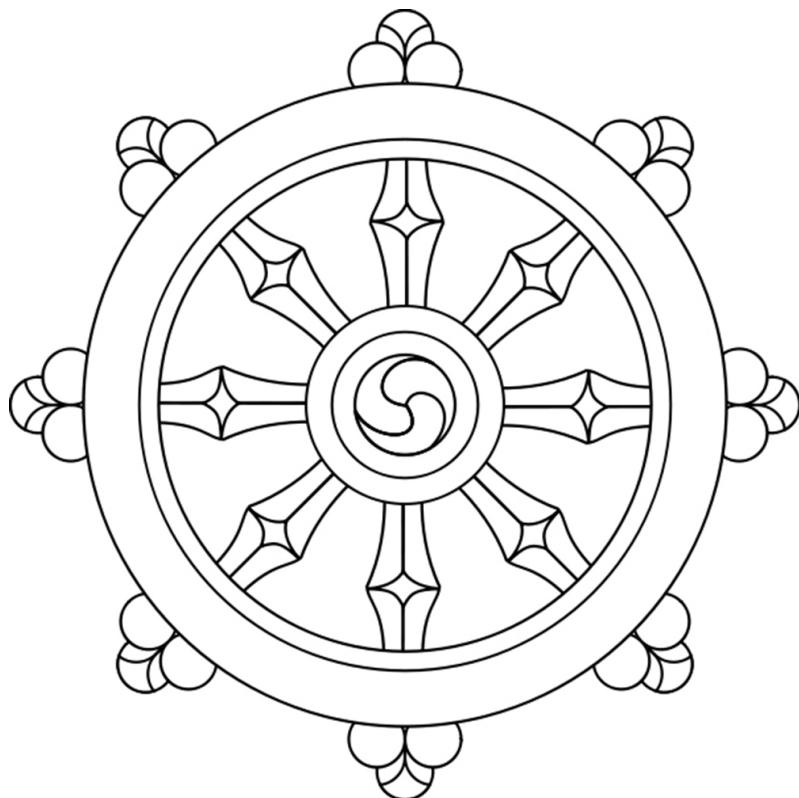
However crowds ever increased and people chanted and set up a market place, according to Radio HBC 94 FM who visited the site on December 10, 2005. The crowds were kept at a distance of about 50 meters. All witnesses claimed that Guru neither ate, drank nor left to relieve himself. He just sat and meditated under the pipal tree. Baffled onlookers were ever increasing. There were stories of miracles: a girl and a young man had gained the power of speech although they could not speak since birth.

The Underground Meditation

On March 11, 2006 Guru disappeared from the site leaving his clothes behind. At first, everyone feared he had been abducted. However, he was found on December 25, 2006. "There was no peace." Guru said. "I have been wandering in the forests since then. I am engaged in devotion which will continue for 6 years." After returning to his meditation site for a couple of months, he again disappeared on the 11th of March, 2007. Two weeks later, he was found again. He asked his followers to build him a meditation area underground. He meditated there for 3 months before resurfacing to make a speech.

Since then, Guru has continued to meditate and is now in his third year. He gave audience and blessed his devotees with a vajra toward the end of October 2007. A chorten has also been completed under his direction near his present meditation site in February of 2008. This was made in thanks for the siddhis that Guru received.

Om Namo Guru Buddha Gyani



BIOS

Palden Dorje

Palden Dorje, born Ram Bahadur Bomjan on April 10, 1990 in Ratanpuri, a village in Bara District, Nepal. His mother, Maya Devi Tamang, married at age 12 and migrated to the Terai region in 1972. She gave birth to 5 boys and 4 girls. Palden Dorje is the third son. He became a monk during his elementary school years. After his first excursion to Lumbini in 2004 he went to study at a Sakya Monastery in northern India. In early 2005 he furthered his studies at Pokhara and returned home after a paralyzing illness. At his recovery, he began his six-year meditation in the Halkoriya Jungle on May 16, 2005.

Andrea Good

Andrea Good was born in California to a German mother and a British father, Jack Good, who at the time was a rock and roll musical producer. Andrea graduated from the University of New Mexico with a degree in Anthropology. She has traveled and studied abroad extensively including Mexico, Japan, France, Spain and China. She moved to Hokkaido, Japan with her Japanese husband and has two children. She has taught English for 20 years and Aromatherapy for 15 years. She became interested in Buddhism in 1995 and made her first trip to Nepal in 2008. She recently assisted with the English subtitles for Prince Siddhartha, the stage musical directed by Imee Ooi in Malaysia.



Alfred Cloutier

Fred was an unsung hero. Where he was born, we don't know. What he did in his life, we hardly know. He had no family. We only know that there was a brother, no name, who died years ago.

Fred was found on the morning of the 27th of September, 2009. A neighbor had alerted the police and together they entered his very modest, very tidy apartment to find Fred resting on a chair with his legs gently crossed. He was in his Bermuda shorts, with his arms at his side.

"Are you sure he is dead? But his face is pink!" Linda, the neighbor exclaimed.
"Yes, he's dead, probably last night."

Fred was the picture of health. He was 63, retired. He was 5'10", of perfect build with grey hair down to the nape of his neck. He was totally alone.

Linda arranged for him to be taken to the funeral home. He was given a casket and a vault, and a proper funeral service. No one came, except Linda and four employees of the home.

Fred had moved into the poor neighborhood of Beverly, Massachusetts three years ago on his social security payments. It had been a long time since he had had a residence to be called his own. Several years before, he had a job in a convenience store. When the recession hit, he had lost his job. Having nowhere and no one, he became homeless. This highly intelligent man was reduced to finding his food in dumpsters, and to endure the freezing winters. Fortunately, a good soul enticed him to live in a shelter. Fred worked diligently, quietly and happily. Whereas most homeless were also careless, and just came for the benefit of a good meal and a night indoors, Fred cooked, cleaned, did the laundry, and his work was monastic, immaculate. When he retired, he lived with the same scheduled diligence. His possessions were few: two pairs of trousers, three sweaters, no socks; a pair of brown shoes; his bed and his recliner. He had no car. On his table was his most prized possession: his computer. And he was very literate.

Linda called him lonely Fred, and baked him cookies and brought him homemade stew. He accepted them like an eager child, eyes lit up. Sometimes he'd ask Linda when she was planning on making her next batch of cookies.

He had such a beautiful smile, Linda recalled. He was so intelligent, and such a gentleman. So Linda stood alone at his funeral, and amidst her quiet tears, she wondered, why, oh why there was no one to mourn the passing of this great man?

But there was. Little known to Linda, there were people in at least 10 different countries around the world who were beginning to feel very uncomfortable at Fred's silence. Unable to bear it any longer, these people began to search for him. They were the people of the Palden Dorje Google Group, an eclectic group of individuals from various nations and religions who joined together in their interest to know about the meditating boy from Nepal. Fred had been a member of their group since the year before. Not only was he a member, but he was the member. This shy man had been the most talkative member of the group. Over the past year he had 1421 posts to his name. Everyone knew Fred. He posted link after link, subject after subject. He engaged us, engaged our minds, engaged our views, and engaged our personalities. We became a family, a Dharma family.

So we searched for Fred, and to our great disappointment found him...in a lonely obituary notice:

ALFRED CLOUTIER

Alfred Cloutier, 63, of Beverly, Sunday at home. Arrangements by the Campbell-Lee, Moody, Russell Funeral Home, 525 Cabot St., Beverly.

Published in The Salem News on 9/30/2009

And then we knew. He had died at home, no hospital, no family, nothing. No leads...except, we knew the name of the funeral home. So we called them, and they kindly gave us the number of the neighbor, Linda.

What was the joy of Linda to find that Fred had friends! A young man in India was distraught, a lady in the Czech Republic devastated, two people in Japan desperate. There were friends in Germany, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Turkey, England, Nepal, and the United States. There were friends in Singapore, China, Bali, and Brazil! They were all clamoring to know: Where is Fred?! What happened to Fred?

Fred's last post had been on the 24th of September. I had been about to go into surgery. He had posted a prayer, a prayer for me. The operation was a success, but within two days Fred was gone. Peacefully, quietly, unnoticed...

The last project of the group had been to save animals from sacrifice in Nepal. The news was that Palden Dorje would set out for the site of the biggest animal sacrifice in the world, Gadhi Mai Mela in southern Nepal, where hundreds of thousands of animals to please a goddess and have wishes granted. Palden Dorje intended to put a stop to it. We decided to do what we could. Joe found a petition; Fred was the first to put his name to it. That was on the 20th of September, a week before he died. The petition was made out to the Nepali government and asked to make animal sacrifice illegal in Nepal.

Fred, you were the butterfly before the hurricane. We will miss you and cherish you within us!

