

## **The Beloved Loves a Good Story – An Incomplete History of Lama Thubten Gonpo Tsering' s Life.**

This is a brief story of some of the significant people who have been my kind teachers, to whom I am joyously grateful. With the Blessings, Guidance and Help from the Beloved, The Source, Source of Love and Light, may their Presence and Teachings live on through me in some beneficial way.

As requested, from being invited to teach, folks want to know a bit about me, personally, and about some of the significant people who have inspired and helped me to continue to wake up, more and more spiritually. The intention here is not to “name drop” or boast in any way, but to just simply share something of my past.

Give all the credit for any realization, any wakeful moments, or any good qualities that may arise completely to the Beloved, True Source, the Divine Source... the Source from Whom all blessings flow.

Born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 1952 at 12:30 Noon. Born spiritually awake, fully remembering my past. Had an interesting childhood being born into a very wealthy family. Occasionally enjoyed frequent spiritual emanation/visitations from wonderful spiritual beings at night. At six, was recognized by Geshe Wangyal as a reincarnation of a Tibetan Buddhist Lama named Kunga Ridzin. At the time, I chose to remain with my parents, and did not accept or ascribe any importance to the event. Friends would ask what religion was practiced and the reply was “Guru Yoga”.

Took birth to build bridges between cultures and people, to unite, if only within the Self, the various spiritual traditions in existence. To awaken integration.

Like a tree, one is known by the fruit. Some of you have met me... and enjoyed the presence and smiling nature of this open heart. And this tree has many roots, in many traditions.

### **In the Tibetan Buddhist tradition:**

Root teachers include teachers in the Nyingma, Nyingma/Palyul, Sakya, and Kagyu Schools of Tibetan Buddhism. From an early age, and throughout this life, received teachings from my major teachers, His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche, His Holiness Sakya Trizin, Vidyadhara Chogyam Trungpa, His Holiness 16<sup>th</sup> Karmapa, and His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Other major teachers were the previous Kalu Rinpoche, His Holiness Penor Rinpoche, His Holiness Dilgo Kyentse Rinpoche, and His Eminence Chagdud Rinpoche. Chogyam Trungpa was especially influential in awakening, and confirming, a deep understanding that most of what was happening in this existence is a form of “spiritual materialism”.

Over the years, received many teachings and empowerments. Throughout this, the main practice is Dzogchen, specifically the Longchen Nyingthig, and Nam Cho Dzogchen teachings in the Nyingma/Palyul Tradition. As a child and young adult, completed three Ngondros, and as a child and in retreat, signs of success in the practice appeared when doing Tsalung (Tummo). In the Sakya tradition, received the complete teachings of the Lam Dre, Highest Yoga practices of Vajra Kilaya Tantra and Vajrayogini Tantra. In the Kagyu tradition, received the precious teachings and completed retreats on

the Six Yogas of Naropa, and teachings on Mahamudra practices. From His Holiness the Dalai Lama, received the complete Kalachakra Tantra.

In America and India, completed nine years of training (learning the Sutras, Major Tantras, Madyamaka, Prajnaparimita, Abhidharma, Vinaya, and Debate) and in 1984 completed a three and a half year retreat under the guidance of His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche and His Holiness Dilgo Kyentse Rinpoche. Also had the great blessing to experience a forty-nine day dark retreat under the guidance His Holiness the 16<sup>th</sup> Karmapa.

Throughout this life, have taught in Buddhist centers around the world giving foundation teachings on Pabonka Rinpoche's "Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand", Shantideva's "Bodhicaryavatara", "The Three Visions" a foundation teaching in the Sakya tradition, and Gampopa's "Jewel Ornament of Liberation". Activities included giving refuge in Amitabha, giving Bodhisattva vows and practices, occasionally giving teachings on TsaLung, and Highest Yoga Tantra empowerments related to Red Tara, Vajrayogini, Manjushri and Buddha Amitabha. Beginners mind. Always beginners mind.

#### **In the Zen Buddhist tradition:**

Soto Zen: As a young man, in 1967, met and sat with Shunru Suzuki Roshi in San Francisco. Studied for two years with Katagiri Roshi, Abbot of the Minnesota Zen Center in Minneapolis. The Soto Zen practice of Shikantaza is very similar to the practice of Dzogchen.

#### **In the Himalayan Tradition:**

Spent most summers in Northern India from age twelve and lived in the Himalayas for most of the time between 1972 and 1984.

Kriya Yoga: Satguru Kriya Babaji Nagaraj is a main root teacher. Have been and continue to be blessed with His Darshan and Satsang in this life. Babaji did really give me techniques or meditation practices, though occasionally He would suggest a pranayam or practice. Mahamuni Babaji Nagaraj gave me Himself. Once, as a child, Babaji, told me a story, about a man who, while walking toward the sunrise, toward the Light. In his shadow, miracles happened, however, he never knew. He just kept walking toward the Light. Taking this to heart, developed the view or mood to be unassuming, quite in the background and content with not being visible, understood, or known by others. Mahamuni Babaji was "popularized... made public so to speak" through the writings of Paramahansa Yogananda in his classic, "Autobiography of a Yogi".

As a child, at 12 years old, received special permission from Shri Daya Mata, then the current head of the Self Realization Fellowship, to receive initiation into Kriya Yoga from Brother Ananda Moi.

Further, studied Purna (Complete) Kriya Yoga with Shibendu Lahiri, great grandson of Lahiri Mahasya, at Satyalok in India, and did a three month retreat with Swami Paramahansa Hariharanan.

Raja Yoga/ Indian Tantra: Studied intensively Shri Vidya Tantra, Raja Yoga, with Dr. Ushabad Arya and His Holiness Swami Rama. His Holiness Swami Rama initiated me into the Giri Order, giving me the name Swami Chidakashanand Giri.

Kundalini Yoga: Studied and received Shaktipat from Swami Nityananda (Non-Physically), Swami Muktananda, and Yogi Bhajan.

Surat Shabd Yoga: Received initiation into Surat Shabd Yoga from Sant Satguru Kirpal Singh. Received initiation into the Radha Soami Tradition from Satguru Maharaj Charan Singh. Received Knowledge from Satguru Maharaj Ji, a direct transmission of, or experience of God in four ways: seeing as Light, hearing as an Audible Life Stream, tasting/ smelling as Amrit (Healing Fragrant Nectar), and these three Divine experiences arising from the Word, which in the tradition, is not a mantra that can be spoken with the tongue of the mind or mouth, but is the Primordial Vibration, the MahaMantra.

Membership in the Nath Sampradaya: Satguru Kriya Babaji and His Holiness Swami Rama facilitated my introduction and induction to the Nath Sampradaya.

Hatha Yoga: Completed teacher trainings with His Holiness Swami Rama, Swami Vishnudevananda, and Swami Satchitananda. Became a Certified Yoga Teacher from the Himalayan Institute in Minneapolis, and a Certified Kundalini Yoga Teacher, having completed a three month training at the Nanak Dwara Ashram under the direction of Yogi Bhajan.

Rebirthing: An advanced pranayama practice. Met and studied with the founder of Rebirthing, Leonard Orr in India and America. Received training in guiding people in his rebirthing process and breathwork and rebirthing have become an integral part of the healing sessions, began in 1972, that continue to this day, along with Shiatsu, Thai massage, assisted yoga postures, and psychotherapy

#### **In the Sufi Tradition:**

Met Murshid Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti, Sufi Samuel Lewis, in the summers of 1967 and 1968, receiving initiation and becoming a mureed. Received teachings and initiation from Pir Murshid Vilayat Inayat Khan in 1969. Murshid Sam's presence woke up the spiritual heart. He was so kind and accepting. Though preferring to stay in the background, to be concealed, unrecognized in the shadows, He invited me to the dance. He gave me the name Tariq.

In October of 1971, spent a year at the feet of Muhammad Raheem Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, affectionately known as Guru Bawa. He was a Sufi, a blazing bright being, and similar to Satguru Babaji, He did not give any initiation per se, He simply gave Himself to everyone who sat with Him. Guru Bawa played a significant role in shifting from "head" Dzogchen, spacious mind, to "heart" Dzogchen.

In Cyprus, in August of 1973, found, or was found by, Naqshbandi Sufis and met Shaykh Abdullah Daghestani shortly before his passing. Such a great blessing. Took initiation into the Order from Moulana Shaykh Nazim Al Haqqani Al Qubrusi.

In 2013, renewed my friendship with and re-experienced initiation with Wali Ali at Northwest Sufi Camp in the summer of 2013. Also at camp, formally was initiated into the DHO for the first time.

Later in 2013, under the most majestic Redwood trees in Pomplin Grove, at the Humboldt County Sufi Camp in 2013, received initiation for the first time into the Ziraat. Yea! Toward the One. Toward Integrating Heaven and Earth.

Have such a great Love for the Sufi Sampradaya, the Universal Ever Present Sufi community

#### **In the Jewish Tradition:**

Studied the Jewish mystical teachings of the Kabbalah and Pathworking with Rebbe Zalman *Schachter*-Shalomi. Currently studying with Rabbi Jonathan Seidel and Rabbi Hanan Sills in Eugene, OR.. both Rabbi's in the Jewish Renewal Movement, and Rabbi Pamela Frydman, who is both a Rabbi in the Jewish Renewal Movement and a teacher in the Sufi Ruhaniat tradition.

#### **In the Christian Tradition:**

Received catechism, a summary teaching of Christian Doctrine with Father Thomas, an Episcopal Priest. Received first communion with Christ from Bishop Kellog. Father Thomas did a sabbatical in India and was very interested in meditation. He helped me organize many early Interfaith dialogs in Minneapolis.

In 1973, fulfilled a dream of meeting with Desert Fathers and experiencing the meditative tradition of the Coptic Christian Church. Met with Pope Shenouda III of Alexandria at the Church of St. Mark. Pope Shenouda III was a very humble man, modest, very kind and friendly. Got to share with His Holiness the true longing, the pure love that was arising for God alone, which was awakening in this Spiritual Heart. His Holiness was so kind, loving and encouraging, guided me to spend time with some Brothers in the desert near Alexandria. His Holiness recommended a visit to Mt. Athos in Northern Greece. Spent three days on Mt. Athos, in the "Garden of Mary". Met some humble, very dedicated ascetic monks there, whose qualities are very similar to the Nath Siddhas in the Himalayas.

Experienced a one month silent retreat in Kentucky at the Abbey in Gethsemani in Thomas Merton's hermitage. Enjoyed receiving teachings from the Brothers. Thomas Merton, O.C.S.U. was a Cistercian/Trappist monk who pioneered a dialog between Christianity and Buddhism.

Currently, enjoy studying with Sadi Neil Douglas-Klotz and receiving teachings through the Abwoon Resource Center learning Aramaic and the original teachings of Jesus. Yea! Thank you Sadi.

#### **In the Spiritualist Tradition:**

Birdie Torgeson, Minister of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Spiritualist Church in Minneapolis, was one of the most gifted mediums in the world, and played a very special role in this life. She helped tame the spiritual senses, and helped in getting grounded in appreciation for how precious it is to be in a physical body; especially at a time when, at an early age, all that was arising was to do quit this physical existence.

Birdie was instrumental in a very practical way, helping hone my spiritual communication skills. As a young child studied with Birdie and as a young man, worked on the altar of the Church as a medium and healer. Also, spent a summer at a Spiritualist camp called Camp Wonewok in Wisconsin and met many wonderful mediums.

#### **In the Pagan/ Shamanic Tradition:**

At age twelve, met Carl Weschcke, founder of Llewellyn Publications. He began inviting me on the weekend, to his home in St. Paul, Minnesota to meet with various interesting guests: Occultists, prominent scholars in the Magical arts, leaders in the Pagan Community, and some notable English Esotericists. Lively discussions were always had and a deep love and respect began to awaken in me for worshipping the Goddess, and for experiencing Her Presence in Nature. Carl Weschcke arranged for me to receive an honorary membership in a Minneapolis Gardnerian Coven.

Met Sami Shamans in Northern Finland, and studied with Buriyat and Mongolian Shamans in Russia, near Lake Baikal, and in Mongolia.

In the American Indian tradition, met many wonderful teachers in the Lakota Tradition. Was guided to give support to the A.I.M. Meeting and learning from Dennis Banks and Russell Means was very a significant event and, with the help of my parents, started H.O.T.E.S.S., a K to 12 school in Minneapolis that pioneered integrating American Indian culture and traditional education. Studied with Medicine holders within the Hopi, and Apsaalooke (Crow) tribes. Also met with and received teachings from several of the Thirteen Grandmothers. Blessed and grateful to hold Wolf, Crow, and Bear medicine. Currently learning Lakota traditional ways and songs from Ed Little Crow and David "Manyhands" Maloney in Ashland and Eugene Oregon and frequently attend the Manyhands' sweat lodge.

#### **In the Taoist Tradition:**

In the 1960's, was influenced by the writing of two men, Alan Watts, and John Blofeld, though I never met either of them. Both men held a universal view which I share.

Met Taoist Master Mantak Chia in 1984. Mantak Chia's main teacher is One Cloud Hermit (Yi Eng). Yi Eng taught Master Chia, during a five year training period, seven sacred Taoist formulas and methods of internal alchemy, teachings that culminate in the Reunion of Heaven and Man, the attainment of physical immortality. Master Chia "repackaged" these teachings and created the Healing Tao and the Universal Tao. Studying intensively the entire curriculum of the Healing/ Universal Tao, became a Certified Healing Tao Instructor in 1990 and am still actively teaching these practices. Further learned the healing arts of Chi Nei Tsang (Internal Organ Chi Massage) with Master Chia and have integrated these teachings into a healing practice, a practice that includes Shiatsu, Thai Massage, Breathwork, and Psychotherapy. Precious teachings. Integrating spirituality and sexuality is a major theme of exploration and practice in this life.

Studied with Dr. Jwing-Ming Yang, PhD in Boston, further refining the experience of Bone Marrow Washing/ Muscle Tendon Changing, an advanced Nei Kung practice.

Studied for three months at Wu Tai Shan, a sacred mountain in China, mainly on the Central Peak. Was guided to do a one month retreat here. A profound experience. Met some wonderful Taoist adepts/ sages there.

Studied with Taoist Master Ni Hua Ching, and Eva Wong, PhD, in Denver Colorado, who started the Fung Loy Kok temple in Denver, gained from both a deeper understanding of Taoist philosophy and cosmology.

#### **The Usui and Gendai Reiki Tradition:**

Received training in Usui Reiki, up to the level of being an Usui Reiki Master.

Received training and empowerments to be a Gendai Reiki Master, and am a member of the Gendai Reiki Ryoho in Japan.

#### **Reiki Tummo/ Open Heart Meditation:**

Met Irmansyah Effendi in 2003 in America. So grateful. Have completed the Reiki Tummo curriculum up through Master Yoga 2.1, and have completed the entire Open Heart Meditation Curriculum. Received permission to hold introductions to Reiki Tummo and Open Heart Meditation.

Experiencing the Inner Heart, within the Spiritual Heart, has been the single most influential spiritual event in this, or any other life. The Inner Heart opening instantly changed my view completely. Went from a view that the Divine was a neutral energy, requiring supervision, personal direction and personal cultivation, to experiencing directly that the Beloved, the Source, has a Will. This Will is the Love. Before, surrendering to the Beloved was a dream. Through this experience, it is become spontaneous, effortless, shifting the attention, the focus, from it being about “me” and “my” activities to becoming completely about the Beloved, the Source, and surrendering to the Great Plan the Source has for everyone and everything everywhere. Heart, and Inner Heart, truly are the key to our connection to the Divine. These fresh teachings, arising in 1998, are a direct blessing from the Source, the Divine.

They have completed this life in a way that previously, could not have been imagined. This path is facilitating the experience of being an instrument, becoming a part of the Love, Light and Joyous Gratitude that is reaching out to completely embrace every being and every event in existence, inviting everyone and everything into remembrance, into union with the Beloved. Everyone. For me, in this Live, these precious teachings embody and complete everything that has come before.

#### **At present:**

Feel it is important to share that currently, though I have the greatest respect for the lineages of precious teachers, the guru parampara, that is a living part of me, am feeling clearly now that these

intermediate connections, these precious relationships, have completely dissolved. Am left with the deepest respect for those who have so deeply touched this life, but rather than their holding a place between myself and the Beloved, am enjoying just a simple pure, direct connection with the Source, the Beloved, the True Source. When asked about the lineages held in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, the Himalayan, the Sufi traditions, I now express that there is just a simple direct connection with the Source. In Vajrayana Buddhist terms, the language for the Source is Adi Buddha Samantabhadra, emanating as the Buddha Amitabha. In other communities and traditions, the language used is the Beloved True Source, or Divine Source.

### **Future Projects:**

To continue traveling, giving introductions to Open Heart Meditation and Reiki Tummo.

Inviting Buddhists and others to experience the spiritual heart, working to develop a one to ten day retreat program on "Heartfulness" meditation, in contrast to "Mindfulness" (Vipassana). Inviting others to embrace "En Love en ment" and Enlightenment.

Writing a book on Intergral Taoist Yoga, integrating the practice of Hatha Yoga with the dharan/dhyan of Taoist Internal Ni Kung and Ni Dan practices.

Exploring day long events integrating the movement, such as the Dances of Universal Peace and sitting Open Heart meditation.

Re-invigorating Interfaith Dialog, inviting everyone to "get real". Joyfully, to dive deep into whatever spiritual tradition you are engaged in, so deep, that the path, the process, the experience, transforms character, personality, touches everything, allowing the natural goodness within, the Love, the Light, and the Wisdom within, to blaze forth in this existence.