

Ngawang Senge's Dharma History

- In **1993** I first heard about Milarepa's life while living in a squat in Vancouver, BC, and was deeply moved and inspired to follow his life. I made the aspiration to go to Tibet and study with masters in his lineage, not knowing they were in B.C.
- In **August 1995**, I accidentally showed up at the retreat center Rigdzin Ling, in Northern California while hitch-hiking. I met Chagdud Rinpoche and Lama Drimed and stayed there for 4 years, mostly doing half time retreat and 3 hours of work during the week and full retreat on weekends. For 3 months a year in the summer and winter, I attended Dzogchen retreats. During that time, I took part in 9 drupchens as a chopon. I participated in retreats on Nang Jang, Yeshe Lama, Chetsun Nyingtik and Rigdzin Srokdrup Tsalung and did extensive personal retreats on them as well, including 6 months of rushen. I also built 2 stupas, participated in building the remaining 6 and built many retreat cabins, a temple and countless tsa tsas as well as writing mantra rolls in 24K gold ink that I made.
- In **August of 1999** I felt the powerful urge to go to the source of the Dharma and left for Nepal and India. I began studying Tibetan language, both classical and colloquial. After a life-changing meeting with the Togdens in Tashi Jong and Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo, I took celibate Upasaka vows from Khamtrul Rinpoche and the Togdens and went into retreat in Tsopema for about 6 months and in Ladakh for a few months on the practice of Chetsun Nyingtik ngondro and tsalung.
- In **2001 to 2003** I lived in London and Miami where I taught yoga. Then I realized that I didn't want to waste this life and I immediately traveled to Nepal in the spring of 2004 to receive bikshu ordination from Kyabje Trullshik Rinpoche.

- In the Fall of that year, I moved to Darjeeling to study colloquial Tibetan and in the **spring of 2005**, I moved to Shechen Monastery. In September of that year, I began the first year of Shedra with the monks. I repeated the first year twice to improve my Tibetan.
- In **2006**, I made a solo pilgrimage across Kham, Amdo, and Utsang, receiving teachings, transmissions, and practicing in holy sites, from Senge Utso, where Chogyur Lingpa went into the lake for hours in front of over 300 people including Khyentse and Kongtrul to Oyuk, Senge Wangchuk's cave where he attained rainbow body. I hiked through many sacred sights and practiced in caves and hermitages, meeting many masters.
- I met Lama Achyuk, in Yachen Gar, Kham from whom I received profound pointing out instructions and displays of miracles and participated in a Chenrezig drupchen at Tromge Gonpa, birthplace of Chagdud Rinpoche and Tulku Arik. After these travels, I was deeply inspired to practice in the footsteps of the great masters, feeling their blessings.
- At the end of my second year of Shedra, in **2007**, I had a large statue of Ekajati commissioned and blessed by Trulshik Rinpoche and others. In the previous year at Oyuk, I was inspired to bring a statue of her to Chetsun Senge Wangchuk's rainbow body cave and have it installed there. It was made by a foremost copper statue maker in Patan for the cave. I also went to Samye, Chimpu and other hermitages to receive blessings, practice, and meet yogis and yoginis.
- I felt a great disillusionment with Shedra, and one evening during debate, when my emotions were flaring, I thought: "If I die after nine years of Shedra or after nine years of retreat, how will my mind be at the moment of death?" Thinking this, I approached Khenpo Tsultrim and asked his leave to enter HH Getse Rinpoche's 3 year retreat center in outside of Pharping

- In **July, 2007** I began my three year retreat at Chagdud Ritro, where HH Katok Getse Rinpoche lived with us for the majority of the retreat. He gave me the complete Chetsun Nyingtik teachings of Adzom, Kongtrul, and Lerab Lingpa as well as the entire Troma Nakmo and Katok retreat cycles. I focused primarily on Chetsun Nyingtik for the retreat.
- In **2011** I went back to Boudhanath, and continued to receive transmissions, teachings and empowerments as well as personal guidance in Dzogchen from many masters including Trulshik Rinpoche, Gechak Khenpo Konchok Pelden, Tulku Pema Wangyal, Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche, Tsoknyi Rinpoche, and Mingyur Rinpoche. In particular, from Getse Rinpoche I received the one-to-one Dzogchen transmission of Adzom Drukpa's Twenty-five Spheres. I also received the one-to-one Dzogchen Oral Lineage of Khenpo Ngagchung from Khenpo Konchok Palden.
- Then, with Rinpoche's blessings, I went up to Lapchi and did retreat in a cave for 14 months focusing on Vajrayogini, Vajravarahi, Mahamudra, Tummo, and Rushen.
- In **September 2012**, I went to Arkansas where HH Getse Rinpoche was bestowing teachings and transmissions after which I went into retreat for 8 months.
- In **2013** I went to Crestone and received more teachings and personal guidance from Tsoknyi Rinpoche and did loose retreat there.
- From **2014 to 2017**, with Tsadras kind support, I went into retreat, first in the mountains of New Mexico in an earth shelter and then in a retreat cabin in Crestone where I started with Mahamudra, then went through the practices of Yangti Nakpo. I did 10,000 of the ngondro, the three roots of Kusum Thuktik, Zhitro Thuktik, and Tsogyal Thuktik, followed by the 7 Yogas, Rushen, Trekcho, Togonal, and Dark Retreat.
- From **2017 to Fall 2018** I continued mostly full-time practice focusing on tsalung, trekcho, togal, and dark retreat.

- On **November 18th, 2018**, His Holiness Katok Getse Gyurme Tenpa Gyaltzen passed into Parinirvana and I left the next morning for Nepal to be part of his cremation. I witnessed his body shrinking and many amazing relics as we went into the cremation stupa. After 6 weeks of pujas, I then went to continue to receive teachings and guidance from Khenpo Konchok Pelden for many months, following which I went into retreat. In the summer of 2019, I went back to Crestone and spent another two years in retreat focusing on Dzogchen and tsalung. In 2021, I went back to Nepal to do some more retreat and then in September I returned to Canada for the first time in almost 30 years.
- In **2022**, with the encouragement and direction of Tulku Orgyen Chowang Rinpoche and my other teachers, including HH Getse Rinpoche's final words to me, I began to teach a small group of people on Saltspring Island. First, I taught Shamatha, and then as the group became more serious, I gave the extensive teachings on ngondro from the Getse Lineage, culminating in a 6 week retreat in tents on the south side of Mt Tuam where we went through the practice of uniting shamatha and vipasyana while starting every pre-dawn session with ngondro.
- In **2023** I was invited to a hut in the desert outside of Joshua Tree where I have been in loose retreat and teaching meditation and bodhichitta on the weekends, including the long commentary by Dzatrul Ngawang Tenzin Norbu on the 37 Practices of a Bodhisattva.
- I continue to listen to teachings in Tibetan by great masters such as Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, Dilgo Khyentse, Kangsar Tenpai Wangchuk, Khenpo Namdrol, Khenchen Tsultrim Lodro, Tsoknyi Rinpoche, and HH Getse Rinpoche. These teachings continue to fill my life with blessings and guidance, even in retreat and was encouraged by both Getse Rinpoche and Tsoknyi Rinpoche.