

Progress Report for Lama Zangmo/Julie Jacob
Karme Ling Retreat Center
December 2014

I feel very fortunate that I have been able to stay in retreat and practice for another year. The daily schedule has gone through a few changes. The first session is the same as before, from 4 AM to 7:30, including the current practice, Chaptor, Sang, and my personal practice requirements. At 8:15 we practice Sojong as a group in the shrine room. For the first half of the year, I continued to practice Trulkor alone after Sojong, followed by a short session until lunch. In June the other retreatants learned Trulkor and now we practice together. Since June, I have a long session in my room after Sojong until lunch. The third session now goes from 1:45-3:45 followed by Mahakala and Sur as a group. Then we practice Trulkor together, which takes slightly over one hour. After that there is a dinner break and then the fourth session is from 7:15-9:15. As soon as the fourth session ends I practice Lujin and finish around 10:00. I have not missed any practice sessions.

During the Six Dharmas, we were not required to offer any tormas on our personal shrines. Several of us took the opportunity to make more elaborate tormas for our group pujas. We learned how to make an elaborate Shongpa Namdak for Mahakala and Green Tara torma. These took about one month each. In preparation for Chakrasamvara, as a group we took two months to make a large torma for the dakinis, called the Khandro Torchen. When finished it was about four feet tall, and Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche was very pleased. Since I studied sculpture in college, I hope I can become a good torma-maker in order to better serve Rinpoche and the lineage.

I spent about one month helping the other women learn Trulkor. Our Retreat Master taught the exercises, and I reviewed with them during our lunch break. I was able to give some individual feedback, which seemed helpful to the retreatants. I also became more aware of my own practice, especially the areas I need to improve, so it was helpful for me as well.

Thankfully I have not had many difficulties. I had a minor health problem this year, but it did not interfere with my practice. I received treatment and am feeling better. As before, I find that any difficulties that arise are truly in my own mind. If I look for an obstacle external to myself, I can't find anything. So when a problem arises, I feel confident that the only effective way to deal with it is through practice.

In a deep way, I really wish to be able to serve our lineage. In particular, Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche has been extremely kind to me and I want to fulfill any intentions he has for me. Also there are countless beings who are suffering right now, and I aspire to benefit them. I know I am not an accomplished practitioner yet, so I need to work hard. I keep these as my motivations.

Retreat Schedule:

Daily Practices

Beginning of retreat-current:

Chaptor

Sang

Sojong

Short Mahakala

Sur

December 5 2012-current: Trulkor

Beginning of retreat-July 2014: Short Chöd "Milam Lungten"

July 2014-current: Long Chöd "Lujin"

Exceptions:

Once per month: Green Tara instead of Sojong

April 2013-current: Once per month Tsendring instead of Short Mahakala

Full and New moons: Monlam prayers instead of Chöd

Room Practice:

November 26 2013-March 29 2014: Vajrayogini Inner Practice

March 30-May 27: Vajrayogini Secret Practice

May 20-22: Vajrayogini Drupchö

May 23-25: Vajrayogini Jinsek

May 28-December 20: Six Dharmas of Naropa

May 28-June 26: Ngondro

June 27-July 25: Tummo

July 26-August 24: Gyulü

August 25-September 23: Milam

September 24-October 22: Ösal

October 23-November 21: Bardo

November 22-December 20: Powa, Podep and Four Session Guru Yoga

December 21-current: Chakrasamvara Outer Practice

All funds received from the Tsadra Foundation went directly to Karma Ling Retreat Center to pay for my retreat tuition.