

Initial questionnaire for potential applicants for the traditional 3-year retreat

ཕ་རྒྱལ་འཕེལ་རྒྱུ་དང་སྐྱེ་སྐྱོད་མཚོན་པའི་ལྷན་ཁག་གི་མཛུགས་ལུགས་ལྟར། །
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Hello and thank you so much for the opportunity to be considered for the upcoming 3-year Retreat. I am so grateful. I am also aware that many lifetimes of accumulating merit are ripening. I rejoice!!

My name is Charles Gambill Caldwell. I go by Gam. I'll answer the questions in order;

–My precious tsawé lama is the 6th Sogan Tulku, Pema Lodoe Rinpoche;

–I am most affiliated with the Longchen Nyingtig lineage as transmitted from Longchempa to Jigme Lingpa to Jigme Gwalwe Nyuku to Patrul Rinpoche to Nyolshul Lungtok to Khenpo Naga to Khenpo Munsel to my precious teacher;

–I have been a committed Buddhist for 25 years. Wavy Gravy took several of us from my commune to meet Venerable Kalu Rinpoche in 1975...I took Refuge with him, but, it took a few decades before I understood what any of it meant;

–Practices to which I've applied myself:

Completed the Longchen Nyingthig Ngöndro and typically begin the day with reciting it,

I have recited over 6.5 million Benza Guru mantra and will continue,
I received the Kalachakra empowerment from His Holiness the XIVth Dalai Lama 3 times, and have practiced one of the sadhana and recited over 100,000 mantra,

I received Ven. Sogan Rinpoche's initiation into Phowa, practiced in a 10-day retreat and achieved signs of accomplishment (my aperture of Brahma opened),

I received the Troma Nagmö wang from Ven. Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche 25 years ago and became a dedicated practitioner with Julie Rogers group at ODD years before the pandemic and continued on zoom during pandemic. Mostly practice the feasts. I've read Dudjom Lingpa's Chöd manual several times,

I received Sera Khandro's White Tara wang, lung and continue to practice the sadhana. I've recited over 300,000 mantra.

I received and continue to practice a Sera Khandro Chenrezig sadhana. I have recited 290,000 mantra this year,

I have been doing tsok on the 10th and 25th of each Tibetan month for 5+ years.

I practice a Sera Khandro guru-dakini sadhana and have recited over 100,000 of each mantra and will continue,

I received the Sera Khandro Manjushri wang and the Tiglé Gyachen wang in October of this year. I am practicing both.

–My affiliation with Pema Ösel Ling is my friendship with Yudron Wangmo, I've participated in an on-line Tröma practice, and I've watched and listened to Lama Tharchen's explanations of the Troma sadhana.

–I am familiar with the Dudjom Tersar Lineage. I began accumulating Ngöndro with the Dudjom Tersar Ngöndro. I’m currently reading “A Clear Mirror”, and, as I’m sure you know, Sera Khandro’s love-of-her-life and treasure revealing partner was Drimé Öser.

–I met Kyabje Dudjom Yangsi Rinpoche at ODD.

–I completed many week-long retreats; I received the Chetsün Nyingthig wang and lung from Khenchen Namdrol Rinpoche in October, 2022, and completed the month-long Chetsün Nyingthig retreat in early 2023; I lived alone in a yurt in a field outside of Sebastopol for almost a decade, and since I quit my job in June of 2020, I essentially practice almost all my time.

–My expectation of a long retreat is that I will attain enlightenment.

–Yes, I have maintained a daily practice for many years.

–I have completed the Longchen Nyingtig Ngöndro and continue to practice and accumulate almost every day.

–my main weakness is anger and pride and my main strength is my resilience, inner strength, confidence and ability to survive with Great Love.

–I have never lived in a “closed community environment”. However, I lived in a commune in Haight-Ashbury many years ago.

–I feel mentally, physically and emotionally able to be in retreat with other people for 3 years.