

A Dharma curriculum vitae detailing your Dharma history (both study and practice)

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I first discovered Buddhism when I was 13 years old. As I was learning Japanese at the time, I was naturally drawn to Japanese Zen Buddhism and started simple meditations on my own. I also kept reading books and watching documentaries on various Buddhist traditions, and naturally moved my interest to Tibetan Buddhism over the years. I then spent the following years meditating on my own regularly and keeping a casual interest in Tibetan Buddhism and focusing on Shamatha. By 2023, I became increasingly interested in Vajrayana, and as all the credible sources said one needs a proper teacher to start with Vajrayana, I started searching for suitable centers in my city.

January 2024

At the beginning of 2024, I first visited the center Karma Thegsum Choling Slovakia led by Lama Sangye. My first experience here was a weekly Chenrezig and Amitabha practice. This was also my first in-person contact with Vajrayana as a whole. After that first experience, I kept attending every week, and I also started attending their weekly meditation practice that includes Shamtha, Tonglen, and a teaching - at that time, Lama Sangye was teaching about Buddha nature.

March 2024

In March, Lama Zangmo from KTD visited our center for a White Tara retreat. I received my first empowerment - White Tara, from Lama Sangye. The retreat with Lama Zangmo included detailed instructions for the practice and guided practice. During her visit, and thanks to her teaching, I became interested in doing the 3-year retreat. Her way of teaching and the way she practiced was incredibly inspiring, and that is also why I decided to do the retreat in Karme Ling, especially after finding out she is one of the women's retreat masters there. I approached Lama Sangye about it, and he was very supportive, so we discussed the next steps and practical things to consider. He also did his 3-year retreat in Karme Ling, so it felt correct for me to follow in his steps. I started Ngondro under Lama Sangye's guidance.

That month I also started attending a newly-opened classical Tibetan class, where we began by learning how to read, basic vocabulary, and grammar - all aimed at understanding sadhanas and Buddhist texts rather than colloquial language.

May 2024

In May, I took my refuge vows with Lama Sangye on Saga Dawa. I also became interested in learning how to make tormas, so I started learning under the guidance of Lama Sangye and the center's chopon. We started with the basics of dough making, making gyents, and basic tormas such as shalze, kartor, and martor.

This month I also started attending the monthly Shower of Blessings puja with tsok that I soon started choponing as well.

June 2024

In June, Karma Lhundup Rinpoche visited our center to do Cho, Konchok Chidu, and bestow empowerments for the peaceful form of Guru Rinpoche, the Long Life empowerment of Amitayus, and Two-armed Vajrakilaya empowerment. This was also when I became interested in how to chopon, so I started learning all the basics from the main chopon, and during the practice of Konchok Chidu I helped as the choyok. I also had the great opportunity to speak with Rinpoche closely and learn many things from him. During this time I became more involved in the general organization of the center as well, volunteering with anything that needed to be done. As a freelance translator, I was lucky to be able to reserve more time and be more flexible about my schedule than practitioners with more conventional jobs, so I quickly took over more and more tasks.

July 2024

In July, a group of Nyingma monks from the Dorje Drak monastery visited our center to hold a Vajrakilaya puja. At this point, I was actively helping with anything my Lama needed. Other than helping with the organisation and taking care of the monks, I also helped with the preparation of the sadhana - I proofread the Slovak translation. I also helped the monk's chopon, first simply performing simple choyok tasks, then taking over some of the main chopon responsibilities as well. It was a very good learning opportunity to be involved in everything the monks did, from preparation for the puja, to the puja itself. Their Dorje Lupon was also very kind and explained a lot of ritual-related things to me.

August 2024

In August, Chamtrul Rinpoche visited our center to give teachings on the connection between the mind and body, and the nature of the mind.

That month I also took a trip to the US with Lama Sangye. We went to KTD and Karne Ling. First, he wanted to show me Karne Ling to make me familiar with the place itself before the retreat, as well as meet the retreat masters and other lamas. At KTD, we attended the Tsedrup puja - I received the empowerment and lung from Lupon Tobden and instructions from Khenpo Sangye. I had a wonderful opportunity to privately talk to many of the lamas - including the retreat masters Lama Zangmo and Lama Lodro, and my Lama's retreat master, Lama Tsultrim. I also actively helped with the puja - simple tasks like cleaning, offering tea, small choyok tasks, preparing tormas, and taking down the shrine after it was over. During my stay there, I also received the lung for Mahakala and Sur from Lama Karma, as they were a part of the Tsedrup puja. I attended the daily practices of Green Tara, Chenrezig and Mahakala.

During my time at KTD, I also realized I would like to ordain one day, so I took the opportunity and discussed this wish with all the ordained lamas and local monks and nuns to hear their insights and advice.

After our return, I started attending the Mahakala and Sur practice at our center as well.

September 2024

Tulku Damcho Rinpoche visited our center and I received the 4-armed Chenrezig empowerment from him, as well as a teaching on the devotion to the guru. During his visit, I also got to attend him and spend some private time with him. I also discussed my wish to ordain, and got his support and advice.

I also moved to our center permanently this month, making it easier to dedicate more of my time to practice and volunteering.

October 2024

Our center had a visit from Khangsar Shabdrung Rinpoche, who gave a teaching on meditation on the nature of the mind.

At the end of the month, Lama Sangye, another student of his, and I travelled to Nepal, to receive the lung for Kangyur from H.E. Sangye Nyenpa Rinpoche in the Benchen Monastery in Swayambhu. We have stayed in Nepal until the middle of January 2025, and in addition to the lung, I have also received numerous precious teachings from H.E., and I visited numerous monasteries and holy sites. At the end of our stay in January, I also visited the Thrangu Tashi Yangtse Monastery, where I spent two weeks practicing daily.

February 2025

In February, we held a Mahakala Tsedring (Tsalma) puja for 5 days that also included Lehur Drakmo. During the whole event, I served as the chopon, and it was by far the most complex puja I choponed so far. I also helped prepare most of the tormas needed, and I can say I learned a lot about ritual practices from this amazing experience.

March 2025

At the beginning of the month, we had a regular Konchok Chidu practice, and this time I worked as the main chopon again.

Later this month, I joined my first Nyungne practice, under the guidance of Lama Sangye, as well as a weekend shamatha retreat.

April 2025

In April Lama Zangmo from KTD visited our center again. She first gave a teaching on the basic principles of Vajrayana, focusing on creation and completion stages, and then she gave detailed instructions on the practice of Chenrezig and Amitabha that we do every week.

She then led a White Tara retreat, that I also choped. I also had the opportunity to speak with her in person about the 3-year retreat again, as well as learn more about ritual procedures.

May to June 2025

In May, I went to Thrangu Tashi Yangtse Monastery in Namobuddha, Nepal, to join a month-long Lojong retreat under the guidance of Lama Karma Phurba. During the retreat, we focused on contemplative meditation with four sessions a day, coupled with daily classes with Lama Karma Phurba where he taught from Thrangu Rinpoche's Lojong Commentary, Heart of the Dharma, and daily classes with Khenpo David Karma Choephel, who taught the first five chapters of his commentary, Entering the Way of the Bodhisattva. The retreat and classes were an amazing practice opportunity for me. During this time, I have also received the lung for Dakpo Targyen from Lama Aju, and from Khenpo David, we received the lung for Reciting the Names of Manjushri and Entering the Way of the Bodhisattva. I was very impressed by the classes with him, so I approached him about translating Entering the Way of the Bodhisattva into Slovak. He was very supportive, and because he has worked with Lama Sangye before, he trusted me to do a good job. I am currently working on the translation, and hoping to finish and publish it before my 3-year retreat..

I also took the 5 lay vows with Khenpo David in May.

During my stay in Namobuddha, after carefully contemplating it and discussing it with many different rinpoches, lamas, and monastics, I made my final decision to ordain, and informed Lama Sangye, who was very supportive, and went to discuss it with Tulku Damcho Rinpoche with me directly. Rinpoche was also supportive, and I got his approval to ordain and stay at our center in Slovakia and start with a sort of "pre-ordination" (rabjung) before I get the chance to take the novice vows. He instructed me on what to do during this period, and I have prepared changing my personal life according to his instructions.

July 2025

At the time of writing this last part, I have received rabjung and Sojong vows from Dorje Lopon Ganden Tsewang, who has come to our center this month to hold another Vajrakilaya drubchen. I started living as a nun, and I am waiting for an opportunity to take the novice vows. Lama Sangye also helped me make a proper monastic-like daily schedule.