

What next?

What follows the *ngondro* practice is called the *ngoezhi* or the main corpus of the teachings. Dzogchen, or the Great Perfection Teachings, is considered the swiftest path of all teachings of the Buddha. The culmination of the Dzogchen teaching is the direct introduction to the nature of mind by the Root Guru through the pointing out instructions, called *Rigpa Ngotrod*.

There are different lineages of the Dzogchen teachings in the Nyingma tradition. Besides the Longchhen Nyingthig, one that is prevalent in Bhutan is the Kunzang Gongdue Dzogchen teachings of the Pema Lingpa tradition. Pema Lingpa, considered as the immediate incarnation of the Omniscient Longchhenpa, is one of the Five Terton Kings who revealed a total of 32 concealed teachings, *termas*, which are classified into the three cycles of *La-Dzog-Thug Sum*.

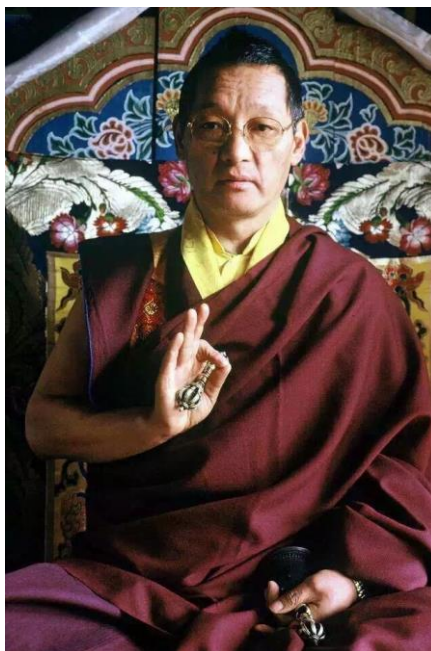
The principal lineage holders of the Peling lineage are HE Sungtrul Rinpoche, HE Thuksey Rinpoche and HE Gangteng Rinpoche.

Prerequisites

No prerequisite qualification is necessary to start the *ngondro* except for your interest and desire to practice. Whether a monk or nun; *khenpo* or *tulku*; ordained or lay; old or young; learned or illiterate, the *ngondro* practice is a must for everyone.

However, to receive the Dzogchen teachings, the prerequisite is the accumulation of each of the five segments of the inner *ngondro*, i.e. *chabdro*, *semkyed*, *Dorse*, *mendrel* and *lamai nyeljor*, at least 100,000 times each. This has been the standard requirement in all traditions and is followed to this day.

Precious Opportunity



HE Gangteng Rinpoche, with immense kindness, gives the complete Dzogchen teachings to students who complete 10,000 repetitions of each of the five segments of the *ngondro* practice, with the commitment of the student to complete the 100,000 repetitions thereafter. Rinpoche received the complete teachings of Pema Lingpa from HH Dudjom Rinpoche Jigdrel Yeshey Dorji, HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche and HH Je Thrizur Tenzin Dondup. HE Gangteng Rinpoche is today one of the foremost teachers of Dzogchen, teaching fortunate disciples all over the world. So, this is a great opportunity for those earnestly wishing to embark on the path of Dzogchen.

This brief introduction is intended for those who wish to receive the Dzogchen teachings from HE Gangteng Rinpoche. Chhimi Kinley prepared it at the request of Karma Wangmo. If interested, please contact Karma Wangmo @ 77110511; Pedling Choki Gatshel @ 17846962; or Pema Bulop @ 77654224.



KUNZANG GONGDUE NGONDRO

The Dzogchen Teachings of Pema Lingpa

Ngondro

When someone asks ‘what is *ngondro* practice?’ the person is actually asking what is Dharma practice and essentially how do I become a Dharma practitioner.

Obviously, the best response to this question is to go to a qualified teacher and get detailed *ngondro* teachings. However, if you cannot decide to do so immediately then looking into the contents of the *ngondro* practice, summarized herein, may help you.

Ngondro means ‘that which goes before’. In other words, it is the very first step. It is also called the foundational practice and is a structured practice manual designed to generate the mind of renunciation, purify negative karma and accumulate merit so as to be able to actualize our potential or realize our true nature as a Buddha.

The *Ngondro* practice is divided into two parts. The outer part consists of reflecting on the four thoughts that turn your mind away from samsara, called the *lodhog namzhi*. They include reflection on:

- 1) Precious human birth to gain appreciation of human life and discover its immense potential;
- 2) Impermanence and be urged to set priorities;
- 3) The principle of cause and effect to get the conviction that *karmic* results are consequences of our own actions thereby being inspired to engage in positive actions and avoid negative ones; and
- 4) Shortcomings of samsara to see the meaninglessness of further rebirths in any of the six realms.

In brief, the purpose of outer *ngondro* practice is to ask serious questions to yourself and assess, very honestly, your own condition or predicament of this life.

Are you ready?

If you find that your life is perfect, be it with regards to health or wealth, career or relationships etc. and feel absolutely confident about facing any unforeseen and unfavorable circumstance then you are an exceptional being with no obvious need to seek refuge or help from anywhere else. But, on the other hand, in spite of all the favorable circumstances, if you feel uneasy or as if something is missing which compels you to ask if there is anything more to life then you must acknowledge it as your inner call. It means that you are ready to set on the spiritual path.

The Dzogchen Path

The Vajrayana Dzogchen tradition presents the actual journey, beginning with *chabdro* (refuge), followed successively by *semkyed* (*bodhicitta*), *Dorse*m (Vajrasattava), *mendrel* (mandala offering) and the *lamai nyeljor* (guru yoga) practices of the inner *ngondro*.

Chabdro is taking refuge in *Kenchok Sum*, the Three Jewels, which are the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. At the relative level, one takes refuge with the understanding that the Three Jewels are undeceiving and trustworthy. This strong commitment to the Three Jewels ultimately enables one to realize one’s nature as the Three Jewels.

Semkyed is the practice of giving rise to *bodhicitta*, the altruistic mind to attain liberation for the sake of all other beings. While the relative aspect of the *bodhicitta* practice is to cultivate unconditional love, compassion and rejoicing without partiality to countless beings, ultimately it is to realize one’s mind as the Buddha.

Dorji Sempa or Vajrasattava practice purifies the negative actions that one has accumulated over countless lifetimes. As a result, one experiences clarity of mind and gains tranquility. The meditation and mantra recitation constitute the relative purification while the ultimate Vajrasattava is, when at the end, one lets go of all contrived practice and simply rests in deep silence.

Mendrel or the mandala offering is to accumulate merit and wisdom. The relative mandala offering refers to the symbolic and visualized offerings of all the riches of the entire world system and the buddha-fields whilst reciting the verses. The ultimate practice is to rest on the syllable *Hung*.

Guru yoga or *lamai nyeljor* is the last segment of the inner *ngondro* practice. In this practice, one uses one’s root teacher as the medium to receive blessings. The recitation of the supplication prayer and taking the empowerments along with the blessings of the Guru constitutes the relative practice. After fervent supplication, one mingles one’s mind with that of the Guru and rests naturally in a non-contrived state of mind, which is the ultimate practice.

*Rest in natural great peace
This exhausted mind
Beaten helplessly by karma and neurotic
thoughts
Like the relentless fury of pounding waves in
the infinite ocean of samsara*

- Nyoshul Khenpo Jamyang Dorji
