

## **An Account of the Life of Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché**

*by Tsiké Chokling Mingyur Dewé Dorjé Rinpoché*  
(Extracted from *The Great Tertön*)

I would like to tell you about the outer, inner, and innermost life story of my father and guru—Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché. Starting with his early years and continuing until his advanced old age of seventy-six, I will depict what I have heard with my own ears and seen with my own eyes. Of course I didn't meet him when he was young, but I have heard many stories from those times. It was the latter part of his life that I personally witnessed.

One of Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché's unique qualities was his warmth; his heart was full of great love and compassion. In terms of ordinary social conventions, he had a truly good character. He had no intention other than to help beings. He was open-minded, possessing a vast, all-encompassing frame of mind. This was how any normal worldly person would describe him.

When Rinpoché was a young child, he received the pointing-out instruction on the nature of mind from his father, Chimé Dorjé. About this he said, "I truly realized the natural face of mind."

Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché had an extraordinary level of respect for the Three Jewels. He said that the first among all Buddhist masters to catch hold of his attention and inspire him with faith and devotion was Buddha Shakyamuni. He was moved by the Dharma, by the teachings he had been given, and he had a high regard for the Sangha, as it is they who maintain the practice of these teachings.

Among the masters in the Kagyü lineage, he showed particularly great affection for Milarepa and had immense faith in him. Among the Nyingma lineage gurus, it was Künkhyen Longchen Rabjam. On merely hearing the names of these two masters, tears of uncontrived devotion would well up in his eyes and the hairs on his body would stand on end.

I heard that, from his early years, he considered his root gurus to be Samten Gyatso, his own father Chimé Dorjé, and Kyungtrül Rinpoché, a master from Kham. He also connected with the son of the Fifteenth Karmapa Khakyap Dorjé, who was known as Jamgön Karsé Kongtrül. It was from him that Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché received the entire Treasury of Precious Termas.

I remember one day when I was a young boy and Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché and my mother were staying at Nagi Gompa. We had all participated in the *Ocean of Amrita* Great Accomplishment gathering, and after its completion came the day for chanting the *Rain of Wisdom, the Ocean of Songs of the Kagyü Masters*.

Rinpoché and my mother were reading along with everyone else until we came to the chapter with a song by Jamgön Karsé Kongtrül. At this point, first one and then the other started to weep, out of devotion, as they remembered their guru. They were unable to continue, which interrupted the whole chanting. This was the kind of deep-felt devotion that Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché had for Karsé Kongtrül.

Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché also considered the Sixteenth Karmapa Rangjung Rigpé Dorjé to be his root guru. The kind of appreciation he had for the Sixteenth Karmapa was as great as if he were in the presence of the Buddha in person. He never thought of him as an ordinary human being in a material body of flesh and blood. Therefore, whenever the Karmapa asked him to do anything, be it spiritual or secular, in order to please him he wouldn't hesitate for even a second to carry out his guru's wish. This was exactly how Naropa served the great Indian master Tilopa. When told, "Someone who is my disciple would jump off this cliff!" Naropa simply jumped, without hesitation. His body was mutilated, but Tilopa restored it to its former state. Naropa underwent many such trials. In the same way, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché was ready to sacrifice life and limb to carry out any wish the Karmapa expressed. This type of devotion is rare, and people who knew him well saw it in him.

As for the Gyalwang Karmapa himself, he had the deepest trust in Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché, seeing him with pure perception as Chokgyur Lingpa and Guru Chöwang in person. Many times, while at Rumtek in my youth, I saw that whenever the Karmapa received a letter from my father, he would immediately place it on the top of his head before opening it. Being young, I wondered, “Why does he treat a letter from Daddy as something so special?” Meanwhile, from his side, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché saw the Karmapa as the very embodiment of all the Kagyü masters—Vajradhara, Tilopa, Naropa, Marpa, and Milarepa. In this way, their relationship was as close as between spiritual father and son.

This is what I know from spending time with the Karmapa at Rumtek. Whenever the Sixteenth Karmapa needed a *mantradhara* (an accomplished Vajrayana practitioner) to perform certain ceremonies, he would demand that Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché be the one to do it, and no one else. For instance, when he was severely ill in Delhi, a message was immediately sent to call Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché to come. In the biography of Chokgyur Lingpa, there are instructions linked to a specific prediction— “when threatened by the subtle water monster, perform the torma expulsion according to vidyadhara Dükhi Shechen.” Accompanied by his eldest son, Chökyi Nyima Rinpoché, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché went immediately to Delhi to perform this profound ritual. My brother later told me that Rinpoché performed the torma ritual very elaborately and with extreme attention to detail, for the sake of securing the Karmapa’s well-being.

Among the masters of the Nyingma School, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché was particularly close to the late Kyabjé Dilgo Khyentsé, whose full name was Ngedön Tekchok Tenpé Gyaltzen, which means “victory banner of the teachings of the supreme vehicle of definitive meaning.” I can best describe their relationship as one of indivisible minds—like father and son. This means that Dilgo Khyentsé would ask my father to clarify any doubt or uncertainty that he had. My father would then make use of these opportunities to expand

the expression of nondual awareness even further. The mutual respect and pure appreciation these two had for each other was tremendous; Dilgo Khyentsé regarded Tulku Urgyen as Guru Chöwang, and Tulku Urgyen regarded Dilgo Khyentsé as Manjushri.

Let me mention Kyabjé Düdjom Rinpoché, the master who, for our times, is like the life-pillar of the Nyingma School of Early Translations. In Lhasa, it was from our Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché that this learned and accomplished individual received all the empowerments and transmissions for Chokgyur Lingpa's terma, the *Three Sections of the Great Perfection*. Düdjom Rinpoché later described Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché as "the present heart-son of Chokgyur Lingpa, in terms of both Dharma and family lineage. He is someone whose power and strength of realization has fully bloomed. In terms of the Dzokchen levels, having gone through the four visions, he has arrived at the final stage known as 'the exhaustion of phenomena and concepts.' In other words, he is someone who has fully perfected the great strength of primordially pure awareness. Such a person is rare indeed." These are the kinds of words used by a master both learned and accomplished, to describe our Rinpoché.

Nyoshül Khen Rinpoché was another master who always had a deep appreciation for my father. He often expressed how rare it is, in these times, to find someone with such a deep realization of Dzokchen. In this way, many masters—some accomplished, some learned— offered lofty words of praise. But how did Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché behave? He always partook of simple food, wore simple clothing, and insisted on a simple low seat.

The main monastery Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché built was Pal Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling, in Boudhanath, Nepal, and upon its completion he invited Rangjung Rigpé Dorjé, the Sixteenth Karmapa, to come and confer all the empowerments and transmissions of the Vajrayana Treasury of the Kagyü Lineage (Kagyü Ngakdzö). His Holiness graciously did so. For the inauguration, King Birendra of Nepal was invited to attend in the position of Dharmaraja,

Dharma king, to preside over the opening ceremony. The Gyalwang Karmapa himself, in the company of numerous incarnate lamas, performed the consecration.

Some years later, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché invited my root guru, Kyabjé Dilgo Khyentsé Rinpoché, the lord who encompasses all mandalas and buddha families, to come here to the monastery to confer the empowerments, reading transmissions, and instructions of Chokgyur Lingpa's termas, the Chokling Tersar, in their entirety. In addition, His Holiness gave the Four Branches of the Heart Essence, which are regarded as the unique teachings of the Nyingma School. Not only that, but Dilgo Khyentsé also gave us the explanation of the *Secret Essence Tantra* and the *Wisdom Essence of the Gradual Path*. In short, His Holiness came at Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché's invitation to give a tremendous array of vast and profound teachings.

While living in this monastery, Pal Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling, our precious father gave the transmission of the *Three Sections of the Great Perfection* several times, once to Depuk Rinpoché and once to Gomchen Khampa Rinpoché. Both Chökyi Nyima Rinpoché and I had the good fortune to be present and receive it. In the following years, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché gave instructions to hundreds and thousands of foreigners. He gave the transmission of the sacred *Heart Essence of Samantabhadra* to many of them. Often these teachings took place in the form of the annual seminar, at which time both he and Chökyi Nyima Rinpoché would teach. During the seminar, Chökyi Nyima Rinpoché would introduce the participants to the Buddha's teachings. After that, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché would give the pointing-out instruction of nondual awareness. There were many who experienced a taste of liberation through this, and many who recognized the nature of mind and gained a profound understanding of it.

Wondering how this could be possible in such a large and diverse gathering, I have asked several great masters about it, and this is what they have told me.

Once the strength of awareness has become perfected through the path, some signs will automatically occur, such as what are called the “threefold blazing forth” and the “threefold magnetizing.” These entail the blazing forth of experience, realization, and samadhi. Due to the strength of his nondual awareness, the power of Rinpoché’s experience and realization was automatically blazing forth and burning brightly. It thus became possible for those around him to receive a glimpse of this recognition. The way this can happen was beautifully expressed by Mipham Rinpoché: “As the blessings of the realization of the ultimate lineage are transmitted to our hearts, may we obtain the great empowerment of awareness display.”

Because of Rinpoché’s realization of the ultimate lineage, the expression of awareness as blessings was able to mingle with the openness of faith of his students. This coincidence enabled them, no matter their level or capacity, to recognize the nature of mind in a single instant. This evidently happened for many hundreds of students. This was Rinpoché’s unique way of benefiting beings.

In addition to giving teachings, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché instigated the tradition of practicing the *Ocean of Amrita* Great Accomplishment gathering, as well as the *White Amitayus* Great Accomplishment, once a year here at Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling Monastery, in the first month of every year. He also arranged for khenpos to come to teach at the monastic college in the monastery.

The most treasured place for us Nyingma followers is the upper cave of Yangleshö, known as the Asura Cave, here in Nepal. Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché, together with my late mother, had a monastery constructed there, along with a shrine hall and statues, and a three-year retreat center. Once, when staying there for a duration of three months, Rinpoché gave the transmissions for both the *Heart Essence of Samantabhadra* and the *Heart Essence of Chetsün*, as well as the instructions connected to them. He also generously gave the teachings on Chö and the preliminary practices, the ngöndro.

At his hermitage, Nagi Gompa, one of Rinpoché's last major deeds was to enlarge the shrine hall. He also built a new retreat center there, and an assembly hall for the nuns.

Earlier on, in 1986, it was at Nagi Gompa that our precious father had given the Chokling Tersar to the main Kagyü tulkus—headed by Kyabjé Shamar Rinpoché, Kyabjé Situ Rinpoché, Kyabjé Jamgön Rinpoché, and Kyabjé Gyaltsab Rinpoché. Also present was a large gathering of tulkus and lamas, monks and nuns, and lay people from many different countries. He bestowed, upon them all, the ripening empowerments, liberating instructions, and supportive reading transmissions for the Treasure teachings of Chokgyur Lingpa.

At Nagi Gompa, Rinpoché also gave the *Three Sections of the Great Perfection* several times. On one occasion, having invited my root guru, the vajra holder Dilgo Khyentsé, to come to Nagi Gompa to transmit the *Three Sections*, he also arranged for Dzongsar Khyentsé Rinpoché, Dzokchen Pönlop Rinpoché, Chökyi Nyima Rinpoché, the Neten Chokling Tulku, and many other lamas to be present. During this time, Khyentsé Rinpoché told him, “You are the only one who holds the lineage for the Hundred Chö Empowerments (Chöwang Gyatsa); you must give it to all these lamas.” Rinpoché thereupon gave the transmission for all hundred empowerments. In this way, he gave the ripening empowerments to numerous masters of the present age. His last major transmission was of the empowerments for the Root Texts of the Heart Essence, at the request of the retreat lamas and nuns at Nagi Gompa.

Over the years, Rinpoché gave instructions in the preliminary practices to both local people and foreigners, and extensive guidance in understanding and training in the nature of mind. In short, he turned the Wheel of Dharma throughout his entire life. His life was filled with great deeds.

Tulku Ugyen Rinpoché's other sons include Tsoknyi Rinpoché and Mingyur Rinpoché, who have a mother different from Chökyi Nyima's and mine. For

these two, he built a large monastery at the top of the hill above the Swayambhu stupa, with a beautiful shrine hall containing representations of awakened body, speech, and mind.

In this way, Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling Monastery, the Asura Cave temple and retreat center, Nagi Gompa, and Tsoknyi Rinpoché's hilltop monastery thrived under his guidance. Everything at these temples was constructed and completed under Rinpoché's personal direction.

Sometimes people wonder what Rinpoché's personal practice was—his main *thing*. About this we can only surmise from the way he guided us all. For instance, he would say, “No matter what you do, no matter what situation you are in—whether walking, sitting, eating or lying down—always suspend your attention within the nature of nondual awareness. That's all there is to it!” This was his main practice: to simply remain in naked dharmakaya awareness.

As a support for this, his primary sadhanas were the *Heart Essence of Samantabhadra* and the *Heart Essence of Chetsün*, practices he continued to apply until the end. In addition, Longchenpa's *Treasury of Dharmadhatu* was very precious to him. He was deeply fond of the masters of the Kagyü lineage, from Vajradhara right down through Tilopa, Naropa, Marpa, Milarepa, Gampopa, and so forth. He regarded the Kagyü and Nyingma lineages as inseparable and the practices of Mahamudra and Dzokchen as indivisible. This was how he practiced, and this was also how he taught. To that I can bear witness. One day, shortly before he passed away, I went in to see him and made the following request: “We need to do some ceremonies to support your health. You have to remain for our sake, for the sake of the teachings and all beings.”

“You don't need to worry about me,” he said, smiling, “I won't die for a couple of years yet.” Although his body was in quite bad shape, and it must have been very uncomfortable, he could truly laugh and joke about the prospect of passing away, without any fear or worry. He was like a true yogin who is joyful

and at peace, even when on the verge of death—not a flicker of despair or attachment to anything. During his last months, I spent a couple of weeks with him. Because he had perfected the view, he never showed any anxiety or fear whatsoever. This was the kind of sky-like yogin he was. I feel truly lucky to have known such a person.

Here are some of the essential points he taught us students before passing away. With each passing moment we all approach death. Not a single person in this world lives forever. Once we are born, it is sure that we must die. Nevertheless, if we practice in a genuine way, it is certain that there will be benefit in both this and our following lives. This was one of his main teachings—inspiring his disciples to practice by making them face the fact of their mortality.

Once he had inspired us with the reality of death, he would say, “Don’t regard futile worldly affairs as meaningful!” In this way, he would teach us the four mind-changings—the difficulty of obtaining the freedoms and riches of a precious human rebirth; impermanence and death; the causes and consequences of karmic actions; and the painful quality of samsaric existence. Tulku Ugyen Rinpoché’s main structure for a teaching was always the *Four Dharmas of Gampopa*, which is identical to Longchen Rabjam’s *Four Dharmas*. These four are turning one’s mind to the Dharma; making one’s Dharma practice become the path; letting the path clarify confusion; and letting confusion dawn as wisdom. Connected with the fourth point, allowing confusion to dawn as wisdom, he would then usually proceed to give the pointing-out instruction.

The essence of all Buddhist teachings is contained in the pith instructions of Dzokchen. Tulku Ugyen Rinpoché’s style of giving these instructions was concise, simple, and comprehensible, with a gentle aptness, always warm with blessings. This was how he could communicate the profound essence of the Dharma and point out the nature of mind to an entire gathering of people

simultaneously, ensuring that their individual mindstreams became temporarily liberated. This ability is the outcome of having reached perfection in the view, and in this, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché was unmatched.

He would often tell his followers, “Everything is impermanent, and no fleeting thing is worth pursuing. Therefore, practice the Dharma in an authentic way, and this will surely help you, both now and later.” To practice the Dharma was both his main teaching and his testament!

Rather than filling up a billion universes with pure gold and giving them to Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché, he would be more pleased if you would simply apply yourself wholeheartedly to spiritual practice—because that is how each sentient being can reach awakening.

Once, I asked him about the most important practice for myself and other followers. He replied with the following advice: “Regard devotion and compassion as the most vital of all! Here, devotion means that if you follow the Kagyü teachings, then you should regard your root guru as Vajradhara, or as Marpa or Milarepa. If you follow the Nyingma lineage, then you should regard your teacher as Samantabhadra, Garab Dorjé, Shri Singha, or Longchen Rabjam in person.”

He would often emphasize that devotion and compassion are indispensable if one is to recognize the nature of mind when having it pointed out. Many times he spoke of “emptiness suffused with compassion.” There is a famous Tibetan saying, “A closed-up person gives rise to no good qualities, just as a burnt seed will never sprout.” Once you have the openness of faith, seeing the guru who bestows the profound instructions as a buddha in person, then it becomes possible for the transmission of the ultimate lineage to take place. As the nature of realization is introduced, one comes to recognize nondual awareness without a flicker of doubt. Therefore, regard devotion to be of vital importance.

Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché also said, “All sentient beings without a single exception have been, and therefore are, our own parents. Cultivate all-encompassing compassion! In our Vajrayana tradition, devotion and compassion are regarded as the most important qualities.” About samaya, he said, “Once you embark on Vajrayana practice, you become like a snake in a bamboo shaft: there are only two ways to go—up or down. This is an analogy for the equally great advantage or risk of this path. Please remember that devotion and compassion are the safety line that will ensure that you reach realization and liberation through the Vajrayana teachings.” I feel these were his last words of advice to me.

He also told me that future disciples who want to practice the New Treasures of Chokgyur Lingpa, especially the teachings of the *Dispeller of All Obstacles* and the *Heart Essence of Samantabhadra*, must traverse the complete path of the preliminary practices, the main part, and the additional practices. He also said that, even if one never practiced anything other than the preliminaries, this would still be enough. Why? Because the preliminaries are even more profound than the main part, since we need to purify our obscurations and gather the accumulations. The person who sincerely goes through the four times one hundred-thousand practices will be able to purify physical misdeeds by means of bowing down, verbal misdeeds by means of the Vajrasattva mantra, mental misdeeds by means of the mandala offerings, and the combination of all of these by means of guru yoga. We definitely need to purify the obscurations of our misdeeds. It might be possible to gain a glimpse of the nature of emptiness without first undergoing any purification, but because of our past karma and temporary circumstances, this glimpse soon gets covered up again and forgotten. Don't delude yourselves: please apply yourselves wholeheartedly to the preliminary practices. This is the instruction that Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché gave, over and over again.

Once you allow these preliminary practices to take effect by purifying your obscurations, then automatically you will come to recognize the nature of mind, and your realization of the view will unfold further and further.

Another important point he often repeated was this: “Tell your disciples to keep their view as high as the sky, but to pay an attention as fine as tsampa barley flour to what they do.” Some individuals may convince themselves that they have an incredibly high view. They might feel it reaching so high that there is no great need to worry about the consequences of their actions. That is definitely not all right. Look at Rinpoché’s example: he never drank alcohol, and he lived with completely pure discipline. In the same way, no matter how high your view may be, to the same extent you should be all the more gentle and courteous, and never frivolous or crude. Tulku Ugyen Rinpoché continued, “Tell your students to go through the preliminaries first, and only then to carry on with the main part of practice.”

That was one point he made. Another was this: “Tell them that all vajra friends in the future will move toward awakening as one single group, as a single mandala. Therefore, keep harmony, be kind to each other, and observe the precepts with purity. Then the incredibly profound teachings of Vajrayana will take effect.”

These are some of the last points that my precious father told me, and besides these I don’t have much to say. Let me just add these additional words of advice from him: “Look really well into the nature of your mind. This is the essence of all the Dzokchen teachings. First recognize, then resolve what you have recognized, and then gain confidence therein. It is not enough just to recognize the nature of mind; you need to develop the strength of this recognition. But just developing some strength is not enough either; you must attain stability. That’s it in a nutshell! In short, practice well so that you yourself become fully trained. Generate even more devotion and compassion than you already have, because this will allow your experience and realization to naturally expand.

This is what all your students should be told.” Even though our precious father’s mind has dissolved into the dharmakaya expanse of primordial purity, and remains therein, he can still be continually aware of whatever sentient beings are doing. So don’t be deceitful, those of you who were his students! Don’t discontinue the preliminary practices and recitations that you were doing while he was alive, just because you think you may not have to be accountable from now on. Continue with your individual practices. Always mingle your mind with his, no matter what practices you are doing, be it the accumulation and purification practices of the preliminaries, your meditation training, or any other practice. This way your practices will deepen further and further.

I feel I should tell you, his followers, this as well: Whoever personally received the pointing out instruction from Tulku Ugyen Rinpoché is extremely fortunate. This is like having the open end of the golden garland of the lineage placed in your hand. If you also bring this instruction into your own experience, through practice, then it is certain that your guru will continue to behold you from the unmanifest dharmadhatu, and the true guru will awaken from within your own heart. As it is said, “The guru is not outside but within.” This means that you are face-to-face with the true guru in the very moment that you recognize the nature of mind. Please understand this!

To the rest of you who have connected to Tulku Ugyen Rinpoché through his books, I would like to say the following: Don’t concentrate only on the words on the pages! Turn your attention back onto itself and look into the nature of your mind! In a moment of devotion or compassion, if you simply allow your mind to mingle indivisibly with the guru’s, you can truly understand the Dzokchen teachings. That would be a truly excellent outcome!

My older brother, Chökyi Nyima Rinpoché, is now reaching maturity. He studied and trained well at Rumtek. He received numerous empowerments and transmissions of the Kagyü teachings from Rangjung Rigpé Dorjé, the

Sixteenth Karmapa, and from Kalu Rinpoché. Later on, we both received the great Treasury of Precious Termas, the entire Four Branches of the Heart Essence, and the Root Texts of the Heart Essence from Kyabjé Dilgo Khyentsé Rinpoché. We also received the terma teachings of Chokgyur Lingpa from Tulku Ugyen Rinpoché. Every year, Chökyi Nyima Rinpoché gives teachings during seminars and retreats. He plants the seeds of the Dharma in the minds of countless people from many different countries. Accepting Chökyi Nyima Rinpoché as your teacher, while keeping pure samaya without deceit, will help fulfill all Tulku Ugyen Rinpoché's wishes.

As for myself, I definitely have no vast learning, high realization, or deep meditation. I only have the mere title of being an incarnation of Chokgyur Lingpa, which was forced upon me by the Karmapa. That's really all. Still, I will certainly try my best to follow the last words and advice of my father, Tulku Ugyen Rinpoché, on developing further devotion and compassion, and training in recognizing the nature of mind.

Tulku Ugyen Rinpoché's other sons, Tsoknyi Rinpoché and Mingyur Rinpoché, will also follow their father's command to practice. My expectation and wish for my brothers is that they will benefit a great number of people by means of Chokgyur Lingpa's terma teachings.

To summarize, since there is no need for me to go on and on, please practice well. Remember that impermanence will catch up with all of us, one day. Make sure, when that day comes, that you have already attained complete fearlessness—while you still can! Otherwise, when you are reborn as a dog, a snake, or some other life form among the six classes of beings, how much of a chance will you have to receive teachings? What kind of a connection will you be able to form with a true teacher? What opportunity will you have to practice a spiritual path? Think honestly about this. The feeling of dread that arises will make you fully appreciate having met such a great master in this life.

What incredible good fortune to have received such eminent instructions connected with the most excellent teaching, the Great Perfection! Your unique situation is that you are holding the open end of the pure golden garland of the lineage. Please don't disregard or cast away this precious connection! Don't occupy yourself only with the pursuit of food and clothing, luxury and wealth! Don't chase only after power and fame! Wholeheartedly entrust your innermost aims to the pure, genuine practice of the Great Perfection. With the devotion that sees your guru as a buddha in person, receive the four empowerments, mingle your mind, and remain in the state of indivisible space and awareness. That is the most meaningful way to spend this or any future life. All of Rinpoché's students, please fully apply yourselves in this way.

On the one hand I feel very disheartened at Tulku Urygen Rinpoché's passing. He has gone; his mind dissolved into the realm of dharmadhatu. On the other hand, when I think about all that he did, it seems that he was able to fulfill all his aims and complete all his activities. He did impart all his oral instructions, empowerments, and transmissions to his heart sons and followers. He also completed the construction of several monasteries, temples, and retreat centers.

His last deed in this life was to sit upright in the vajra posture, placing his hands on his knees like Longchen Rabjam. Then, from 2:15 a.m. until the following night, he remained in samadhi until his mind expanded into the all-pervasive realm of dharmadhatu. Thinking about this, I cannot feel worried. And why? Because I know that the essence of what he taught was to practice the Great Perfection. That's all there is to it! I also know that sooner or later I too must leave this body, just as he left his. This makes me feel more inspired and brave.

Some people feel at an utter loss, thinking, "My guru is gone!" Don't make yourself depressed and downcast. Uplift your spirits! Appreciate that your master's passing is a direct pointing-out instruction revealing the

impermanence of all things. Unlike merely speaking of mortality, this particular teaching is instead felt very acutely in our hearts. Understand that likewise, with each moment, we are all a step closer to death. We must use every available day to practice sincerely.

Continue practicing in exactly the same way as if our precious father were still alive. Then your experience and realization will blaze forth, your vitality and merit will increase, and you will attain good results. Don't despair, thinking, "Now I have no teacher! Now there is no one from whom to receive teachings!" This is not true. You have already received the teachings, and it is your responsibility not to forget or cast away what you have received. You personally must persevere in practice. Nobody else can do it for you. There is really no benefit to be had from receiving teachings if we don't practice them. Take the instructions to heart, assimilate them within your being, and use them to tame your own rigid and unruly tendencies.

Continuously deepen the strength of your devotion and compassion, because then, without doubt, you will come face-to-face with the view of the Great Perfection. This is a certainty agreed upon by every great master I have met—the Gyalwang Karmapa, Kyabjé Dūdjom Rinpoché, the vajra holders Kyabjé Khyentsé Rinpoché, Kyabjé Kalu Rinpoché, and my father too.

All these masters from whom I received so many teachings and empowerments have demonstrated the reality of impermanence by dissolving into the dharmakaya realm, showing that we too must one day die. Therefore, please personally apply what your teacher has taught you, expand your devotion and compassion, and practice uninterruptedly, day and night. By truly applying ourselves to the teachings, we are on the path to buddhahood. However, it is up to us whether or not we follow it. You have received the teachings; now it's up to you to practice. Please do so, before it is too late. Please don't just remain heartbroken and depressed. Try your best to practice the instructions in a trusting and loving way; that is something that will please

the guru. Pleasing him will help dispel obstacles for the rest of our lives. We will be able to open up to deeper levels of insight. At death, it will enable us to proceed to the Glorious Copper-Colored Mountain, where we can again be united within a single mandala. This, along with my best wishes, was what I wanted to say to all of you.

Finally, during the Grand Kagyü Mönlam in Lumbini, Chökyi Nyima Rinpoché returned home for a day to spend time with his father. While we were sitting together, he told us that he had been offered a large acreage of land in Lumbini. He asked if Rinpoché would kindly make a divination and a final decision concerning that piece of land.

Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché responded, “This project will be excellent! Lumbini is the place where our teacher, Buddha Shakyamuni, took birth. I am very pleased you have obtained the land. It would be excellent to erect a large temple hall there, at least a hundred feet across, with a statue of the Buddha.” Joining his palms, he continued, “I pray that it will contribute to peace for all beings in the world, and especially to peace in the country of Nepal.” This was the last specific will and testament he gave us.

To fulfill this last wish, we will try our best to make arrangements quickly for the construction of a large temple in Lumbini, with a beautiful Buddha statue. We will raise the funds with the help of all our benefactors, and we offer our services in fulfilling this aspiration.

On a more inner level, I will try my best to fulfill Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché’s wishes by staying some months in retreat at the sacred Asura Cave. While there, I will practice the complete paths of Chokgyur Lingpa’s termas, the *Heart Essence of Samantabhadra* and the *Dispeller of All Obstacles*. I will also practice the *Heart Essence of Chetsün*. I will start with the preliminaries and continue through the main part, up to and including trekchö and thögal.

A while ago, Tenga Rinpoché asked me to give the Chokling Tersar empowerments at his monastery. I mentioned this recently to my father, who

was sick at the time. “How can I possibly give those empowerments at Swayambhu when my thoughts are up here at Nagi Gompa with you? Would it be all right to postpone them for a while?” Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché replied, “No, you can’t postpone them! You must give the empowerments! Uphold the lineage of Chokgyur Lingpa and spread his teachings. That is what I want you to do!” Therefore, when the forty-nine days of ceremonies are complete, I will joyfully begin offering these empowerments. I feel extremely happy to be doing this because I know it will please my guru, who remains as the primordially pure state of dharmakaya.

This lineage of the Tersar that I have received from both Kyabjé Dilgo Khyentsé Rinpoché and Kyabjé Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché is like a garland of pure gold. It is a garland that includes the great masters Karmapa Khakyap Dorjé and Tsangsar Samten Gyatso. In front of Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché’s reliquary (*kudung*), I have taken the vow to fulfill his wishes by upholding the ripening empowerments, liberating instructions, and supportive transmissions of this lineage to the best of my ability, wits, and understanding. This doesn’t mean that I am some incredibly special person, an advanced Dzokchen practitioner or the like, because I am not—it is just my aspiration.

May you all have good health and long lives and be able to carry out your spiritual aspirations. May your experience and realization blaze forth, and may your minds be indivisible from Tulku Urgyen Rinpoché. This is the wish I have made in front of the precious *kudung*.