

June 29, 2020

Dear Natural Freedom Yogis,

Greetings from New Hampshire. As I write, a much needed torrential downpour is pattering a symphony on the roof, and the wind paints dancing arcs on the surface of the pond outside my window.

I hope that you and your family and friends are well and safe. Even when it feels as if the world is falling apart, there are small blessings everywhere. This I believe and it keeps me going. These last few weeks, I have been reflecting on my own frailty, confusion and humanness. Maybe this brokenness we all carry is a kind of blessing, a hidden jewel held with gentleness in the hand.

As we wind down our year of the preliminary practices of the Longchen Nyingtik, I feel the arising in my heart a sense of openness mixed with humility. It is joyful to think about what is in store for us this coming year in the fullness of being human.

This year of the program is titled **View, Meditation and Action**. We will be exploring the wide skylike view of the Great Perfection, how to cultivate the loving expanse of primordially present heartmind in practice and how to integrate awakened mind into every moment of life. Nothing is discarded in or worthy of exile in this practice. It is not for the faint of heart.

The formal practices we will be deepening in this year are:

- Dzogchen Shamatha and Vipassana
- Subtle Discernment (Rushen)

The texts you will need primarily

- The Trilogy of Rest (all three volumes)
- Yeshe Lama (available from Shambhala as a restricted text)

Teachings will take place via four seasonal Natural Freedom weekend retreats and regular online teaching and practice sessions. The four seasonal retreats will take place on these dates:

July 24-26, 2020

October 10-11, 2020

Feb 20-21, 2021

May 1-2, 2021

These retreats will be recorded in case you are unable to attend one or more of them. However, live attendance is preferred. It is powerful to be together, and is important for our cohesion and mutual support as a sangha (when possible). These retreats will include ample

spacious breaks for personal practice and exercise mid-day. Breathing room is important when online!

Our regular practice gatherings will take place on the first and third Mondays of every month, 9-11am EST, beginning in August. Please mark your calendar for those gatherings. These gatherings will include teaching, practice, and breakout groups. Some sessions will emphasize teaching more than others.

My aspiration is that all our gatherings might be recorded and organized on a webpage that we can access anytime, in case of a missed meeting or need to revisit the materials. But that depends on the level of technical support and resources that are possible right now through NDF. Hopefully the capacity is there to make it happen.

I am very much looking forward to seeing you live on July 6 and later in the month for the opening of our yearlong program **View Meditation and Action**. A syllabus will be forthcoming.

It has taken me some time to think (and heartfully *feel*) through the rhythm of this next year. I was able to find confidence in this vision with Liz's support as a conversation partner. Thank you for your patience as that unfolded.

I am hoping that by July 2021, we will be able to gather in person again for an intimate week-long Rushen retreat either at Wonderwell or at Tara Mandala. But that remains to be seen. It is also kind of amazing to hang out here in the great Not Knowing, and know that anyway we will be connected and can drink the stream of blessings in this lineage together.

Love and gratitude for all your courage and compassion,

Willa