

Introduction to Sherap Chamma: Mother of Wisdom and Love

Sherap Chamma [*sherap* means wisdom; *cham* means love; *ma* means mother] is a wisdom goddess who comes from the Bön tradition, the oldest spiritual tradition of Tibet. According to the oral history of Bön, these teachings go back many thousands of years, originating in central Asia and then moving into the country of Zhang Zhung, part of which became Western Tibet.

While the teachings of Sherap Chamma are from a very ancient tradition, the transmission—the living knowledge of these teachings—has never been interrupted. The experiential instruction was passed from teacher to student, unbroken for thousands of years up to this very moment. As practitioners, we feel wonderful about that. There were times in history when the instructions were given only to a very small number of people, and when they almost disappeared, but then they resurfaced and flourished. The transmission is warm, it can touch you, you can feel it.

Within the Bön tradition, Sherap Chamma is one of the most important deities. She is a *yidam*, a fully enlightened deity, and through connecting with her presence, we are supported to realize our true nature and to reach enlightenment. There is a rich body of literature and many teachings of Sherap Chamma, which describe the different aspects of her and the different healing qualities that she has. There are many elaborate rituals and sadhanas pertaining to her. Through my own practice I have quintessentialized the practice we will do together. It is concise—simple and short. “Simple” does not mean that the wisdom teachings are compromised in any way. “Short” does not mean that the power or the quality is reduced.

I think it’s important to explain this, because this is a teaching of great significance, and we need to value the opportunity to enter into this practice together at this time on our planet. We are going through a time of disconnection. We suffer when we are disconnected from the mother space, the source of being. Confusion, conflict, and wars resulting from disconnection are manifesting on a large scale in countries, between political parties, and within families. Sherap Chamma represents the source of connection, and through connecting with her we are able to connect to ourselves, to each other, and to the rest of the world. Connected to the source, the space of the mother, we are not driven by ego identity and we spontaneously cultivate love toward others. Wisdom means to self-realize, and love arises from that wisdom and can be expressed as kindness and care toward others and our planet.

The most important thing is to understand who the Mother of Wisdom and Love is, to develop a relationship with her, and to allow the practice to touch the places in your body, speech, and mind that carry the pain of disconnection and need healing. When we are willing to open and allow ourselves to be touched, when we meet our pain with openness, the light of awareness, and the warmth of kindness, we will receive much benefit.

I welcome you to enter into the practice of Sherap Chamma with my full blessings. Know you are receiving a complete teaching at a time that is ripe for these teachings. Feel that with the support of a worldwide sacred cyber sangha, we can bring wisdom and loving compassion to benefit ourselves, our relationships, and our planet.

With great warmth,
Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche