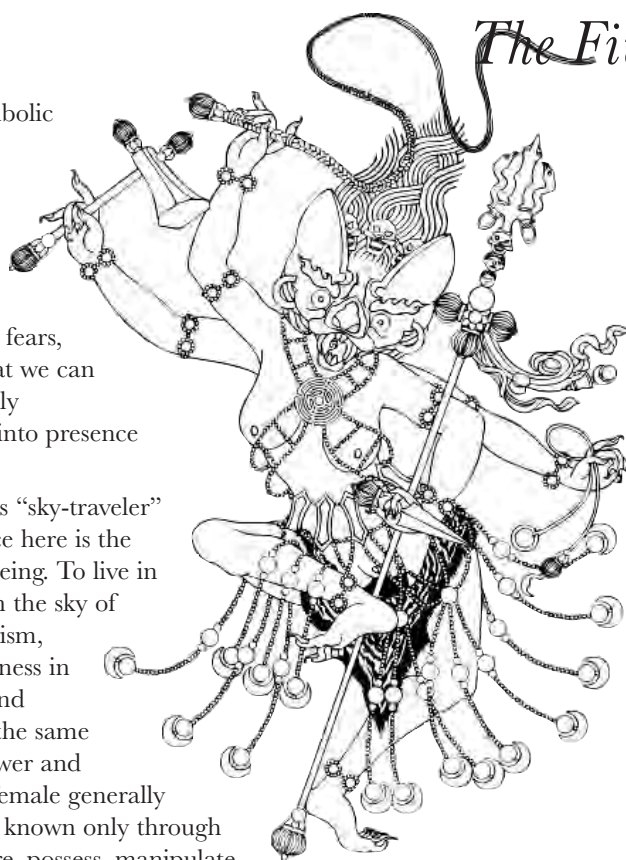


*Wherever there is space, five elements pervade,  
Wherever the five elements, the homes of living beings,  
Wherever living beings, karma and defilements,  
Wherever is defilement, my compassion also.  
Wherever is the need of beings, there I am to help them.*

— *from A Biography of Yeshe Tsogyel*  
according to Ven. Bardo Tulku

Meditation on the five dakinis uses symbolic enactment to transform emotional reactions into presence. Symbols speak directly to the mind of emotion, avoiding the distractions and rationalizations of the intellect. Enactment takes us through the dismantling process, familiarizing us with reactions, fears, experiences, and transformations so that we can recognize the reactions and fears in daily life and transform the reactive pattern into presence and awareness.

*Dakini* is a Sanskrit word that means “sky-traveler” or “she who moves in space.” The space here is the totality of experience, the mystery of being. To live in the mystery of being, you must move in the sky of awareness. A dakini, in Tibetan Buddhism, represents the energy of pristine awareness in the totality of experience. She moves and functions in this space freely and is, at the same time, one with it. She embodies the power and dynamism of pristine awareness. The female generally represents original mind, which can be known only through direct experience. Any attempt to ignore, possess, manipulate, or control the energy of original mind is an expression of habituated patterns. Such attempts backfire viciously, entangling you in patterned behavior. Working at the level of energy that the dakinis embody is a bit dangerous. If you aren’t present with the energy, it flows into habituated patterns.



### The Five Dakinis

Khyungpo Naljor, a twelfth-century teacher in Tibet, once had a visionary experience in which a lion-headed dakini appeared to him and sang this song about working with dakini energy:

*Crystal dakini guards against interruptions.*

*Jewel dakini increases wealth.*

*Lotus dakini gathers energy.*

*Action dakini gets everything done.*

*When wanting and grasping hold sway  
the dakini has you in her power.*

*Wanting nothing from outside, taking things as they come,  
Know the dakini to be your own mind.*

*The essence of mind is knowing.*

*Know that the crystal is the non-thought of mind itself  
And the crystal dakini guards against interruptions.*

*Know that the source of wealth is contentment  
And the jewel dakini fulfills all wants and needs.*

*Know that the lotus is the non-thought of freedom from attachment  
And the lotus dakini gathers energy.*

*Know that action has no origination or cessation  
And the action dakini gets everything done.*

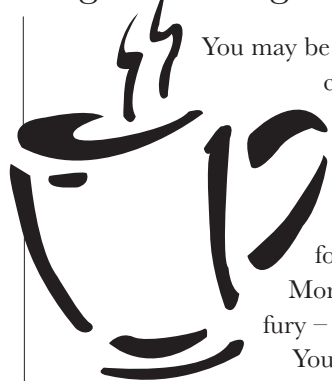
*Those who do not understand these points  
Can practice for eons and know nothing.*

*So, the heart of the matter is  
To know that the dakini is your own mind.*

The meditations on the five dakinis and emptying the six realms fundamentally change our relationship with reactive emotions, the former by transforming the reaction chains into presence, the latter by dismantling the way patterns distort how we experience what arises and view our lives.

— Ken McLeod, *excerpt from Wake Up to Your Life*

### Tonglen: Taking and Sending



You may be formally doing tonglen or just sitting having your coffee, and here comes Mortimer, the object of your passion, aggression or ignorance.

You want to hit him or hug him, or maybe you wish that he weren’t there at all.

But let’s say you’re angry. The object is Mortimer and here comes the poison: fury. You breathe that in. The idea is to develop sympathy for your own confusion. The technique is that you do not blame

Mortimer: you also do not blame yourself. Instead, there is just liberated fury – hot, black and heavy. Experience it as fully as you can.

You breathe the anger in; you remove the object; you stop thinking about him. In fact, he was just a useful catalyst. Now you own the anger completely.

You drive all blames into yourself. It takes a lot of bravery, and it’s extremely insulting to the ego. In fact, it destroys the whole mechanism of the ego. So you breathe in.

Then, you breathe out sympathy, relaxation, and spaciousness. Instead of just a small, dark situation, you allow a lot of space for those feelings. Breathing out is like ventilating the whole thing, airing it out. Breathing in is like opening up your arms and just letting go. It’s fresh air.

— Pema Chödrön, *Start Where You Are: A Guide to Compassionate Living*

### Mindfulness

If you are miserable you are miserable; this is the reality, that is what is happening, so confront that. Look it square in the eye without flinching. When you are having a bad time, examine the badness, observe it mindfully, study the phenomenon and learn its mechanics. The way out of a trap is to study the trap itself, learn how it is built. You do this by taking the thing apart piece by piece. The trap can’t trap you if it has been taken to pieces. The result is freedom.



— Ven. Henepola Gunaratana, *Mindfulness in Plain English*

RETREATS & WORKSHOPS

❁ **RELEASING EMOTIONAL REACTIONS**  
Upaya Zen Center, Santa Fe, NM  
**DATE:** February 16 to 20, 2005  
**LEVELS:** Intermediate & experienced  
**COST:** \$550 - \$670

❁ **LETTING GO OF THE CACTUS**  
Mt Baldy Zen Center, Mt Baldy, CA  
**DATE:** May 18 to 22, 2005  
**LEVELS:** Beginning & intermediate  
**COST:** \$475 - \$550

❁ **KARMA AND DISMANTLING BELIEF**  
Upaya Zen Center, Santa Fe NM  
**DATE:** June 5 to 12, 2005  
**LEVELS:** All levels  
**COST:** \$1,000 - \$1,210

❁ **THE FOUR IMMEASURABLES**  
Shambhala Center, St. Johnsbury VT  
**DATE:** July 13 to 17, 2005  
**LEVELS:** All levels  
**COST:** TBA

❁ **DIRECT AWARENESS RETREAT**  
Vallecitos Mt. Refuge, Vallecitos NM  
**DATE:** September 3 to 24, 2005  
**LEVELS:** Three - five years experience  
**COST:** \$2,300 - \$2,500

RETREATS & WORKSHOPS

❁ **GENEROSITY: WHO GIVES?**  
Great Vow Monastery, Clatskanie OR  
**DATE:** November 9 to 13, 2005  
**LEVELS:** All levels  
**COST:** TBA

**REGISTRATION:** To register for a retreat, please send a \$100 deposit to Unfettered Mind and indicate the retreat you wish to attend. For further details, visit [unfetteredmind.org](http://unfetteredmind.org)

CLASSES & GROUPS

❁ **MONTHLY MEDITATION PRACTICE & TEACHING WITH KEN McLEOD**  
**DATE:** First Sunday of each month  
9:00 am to 11:30 am  
**LOCATION:** 11732 Washington Place, L.A.  
(**NOTE:** location has changed)  
**COST:** \$25 or \$200 for 12 classes  
**CONTACT:** Call 310.827.7766 or email [info@unfetteredmind.org](mailto:info@unfetteredmind.org)

❁ **TUESDAY EVENING CLASS WITH KEN McLEOD**  
**DATE:** Tuesdays, 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm  
**COST:** \$25 or \$200 for 12 classes  
**CONTACT:** Call 310.827.7766 or email [info@unfetteredmind.org](mailto:info@unfetteredmind.org)

CLASSES & GROUPS

❁ **MEDITATION GROUP**  
**DATE:** Third Sunday of each month  
Sitting from 4:30 pm to 6:15 pm  
**CONTACT:** Jeanne Pisano at 818.761.4180

SPECIAL EVENTS

❁ **UNFETTERED FILM TALK**  
Join us for Unfettered Mind's second quarterly potluck dinner and Film Talk. View "Twelve Monkeys" beforehand and consider the significance of what you are seeing. Come prepared to share your favorite dish, socialize, and discuss the film.  
**DATE:** Sunday, January 9, 6:00 pm  
**CONTACT/RSVP:** Peri at 310.451.4416

*Threads Editor:* Ken McLeod  
*Threads Managing Editor:* Deborah Neikirk  
*Threads Contributing Editor:* Janaki Symon  
©2004 Unfettered Mind  
[unfetteredmind.org](http://unfetteredmind.org) 310.827.7766



13323 Washington Blvd, Suite 302  
Los Angeles, CA 90066