

Buddhism Guide

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Chogyam Trungpa



Chögyam Trungpa (1940 – April 4, 1987) was a [Buddhist meditation](#) master, scholar, teacher and artist.

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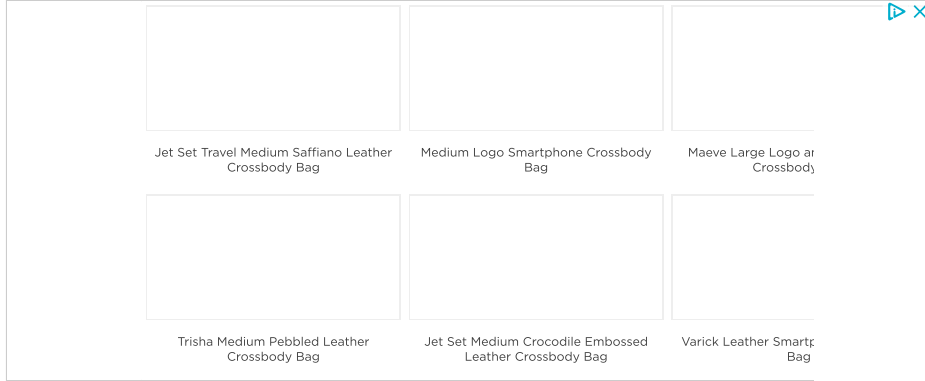
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Biography

Born in Tibet, Chögyam Trungpa was the eleventh in a line of Trungpa tülkus, important figures in the [Kagyu](#) tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. In 1959, after having already achieved wide renown for his teachings in his native country, he fled the Chinese invasion and crossed the [Himalaya](#) on foot into India. His three main teachers were Jamgon Kongtrul of Sechen, HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, and Khenpo Gangshar.

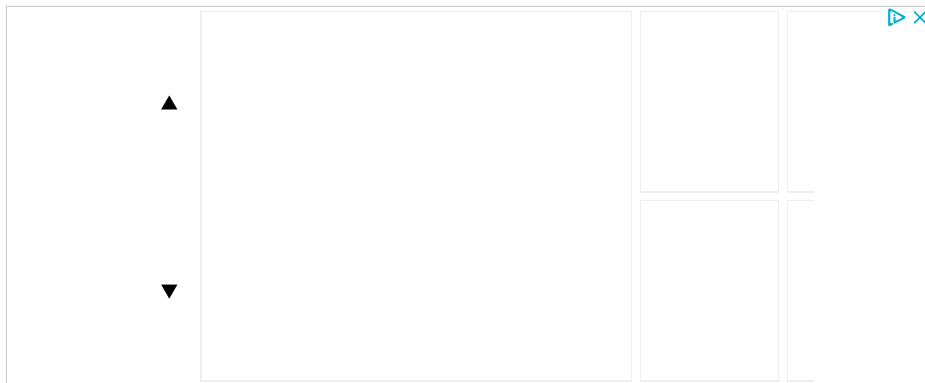
After familiarizing himself with the English language he studied Comparative Religion at Oxford and then came to the United States at the invitation of several students.





Early in his time in the West, Trungpa gave up his monastic robes and adopted western dress and mores, in order, he said, to undercut the temptation of students to become distracted by exotic cultures and dress, and by their preconceptions of how a guru should behave. He drank, smoked, slept with students, and often kept students waiting for hours before giving teachings. Much of his behavior was deliberately provocative and sparked controversies that continue to this day. In one account, he forced students to give up smoking marijuana and confine themselves to alcohol, claiming that the smoking was not of benefit to the spiritual progress of his students. Students were often angered, unnerved and intimidated by him, but remained fiercely loyal, committed, and devoted.

In 1974, Trungpa founded the Naropa Institute, which later became Naropa University, in Boulder, Colorado. Naropa was the first accredited Buddhist university in North America. Trungpa also founded more than 100 meditation centers throughout the world. Originally known as Dharmadhatu, these centers, now more than 150 in number, are known as Shambhala Meditation Centers.



In 1976, Trungpa began giving teachings, since gathered and presented as the [Shambhala Training](#), inspired by his vision (see terms) of the legendary Kingdom of Shambhala. Shambhalian practices focus on using mindfulness/awareness meditation as a means of connecting with one's basic sanity and using that insight as inspiration for one's encounter with the world. The Shambhala Training is essentially a secular approach, rooted in meditation, but accessible to individuals of any, or no, religion. In Shambhala terms, it is possible, moment by moment, for individuals to establish enlightened society. His book Shambhala, Sacred Path of the Warrior, provides a concise collection of the Shambhala views.

Three of his famous and well known students are Pema Chödrön, Allen Ginsberg and Anne Waldman. Ginsberg and Waldman were also teachers at Naropa University.

62 acres in Lake George, CO	304 acres in Conifer, CO	1 acres in Colorado City, CO	9 a Estes
\$5,400	\$8,999,000	\$4,560	\$47

In 1986, Trungpa, in failing health, established his headquarters in Nova Scotia, where he shortly thereafter died of liver failure. Upon his death, his leadership was carried on by his American disciple and Dharma heir, Osel Tendzin, (Thomas Rich) and then by his eldest son and Shambhala heir, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche. His death and cremation are alleged to have been accompanied by a number of

Controversies

There are a number of controversies that surround Trungpa's behavior, including his open sexual relationships with students and drinking of alcohol, which led to his death of cirrhosis of the liver at the age of 47 (). While drunk, he smashed a sports car into a joke shop, and was left partially paralyzed, so he usually needed assistance walking. It is said that even while drunk, he could lecture brilliantly and be precise and compassionate with his students, though on some occasions having to be carried off-stage for being too drunk (Zweig 1991, p.141). It is also said that he could be nasty and abusive when drunk, most famously at the Halloween party at the 1975 Fall Seminary, when he ordered his Vajra Guard to forcibly strip poet W. S. Merwin and Merwin's girlfriend Dana Naone (Clark 1980, pp. 23-25).

Chronology

1940: Born in Kham, Eastern Tibet. Enthroned as eleventh Trungpa Tulku, Supreme Abbot of Surmang Monasteries, and Governor of Surmang District. Some put his birth in 1939, including his biography at .

1944-59: Studies traditional monastic disciplines, meditation, and philosophy, as well as calligraphy, thangka painting, and monastic dance.

1947: Ordained as a shramanera (novice monk).

1958: Receives degrees of Kyorpön (Doctor of Divinity) and Khenpo (Master of Studies). Ordained as a bhikshu (full monk).

1959-60: Escapes to India during the Chinese invasion of Tibet and increasing suppression of the Buddhist religion.

1960-63: By appointment of the Dalai Lama, serves as spiritual advisor to the Young Lamas' Home School in Dalhousie, India.

1963-67: Attends Oxford University on a Spaulding scholarship, studying comparative religion, philosophy, and fine arts. Receives instructor's degree in Sogetsu School of Japanese flower arrangement founded by Master Sofu Teshigahara.

1967: Founds Samyé-Ling, a meditation center in Dumfriesshire, Scotland.

1968: Receives The Sadhana of Mahamudra terma text while on retreat in Taktsang, a sacred cave in Bhutan. (see Termas)

1969: Becomes the first Tibetan British subject. Injured in a car accident, leaving him partially paralyzed. Relinquishes monastic vows and robes.

1970: Marries Diana Judith Pybus. Arrives in North America. Establishes Tail of the Tiger, a Buddhist meditation and study center in Vermont, now known as Karmê Chöling. Establishes Karma Dzong, a Buddhist community in Boulder, Colorado.

1971: Begins teaching at University of Colorado. Establishes Rocky Mountain Dharma Center, now known as Shambhala Mountain Center, near Fort Collins, Colorado.

1972: Initiates Maitri, a therapeutic program that works with different styles of neurosis using principles of the five buddha families. Conducts the [Milarepa](#) Film Workshop, a program which analyzes the aesthetics of film, on Lookout Mountain, Colorado.

1973: Founds Mudra Theater Group, which stages original plays and practices theater exercises, based on traditional Tibetan dance. Incorporates Vajradhatu, an international association of Buddhist meditation and study centers, now known as Shambhala International. Establishes Dorje Khyung Dzong, a retreat facility in southern Colorado. Conducts first annual Vajradhatu Seminary, a three-month advanced practice and study program.



1974: Incorporates Nalanda Foundation, a nonprofit, nonsectarian educational organization to encourage and organize programs in the fields of education, psychology, and the arts. Hosts the first North American visit of His Holiness the Sixteenth Gyalwang [Karmapa](#), head of the Karma Kagyü lineage. Founds The Naropa Institute, a contemplative studies and liberal arts college, now fully accredited as Naropa University. Forms the organization that will become the Dorje Kasung, a service group entrusted with the protection of the buddhist teachings and the welfare of the community.

1975: Forms the organization that will become the Shambhala Lodge, a group of students dedicated to fostering enlightened society. Founds the Nalanda Translation Committee for the translation of Buddhist texts from Tibetan and Sanskrit. Establishes Ashoka Credit Union.

1976: Hosts the first North American visit of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, revered meditation master and scholar of the Nyingma lineage. Hosts a visit of His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche, head of the Nyingma lineage. Empowers Thomas F. Rich as his dharma heir, known thereafter as Vajra Regent Ösel Tendzin. Establishes the Kalapa Court in Boulder, Colorado, as his residence and a cultural center for the Vajradhatu community. Receives the first of several Shambhala terma texts (see termas). These comprise the literary source for the Shambhala teachings. Founds [Alaya](#) Preschool in Boulder, Colorado.

1977: Bestows the Vajrayogini abhisheka for the first time in the West for students who have completed ngöndro practice. Establishes the celebration of Shambhala Day. Observes a year-long retreat in Charlemont, Massachusetts. Founds Shambhala Training to promote a secular approach to meditation practice and an appreciation of basic human goodness. Visits Nova Scotia for the first time.

1978: Conducts the first annual Magyal Pomra Encampment, an advanced training program for members of the Dorje Kasung. Conducts the first annual Kalapa Assembly, an intensive training program for advanced Shambhala teachings and practices. Conducts the first Dharma Art seminar. Forms Amara, an association of health professionals. Forms the [Upaya](#) Council, a mediation council providing a forum for resolving disputes. Establishes the Midsummer's Day festival and Children's Day.

1979: Empowers his eldest son, Ösel Rangdröl Mukpo, as his successor and heir to the Shambhala lineage. Founds the Shambhala School of Dressage, an equestrian school under the direction of his wife, Lady Diana Mukpo. Founds Vidya Elementary School in Boulder, Colorado.

1980-83: Presents a series of environmental installations and flower arranging exhibitions at art galleries in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Denver, and Boulder.

1980: Forms Kalapa Cha to promote the practice of traditional Japanese Tea Ceremony. With the Nalanda Translation Committee, completes the first English translation of The Rain of Wisdom.

1981: Hosts the visit of His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama to Boulder, Colorado. Conducts the first annual Buddhist-Christian Conference in Boulder, Colorado. Exploring the common ground between Buddhist and Christian contemplative traditions. Forms Rvuko

1983: Establishes Gampo Abbey, a Karma Kagyü monastery located in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, for Western students wishing to enter into traditional monastic discipline. Creates a series of elocution exercises to promote precision and mindfulness of speech.

1984-85: Observes a year-long retreat in Mill Village, Nova Scotia.

1986: Moves his home and the international headquarters of Vajradhatu to Halifax, Nova Scotia.

1987: Dies on April 4th (alcoholism related).

1989: Reincarnation believed to have born in Derge, Tibet; recognized two years later by Tai Situ Rinpoche.

List of published works

Born in Tibet 1966

Meditation in Action 1969

Mudra 1972

Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism 1973

The Dawn of Tantra, by Herbert V. Guenther and Chögyam Trungpa 1975

Glimpses of Abhidharma 1975

The Tibetan Book of the Dead: The Great Liberation through Hearing in the Bardo, translated with commentary by Francesca Fremantle and Chögyam Trungpa 1975

The Myth of Freedom and the Way of Meditation 1976

The Rain of Wisdom 1980

Journey without Goal: The Tantric Wisdom of the Buddha 1981

The Life of Marpa the Translator 1982

First Thought Best Thought: 108 Poems 1983

Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior 1984

Crazy Wisdom 1991

The Heart of the Buddha 1991

Orderly Chaos: The Mandala Principle 1991

Secret Beyond Thought: The Five Chakras and the Four Karmas 1991

The Lion's Roar: An Introduction to Tantra 1992

Transcending Madness: The Experience of the Six Bardos 1992

Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving Kindness 1993

Glimpses of Shunyata 1993

The Art of Calligraphy: Joining Heaven and Earth 1994

Illusion's Game: The Life and Teaching of Naropa 1994

The Path Is the Goal: A Basic Handbook of Buddhist Meditation 1995

Dharma Art 1996

Timely Rain: Selected Poetry of Chögyam Trungpa 1998

Great Eastern Sun: The Wisdom of Shambhala 1999

Glimpses of Space: The Feminine Principle and Evam 1999

The Essential Chögyam Trungpa 2000

Glimpses of Mahayana 2001

Glimpses of Realization 2003

The Collected Works of Chögyam Trungpa, Volumes One through Eight 2003

True Command: The Teachings of the Dorje Kasung, Volume I, The Town Talks 2004

See also

- Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche
- Trungpa tülkus
- Surmang Monastery
- Shambhala International
- Buddhism in America
- Ken Keyes, Jr.
- Reginald Ray

Haiku

The beginner in meditation
Resembles a hunting dog
Having a bad dream.

His parents are having tea
With his new girlfriend –
Like a general inspecting the troops.

Maple leaves might pounce
Tigers might become maple leaves
The dichotomy is in visual art

Coming home from work,
Still he hears the phone
Ringing in the office.



Source

- Connie Zweig, Connie and Jeremiah Abrams (Eds.) (1991). *Meeting the Shadow*. ISBN 087477618X.
- Tom Clark (1980). *The Great Naropa Poetry Wars*. ISBN 0-932274-06-4.



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