

## NAMCHAK FOUNDATION LEADERSHIP TEAM

### **Tulku Sangak Rinpoche**

*Spiritual Director of Namchak*

Tulku Sangak Rinpoche is the world lineage holder of the Namchak lineage. Rinpoche is the spiritual director of Namchak Retreat Ranch and Ewam International Centers worldwide.

Born in Chamdo in the Kham region of Tibet in 1952, Rinpoche was recognized in early childhood by the great Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö [1893-1959], as well as by the former Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche, to be the reincarnation of the Gochen Tulku.

Rinpoche's parents hoped he was the reincarnation of another master instead—the great tertön Tsasum Lingpa, founder of our Namchak lineage. Tsasum Lingpa had been reborn in their family repeatedly in the past. Their family had been responsible for the local Namchak Ritrö monastery and Tsasum Lingpa's hermitage.

Imagine their chagrin when, as soon as he was old enough to speak a bit, he insisted he was a reincarnation of another lama—the Gochen Tulku! As such, he was head of the Gochen monasteries of the Namchak lineage. Soon after, he was formally recognized and confirmed as the 6th incarnation of the Gochen Tulku. It was Tsasum Lingpa who first predicted and named the site for the first Gochen Monastery, which was then built by the first Gochen Tulku, Gyalwa Gyatso.

Around the age of three, when Rinpoche was with his family and a large group of others harvesting hay in the fields, he was left sitting on a boulder at the foot of a cliff, where he imparted the wondrous sign of his realization by leaving his footprint in a rock, as though in soft clay. To this day, it is still visible.

During the Cultural Revolution after 1969, he received important teachings, including Dzogchen (the Great Perfection) from Tulku Chemchok Rinpoche, and practiced them deeply. Later on, due to the kindness of HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, he spent 14 years studying and practicing under him outside of Tibet. At that time, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama empowered him to take charge and uphold the Namchak lineage by starting the Namchak retreat center in Nepal. He published the Treasure teachings of the Namchak lineage, beginning soon after HH Dilgo Khentse Rinpoche's parinirvana.



Tulku Sangak Rinpoche, an outstanding meditation master and scholar, is the primary lineage holder of the Namchak lineage. He also holds other widely practiced lineages of Tibet. Rinpoche is a master stupa builder as well. He has established the Turquoise Leaf Nunnery, a convent in Nepal where more than 50 nuns live and practice.

When he was about seven, he first heard of the land of America. He thought of nothing else for a week and knew he would ultimately move here. He had specific visions of places here in the U.S.

As an adult, on one of his early trips to America, he asked Lama Tsomo to drive him around so that he could look for a place to create a center. Rinpoche recognized from his childhood visions the land on which the Garden of One Thousand Buddhas now sits. That is where he created his first U.S. center.

After living in Montana for many years, he and his family have now moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico, where he has established a retreat and practice center, Pema Khandro Ling.

After establishing the first Ewam in the U.S., the center's Dharma activity prospered around the world, including Taiwan, Hong Kong, Bhutan, India, and others. In the States, Rinpoche later bestowed the Lama title to Sangak Tsomo, and she was given the responsibility to begin the work of building the Retreat Ranch and overseeing the translations of the Namchak lineage sacred texts, for which he expressed his approval and support for Lama Tsomo's endeavor.

**Namchak Khenpo Rinpoche Ngawang Gelek  
(Khen Rinpoche)**

*Teacher and Tibetan Buddhist Scholar*

Khen Rinpoche is one of the younger brothers of Tulku Sangak Rinpoche. They are descendants of the Great Treasure Revealer Tsasum Lingpa nearly three centuries ago and became known as the Namchak family. The Namchak family originates from the Sum (pronounced “soom”) family of the Tong clan, one of the six original clans of the Tibetan people.



After entering the Namdroling Monastery Shedra of HH Penor Rinpoche, Khen Rinpoche completed the study of all the Indian Buddhist philosophical traditions and the Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism under numerous great teachers. He also completed nine years of rigorous training and served at the Namdroling monastery for several years. Enthroned as Khenpo by HH Penor Rinpoche, he taught at the Shedras of Ringo Tulku and Shechen Monastery for many years, as was instructed. Khen Rinpoche strictly abides by his precepts in everyday life and is diligent in his practice.

As it was necessary to assist Tulku Sangak Rinpoche, Khen Rinpoche was sent forth from Namdroling by HH Penor Rinpoche. He taught at the Nunnery and Purbaling retreat centers in Nepal, beginning from the Preliminary Practices through the stages of generation and completion, and then to Tsalung. Besides representing Tulku Sangak Rinpoche as his spiritual heir, he visits and teaches at a variety of places around the world, including the Namchak Foundation and the Namchak Retreat Ranch, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and other locations. While in the U.S., he resides and meditates at the Garden of One Thousand Buddhas in Arlee, Montana.

Khen Rinpoche teaches many retreats and programs, including Shamata, Vipassana, The 37 Practices of a Bodhisattva, The Four Thoughts that Turn the Mind, and Walking the Path. His students revere him as a teacher who thoroughly answers questions and infuses profound wisdom with humor and levity.

“Khen Rinpoche is one of my favorite teachers. His ability to weave humor and stories into these profound teachings makes it an absolute joy to learn with him.”

Joe, meditation practitioner

## Lama Tsomo

*American lama, author, and co-founder of the Namchak Foundation and Namchak Retreat Ranch*

Born Linda Pritzker, Lama Tsomo followed a path of spiritual inquiry and study, ultimately leading to her ordination as one of the few American lamas in Tibetan Buddhism.

Under the tutelage of Tulku Sangak Rinpoche, international holder of the Namchak lineage, Lama Tsomo has done extensive spiritual retreats in the U.S. and abroad and is fluent in Tibetan. Today, she is dedicated to sharing the teachings of the Namchak lineage with Western students, bringing greater happiness and meaning to life through meditation practice, community, and retreat. She is passionate about reaching young people and supporting those working for positive social change. Her teaching has inspired American and international students, who appreciate her informal and often humorous style.



Lama Tsomo holds an M.A. in Counseling Psychology, emphasizing Jungian studies. She is the author of the Ancient Wisdom For Our Times series, an exploration of Tibetan Buddhism meditation that includes Why Bother? An Introduction; Wisdom & Compassion (Starting with Yourself) and Deepening Wisdom, Deepening Connection. This wise and accessible series based on the Vajrayana path gives readers tangible ways to cultivate joy, compassion, focus, and fulfillment in everyday life. Along with the Namchak Community, she created Taking a Breath: A Meditation and Reflection Journal, a hands-on guide for developing and improving meditation practice.

Lama Tsomo teaches at various events and retreats, such as The Four Immeasurables, Waking Up in Community: Taking Your Practice into the World, and Clearing the Lens. Passionate about making Tibetan Buddhist teachings and practices accessible to Westerners, she is known for her stories, humor, and real-life applications of meditation practice.

“Lama Tsomo’s presence radiates light and kindness.”

Kendall, meditation practitioner

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