

Zen and the Art of Avoiding Burnout

Buddhist author encourages embracing space to avoid stress

Tulku Lobsang and his awesome sword.



Janice Vega • College Times

Tulku Lobsang is believed to be the eighth incarnation of the Nyentse Tulku, a beloved Buddhist master with great wisdom. Tulku-la teaches methods for achieving physical health, happiness and development of the mind.

His knowledge and spiritual abilities have reached audiences around the world and his teachings help give way to the wisdom that is vested in each of us. Tulku-la will be making a series of appearances in the Valley this coming week, starting with the presentation of his book *Burnout Syndrome: A Tantrayana Perspective at Changing Hands in Tempe*.

College Times caught up with Tulku-la to learn more about his book and teachings.

College Times: Your teachings are based on ancient Tantric knowledge. Can you briefly explain what that is?

Tulku-la: Ancient Tantrayana teachings are the most sacred and secret teachings of Tibetan Buddhism. Tantrayana teachings are the truest teachings of the Buddha. Many of Buddha's teachings don't truly describe what the reality is; they only teach based on how humans think, how humans see, how humans feel. With Tantrayana, Buddha didn't keep anything secret; everything is the true reality. These teachings were kept secret because they are outside of concepts, outside of how humans usually think. Therefore, we need to know this [teaching] because that is the way we can get outside of how humans see and how humans think.

In your book, you talk about how lack of energy results from problems with our channels. What are "channels" and why are they important?

The concept of the channel is that it is possible

for everything to become a channel, to become space. [In life] we do not have enough love and we do not have enough faith. This is why we receive burnout and stress. In some moment, with your family or with your job, you start losing motivation, you start losing love and you start losing faith. When you lose love and motivation, mentally, it creates a block. And that's how you easily become stressed, burnt out and lazy. Therefore, if we don't want to be burnt out, what we need to practice is motivation. That's the only way to make energy flow. That's what I call channels – it's the flow of energy. Stress means you don't have that flow, it's blocked. You need love and faith.

Why do people suffer from burnout syndrome more today than in the past?

There are three reasons for this. One is the way society is in our modern way of living. There is not enough space, it is too crowded. Everything is moving so fast; cars, the TV, the computer. There is so much noise, not enough calmness. Second is that we know so many things. Knowing so much makes us worry about possibilities, what can go wrong. We think too much. There is not enough space in our mind. Third, physically, we don't move enough. We stay in one position for too long and this creates blocks. Then the blood, wind and energy do not flow in our bodies. This equals stress, when there is no flow.

Can you offer any advice on how to control this burnout?

Change others is the only way we know to try to make ourselves happy. But, if you want less stress and you want a more calm life, the key is to never forget to change yourself. Changing yourself is the secret of a life with more flow and more peace.

You are giving a talk on sexuality and spiritual-

ity. Can you please explain more about what each of these words means?

Without sexual energy, there is no way to practice the spiritual path. Our teachings always say, "the renunciation of desire is the biggest mistake, the biggest suffering of our lives." In our body and in our mind, the most intense, or most manifested love is our sexual desire. The way that most of us experience love is through the experience of sex. This means that, as normal human beings, we experience love through the body, not the mind. Our minds may experience happiness, but not true love. When desire becomes infinite in our lives, then we have bliss. This is love, this is the greatest love. If we want to be a spiritual person, if we want to be a happy person, we need to work with our sexual energy. Sexual energy is [what] creates our life or destroys our life. If sexual energy goes the wrong way, everything goes the wrong way. What I always tell people is that without sexual energy it is not possible to feel anything. Example: when you look at a flower and you feel that it is beautiful, that is because of sexual energy. Without sexual energy it is not possible for you to see a flower as beautiful. It is the source of all happiness.

Tulku Lobsang, "Burnout Syndrome, a Tantrayana Perspective," Changing Hands Bookstore, 6428 S. McClintock Drive, Tempe, 480.730.0205, Monday, October 4, 7 p.m., free

"Cut Your Thoughts: The Body as a Vehicle for Change," Emaho Foundation, 1402 N. Miller Road, Suite B1, Scottsdale, 480.704.4169, Tuesday, October 5, 7 p.m., \$10

"Sexuality and Spirituality," Embassy Suites Hotel, 2630 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix, 602.955.3992, Wednesday, October 6, 7 p.m., \$15