

## A DEEP SHIFT INSIDE ME

BY LAMA PALDEN DROLMA

TEACHER, MOTHER, AND PSYCHOTHERAPIST

AN INTERVIEW FROM THE BOOK *WHY BUDDHISM?*  
*WESTERNERS IN SEARCH OF WISDOM* (2001) BY VICKI MACKENZIE

At first glance, Caroline Alioto has all the marks of a regular modern American woman. She lives in California, eats health food, has been married several times (with two children from different husbands), and is a practising psychotherapist with all the language that goes with it. A second, longer look, however, reveals that she is a most unusual person indeed. To begin with she is a lady lama—a title bestowed by the Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism on certain meditators who have undergone a strict three-year retreat—with robes to match her status. Then there is her exotic past. She has ventured far geographically as well as mentally, intrepidly breaking down barriers of habit and culture as she goes. One of her husbands was a Rinpoche from the remote and largely unknown Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan, where she lived for two years as one of only a handful of Westerners. Perhaps most significant is the fact that she is rapidly becoming a highly respected teacher with an ever-increasing group of students both at her own centre, Sukkhasiddhi in San Rafael (north of San Francisco), and at nearby Spirit Rock, founded by well-known author and teacher pair, Jack Kornfield and Sylvia Borstein.

I first encountered Lama Palden Drolma (to use her Tibetan ordination name) in 1996, when I was doing research for a book, and she graciously invited me to stay in her house, even though she had never seen me before in her life. I met a tall, slim, brown-eyed, 40-something woman with a stylish air and an infectious giggle. I was struck by the way she managed to do umpteen tasks (cook food, answer the telephone, supervise her ten-year-old daughter, feed the cat, chat to friends, organize Buddhist teachings) simultaneously and at vast speed. She was also extremely unassuming. It was only after I had known her for some time that the extent of her training and the profundity of her spiritual expertise emerged. I wondered whether this lack of self-publicity was due to her personality or her gender. Whatever the reason, I found it an attractive trait.

Lama Palden's journey into Buddhism illustrates many points. During our conversation she used the words 'practice' and 'realisation' many times. The two are inter-connected and pivotal for those who seriously want to follow the Buddha's path. The Buddha maintained that spiritual evolution is something everyone can achieve since we all have Buddha nature, but the responsibility and the effort is in our own hands. In this context the Buddhist does not wait for a moment of 'grace' to fall on her or him, not hope for a blinding light on a road to Damascus, but sets about working on his/her own inner transformation according to spiritual maps plotted by those who have gone before. The Buddhist practises to reach awakening just as a concert pianist practises to play a sonata. On this journey the markers along the way are 'realisations'—moments when the subject of meditation stops being a mental pursuit and becomes felt or real; moments when the meditation drops from the head to the heart. Realisations are the difference between dogma and true wisdom. You know that a teacher has realisations because they teach from their own experience rather than mere book learning, and because their actions do not differ from their words.

During the conversation Lama Palden also revealed (somewhat bravely) that as a child she had had memories of past lives. This is the business of reincarnation. While some Western Buddhists regard reincarnation as an unnecessary tenet (see the interview with Stephen Batchelor) many, like Lama Palden, accept it completely. Certainly reincarnation or rebirth is totally feasible, excepted even, within Tibetan Buddhism; consciousness is said to leave the body at death and move on to another form, carrying its propensities with it. Thus consciousness moves from life to life in a continuous stream, bringing with it habits, predilections and predispositions laid down in previous existences. For Lama Palden reincarnation

explains precisely why she is a Buddhist and led the life she has.

This interview was conducted in Lama Palden's study in Marin, California, a small room into which she had managed to fit a desk, sofa, many fascinating books and an altar filled with Buddha statues, flowers and an ever-flickering candle. It reflected the many facets of her life. Her conversation was frank, serious and punctuated by the occasional giggle.

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What I was looking for was what you would call 'mystical union'. I had had mystical experiences as a child in church. I used to sing in the choir, and during the devotional singing and chanting I would often have a very strong sense of coming into the divine presence. All along I loved the church—there really wasn't any dogma in the Episcopal Church I was raised in. But it didn't go far enough. I was yearning to purify and in some way transform what I experienced as my own neuroses, my own suffering, so that I could come into a deep state of peace and grace. I had felt them at times but they weren't always there. As a teenager I was keenly aware of a lot of emotional turmoil. What I wanted was to become a vehicle for blessings and healing to come through me to other people—to be able to benefit humanity somehow. I had had that concern from early on. With the Church it got to the point of "When do we go to the desert to do the Retreats?" In those days that part was never forthcoming.

In the early 1970s I started exploring comparative mysticism in different traditions like Sufi and Zen, studying and learning from various teachers in the San Francisco Bay area. Then a Sufi friend dragged me to see Kalu Rinpoche, an elderly lama from Tibet. He had done a total of around 25 years retreat himself and was a highly revered teacher. It was only Kalu Rinpoche's third trip to the West. I didn't know all this, of course, but as soon as I saw him I knew he was my teacher in a very fundamental sense. I had been practising these other traditions sincerely for about six years, all the time praying to meet my actual, true teacher. I just saw him and sensed an authentic presence and an embodiment of truth. He was a pure being and something rang so deeply inside of me. I just knew this was the person I'd been looking for, who could provide the profound spiritual practice I wanted. I took Refuge with him the night I met him. It was the full moon of September 1977.

Four months later I sold everything I had and went over to his monastery in Darjeeling to study with him. I was 25 and I had a five-year-old son who was going to come with me but he ended up staying at home with my mom. She took care of him, which she did twice over the course of my training. Once I began studying with Kalu Rinpoche and some of the other lamas, I began to have a profound appreciation for Buddhism and the tradition. I found it met everything that I had been longing for. As soon as I started doing the practises I felt a deep shift take place inside me. In the Buddhist practises I found the way of transforming myself which I had been looking for.

Kalu Rinpoche had a rather funky monastery. It's been built up a lot more since. He had a little tiny house attached to it, right above the road on the way to Darjeeling. He gave me and my travelling companion a room to stay in that belonged to two monks who were on holiday, so we lived right in the monastery itself for the entire four months we were there. Kalu Rinpoche was incredibly gracious. He taught us himself at least three times a week quite extensively. There were a handful of Westerners and he had a translator. We had other teachers as well, including Bokar Rinpoche (who became Kalu Rinpoche's successor). All in all we had teachings just about every day.

We were also meditating right from the very beginning and doing a series of traditional Tibetan foundation practices called Nyondro. These included established rituals for purification, taking Refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. I was also learning to dedicate all my spiritual practice to the benefit of all beings. It consisted of saying a very simple little four-line prayer, but it was a very important prayer. I found that it radically altered my experience of spiritual practice. Along with this I was meditating on the Bodhisattva of compassion.

So I was there with Kalu Rinpoche and he didn't disappoint me at all. In fact I was filled with a deep happiness and felt a tremendous sense of blessing. At one point I had a really remarkable experience. When I was 22 I had seen a therapist for a short time, and she had mentioned to me that I should work on self-love. It was the first time I'd ever heard such a term. I thought, 'Self-love, what's that?' For about three years it had become like a koan [Zen riddle given to students to meditate on] for me. 'Self-love—how do you do that?' One day in Sonada (near

Darjeeling), Bokar Rinpoche had been teaching us and we came out of the tiny temple and Bokar Rinpoche looked right at me. I actually saw gold light coming out of his heart and into my heart—and something turned inside me. It was an experience of somebody loving me so much but impartially so that somehow my own love was awakened in a way that it never had been. From that day on, something clicked inside me and I felt an experience of self-love. Over the years it has stayed with me and grown.

Five years later I did a three-year retreat on Salt Spring Island in British Columbia, during which time the work on self-love was very helpful. It was so hard—I had to have a lot of compassion for myself then! There were twenty of us altogether, ten men and ten women, in separate compounds. I had prayed for years to be able to do a long retreat, and Kalu Rinpoche was very keen on the idea. Afterwards I felt that I had done at least one thing that was meaningful in this life. It was extraordinarily worthwhile. My practice changed night and day after the retreat.

It was a really intense training period. We got teachings constantly from a Canadian monk who was a lama. And Dezhung Rinpoche, a high lama, came twice for extended periods. (I really felt a tremendous blessing in his presence. He gave a boost to my practice.) We were also sitting on the cushion twelve or thirteen hours a day. We practised all day long, and during our break we studied Tibetan texts. All our texts were in Tibetan, so we had to learn to read Tibetan. I had learnt a little bit before, but I learnt mainly in retreat.

It's extremely hard work doing intensive practice. To put it into perspective, later I went back to college and then went to graduate school, and I felt as if I was on a vacation the whole time. It was so simple compared to doing a three-year retreat, because to discipline one's mind and to work directly with one's mind is probably the hardest thing you can do. That is where the self-love was useful. In that retreat my imperfections were in my face all the time. I saw what I considered my own obscurations [negative tendencies obscuring progress toward Enlightenment]. Since I was a teenager I had been very aware that my discipline wasn't perfect. I would think that it would be excellent to be able to meditate perfectly all day long, but in that retreat I saw that my mind would run around and think about all kinds of different things and get distracted. I had to face those challenges in retreat because that's all you are doing. The day is so structured that it gives you a situation where you can really attend to your spiritual practice without the outside distractions. I've never really had a problem with self-discipline since my three-year retreat.

Deep emotional needs also came up for me, and there was no outer means of fulfilling them. Needs for a companion, personal love, that sort of thing. Also when I went into retreat my son was ten—so every day I was aware of not being there for him. Once again he was with my mom. It wasn't that I was guilty, but I was feeling a great deal of concern about him. Even though he was only ten, I asked for his permission before I went into retreat. And he gave it. And Kalu Rinpoche had told me it was very beneficial for mothers to go on retreat if the child were in a situation where they were well taken care of—and if the practice were really good then it would justify the separation. That really made me devote myself as ardently as possible to the retreat and the practice.

Still my parents and siblings certainly felt that I was being irresponsible. They were always very supportive of the spiritual path but they felt that going away for three years and leaving my son was over the line. My father thought it was hugely selfish. Nevertheless, they still helped me. I think my parents are wonderful people and I'm deeply, deeply grateful to them, especially my mother. She's been incredibly loving. But it weighed on me the whole time. I really truly believed that if I could realise some of the teachings it would make it worthwhile, because I felt the blessings that emanate from touching upon the truth would make up for the sacrifice my son and family were making. This retreat, however, was much more than an investment. From the start my motivation was to do it for others. I always knew that I wouldn't really be able to help sentient beings until I had deeper realisations. As a teenager I had volunteered in political movements (my family were very politically motivated), including joining an anti-war movement. Within two months I realised that the anger that fuels wars was inside each of us, and that until I learnt how to deal with my own anger and defects, there really wasn't much use my trying to change the world. From then on I saw that the way to progress was to go inside to resolve my own negativities and then from a place of inner peace to try to benefit the world. That was the path that I decided on.

Although in the short term my going away was difficult for both of us, I thought I would have more to give my son and that ultimately he would benefit through my retreat. In the end I think it paid off. We had to work through getting back together and him being able to trust that I was going to be there and that I really cared. He knew that,

but he had to understand on a deep emotional level. It was very difficult for him, but he always maintained afterwards the he was very proud of me and very happy I'd done it. How he's 26 and has done periods of retreat himself including a five-month one with Pema Chodron in Nova Scotia. [Pema Chodron, a Canadian grandmother and ordained Tibetan Buddhist nun, is one of the West's most prominent teachers and practitioners.]

In the January of the last year of the retreat my younger brother died, which was excruciating for the whole family, especially his young wife. I was due to finish the retreat in October. Not being with them was very painful, especially since I knew my son would be feeling the loss greatly as my brother had been an important role model for him. My family very much wanted me to be there, but Kalu Rinpoche reminded me by phone through our lama that while I could do whatever I liked, I had agreed to be there for three years. With that I knew that I had to stay, because I had understood when I went into retreat that you set aside all concerns for family and worldly things during that period. It's not that you don't pray for your family, friends and people every day, but you don't go running out to fix things. So I had to face all the pain with my sitting practice and try to help the situation in every way I could through prayer. I went through tremendous grief, but ultimately that brought me to a huge turning point in my own practice. Everything in me was screaming to go to be with my child and my family, and through not acting on it I was forced into an experience of my true self—true self in the sense of that which is beyond time and place, beyond death. It was as though I set myself free from loads of conditioning. It didn't mean my compassion was less (I think my love and compassion for my family has deepened), but somehow it burnt up a lot of my limitations.

Put in more Buddhist terms, I realised absolute reality through that experience. What I felt happened was that I agreed to deal with things from an absolute point of view. I had to jump off the cliff of my conditioning into the abyss of the totally unknown, unconditioned Emptiness. I knew that Kalu Rinpoche's mind would hold me and it did. Even though he was thousands of miles away, I felt his presence. I jumped and what I contacted was a sense of the absolute true vajra [diamond-like] nature in myself which I have never lost. Through that I was able to go through the grief and ultimately come into a sense of deep joy.

The other piece of the story is when I came out of retreat my parents both independently told me they felt it was good that I had stayed and finished. They said in the depth of their own grief they wanted me there but later they realised that fundamentally there was nothing I could have done because he was already dead and they realised it was important I complete my training. I found that very moving, because even though I had had a realisation of the absolute true nature of mind, that didn't mean I no longer had any emotions and feelings nor was I invulnerable to what people thought and said. I had not let go of all attachments either. Those continued to surface. I still have my obscurations.

I have no fear of death. To me death is a transition. I feel that it's going to be a wonderful opportunity to open up and deepen. The Buddhist tenet that consciousness continues is not a belief, it's a fundamental experience, although obviously in this life I haven't died yet. For me it is not such a far leap because I remembered other lives when I was a child. I remembered living in other countries like Peru, China and some kind of Arabian country and wondering how I got to this place. It felt unfamiliar. I had those memories as far back as I could remember. I just knew I had been in other places in other times, although I never talked about it. And I always felt that there was something that I had to do. In fact, when I was two I ran away from home because I thought I was being lazy not accomplishing my mission. I thought I'd been dilly-dallying letting my parents take care of me and it was time I embarked upon my serious work. I knew I was young but I thought I had enough of the basics. I really felt guilty. My mom found me at the train station. She somehow made me understand that it was OK for me to stay at home and that there was a lot I still had to learn.

When I was 26 I married a Bhutanese Rinpoche who was the incarnation of a Tibetan teacher and went to live in Bhutan, the Himalayan kingdom which has been a stronghold of Buddhism for centuries. Then it was even more cut off than it is now. There were only a handful of Westerners there and I was the first American who had ever been married to a Bhutanese. We lived with the royal family part of the time, but then we lived in His Holiness the Karmapa's house, which he wanted us to use. [The Karmapa is head of the Kagyu school and one of the most eminent figures in Tibetan Buddhism. His reincarnations can be traced back further than the Dalai Lama's.] I loved it there. I was very happy and it was extremely relaxing for me in a very fundamental way. We'd visit with people, go

out for a bit, I'd go and see Kalu Rinpoche and take teachings, but most of the time I just did spiritual practice. I think that it's really valuable to see a religion in its own culture. Often I've noticed that when people take up Buddhism in the West they do it in a rather uptight way: it has a rigid quality—it has to be done just so, and everything is very quiet and serious. When you see Buddhism in its own country it's a very natural outflow of daily life. There are children in the temple, people just pop in to make offerings and it's all really relaxed. It was very helpful to me to see this. I also noticed the embodiment of compassion in the people—compassion for me and for each other. That was extremely nurturing. I was there for two years.

The Bhutanese are very devoted to all their lamas. They have this system in Bhutan that whatever is offered the recipient is obligated to give back double (because they are richer). We spent quite a lot of time with His Holiness the Karmapa in his monastery in Rumtek, Sikkim. I was profoundly affected by him. His compassion and loving-kindness was just phenomenal, and so was the field of Shunyata [Emptiness] that you felt in his presence. Any ideas based in ego that I had were completely exposed when I was with him. They were so obvious it wasn't even worthwhile voicing them. We would spend a lot of time with him just chatting and while we were with him he'd receive visitors and letters from the many centres all around the world which were under his direction. Sometimes he would get upset at the behaviour of the lamas or monks in his monasteries and to me he seemed like a mother with her teenage children saying, 'Oh no, what am I going to do now? Lama So-and-So has run off with all the money from the centre. Lama So-and-So has disrobed and now there's a big commotion'. Or he'd say, 'This centre isn't going right', or 'This Lama isn't behaving properly, now I have to figure out what I'm going to do about this situation'. So, it was very obvious to me from early on that the lamas were not infallible. Even though they had a high degree of training and some of them had realisation, they clearly were human beings who had their own imperfections as well. And I knew it because of being married to a Rinpoche too—he was quite open with me about his own shortcomings. We would talk over these things and try to support each other in our Dharma practice.

In the West we tend to be dazzled by lamas and sometimes we can be hurt by them. In the Vajrayana texts [the esoteric tantric teachings of Tibet] there's a very clear message about seeing your lama as the Buddha. I think the key here is that if you are going to see your main teacher as your guru, he or she needs to be capable of fulfilling that role. In my mind, people like Kalu Rinpoche and the Dalai Lama are very developed beings in whom we can place that kind of ultimate trust. I did that with Kalu Rinpoche and I never felt my trust was ill-placed. What we Westerners have to understand is that there are many different levels of realisation in somebody who is a lama. [A lama simply means a teacher.] At one level an ordinary lama is like a parish priest: he's someone who has studied and done a great deal of practice and one hopes is very sincere in what he is doing, but nevertheless is still a student. He is still on the path along with his students. Basically a lama is a spiritual friend who can help share what he knows to guide one further along. There should be a sense of us all being Sangha [spiritual brethren] and spiritual practitioners together on the path. Now there are some lamas who are highly realised, but they are very rare. It's more common among the Rinpoches to have high degrees of realisation and some of the lamas are very realised, but both lamas and Rinpoches keep working on their own practice throughout their lifetime. They may be aged 30 or 40 and become heads of monasteries, but they still keep developing their spiritual growth. Many of them do come to deeper states of realisation and hopefully all of us practitioners will as our lives keep unfolding.

Speaking from my own position as a teacher, I want to share what I have been given. I have had a lot of experience and training and so I can help people by giving instructions and practising with them, but I am not a fully realised person. We can't expect people who aren't fully realised to be infallible. All of us are in process. Even the Dalai Lama says he's just a humble monk. Obviously anybody who looks at his life, listens to him speak or goes into his presence knows immediately he's far beyond what most ordinary monks are. To be like him ultimately is something all we Buddhist practitioners can aspire to. For me, however, it's very much an aspiration, not an actualised reality.

Apart from teaching Buddhism, I'm also a psychotherapist in private practice. I chose this line of work because I didn't want to be dependent on earning my living from the Dharma, because as a lama I was already doing some counselling and because Buddhism and psychotherapy are closely related. Both are working with the human mind and psyche. In actuality there is no way to separate them. Buddha and the many teachers of the lineages who

came after him have taught the way to liberation, yet often we as human beings fall short of being able to fully accomplish what we have been taught. We all have neuroses, and psychological obscurations—East and West alike. Anger, greed, jealousy, desire and pride are endemic to the human condition. Psychological work can help us to unravel some of the unskillful behaviour that we can indulge in, which in turn helps improve our capacity to practice. Now the Dharma does that too but basically the Dharma says, ‘Do this and don’t do that’. Well, that’s fine, but some people find that they can’t stop the compulsion to act out in negative ways. Even if they practise very devotedly for years they can’t stop their compulsion to act out of greed or pride or anger. That’s where counseling can be helpful. Buddhism can help but it doesn’t necessarily stop the compulsions—and this is where the idea of the subconscious comes in.

Buddhist practice doesn’t necessarily deal with deep psychological issues because the human mind has a way of sealing off certain aspects of our personality or experience that we don’t want to deal with—that’s why it’s called the shadow, because we block it off and aren’t aware of it. We can practise for a long time without facing what we don’t want to look at. This is where a skillful teacher can come in—he or she can point out, ‘OK, you’re missing such and such. You need to address yourself to looking at so and so’. For example, the teachings over and over again emphasise that we should be kind and loving but why aren’t we always like that? Some of this stems from psychological causes and working on the blockages and processing the issues can actually open up our compassion.

I think Buddhism has not been fully translated into our culture. That’s what is happening now. I believe everything that is needed is included in the Buddha’s teachings, but they have not been culturally transmitted to the point where we can readily access them. Our language, our education system, and our conceptual thinking processes are different.

Some people might think that there is a conflict between Buddhist views on karma and Western ideas of psychotherapy. Karma says that if you are unhappy, or in a poor situation, it is due to actions that you yourself have committed in the past [including previous lifetimes]. Psychotherapy, on the other hand, works on the principle that your upbringing and conditioning are mainly responsible. And personally I don’t have any conflict because I have always felt completely responsible for everything that’s happened to me. It’s all due to my own obscurations. These two different approaches are reconciled through compassion. We fundamentally have to have profound compassion for ourselves and others. People do things to other people out of their own suffering and ignorance and we need to have great compassion for them, as well as for the people who experience pain through the acts of another person. The whole question of karma is exceedingly complex and has been totally over-simplified in the West. My experience of Tibetans and Indian Himalayan people who practise Vajrayana Buddhism is that they have a profound compassion for all human beings in the situations they find themselves in. And it’s all interconnected. All of us who aren’t fully realised have certain degrees of ignorance and obscurations that we sometimes act out upon ourselves and others. We have all caused suffering and experienced suffering. We should all take responsibility for our own healing. Whatever has happened to us is what has happened. How we relate to that is our own responsibility and our opportunity for growth and healing. All of us have the opportunity to take what has happened to us in our lives and use it for our own transformation. We can’t change what has happened. We can change how we relate to it. We can relate with hatred or with forgiveness and love, to ourselves in the first place and to others in the second, in the understanding that this is all part of the cycle of ignorance.

I set up the Sukkasiddhi Center here in Marin County two years ago in order to have a place where the teachings of Kalu Rinpoche, the Kagyu lineage and Tibetan Buddhism in general could be made available to people who aren’t able to travel to the East. I want to translate the essence and principles of these teachings into modern American daily life. My view is that we honour all religions and religious traditions and feel that they’re all a deep enrichment for humanity. My particular bent has been for Tibetan Buddhism but I have a great love and respect for all religious traditions. I teach two to three times a week and lead some retreats. I have been giving Refuge for some time—recently 20 people took it. Some of the students had taken Refuge back in the 1970s but the seeds of Vajrayana practice had lain dormant. They’re now sprouting. The youngest Refuge taker was aged three. It was her own idea. We also have day-long retreats and special events. My vision also includes building a place a little removed from town where people can do long- and short-term retreats. That dream is coming closer. There is already a group

of women who want to do a three-year retreat. One of my main motivations was to help build a community of people who could practise deeply together.

I'm really interested in teaching meditation because I believe it is the profound means for Awakening as well as an important aid in daily life. I have emphasised teaching practices which lead to the realisation of Emptiness and openness—and simultaneously teaching practices which engender loving-kindness and compassion. Learning to meditate and having a daily practice leads us to a more satisfying life as it gives us a way to unhook from daily stresses and learn to come to a place of peace and presence within the self. Meditation calms the mind so one has the possibility of making choices from a settled, peaceful state. In the beginning meditation can help us become better human beings through being happier in our lives. It gives us more contentment. Ultimately, however, meditation can lead to full realisation. This is where the teachings on Emptiness come in. We don't really have a word in English which adequately expresses what Emptiness means. Realising Emptiness fundamentally means coming into the experience that who we really are is not our personality, not our conditioning, but a magnificent divine being. The teachings on Emptiness refer to the fact that an actual substantial self cannot be found. Nevertheless there is a stream of consciousness. Who we really are is beyond life and death. If realisation has occurred, then it doesn't matter whether we are dying, healthy, poor, rich, famous or unknown, because who we really are isn't affected by changing conditions. Buddhist meditation and teachings can help us to realise and come into that experience. That is very liberating, because if we take ourselves to be only our conditioned or constructed self, the ego personality, we're fundamentally never going to be liberated.

I teach beginners and advanced students too. There are many people around here who have devoted a great deal of time and sincerity to their practice and study so that it's actually bearing fruit. People are able to start going into deeper levels of practice now. Still, I am completely amazed how quickly people are progressing and coming to this level of maturity. I can only think it's the blessing of the teachers and the practices. What's happening is very exciting. I never expected the opening that I'm seeing in myself and others.

I've devoted all my adult life to studying and practising Buddhism. If I had not had a second child I would have gone back into retreat. That's what I really would like to do at some point in my life. In a sense the three-year retreat was really tilling the ground and I feel I'm at the point where my practice could go deeper. Right now I have a lot of responsibilities but I hope to be able to spend a few months a year really practising. The profound nature is still untapped.