

This is the earliest known letter from the Vajra Regent Ösel Tendzin to his root guru, the Vidyadhara Chögyam Trungpa, Rinpoche. The Vajra Regent wrote it one week following his initial meeting with the Vidyadhara and signed it "Narayana," the name given to him by Swami Satchitananda, his teacher at that time.

March, 1971

Dearest Rinpoche,

During our visit last week I remarked that you were not what I expected. What I am now attempting to do is to communicate to what degree that was true for me. This is the third attempt to write to you, the other two being inadequate expressions of what I had experienced through our contact. I have met many saints and teachers, but only one had the ability to change my state to a noticeable degree just through dharsan. Swami Satchidananda was the one, but now you are the other. I am telling you this because I realize that it was a significant encounter and one that may have bearing on how I approach life and spirituality.

After our talk, I found myself in a state of quiescence. In itself that is not so new for me, but this calm was deeper, more weighty. The people around me remarked that I seemed different. All I could reply was that our contact was such that all my petty concerns about life became unreal. I have been talking about you ever since. First I noticed that your physical body was no more than your thought to express yourself, that thought of body being so pure that I understood it (the physical) to be only your creation. Your motions and movements being unobstructed by manipulative intentions

Letter from Narayana

looked almost automatic. Yet I knew the consciousness attended to each action. Someone had asked me to ask you why you smoked or drank, but the question was absurd in light of your consciousness of the truth. And like any real contact with another, I became again conscious of my own infinite self. Later on I was eating, just dwelling on you and our meeting. As I ate I became conscious again of Maya—what I was eating became nothing, it was going into nothing. Then the motion became nothing. I became more aware of the depth of your consciousness. Forgive this clumsiness. All I am trying to say is that I am open to you and I have been deeply touched by your divinity, so much so that all I have to do is think of you and my mind and thought subsides. This creates in me a willingness to experience you more fully. I am aware that an opening like this is rare in my life.

I am now at a crossroads in life, not sure of which way to go. I came to California with Swamiji and another individual, a fellow student named Krishna, and we started Integral Yoga Institute in Los Angeles. I have been serving there for close to two years. When I came to Boulder the first time to run the I.Y.I. in Kumar's absence, I made some meaningful breakthroughs and entered into more open relationships. Later I studied some techniques and practiced some disciplines taught by Charles Berner of the Institute of Ability, and I have a close relationship with him and his people. In fact, the girl I am marrying is one of his students. However, my current problem is dissatisfaction in the way in which I have been utilizing my abilities. I have not seen the opening by which I can be made use of so as to benefit everyone. I am no longer interested in only teaching yoga. I have been doing some work on

Letter from Narayana

the Festival, but it falls short of a really fulfilling experience. The way I want to live life is not shared by many. Yet, with all this, there is an enthusiastic and exciting way in which I present myself that attracts others to me.

I probably would come back to Boulder and see you if I had the means. If I cannot make it before you come to California, please understand that I am conscious of you and I am anxious to see you again. I offer my services to you. If I can arrange anything during your stay here, please have John write me at the address on the letterhead. My love to John and Marvin and Bill. May your child be blessed with health and happiness. Please reply if you can.

Yours in love,
Narayana Rich