My Personal Journey through the Gongchig

Namo Guru!
Homage to Khenchen Rinpoche,
Inseparable from Lord Jigten Sumgon and Vajradhara!

Homage to the Gongchig,
Completely and perfectly defining the Drikung Kagyu lineage
with concept, practical application, and essence!

Homage to my Dharma Sisters and Brothers
The profound stream of blessings present in our mindstreams
always available to us and permeating all Drikungpas- linking us together.
I rejoice in the vast virtue created here for the benefit of all!
The only thing that prevented me from going completely insane during my personal journey
through the
Gongchig was the small shred of faith and devotion that I can say I possess to this lineage.
The healing rain of these teachings was not an easy ride and the results of the actions created by
none
other than myself was a pill far more bitter than the Tibetan medicine I turned to for some relief.
Section I, Verse 15. "It is also the case that the knowables' obscuration is purified initially."
(Sometimes obscurations to objects of ignorance are purified before obscurations to objects of
wisdom.)

On a physical level, the difficulty of sitting- legs falling asleep, excruciating pain pointed to past
mistakes
that I could no longer ignore. [Section III. Verse 15 "For any beings that transgress [the vows] there will
be wrongdoing." However, on a positive note [Section III, Verse 10 says that "By keeping a
single vow,
the fruit of nirvana is attained." Positive results can be attained right now! I can say with
confidence that
I have seen the incredible results of taking vows in both myself and in others. And that trying
(and failing
often!) has been far more helpful than never having taken them at all. (Fortunately, there are the
Four
Reliances and Vajrasattva.)

Emotionally and mentally, insecurities and fears were screamingly illuminated. This was very
difficult,
but solutions were also presented: the mindfulness that stimulates the innate wisdom and more
courage
and bodhicitta is needed to awaken the latent innate wisdom. Moral conduct is the basis of
mindfulness
and concentration. Rituals and practices (methods) will also help as illustrated by Section III
Verse 17
"In the teachings, the rituals are especially important." and Section V Verse 10 All elaborations are in interdependent connection with natural abiding." Because of cause and effect and the interdependence of all phenomena, rituals have a profound impact that is evident even to the mind caught in dualism.

Leaving the protective sphere of these teachings and with the thought of re-entering my life, I realize that I am not really adequately prepared and can see even more clearly the importance of retreat.

In closing to summarize some key points:
The Gongchig is the essence of the complete path of the Buddha Dharma. All vows, from whichever vehicle, are practiced, none are abandoned and are the basis for all practice and realization, like the handle of an umbrella. All schools of Buddhist thought (view) are important and are like a staircase-the first is the foundation for the second, the second the third and so on. While helpful as the path is traversed, the view and all identification with it such as "I am a Mahamudra practitioner" must eventually be completely let go of to realize the ultimate. Otherwise, there is still self-grasping, the only enemy. Milarepa stated "I have no view".

Section IV Verse 24 states "One should also dedicate to the Buddhas and the Lamas." Whatever wisdom and merit that I accumulated through receiving these profound teachings I dedicate to Lord Jigten Sumgon, Their Holiness' Dalai Lama, Chetsang and Chungsang Rinpoches, Khenchen Rinpoche, Acharya Kinley (who was so kind and dedicated to us English speakers- so grateful, thank you!), all Drikungpas, and all sentient beings. May these pure teachings of Lord Jigten Sumgon flourish in these degenerate times. Emaho!

Konchok Yeshe Wozer (Alexis Tsapatsaris) January 8, 2012