



# SATDHARMA

## SPIRITUAL BIOGRAPHY OF PATRICK SWEENEY

Patrick Sweeney was born in 1959 in Chicago. He attended Lake Forest College and Columbia University, where he majored in philosophy and political science. He began studying Buddhism in college in 1980 and was first introduced to formal Buddhist practice at the San Francisco Zen Center in 1982. He began studying buddhadharma and Shambhala dharma in the tradition of the Vidyadhara Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche in 1983 at the Chicago Dharmadhatu. He took the refuge vow with the Vajra Regent Ösel Tendzin in 1984 while living at Karmê Choling in Barnet, VT. He attended the 1986 Seminary where he received the bodhisattva vow from the Sawang Ösel Rangdrol Mukpo, who was performing those vows for the first time at the request of his father, the Vidyadhara Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche. Mr. Sweeney received Vajrayana transmission from the Vajra Regent, who was asked by the Vidyadhara to give the transmission at that seminary.

Following the seminary, Mr. Sweeney became a close student of the Vajra Regent, and served the Vajra Regent until his death in 1990. The Vajra Regent asked Mr. Sweeney to be his lineage successor and dharma heir in January of 1989. This was confirmed in a private ceremony at that time in Newport, Rhode Island. In May of 1989, Mr. Sweeney moved with the Vajra Regent to Ojai, California. During that time, the Vajra Regent gave Mr. Sweeney extensive teachings and instructions on the various transmissions and teachings he had received from the Vidyadhara. The Vajra Regent also specifically instructed Mr. Sweeney on how to fulfill his responsibilities as a lineage holder and a teacher.

In August of 1989, Mr. Sweeney received the Vajrayogini Abhisheka from the Vajra Regent. At that time, the Vajra Regent empowered him to bestow that abhisheka on students in the future, and authorized him to bestow the refuge vow, the bodhisattva vow and Vajrayana transmission. In October of 1989, the Vajra Regent's choice of Mr. Sweeney as his lineage successor and dharma heir was confirmed by H. H. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche in Paro, Bhutan.

After the Vajra Regent's death in August of 1990, Mr. Sweeney was instructed by H. H. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche to focus his energy on understanding, practicing, realizing and eventually teaching the Karma Kagyü mahamudra path. His Holiness encouraged him to study with H. E. Jamgon Kongtrul III and the Venerable Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche. He was encouraged by His Holiness to support the Sawang (now Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche), in the Sawang's efforts to fulfill his responsibilities in the reformation of Vajradhatu into what is now Shambhala International. In discussions with His Holiness, Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche and Thrangu Rinpoche, Mr. Sweeney further clarified the two-fold nature of the Vajra Regent's responsibilities to the activity of the Vidyadhara,

# SATDHARMA

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which were his spiritual responsibilities as dharma heir and his administrative responsibilities of maintaining the Vidyadhara's mandala.

In accordance with the instructions of His Holiness, Mr. Sweeney's transmission from the Vajra Regent as his dharma heir enables him to support the Sakyong in his spiritual and temporal responsibilities to Shambhala. It remains Mr. Sweeney's intention to continue the spiritual transmission and lineage of Tantra and Essence Mahamudra that he received from the Vajra Regent, in accordance with the commands of Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche and the Venerable Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche.

From 1991 to 1996, Mr. Sweeney studied extensively with Thrangu Rinpoche. Following the death of Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche in 1992, Mr. Sweeney also began studying with Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche.

In 1992, Mr. Sweeney founded the organization now known as Satdharma, which contains the Ojai Valley Dharma Center, Pullahari Retreat Center, and the Vajra Regent Ösel Tendzin Library and Archives. In 1997, Mr. Sweeney began teaching at Pullahari Retreat Center. He began entering students into refuge and bodhisattva vows in 1998. In February of 2001, Thrangu Rinpoche authorized and encouraged Mr. Sweeney to enter a small group of students into vajrayana discipline, and guide them through the ngöndro. Since that time, Mr. Sweeney has continued to study with the Venerable Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche, Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, and the Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, the main spiritual advisors to both Mr. Sweeney and the Satdharma organization.

For the last five years, Mr. Sweeney has deepened his connection with Kyudo, Japanese meditative archery, through a strong and direct relationship with Kanjuro Shibata Sensei XX. He has invited one of Sensei's most senior students, Mr. Sam West, to form Gekko Kyudojo, and teach Kyudo, in Ojai, California. Mr. Sweeney has made a strong commitment to integrating Kyudo into both Buddhist and Shambhala curriculums in Ojai.

Mr. Sweeney is married and has a son. He continues the householder tradition that is strongly represented in both the Kagyü and Nyingma lineages. Currently Mr. Sweeney teaches extensively and continues to lead the Satdharma community as lineage holder, President of Satdharma and the spiritual leader of the Satdharma three-yana mandala.

Mr. Sweeney has received immeasurable blessings and support to fulfill these aspirations through the teachings and kindnesses of the Venerable Thrangu Rinpoche, Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche and The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche.