

# **INNER PEACE— GLOBAL IMPACT**

**Tibetan Buddhism, Leadership, and Work**

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*A Volume in*  
Advances in Workplace Spirituality:  
Theory, Research, and Application

*Series Editor*  
Louis W. (Jody) Fry, *Texas A&M University-Central Texas*

**Advances in Workplace Spirituality:  
Theory, Research, and Application**

Louis W. (Jody) Fry, Series Editor

*Psychology of Religion and Workplace Spirituality* (2012)  
edited by Peter C. Hill and Bryan J. Dik

*Inner Peace—Global Impact:  
Tibetan Buddhism, Leadership, and Work* (2012)  
edited by Kathryn Goldman Schuyler

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**Kathryn Goldman Schuyler**



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## SERIES PREFACE

Louis (Jody) W. Fry

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A major change is taking place in the personal and professional lives of many organizational leaders and their employees as they aspire to integrate their spirituality and religion with their work. Many argue that the reason behind this change is that society is seeking spiritual solutions to better respond to tumultuous social, business, and geopolitical changes. The result has been a remarkable explosion of scholarship that provides the opportunity for more specialized interest areas, including the role of spirituality and religion in shaping organizations: structures, decision making, management style, mission and strategy, organizational culture, human resource management, finance and accounting, marketing, and sales—in short: all aspects of leading, managing, and organizing resources and people. As evidenced in the recent formation of the *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion* and the success of the Management, Spirituality, and Religion Special Interest Group of the *Academy of Management*, an emerging field with a broad focus on workplace spirituality is gathering momentum.

This book series, *Advances in Workplace Spirituality: Theory, Research, and Application*, focuses on the study of the relationship and relevance of spirituality and/or religion to organizational life. Its vision is to draw from a diverse range of scholarly areas to become a pivotal source for integrative theory, research, and application on workplace spirituality. The purpose of the series is to (1) provide scholars with a meaningful collection of books in key areas and create a forum for the field, (2) support a growing trend toward paradigm integration and assimilation through the interdis-

ciplinary nature of this series, and (3) draw from a wide variety of disciplines for integrative thinking on workplace spirituality with the broad goal of adding to the value of workplace spirituality theory, research, and its application. The series aims to serve as a meeting forum and help cross-fertilization in these communities. Our sole criterion is academic rigor and scientific merit.

The second book of this series, *Inner Peace—Global Impact: Tibetan Buddhism, Leadership, and Work*, is a groundbreaking collection of first-person narratives, scholarly research, and commentaries by noted social scientists focused on the underlying principles of the Tibetan wisdom traditions relevant for successful leadership in the workplace. The uniqueness of this book lies in the breadth and depth of its contributors. In an endeavor of this type, the quality and depth of knowledge of the editor is of the utmost importance. Kathryn Goldman Schuyler has significant understanding of the subtleties of the various worlds of Tibetan Buddhism, so knew whom to invite into her ambitious exploration of its implications for leadership and work. Dr. Goldman Schuyler invited people to be authors only if they possessed a personal understanding of the subject in addition to having professional qualifications. For example, to portray the leadership contributions of the Dalai Lama, we have his 25-year primary English translator, who is also a noted international scholar. Similarly, Dr. Judith Simmer-Brown is one of very few scholars of the feminine principle in Tibetan traditions. This unique volume breaks new ground, as all of the contributors have the highest professional qualifications and have also sustained a contemplative practice for years. They convey a thoughtful yet vibrant picture of the contents and contributions of Tibetan Buddhism in its 50-year life outside of Tibet.

Louis (Jody) Fry  
Series Editor

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# PREFACE

**Kathryn Goldman Schuyler**

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*Peace starts within each one of us.  
When we have inner peace,  
we can be at peace with those around us.  
When our community is in a state of peace,  
it can share that peace with neighboring communities.<sup>1</sup>*

—His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

This is not a book of wisdom teachings, nor is it purely a book of scholarly research. It is intended for the broad audience of people who are intrigued by Tibet, its teachers and teachings, and the process of global change brought forth by their diaspora. It is also designed for leaders, professors, and consultants in search of new ideas and perhaps even an entirely new paradigm for how leaders could be educated and what may be expected of them. This book was written for you if you:

- Are intrigued by Buddhism or the wisdom traditions of Tibet and are curious about how they may be relevant to leadership and daily work,
- Wonder how these traditions have grown from very little presence in the West 50 years ago to becoming a highly visible global force,
- Feel that leadership theory and practice is missing something important, and “you don’t know what it is” (to quote Bob Dylan’s song about major societal change),<sup>2</sup>

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- Have been thinking about the need for new paradigms for leadership, whether in the domains of business, politics, or education,
- Are interested in the contribution of spirituality and human development to leadership development.

### **THE GENESIS OF THIS BOOK**

I do not read or speak Tibetan, nor is my expertise in Asian studies or history. I am a sociologist by training, with ongoing interest in the sociology of knowledge, as well as decades of experience consulting to leaders and organizations on strategic change and organizational health. As a person interested in global change, leadership, and the role of organizations in creating healthy societies, I grew interested in this growing presence of Tibetan Buddhism.

Looking back, I see that my background helped me to notice and value these ideas and questions. As long as I can remember, I had been interested in the relationships among societal change, individual human suffering, and awareness or consciousness. I vividly recall sitting on my bed as a young child, looking out the window at the stars and wondering why human beings seemed always to be fighting, always at war. If we were alone in this huge cold universe, I pondered, why did not we experience one another as kin, rather than as enemy? Nothing answered this question for me. Growing up in New York City made me very aware of the great differences and inequities that exist among people.

In college I studied foreign languages and traveled extensively, seeking to see life through many lenses. I became a professional sociologist, viewing sociology as a foundation for effective action on large societal issues, and also a Feldenkrais practitioner, helping people at an individual level to relieve pain and improve performance of all types through embodied learning. In addition, I became an organizational consultant, focusing on coaching executives and their teams, using this as a base to support these leaders' desire to create healthy organizational cultures.<sup>3</sup> After working as a consultant and coach for about 15 years, I shifted my focus to educating the next generation of consultants, becoming a professor in the fields of organizational psychology and organization development. All of these types of work share the common intention of relieving suffering as permanently as possible through learning. All are powerful tools, yet none seemed sufficient for the job at hand.

About 10 years ago, while working as director of a graduate program in organizational studies, I received a large postcard inviting me to a series of talks by Western women who had been practicing Tibetan Buddhist nuns for over 20 years, and who had received their vows from the Dalai



Lama. I was intrigued, as I had never imagined that such a category existed: women, born and educated in the West, who were such devoted practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism that they lived for over 20 years as nuns in a tradition that seemed to me, at the time, completely unconnected with daily life in today's Western cultures. The postcard invited me into a world that I hadn't known existed. Although I "knew of" Tibet and Buddhism, had heard records of Tibetan chanting years earlier, and had noticed a book by the Dalai Lama in airport bookstores in my frequent travels as an organizational consultant, neither Tibet nor Buddhism were part of my daily awareness. Gradually, over the years since I received that invitation, this changed, leading me to practice in these traditions and to the fundamental notion for this book.

The evening of the first of these lectures by Western Tibetan nuns, I learned that a book had been written in the eighth century that provided guidelines to living as a *bodhisattva*—a being of great compassion who is entirely committed to helping others be happy. Since from this perspective, most suffering comes from the way we experience things rather than from the things themselves, a bodhisattva helps people to appreciate the nature of life.<sup>4</sup> I had heard of this concept in a popular rock song, but never dreamed that a book had been written centuries earlier that taught one how to live like this. I jumped into the course and the book in the middle, with a kind warning from a friendly Western monk that I did not have to stay and could leave at any time if it was not what I wanted. This book, which I later learned was at the core of what the Dalai Lama valued in his own learning, turned out to be the door to a cultural tradition that had moved from distant mountaintops in Tibet to my backyard in San Francisco—and everyone's, around the world, thanks (unintentionally) to the unwanted invasion by the Chinese. I do not see their culture as a panacea, but it does provide glimpses of possibilities for human development that are not visible from within the Western social science mindset.

The Tibetan wisdom traditions or Vajrayana Buddhism have been the heart or foundation of the culture of Tibet since the eighth century, when King Trisong Detsen invited the tantric mystic Padmasambhava and others from India. (Note that the main Buddhist terms, such as "Vajrayana," are described briefly in the glossary, for those unfamiliar with them.) These traditions were taught only by people who had personally mastered the practices and were passed on only to those ready to learn them; the more advanced practices were kept private and were passed on from one teacher to the most skilled students. Because they were taught only by those with personal mastery of these practices, it is a living tradition—a set of understandings about life and ways of training one's mind that are not merely intellectual, but alive. For many centuries in Tibet, these wisdom traditions have been a guide to life, a process of analysis and reason,

a lifelong training of the mind/heart, a way of aligning people towards compassionate action, and a ground for profoundly valuing the opportunities presented by human life.

### **THE CONTRIBUTORS AND STRUCTURE OF *INNER PEACE—GLOBAL IMPACT***

This volume focuses in particular on the contributions that the Tibetan wisdom traditions can make to leadership and the workplace. The topic is approached in varied ways by the authors, who have deep personal knowledge of the particular subjects they address. It is hard to wrap one's mind around a question as large as the contribution of Tibetan Buddhism and the Tibetan diaspora to contemporary leadership and work, since a true understanding of Tibetan culture and what its survival (or loss) may mean to the world requires deep appreciation of the various Tibetan Buddhist traditions, an understanding of societal change processes, and also perspectives on the changing nature of Western society and culture. One person can provide only a limited picture when the topic is so broad, so I invited people to write who brought great diversity of expertise. My goal was to create a book that would provide knowledge from differing perspectives, thereby catalyzing new questions and creating a collage of meaningful perspectives on this aspect of global human change. Because of the complexity and richness of the subject and the goal of fostering an understanding of Buddhism as a practice and not simply as a set of intellectual concepts, I opted to include only contributors with lengthy meditation practices. Some make connections between Tibetan Buddhist theory and leadership theory and practice. Others depict how a few entrepreneurial Tibetan leaders nourished the development of organizations that were critical to the process of transplanting Tibetan teachings and institutions to new soil. Still others have done research related to Tibetan Buddhism and leadership or organizations, while some describe how Tibetan Buddhist practice has influenced their own work.

The book includes people's stories, in the spirit of valuing first-person research, in addition to more widely-recognized approaches to practicing social science. My intention is that this combination will enrich scholarly discourse and also provide information for those who are interested in the phenomenon, yet are not scholars. The blend of voices and perspectives creates a rich picture of how Tibetan Buddhism is becoming an influence on leadership and work. Some were previously published in scholarly journals, others could be, and some are first person narratives or stories. Intentionally, the voices differ. They were not intended to be alike, but to

convey the range of what is happening, how it is discussed, and how people have experienced its impact.

*Inner Peace—Global Impact* has been structured for easy access and modular reading. Each section opens with a brief introduction to its varied contributions, just as this preface conveys a sense of the whole and how the parts fit together.

The first section focuses on the importance of **leadership** in the survival and spread of Tibetan Buddhism in the West. Here, I selected contributors who could cast light on the uniqueness of His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama as he evolved over time: he went from being largely unknown to becoming a global thought leader. The section also addresses the crucial contribution of the feminine principle as an element in leadership and enlightenment—something largely unseen by most people—and brings out the importance of compassion and ethics in leadership development. The second section shifts its focus to **individuals** in the West, looking at how Tibetan Buddhism has impacted people's lives at work. These contributors are intentionally quite varied, ranging from an anthropologist of dance who was so drawn to the inner meanings of Tibetan Buddhist dance that she focused her entire life towards it, to an airline flight attendant, an artist, and a university professor. This section represents first person research: individuals telling their own stories of transformation. The third section is about the importance of **organizing and organizations**: it describes three of the largest global Tibetan Buddhist organizations, suggesting how it has been important to create new organizations that met the needs and mindset of Westerners. The authors of the chapters in this section have been deeply involved personally in these organizations. Dr. Nick Ribush was one of the founding directors of the organization that he describes, while Susan Skjei was a student of the founder, became a teacher within that tradition, was a corporate education executive, and developed programs to bring these perspectives to managers. Sogyal Rinpoche is a wisdom teacher who created and leads one of the largest global Tibetan Buddhist organizations—Rigpa.<sup>5</sup> The fourth section brings in **research** on the impact of Tibetan Buddhist practices in the West, and the final section concludes the book with **reflections** by teachers who have been deeply involved in contemplative practice for decades: a tenth generation Tibetan yogi (Lama Tharchin Rinpoche), a Western CEO and management professor (Bill George), the consultant/thought leader who catalyzed global interest in learning organizations (Peter Senge), and a widely-respected Western organizational consultant and Tibetan Buddhist practitioner (Margaret Wheatley) who introduced Western behavioral scientists to the implications of chaos theory and the “new” physics for leadership—implications that are quite similar to those of Tibetan Buddhism's description of the world. Additional background

information on each author can be found at the start of each section and in their bios. In their own ways, all are wise and passionate, bringing a great variety of perspectives and experience to the book. Every contributor has sustained a practice of contemplation or meditation for many years and brings this perspective to their writing and their work in the world.

The book was developed to fit the interests of varied groups of people, ranging from those generally interested in Tibetan Buddhism or leadership to scholars in these areas. It has a modular design that lets you, as reader, adapt it to your interests. For example, there are extensive notes at the end of many chapters so that scholars can identify source materials and pursue them, if they wish. At the same time, readers interested in the topic but not the underlying scholarship can focus on the stories and thinking that interest them and skip the notes, or use them to locate other readings in their personal area of interest. *Leadership and organization development practitioners* may choose to begin by reading the chapters about leadership or by picking among those about people's work experiences. *Leaders* looking for ideas they can use to hone their leadership skills might begin with the first section on leadership, the section on organizing, and the final section of reflections by noted leadership educators and consultants. *Scholars and management professors* will be able to access the underlying research by reading the extensive notes, and may choose to begin with the introductory chapter and the chapters based on empirical research, plus the more conceptual contributions from Western thought leaders in the final section. They may also be intrigued by the first person stories by a sociologist and a research psychologist of the personal impact of Tibetan practice. *Students of Buddhism* might read in a different sequence. They are likely to be interested in specific contributors whose work they know, as well as in the ways that Buddhism has been impacting people's lives. They may read about how it evolved in the West from the perspective of Tibetan masters (Sogyal Rinpoche and Lama Tharchin Rinpoche), an eminent scholar and translator (Thupten Jinpa), or people actively involved in developing such organizations for 30-plus years (Susan Skjei, Nick Ribush, and Philip Philippou). They may be most intrigued by the chapters by Tibetan thought leaders, the section on *individuals* with stories about the personal impact of practice, the section on *organizations* (which recounts stories of organizations they may care about), and the chapters by scholars who are serious Buddhist practitioners.

These possible approaches are simply suggestions, as the sequence in which the chapters are read is flexible. Fundamentally, the book is conceptualized like a banquet: an array of tasteful dishes, thoughtfully prepared, blending together well, while differing considerably among themselves in "taste." The presence of these diverse perspectives and the

organization of the book come from my deep love of richness and diversity in thought. Perhaps even more important, the scale of the topic required bringing together many knowledgeable minds. I invite you to taste all that whet your appetite, in whatever sequence you like! May you find yourself in deep dialogue with some or many of the contributors—so that this reading itself changes your sense of what questions to ask and what is possible. If it helps you to “connect new dots,” raise new questions, and see things in new ways, it will be doing its job.

I would like this book to help change history. It invites you think about how these ancient wisdom teachings can contribute to a major paradigm shift that keeps life sustainable on Planet Earth. Even if we can find ways to grapple with the full meaning of such teachings and incorporate them in the development of leaders, we are still left with questions regarding how to link wisdom, action, and the practical knowledge and skills needed in the worlds of business, government, public service, and education. Such challenges generate work that is feasible, intriguing, and worth doing. This book is appearing after Tibetan Buddhism has lived and grown for 50 years in the West. May it and others that follow contribute to people’s creative development of ventures over the next 50 years in the evolution of Tibetan Buddhism, and may our collective efforts bring the taste of these wisdom teachings into our work, organizations, and daily lives.

## NOTES

1. Acceptance speech for the *Nobel Peace Prize*, 1989.
2. From Bob Dylan’s, “Ballad of a Thin Man,” a song recorded on the album *Highway 61 Revisited*, 1965.
3. See “The Possibility of Healthy Organizations: Thoughts Toward a New Framework for Organizational Theory and Practice,” *Journal of Applied Sociology* 21, No. 2 (2004): 57-79 and “Practitioner—Heal Thyself: Challenges in Enabling Organizational Health,” *Organization Management Journal* 1, No. 1(2004): 28-37. doi:10.1057/omj.2004.9 Also see Kathryn Goldman Schuyler and Linda Branagan, “The Power Line: A Model for Generating a Systemic Focus on Organizational Health,” *Sociological Practice* 5, No. 2 (2003): 77-88.
4. Shantideva’s *Bodhisattvacharyavatara* (*A Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life*, also known as the *Bodhicharyavatara*) was written in the eighth century. There are several good translations and commentaries available in English. His Holiness the Dalai Lama used Alexander Berzin’s translation for an 8-day course that he taught in Zurich in 2005. It can be downloaded in its entirety from the Berzin Archives, where it is translated as *Engaging in Bodhisattva Behavior* [http://www.berzinarchives.com/web/x/nav/eb\\_toc.html\\_1487505749.html](http://www.berzinarchives.com/web/x/nav/eb_toc.html_1487505749.html) Other good (and quite different) translations are Stephen Batchelor’s *A Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way*

*of Life* (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1979/1998) and the Padmakara Translation Group's *The Way of the Bodhisattva* (Boston: Shambhala, 1997). Contemporary commentaries include those by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *A Flash of Lightning in the Dark of Night: A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* (Boston: Shambhala, 1994), Dzigar Kongtrül Rinpoche, *Uncommon Happiness, The Path of the Compassionate Warrior* (Boudhanath: Rangjung Yeshe Publications, 2009), Pema Chödrön, *No Time to Lose: A Timely Guide to the Way of the Bodhisattva* (Boston: Shambhala, 2005), and Geshe Yeshe Tobden, *The Way of Awakening* (Somerville, MA: Wisdom, 2005).

5. Note that in *Dzogchen* teachings, *rigpa* means “the essential nature of the mind.” Being able to sustain awareness of the essential nature of mind in a stable way is one way to describe what may be meant by enlightenment.

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