



## Becoming Who I Was (feature)

Directors Chang-Yong Moon & Jeon Jin / Korea / 2016 / Tibetan and Ladakhi with English subtitles / 86 mins / Documentary / Ages 10+

In northern India's sparsely populated and mountainous Ladakh region, an impoverished young boy is discovered to be the reincarnation of an esteemed, high-ranking Tibetan monk. Born displaced from his original monastery in Tibet, the boy is denied his rightful place. Amid growing doubts and mounting expectations in the community, the boy and his elderly godfather embark on a grueling improbable trek across India to return the young monk-to-be to his rightful monastery before it becomes too late.

### SET THE STAGE | WORDS TO KNOW

- **BUDDHISM:** a religion of eastern and central Asia grown from the teaching of Siddhārtha Gautama that suffering is inherent in life and that one can be liberated from it by cultivating wisdom, virtue, and concentration.
- **LAMA:** the name or title for a teacher of Tibetan Buddhism.
- **REINCARNATION:** a person or animal into whom a particular soul is believed to have been reborn after death.
- **RINPOCHE:** in Tibetan Buddhism, an incarnate lama or highly respected religious teacher.

### FILM TERMS:

- **SETTING:** place and time at which film is represented as happening.
- **DOCUMENTARY:** a type of film that attempts to explain reality.  
*For more film terms, refer to the PCFF Film Glossary ([pcffri.org/FilmHub](http://pcffri.org/FilmHub))*

### TALK ABOUT IT | DISCUSSION TOPICS FOR BEFORE...

- Have you ever been in a situation where you were considered a leader? What were the responsibilities associated with that position? What were the benefits? What were the challenges?
- How does your upbringing differ from other children's experiences in your country? Would you trade places? Why?
- Have you ever tried walking in deep snow? What do you remember about it?

### ... & AFTER FILM VIEWING

- What do you know about the Buddhist religion or about the China-Tibet story? What would you like to know more about?
- Think about how Padma is portrayed in the film, and the activities the directors show him participating in. Why do you think they showed him playing with his friends, in addition to his monastic roles in the monastery?
- This film took producer/directors Moon Chang-Yong and Jeon Jin eight years to make. What parts of the filming do you think might have been the most difficult?

### RESOURCES:

- **The Rhode Island Community of Mindfulness** ([mindfulnessri.org](http://mindfulnessri.org)): meditation groups or sanghas, including an intergenerational group, that meet regularly to understand and engage in mindfulness and other Buddhist practices.
- **Brown University Contemplative Studies Program** ([brown.edu/academics/contemplative-studies](http://brown.edu/academics/contemplative-studies)): program focusing on the study and application of contemplative states of mind.
- **Atisha Kadampa Buddhist Center** ([meditationinrhodeisland.org](http://meditationinrhodeisland.org)): Buddhist Center located in Providence's East Side neighborhood. Offers meditation classes.