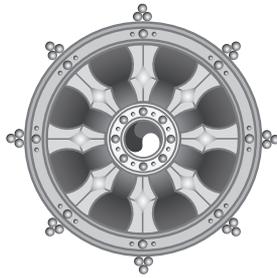


DIAMOND ROSARY



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A Commentary on the
Five Preliminary Practices called the
Blazing Glory of Blessings

commentary by
Khenchen Konchog Gyaltsen Rinpoche

edited by
Khenmo Trinlay Chödrön

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I dedicate this precious work to all the root and lineage masters from whom I received all the blessings.

Grant me and all sentient beings the magnificent blessings so that our mind may follow into the dharma.

Grant us the magnificent blessings so that dharma may follow into the path.

Grant us the magnificent blessings so that errors may be dispelled from the path.

Grant us the magnificent blessings so that confusion may dawn as wisdom.

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Foreword

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DRIKUNG KYABGON

I am very happy to learn that most Ven. Khenchen Konchog Gyaltshe Rinpoche has composed the book *Diamond Rosary – A Commentary on the Five Preliminary Practices Called the Blazing Glory of Blessings*. This root text is excerpted from the *Blazing Glory of Blessing* written by the great Drikung Dharmakirti, which is profound and vast, and contains the complete practice of the Five Fold Path of Mahamudra for daily practitioners.

Nowadays Buddha Dharma in general and Vajrayana in particular are spreading in many countries both in the east and west, due to its wisdom and skillful methods which bring inner peace and happiness and lift the veil of confusion for everyone interested.

It is very beneficial for our day to day practice, especially for those who are very busy and have little time, and we are all very fortunate to have this precious text which presents excellent teachings how to practice from the most ordinary level to the highest level of Guru Yoga in its complete form. If we practice it sincerely, we can attain Buddhahood within the short period of this lifetime through this Dharma practice. These Ngöndro teachings and practices are part of the many high and profound teachings of the Vajrayana system, and in order to fully digest the meaning of this commentary it is indispensable to practice the meditations: *the Three Types of Refuge* which is the foundation of the practice, the Vajrasattva Practice for the purification of body, speech and mind, Offering the Noble Mandala for

gathering the two accumulations, and the Guru Yoga and Loving Compassion and Bodhicitta practices in their complete form.

Especially in these modern times when life is full of crises and filled with the negative energy which destroys the peace and happiness of our life, it is essential to cultivate an altruistic mind or Bodhicitta, practice carefully, and free all sentient beings from suffering and achieve complete enlightenment.

There is no escape from suffering without sincere Dharma practice, and here this book teaches us how to train and stabilize our mind, and create the causes for peace and happiness for all. I am very grateful to most Ven. Khenchen Rinpoche for tirelessly and compassionately working for many years, and composing this invaluable book for the benefit of all sentient beings. So I recommend that those who are in the three year retreat as well as daily practitioners follow this text which has comprehensive explanations and instructions.

My blessings and prayers for successful Dharma practice are always with you.

With my prayers,



H.H Drikung Kyabgon Chetsang
Date: 6th November 2012

Foreword

The daily practice of the Preliminaries to the Fivefold Path of Mahamudra called *Blazing Glory of Blessings* was composed by the supreme Drigung Dharmakirti. Numerous written works, some exceedingly concise and others considerably lengthy, expound on the significance and purpose of the practice of the Fivefold Path of Mahamudra. This particular text has been commonly adopted by participants in the traditional three-year retreat, as its author was highly revered for his impeccable accomplishment in both scholarship and mahamudra. Owing to his masterly realization, this practice became very popular in this lineage.

For this reason, the Most Venerable Khenchen Konchog Gyaltsen Rinpoche undertook the translation of all the corresponding common and uncommon preliminary practices since the early 1980's. Ever since, Rinpoche has taught extensively in various places, both in the United States and Europe. Consequently these commentaries were transcribed and edited.

This commentary delineates the entryway and foundation of the holy Dharma - the common and uncommon preliminary practices comprising the profound essential points of the sutras and tantras.

The common preliminaries are as follows: the precious human life, impermanence, karma, cause and result, and the shortcomings of samsara. The uncommon preliminaries are as follows: taking

refuge in order to make one's mindstream a proper vessel; the practice and recitation of Vajrasattva in order to purify negativities and obscurations; the mandala offering in order to gather the two accumulations; the practice of Guru Yoga in order to receive blessings in one's mind-stream. The special preliminaries are as follows: loving kindness, compassion, and bodhicitta. This commentary, *Diamond Rosary*, contains a clear and precise elucidation on these subjects.

All sentient beings wish to experience peace and happiness and to become free from suffering. This basic desire is universal. Underlining the fulfillment of this wish, the Buddha-dharma has nowadays become increasingly popular throughout the world. In order to eliminate the causes of suffering and create the causes of peace and happiness, intellectual or philosophical understanding is not sufficient. Rather, the individual must engage in experiential meditation practice contingent upon the mind in order to achieve the desired result.

Hence, this commentary is indispensable and essential for all those interested in this practice and will serve a great benefit for practitioners of the entire range of spiritual development. The commentary is not too excessive in length yet is complete in information with regard to the conventional state of mind as well as the ultimate nature of the mind. For this reason, this commentary is fundamental for any Buddhist practitioner.

Ven. Khenchen Konchog Gyaltsen Rinpoche dedicated long hours to compose this commentary and thus I encourage any Dharma practitioner and in particular practitioners following the Drigung Kagyu lineage to follow this guide as a support for their practice.

I greatly rejoice in the publication of this book and offer my heartfelt prayers and wishes that it will become the source for freeing countless sentient beings from the causes and results of suffering and leading them to the excellent path of peace and happiness.

This was written by the eighth Garchen Rinpoche, named Konchog Gyaltsen, on August 22, 2012.

Preface and Acknowledgements

The *Blazing Glory of Blessings* was written by the great scholar and meditator Drigung Dharmakirti and contains practice instructions for the complete Five-fold Path of Mahamudra, albeit in an abbreviated form. As soon as I arrived in the United States, I selected the preliminary (*ngöndro*) practices from that text for use by Western practitioners. Although many versions of these meditation practices have been written by great masters, I chose to use this one for two reasons. First, the great Drigung Dharmakirti was a fully enlightened master so the text holds manifold blessings. Second, it was designed for daily use by practitioners who had completed the Five-fold Path meditation practices, so the practices are complete and concise, making them easier for practitioners to follow. Thus, this book is for those people in the West who not only study Buddhist philosophy and have a high capacity for intellectual understanding, but who also show a keen interest in practicing the profound and precious teachings.

At first, I wrote the Tibetan out by hand and translated each of these practices into English with the help of sangha members. After that, I started giving teachings on them throughout the US on many occasions during the 1980s and 1990s. Seeing that the translations alone were not enough to answer the practitioners' questions, and knowing how important it is that practitioners understand the background of these teachings, I initiated the

tradition of holding a Spring Retreat at the Tibetan Meditation Center in Frederick, MD. During the first five such retreats, I taught detailed explanations of one preliminary practice each year.

Most of those teachings were recorded, so I thought to put them together into a book called *Diamond Rosary* to benefit Dharma practitioners all over the world. Khenmo Trinlay Chödrön took responsibility to transcribe most of them and edit them for many long hours. Linda Wuestenberg, David Griffin, and Zabrina Leung also contributed many hours of transcription. I went through the transcripts and manuscripts quite a few times to ensure that the structure and meaning of the Dharma were as authentic as possible. I did this with the thought that a good quality English translation would open the door to many other languages. In the interest of benefiting as many people as possible through the precious teachings of the Buddha, I encourage translation of this book into other languages.

Dr. Mike Essex kindly took his time and energy to edit the translation of *The Precious Vase of the Two Accumulations* in the mandala chapter. Ani Yeshe Metog typed out the practices in Tibetan script and edited the translations more precisely. Victoria Huckenpahler and Ani Dadron contributed their skills as critical readers and editors. Jason Gan has also spent many hours bringing critical points for clarification and generously sponsored printing this precious book. I am deeply grateful to all of them for their dedication to Dharma study and practice, and for supporting this project. Because of the sincere inspiration and dedication that I received from many Dharma centers and individual practitioners, I successfully completed this book.

The preliminary practices have been translated from Tibetan with the effort to come as close to both the literal text and the original meaning. Those who have memorized previous versions will find some changes in words but the meaning remains the same.

More than ever before, Dharma study and practice are indispensable. In these modern times when life is in crisis, Dharma can be of utmost help, but only if we use it. The commentaries in this book contain precious and profound teachings. Each practice constitutes a complete method of meditation to purify all our negative karma, obscurations, and

delusions. So I encourage every practitioner to expand his or her bodhicitta on the basis of wisdom and compassion so that we may become of good service in the world by bringing inner peace.

Khenchen Konchog Gyaltsen
May 2014

Introduction

Countless buddhas of the past, present, and future endlessly perform activities only to benefit the sentient beings in samsara. This is true even though, from their enlightened point of view, they perceive no difference between samsara and nirvana. From their enlightened perspective, buddhas manifest in myriad different forms according to the needs and capacities of sentient beings. One of their most effective ways of benefiting is to give Dharma teachings, through which they point out the causes of suffering and inspire us to reduce them, and introduce the causes of happiness and inspire us to implement them.

Historically, Buddha Shakyamuni first studied and practiced Dharma for eons, purifying the gross and subtle obscurations, and gathering the two accumulations of merit and wisdom by practicing relative and ultimate bodhicitta. Then, about 2,600 years ago, he was born as a prince and grew up in spectacular luxury in his father's palace. He studied every aspect of knowledge until he established himself as an expert in all of them. He inevitably noticed the suffering his subjects experienced, particularly those of aging, sickness, and death. After that, he could no longer enjoy his royal comforts and started searching for a solution to the predicaments of the world. One day he happened to see a monk, and the mere sight of that holy person brought peace to his mind. He inquired about this, and the senior ministers explained that the monk was searching for total peace,

called "nirvana." Thus inspired, the prince thought to himself, "I must find the end of suffering, the truth of peace." With that, he renounced the kingdom for both his own sake and for all others who seek release from undesirable conditions.

For the next six years, he met with the prominent scholars and meditators of his day. He learned everything they had to offer, but was not satisfied. Finally, he achieved the profound and unshakable state of meditative equipoise on his own; he revealed the perfect wisdom and excellent qualities that had been hidden under adventitious defilements. When he directly perceived infinite wisdom and compassion, he declared, "I have achieved the fully awakened state, buddhahood." Thus, at the age of thirty-five, he attained enlightenment. His mind was overpowered by indomitable compassion for all who remained enslaved by the afflicting emotions, the defilements that cause suffering. During the subsequent forty-five years, he shared his wisdom with anyone who was interested, and showed them the solution for their gross and subtle obscurations. The Dharma that he taught was not merely a religion, but rather it was a direct and practical means to uproot the cause of suffering that can be applied by anyone with the interest to do so. It is a universal solution to suffering and its causes. The message of the Buddha spread to many countries and brought immense benefit to those who have practiced it.

The mind is very complex, sophisticated, and hidden. Even though the mind of a buddha can be found within every individual, we fail to recognize it and continuously project our attention outward. We mistakenly seek peace and happiness from external sources, instead of within. Since the mind is so complicated, many skillful methods are required in order to gradually see the perfect qualities of the mind. For the sake of the followers to come, enlightened beings of the past compiled the many stages of mental development into a simple path. That way, everyone has a chance to experience these stages and free himself from the ocean of suffering.

Generally speaking, the Buddha's teachings can be placed into two categories: the sutra system and the tantra system. In the sutra system, the Buddha taught the Four Noble Truths, the Prajñāparamita (perfection of wisdom), and the vastness and profundity of the mind. Within this, there are two basic

approaches to achieve enlightenment: studying the literature and contemplating its meaning, and meditation practice. For those who can digest these methods, there is a great opportunity to capture the Buddha's final result. To start following this path, the great masters of the past recommended becoming fully convinced of four prerequisite practices, called the "four thoughts that turn the mind" or the "four ordinary foundations." These are:

1. Reflecting on precious human life. Among the six realms, a precious human life provides the working basis from which we can free ourselves from samsara and achieve enlightenment.

2. Reflecting on the impermanence of all composite phenomena, including this precious human life. Everything is continually changing, moment by moment, which shows us that all phenomena are of an illusory nature, like a magic show.

3. Reflecting on the state of suffering. Unenlightened sentient beings are in an unending state of suffering, whether the suffering of suffering, the suffering of change, or the all-pervasive condition of suffering.

4. Reflecting on causality. All these different states of suffering play out within the framework of causality. Everything of this world is a product of karma.

These four foundations are the basis for the successful practice of any of the Buddhist vehicles. Once we are convinced of their truth through empirical analysis, we will be eager to pursue a solution. So, it is important to reinforce our understanding by studying books such as *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*, *Engaging in the Conduct of Bodhisattvas*, *A Complete Guide to the Buddhist Path*, and so forth. With a merely superficial or emotional grasp of the general foundations, we will not be able to follow the path comfortably and we can easily become derailed from it. Therefore, the great twelfth century Tibetan saint known as the second Nagarjuna, Jigten Sumgön, said, "The preliminary practices are even more important than the higher practices." One must deeply understand and practice the simple, yet profound, foundational teachings before beginning the higher teachings.

After establishing a stable starting point, one practices the four uncommon foundations, also called the "Vajrayana ngöndro," to purify negative karma, to reduce obscurations of the body, speech, and mind, and to develop virtues. They are the practices of refuge, Vajrasattva, mandala, and Guru Yoga. Once these four have been well established in the mind, one progresses to the special prerequisite practices of altruistic love, compassion, and bodhicitta. Finally, those practices are followed by mahamudra and the Six Dharmas of Naropa. All of these practices are for training the mind.

When the mind is controlled by the afflicting emotions and obscured by defilements, it easily and freely flows in the wrong direction. Such an unruly mind creates all different sorts of causes for suffering. To train that mind with skillful methods, we must first acknowledge that suffering is not appreciated by any sentient being. Then we look at the causes of suffering and take steps to minimize them. Gradually we develop positive causes and the enlightened attitude. The methods that make the mind more flexible and guide it to abide in the right place are called "mind training." Using these methods will allow us to develop a clear mind that can precisely distinguish suffering and its causes from happiness and its causes. In a nutshell, both samsara and nirvana operate within the framework of causality. Samsara is constructed out of a mind based in confusion, while nirvana is established on the basis of an unconfused mind. The following practices are presented within this context.

Here in your hand are all the prerequisite teachings and meditation practices set out in a way conducive to sincerely and joyfully following the Buddha's path. It is structured as a commentary on the great Drigung Dharmakirti's text called *Blazing Glory of Blessings*. Drigung Dharmakirti (1595-1659) was the first of the Chungtsang Rinpoche's and is renowned as one of the greatest scholars and meditators in Tibet. He was an expert in many different aspects of knowledge, such as medicine, astrology, creative arts, linguistics, and logic, in addition to Buddhist philosophy and meditation. His writings comprised about twenty volumes, and have been admired by great meditators and scholars for centuries. He wrote commentaries on the Guhyasamaja and Kalachakra tantras, as well as many other higher yoga tantra practices of the new and ancient schools. Our

root text, *Blazing Glory of Blessings*, contains all the practices of the Fivefold Path of Mahamudra, including the ngöndro practices that were excerpted from it. To make its profound meaning and blessing more accessible to modern practitioners, I have added a detailed commentary. This commentary is not my own invention, but rather is based on the authentic writings of enlightened beings.

Any individual entering into these practices should rely on a sincere and authentic teacher who is at least minimally experienced in them. Depending on a good teacher and reading these commentaries will give you both moral support and confidence in your Dharma study and practice.

The precious teachings of the Drigung Kagyu,
which are like the treasury of a king,
lack nothing of the holy Dharma.
There is no need to depend on anything else.
This is my heart's advice.

by Drigung Dharmaradza
The Jewel Treasury of Advice

CHAPTER 1 Opening Prayers and Mantras



Activities done only for this life
are like a moth drawn into a flame.
Deceiving oneself in this way is only a cause of suffering.
Abandon attachment to samsara.
This is my heart's advice.

by Drigung Dharmaradza
The Jewel Treasury of Advice

Opening Prayers and Mantras**Altruistic Motivation (Aspiration Bodhicitta)**

DAG LA DANG WAR JE PE DRA/ NÖ PAR JE PE GEG/
 THAR PA DANG THAM CHE KHYEN PE BAR DU CHÖ PAR
 JE PA THAM CHE KYI TSO JE PE/
 MA NAM KHA DANG NYAM PE SEM CHEN THAM CHE
 DE WA DANG DEN/ DUG NGEL DANG DREL/
 NYUR DU LA NA ME PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PE
 JANG CHUB RIN PO CHE THOB PAR JA//

*repeat three times***Engagement in Virtue (Action Bodhicitta)**

DE'I CHE DU SANG MA GYE KYI BAR DU LÜ NGAG
 YI SUM GE WA LA KÖL/
 MA SHI'I BAR DU LÜ NGAG YI SUM GE WA LA KÖL/
 DÜ DE RING NE ZUNG TE NYI MA SANG DA TSAM GYI
 BAR DU LÜ NGAG YI SUM GE WA LA KÖL//

Sixfold Refuge

DRIN CHEN TSA WA DANG GYÜ PAR CHE PE
 PEL DEN LA MA DAM PA NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O/
 YI DAM KYIL KHOR GYI LHA TSOG
 NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O/
 SANG GYE CHOM DEN DE NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O/
 DAM PE CHÖ NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O/
 PHAG PE GEN DÜN NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O/
 PA WO KHAN DRO CHÖ KYONG SUNG ME TSOG YE SHE
 KYI CHEN DANG DEN PA NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O//

*repeat three times***Opening Prayers and Mantras****Altruistic Motivation (Aspiration Bodhicitta)**

All mother sentient beings boundless as the sky -
 especially those enemies who hate me,
 obstructors who harm me,
 and those who create obstacles
 towards my liberation and all-knowingness,
 May they experience happiness and be
 separated from suffering.

Swiftly will I establish them in the state of unsurpassed,
 completely perfected, precious enlightenment.

*repeat three times***Engagement in Virtue (Action Bodhicitta)**

Thus, until I achieve buddhahood, I perform virtuous deeds
 with body, speech, and mind.
 Until death, I perform virtuous deeds
 with body, speech, and mind.
 From now until this time tomorrow, I perform virtuous deeds
 with body, speech, and mind.

Sixfold Refuge

We take refuge in the glorious, holy,
 kind root and lineage lamas.
 We take refuge in the assembled deities
 of the mandalas of the Yidams.
 We take refuge in the exalted Buddhas.
 We take refuge in the perfect Dharma.
 We take refuge in the noble Sanghas.
 We take refuge in the Viras, Dakinis,
 and Dharma guardians,
 possessors of the eye of wisdom.

repeat three times

Cultivation of Bodhicitta (Bodhisattva Vow)

JANG CHUB NYING POR CHI KYI BAR/
 SANG GYE NAM LA KYAB SU CHI/
 CHÖ DANG JANG CHUB SEM PA YI/
 TSOG LA'ANG DE ZHIN KYAB SU CHI/
 JI TAR NGÖN GYI DE SHEG KYI/
 JANG CHUB THUG NI KYE PA DANG/
 JANG CHUB SEM PE LAB PA LA/
 DE DAG RIM ZHIN NE PA TAR/
 DE ZHIN DRO LA PHEN DÖN DU/
 JANG CHUB SEM NI KYE GYI ZHING/
 DE ZHIN DU NI LAB PA LA/
 RIM PA ZHIN DU LAB PAR GYI//

*repeat three times***Short Refuge Prayer**

SANG GYE CHÖ DANG TSOG KYI CHOG NAM LA/
 JANG CHUB BAR DU DAG NI KYAB SU CHI/
 DAG GI JIN SOG GYI PE SÖ NAM KYI/
 DRO LA PHEN CHIR SANG GYE DRUB PAR SHOG//

*repeat three times***Four Immeasurables**

MA NAM KHA DANG NYAM PE SEM CHEN THAM CHE
 DE WA DANG DE WE GYU DANG DEN PAR GYUR CHIG/
 DUG NGEL DANG DUG NGEL GYI GYU DANG DREL
 WAR GYUR CHIG/
 DUG NGEL ME PE DE WA DANG MI DREL
 WAR GYUR CHIG/
 NYE RING CHAG DANG NYI DANG DREL WE TANG
 NYOM LA NE PAR GYUR CHIG//

*repeat three times***Cultivation of Bodhicitta (Bodhisattva Vow)**

Until I attain the heart of enlightenment,
 I take refuge in the Buddhas.
 Likewise I take refuge in the Dharma and
 in the assembly of the Bodhisattvas.
 As the previous Buddhas cultivated
 the enlightened mind and progressed in
 the Bodhisattva's trainings,
 I, too, for the benefit of all sentient beings,
 give birth to Bodhicitta and gradually
 train in just the same way.

*repeat three times***Short Refuge Prayer**

In the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha most excellent,
 I take refuge until enlightenment is reached.
 By the merit of practicing generosity and other good deeds,
 may I attain buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings.

*repeat three times***Four Immeasurables**

May all mother sentient beings, boundless as the sky,
 have happiness and the causes of happiness.
 May they be liberated from suffering and
 the causes of suffering.
 May they never be separated from the happiness that is
 free from suffering.
 May they rest in equanimity,
 free from attachment and aversion.

repeat three times

Homage to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha

CHOM DEN DE DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG
 DAG PAR DZOG PE
 SANG GYE RIG PA DANG ZHAB SU DEN PA/
 DE WAR SHEG PA/
 JIG TEN KHYEN PA/
 KYE BU DÜL WA/
 KHA LO GYUR WA/
 LA NA ME PA/
 LHA DANG MI NAM KYI TÖN PA NYAM ME SHA KYE
 GYEL PÖ ZHAB KYI DÜL DRI MA ME PA LA GO WÖ RAB
 TU TUG TE GÜ PE CHAG TSEL LO/

GANG TSE KANG NYI TSO WO KHYÖ TAM TSE/
 SA CHEN DI LA GOM PA DÜN BOR NE/
 NGA NI JIG TEN DI NA CHOG CHE SUNG/
 DE TSE KHE PA KHYÖ LA CHAG TSEL LO/

NAM DAG KU NGA CHOG TU ZUG ZANG WA/
 YE SHE GYA TSO SER GYI LHÜN PO DRA/
 DRAG PA JIG TEN SUM NA LHAND NGE WA/
 GÖN PO CHOG NYE KHYÖ LA CHAG TSEL LO/

TSEN CHOG DEN PA DRI ME DA WE ZHEL/
 SER DOG DRA WA KHYÖ LA CHAG TSEL LO/
 DÜL DREL KHYÖ DRA SI PA SUM NA DZE/
 NYAM ME KHYEN CHEN KHYÖ LA CHAG TSEL LO/

MI CHOG DÜL WA KHA LO GYUR DZE CHING/
 KÜN JOR CHING WA CHÖ DZE DE ZHIN SHEG/
 WANG PO ZHI ZHING NYER ZHI ZHI LA KHE/
 NYEN YÖ ZHUG PA DE LA CHAG TSEL LO/

GÖN PO THUG JE CHE DEN PA/
 THAM CHE KHYEN PA TÖN PA PO/
 SÖ NAM YÖN TEN GYA TSÖ ZHI/
 DE ZHIN SHEG LA CHAG TSEL LO/

Homage to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha**Homage to the Buddha**

To you, the Bhagavan, Thus Gone, foe destroyer,
 completely perfected Buddha, who is endowed with
 knowledge and what depends on it,
 the One Gone to Bliss,
 knower of the world,
 tamer of beings,
 helmsman,
 unsurpassable one,
 spiritual teacher of gods and humans, incomparable king
 of the Shakyas, I respectfully bow down with my head
 touching your feet unsullied by dust.

At the time when you were born, principal among humans,
 you took seven steps on this earth
 and said, "I am supreme in this world."
 I prostrate to you, Sage of that time.

Your completely pure supreme body has excellent form,
 like the ocean of wisdom and golden Mount Meru.
 Your fame shines in the three worlds.
 I prostrate to you, Supremely Accomplished Protector.

You are endowed with the supreme marks,
 your face stainless like the moon,
 and your appearance of golden color: I prostrate to you.
 Free from stain, there is no one in the three realms as beautiful as
 you:
 I prostrate to you, Unequaled Knowing One.

Supreme among humans, you are the tamer and helmsman,
 who cuts through the all-binding fetters,
 you are the One Thus Gone.
 Your senses are calmed, completely at peace, skillfully pacified,
 I prostrate to you, who resides in Shravasti.

You are the protector, the great Compassionate One,
 the all-knowing teacher,
 basis of the ocean of merit and qualities,
 I prostrate to you who is Thus Gone.

DAG PE DÖ CHAG DREL WE GYU/
 GE WE NGEN SONG LE DRÖL ZHING/
 CHIG TU DÖN DAM CHOG GYUR PA/
 ZHI GYUR CHÖ LA CHAG TSEL LO/

DRÖL NE DRÖL WE LAM YANG TÖN/
 LAB PA DAG LA RAB TU GÜ/
 ZHING GI DAM PA YÖN TEN CHOG/
 GEN DÜN LA YANG CHAG TSEL LO//

Offering of the Seven Limbs according to the Sutra System

JI NYE SU DAG CHOG CHÜ JIG TEN NA/
 DÜ SUM SHEG PA MI YI SENG GE KÜN/
 DAG GI MA LÜ DE DAG THAM CHE LA/
 LÜ DANG NGAG YI DANG WE CHAG GYI'O/

ZANG PO CHÖ PE MÖN LAM TOB DAG GI/
 GYEL WA THAM CHE YI KYI NGÖN SUM DU/
 ZHING GI DÜL NYE LÜ RAB TÛ PA YI/
 GYEL WA KÜN LA RAB TU CHAG TSEL LO/

DÜL CHIG TENG NA DÜL NYE SANG GYE NAM/
 SANG GYE SE KYI Ü NA ZHUG PA DAG/
 DE TAR CHÖ KYI YING NAM MA LÜ PA/
 THAM CHE GYEL WA DAG GI GANG WAR MÖ/

DE DAG NGAG PA MI ZE GYA TSO NAM/
 YANG KYI YEN LAG GYA TSÖ DRA KÜN GYI/
 GYEL WA KÜN GYI YÖN TEN RAB JÖ CHING/
 DE WAR SHEG PA THAM CHE DAG GI TÖ/

ME TOG DAM PA THRENG WA DAM PA DANG/
 SIL NYEN NAM DANG JUG PA DUG CHOG DANG/
 MAR ME CHOG DANG DUG PÖ DAM PA YI/
 GYEL WA DE DAG LA NI CHÖ PAR GYI/

Homage to the Dharma

Pure in nature, cause of non-attachment,
 through virtues liberating from the lower realms,
 wholly the supreme ultimate:
 I prostrate to the Dharma which is peace.

Homage to the Sangha

Having been liberated, you show the way of liberation
 and pay full respect to the pure trainings.
 You are the sublime field of supreme qualities,
 I prostrate to the Sangha.

Offering of the Seven Limbs according to the Sutra System

To as many of you as there are in the worlds of the
 ten directions,
 Tathagatas of the three times, lions among humans,
 to all of you without exception
 I prostrate in faith with body, speech, and mind.

By the power of the aspiration prayers for excellent conduct
 directly perceiving all Victorious Ones in my mind,
 I prostrate in deep respect to all the Victorious Ones
 with bodies as countless as atoms in the universe.

In each atom, countless buddhas as numerous as atoms in the
 universe reside amidst their children, the Bodhisattvas.
 I imagine all realms of phenomena without exception
 filled with Victorious Ones in this way.

With inexhaustible oceans of praise
 and by all sounds of ocean-like branches of melody
 I fully express the qualities of all the Victorious Ones
 and praise all who have Gone to Bliss.

To the Victorious Ones I offer
 excellent flowers and excellent flower garlands,
 sublime cymbals, ointments and parasols,
 sublime butterlamps and excellent incense.

NA ZA DAM PA NAM DANG DRI CHOG DANG/
 CHE ME PHUR MA RI RAB NYAM PA DANG/
 KÖ PA KHYE PAR PHAG PE CHOG KÜN GYI/
 GYEL WA DE DAG LA YANG CHÖ PAR GYI/

CHÖ PA GANG NAM LA ME GYA CHE WA/
 DE DAG GYEL WA THAM CHE LA YANG MÖ/
 ZANG PO CHÖ LA DE PE TOB DAG GI/
 GYEL WA KÜN LA CHAG TSEL CHÖ PAR GYI/

DÖ CHAG ZHE DANG TI MUG WANG GI NI/
 LÜ DANG NGAG DANG DE ZHIN YI KYI KYANG/
 DIG PA DAG GI GYI PA CHI CHI PA/
 DE DAG THAM CHE DAG GI SO SOR SHAG/

CHOG CHÜ GYEL WA KÜN DANG SANG GYE SE/
 RANG GYEL NAM DANG LOB DANG MI LOB DANG/
 DRO WA KÜN GYI SÖ NAM GANG LA YANG/
 DE DAG KÜN GYI JE SU DAG YI RANG/

GANG NAM CHOG CHÜ JIG TEN DRÖN MA DAG/
 JANG CHUB RIM PAR SANG GYE MA CHAG NYE/
 GÖN PO DE DAG DAG GI THAM CHE LA/
 KHOR LO LA NA ME PA KOR WAR KÜL/

NYA NGEN DA TÖN GANG ZHE DE DAG LA/
 DRO WA KÜN LA PHEN ZHING DE WE CHIR/
 KEL PA ZHING GI DÜL NYE ZHUG PAR YANG/
 DAG GI THEL MO RAB JAR SÖL WAR GYI/

CHAG TSEL WA DANG CHÖ CHING SHAG PA DANG/
 JE SU YI RANG KÜL ZHING SÖL WA YI/
 GE WA CHUNG ZE DAG GI CHI SAG PA/
 THAM CHE DAG GI JANG CHUB CHIR NGO'O//

Likewise I offer
 excellent garments and sublime scents,
 fragrant powders equal to Mount Meru,
 and all sublime perfectly arranged to the Victorious Ones.

I bring to mind unsurpassable and vast offerings
 for all the Victorious Ones.
 By the power of faith in the excellent conduct
 I prostrate and make offerings to all Victorious Ones.

Whatever negative deeds I have done
 with my body, speech, and even in my mind
 influenced by attachment, hatred, and delusion
 I confess each of them one by one.

I rejoice in each and every meritorious deed
 of all the Victorious Ones in the ten directions,
 all their children, the bodhisattvas; and solitary realizers;
 the ones who abide on the paths of learning and
 no more learning; and ordinary beings.

You who are the lamps of the worlds of the ten directions,
 who gradually awakened to buddhahood and
 gained freedom from attachment, to all those protectors,
 I request that you turn the wheel of unsurpassable Dharma.

With my palms folded, I beseech
 all those who wish to manifest nirvana,
 to remain for kalpas as numerous as atoms in the
 universe for the benefit and happiness of all beings.

Whatever small merit I have gathered
 through prostration, offering, confession, rejoicing,
 requesting, and beseeching,
 all this I dedicate for the perfect awakening.

Auspicious Mantras*Sanskrit vowels and consonants*

OM A Ā / I Ī / U Ū / RI RĪ / LI LĪ / E AI / O AU / ANG ĀH /
 KA KHA GA GHA NGA / CA CHA JA JHA NYA /
 TRA THRA DRA DHRA NA / TA THA DA DHA NA /
 PA PHA BA BHA MA / YA RA LA WA /
 SHA SHHA SA HA KSHYA SVAHA //

*repeat three times**The Mantra of Dependent Origination*

OM YE DHARMA HETU PRABHAVA HETUN TESHAN
 TATHAGATO HYAVADATA TESHANTSA YO NIRODHA
 EVAM VADI MAHA SHRAMANA YE SVAHA//

*repeat three times**The 100 Syllable Mantra*

OM BAZRA SATVA SAMAYAM/ ANU PALAYA/
 BAZRA SATVA TVENOPA/ TISHTA DRIDO ME BHAVA/
 SUTO SHYO ME BHAVA/ SUPO SHYO ME BHAVA/
 ANU RAKTO ME BHAVA/ SARVA SIDDHIM ME
 PRAYATSHA/ SARVA KARMA SU TSA ME/
 TSITTAM SHREYA KURU HUNG/ HAHA HAHA HO/
 BHAGAVAN SARVA TATHAGATA BAZRA MAME
 MUN TSA/ BAZRI BHAVA/ MAHA SAMAYA SATVA A//

*repeat three times**Increasing Mantras*

OM SAMBHARA SAMBHARA BIMANA SARA MAHA
 DZAMBHA HUNG//
 OM SMARA SMARA BIMANA SKARA MAHA
 DZABHA HUNG PHAT//
 OM SAMBHARA SAMBHARA MAHA
 DZABHU HUNG PHAT//

*repeat each one seven times**Mala Blessing Mantras*

OM RUTSI RAMANI PRAVARTAYA HUNG PHAT//
 OM HRI PADMA NIRTI SHVARI HUNG//

repeat each one seven times

OM A HUNG//

*repeat one mala round***Auspicious Mantras***Sanskrit vowels and consonants*

OM A Ā / I Ī / U Ū / RI RĪ / LI LĪ / E AI / O AU / ANG ĀH /
 KA KHA GA GHA NGA / CA CHA JA JHA NYA /
 TRA THRA DRA DHRA NA / TA THA DA DHA NA /
 PA PHA BA BHA MA / YA RA LA WA /
 SHA SHHA SA HA KSHYA SVAHA //

*repeat three times**The Mantra of Dependent Origination*

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 TATHAGATO HYAVADATA TESHANTSA YO NIRODHA
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 SUTO SHYO ME BHAVA/ SUPO SHYO ME BHAVA/
 ANU RAKTO ME BHAVA/ SARVA SIDDHIM ME
 PRAYATSHA/ SARVA KARMA SU TSA ME/
 TSITTAM SHREYA KURU HUNG/ HAHA HAHA HO/
 BHAGAVAN SARVA TATHAGATA BAZRA MAME
 MUN TSA/ BAZRI BHAVA/ MAHA SAMAYA SATVA A//

*repeat three times**Increasing Mantras*

OM SAMBHARA SAMBHARA BIMANA SARA MAHA
 DZAMBHA HUNG//
 OM SMARA SMARA BIMANA SKARA MAHA
 DZABHA HUNG PHAT//
 OM SAMBHARA SAMBHARA MAHA
 DZABHU HUNG PHAT//

*repeat each one seven times**Mala Blessing Mantras*

OM RUTSI RAMANI PRAVARTAYA HUNG PHAT//
 OM HRI PADMA NIRTI SHVARI HUNG//

repeat each one seven times

OM A HUNG//

repeat one mala round

Blessing of Vajra and Bell

DOR JE HUNG LE DOR JE SEM PA ZHU WA LE JUNG WE
 THAB DE WA CHEN PÖ RANG SHIN DOR JER GYUR/
 DRIL BU A LE DOR JE NYEM MA ZHU WA LE JUNG WE
 SHE RAB TONG PA NYI KYI RANG SHIN DRIL BUR
 GYUR/ THEL MO A DI KA DI YONG SU GYUR PA LE LAG
 YE SU NYI MA DANG YÖN DU DA WA SEL WAR GYUR/

Hold the vajra with your right thumb and ring finger at the heart level.

OM SARVA TATHAGATA SIDDHI BAZRA SAMAYA
 TISHTHA ESHA STVAM DHARAYAMI HI HI HI HI HI
 HUNG HUNG HUNG PHAT SVAHA/

Take the bell with your left thumb and ring finger and hold it at your waist. Keep the vajra in the former position and ring the bell stirring it in the four cardinal and four intermediate directions.

OM BAZRA GANDHE HUNG/

OM BAZRA DHARMA RANITA/
 PRARANITA/
 SAMPRA RANITA SARVA BUDDHA KSHETRA
 PRATSALINI/
 PRAJNA PARAMITA NADA SVABHAVA BAZRA HRIDAYA
 SANTO SHANI HUNG HUNG HUNG HO HO HO/

Ring the bell. Afterwards engage in any other practice.

Blessing of Vajra and Bell

From a vajra with a HUNG arises Vajrasattva, who dissolves into the vajra, the nature of great bliss which is the method. From a bell with an A arises Vajragarvi who dissolves into the bell, the nature of emptiness which is wisdom. The vowels and consonants in your palms transform into sun and moon in your right and left hand.

Hold the vajra with your right thumb and ring finger at the heart level.

OM SARVA TATHAGATA SIDDHI BAZRA SAMAYA
 TISHTHA ESHA STVAM DHARAYAMI HI HI HI HI HI
 HUNG HUNG HUNG PHAT SVAHA/

Take the bell with your left thumb and ring finger and hold it at your waist. Keep the vajra in the former position and ring the bell stirring it in the four cardinal and four intermediate directions.

OM BAZRA GANDHE HUNG/

OM BAZRA DHARMA RANITA/
 PRARANITA/
 SAMPRA RANITA SARVA BUDDHA KSHETRA
 PRATSALINI/
 PRAJNA PARAMITA NADA SVABHAVA BAZRA HRIDAYA
 SANTO SHANI HUNG HUNG HUNG HO HO HO/

Ring the bell. Afterwards engage in any other practice.

The Four Thoughts that Turn the Mind

- 1) KYE MA! DEL JOR DI DRA SHIN TU NYE KA ZHING/
JIG PAR LA WE LÜ DI THOB PE TSE/
DÖN ME NAM YENG WANG DU MA SONG WAR/
DE DRE THAR PA DRUB LA ZHÖL WAR JA/

- 2) DÜ CHE MI TAG JIG PE CHÖ CHEN TE/
DRO KÜN KYE NE CHI WA NYI LE ZHEN/
NAM CHI NGE ME TSA KHE ZIL PA DRA/
NYUR DU NYING PÖ DÖN LA TSÖN RE REN/

- 3) GE WE DE WA THOB CHING CHIG SHÖ KYI/
DUG NGEL DRE MIN GYU LE JUNG WE CHIR/
LU ME GYU DRE SHI SAM BAB KYI CHÖ/
LANG DOR NE LA DENG NE BE PAR GYI/

- 4) NGEN SONG SUM DANG NGÖN THÖ
GO PHANG LA'ANG/
KE CHIG TSAM GYI DE WA YÖ MIN CHING/
SI PAR CHEN PE NYE GYA KYE TSA DE/
DOR NE ZHI WE LAM CHOG DRUB PAR JA//

The Four Thoughts that Turn the Mind

- 1) Oh! This kind of leisure and endowment is supremely difficult to obtain. Having obtained this body which is easily lost, without falling under the influence of meaningless distractions I will apply myself diligently to attain ultimate liberation, joyous result.

- 2) The nature of composite phenomena is impermanence and disintegration; therefore death is a certainty for all who are born. The time of death is uncertain like a drop of dew on a blade of grass. Now is the time to swiftly make effort for the essence of Dharma.

- 3) Arising from causes, happiness is obtained by virtues, and the fruit of their opposite ripens as suffering. Hence happiness and suffering are phenomena whose natural way of abiding is the inexorable causality. From now on I will strive in what should be adopted and what should be given up.

- 4) In the three lower realms and also in the three higher ones, there is not even an instant of absolute happiness. Abandoning the root causes which bring about hundreds of mistakes of roaming around in samsaric existence, I will accomplish the supreme path of peace.

Commentary

Altruistic Motivation (Aspiration Bodhicitta)

*All mother sentient beings boundless as the sky,
especially those enemies who hate me,
obstructors who harm me, and those who create obstacles
towards my liberation and all-knowingness,
May they experience happiness and be separated from suffering.
Swiftly will I establish them in the state of unsurpassed,
completely perfected, precious enlightenment.*

It is very important to put this prayer of altruistic motivation right at the beginning of our practices, because it provides focus for our Dharma study and practice. Enlightened masters of the past condensed the vast and profound meaning of the sutras and tantras into a simple form that we can easily memorize. As we chant this prayer, it is crucial to pay attention, contemplate its meaning, bring that meaning into our heart, and put it into practice.

By specifically focusing on the *enemies* and *obstructors* who give us a hard time, we can directly sever our hatred and resentment. Saying, “May *they* experience happiness and be separated from suffering” is a genuine Dharma practice that brings peace into the mind. This prayer is a very direct and powerful way to cut through our shortcomings. It gives us the strength to persevere in our practice and not give in to obstacles - a genuine way to train the mind.

It is very easy to feel kindness and compassion toward our family, friends, and those who support us and our work. This is because of our attachment based on self-cherishing. We believe they are the source of our happiness and joy, and don't realize that sometimes they are actually the source of confusion and suffering. This prayer forces us to go beyond our limited habit of perceiving enemies and obstructors as the sources of our suffering. We usually view them with bitterness without realizing how much they, too, desire happiness and freedom from suffering. This prayer extends the mind to include all sentient beings throughout the world and, in that way, it teaches us how to eliminate attachment, boundaries, self-cherishing, and resentment. It helps us to build courage, strength of mind, and

bodhicitta based empirically on wisdom and compassion.

We are training ourselves to break through boundaries such as “friend,” “enemy,” “self,” and “other.” This is a very special practice with profound meaning. We are trying to purify our mental obscurations; that is, we are trying to fix our own mind instead of other people. Usually our mind is habituated to samsaric thoughts of attachment, hatred, pride, jealousy, and so forth. These are what obstruct our mental peace and happiness; these are what give us such suffering. We must focus on these thoughts and purify them as much as possible. This prayer is designed to help us accomplish that aim.

Reciting this prayer and reflecting on its meaning first thing in the morning suffuses our mind with loving-kindness, compassion, and bodhicitta. When the mind starts out occupied with such thoughts, the whole day can then be filled with them. We should all memorize this prayer so we can say it at anytime, anywhere. Of course it is good to recite it when we are in the prayer room, but we have a tendency to leave our noble thoughts there when we leave.

When we are faced with undesirable conditions, this practice helps us to feel kindness and compassion for those who do not support us. The problem is actually within our own mind, but that is very difficult to recognize. This prayer helps bring the problem to the surface. Otherwise negativity can stay in hiding where we remain unaware of it. So, when we pray this way, we are to look at our mind and transform our own negative thoughts, rather than focusing on the other person with anger and hatred. We can thus transcend and uproot our negative feelings by praying for our enemies to achieve complete enlightenment.

This practice's usefulness is not limited to our daily life, or even to this lifetime; it is also beneficial for our future lives. One day, the experiences of this life will be just a dream, perhaps a nightmare, but still only a dream. All our experiences will belong to the past, but the results of this practice will remain with us life after life. This practice teaches how to cultivate our mind and place it on the right path. It will show us the causes of suffering as well as the causes of happiness. We know that our habitual tendencies push us to think and go in one direction and give us little room to make a choice. We also know what causes

happiness, but are reluctant to follow that road because it may be painful. Many thoughts occupy our mind and sometimes they overwhelm us. This prayer teaches us how to recognize these shortfalls and allows us to change our direction. It is worthwhile to sacrifice some things in samsara in order to dispel our confusion and achieve ultimate peace and happiness. Here is a practice that provides us with a method to cultivate the universal mind of enlightenment and develop compassion toward every sentient being. It is a special method to heal our mind.

It will take time for us to find real peace because we are habituated in samsara and experience only a very narrow mind. However, we can open the mind if we exert effort, because we all have buddha nature, the seed of enlightenment, within us. It is the nature of a mustard seed to contain oil. If someone were unaware of that, it would not mean that the seed had no oil. Similarly, all sentient beings, no matter which of the six realms they find themselves in, are permeated with buddha nature. This is their nature whether they are aware of it or not. And it is because of this that the Dharma is not just for Buddhists; rather, it can benefit every sentient being. The peace of the Dharma is the mode of abiding of all phenomena, and is also called the “basic goodness.”

The teachings on mahamudra mention that the ultimate nature of reality is uncontrived and unfabricated, and describes conventional reality as being temporary or artificial, an illusion. Awareness of this allows us to open our hearts to infinite space that is without beginning, edge, or center. When there is such space in our mind, we feel relaxed and limitless. So cultivate this limitless, universal mind as much as possible.

Sometimes when we meditate, we feel some peace and think, “Oh! I must be enlightened now!” But then other thoughts come and drag us in all directions, making us feel crazy. We think, “There’s that terrible person who. . .” and suffer so much. I’m saying this from my own experience. I feel that this prayer is *real* Dharma practice. There is such profound meaning condensed into this short prayer. We should say it sincerely and meditate on its meaning. As a matter of fact, all the systems of mind training are contained within it. With this prayer as our guideline, we have the opportunity to dismantle all our barriers and come to perceive every sentient being as a member of one family.

Take a deep breath and relax the mind in peace for a few moments. Then bring all sentient beings, human and non-human, into your awareness. Regard all of them, particularly enemies, harmful demons, and those who obstruct the path to enlightenment, as you do your own dear mother. Sentient beings are lost and confused in samsara due to fundamental ignorance and it is for this reason that they destroy the causes of joy and happiness as if they were enemies. And they chase after suffering as if it were their closest friend or relative. With that in mind, say this prayer, “May they swiftly experience happiness, be free of all suffering, and achieve unsurpassed buddhahood.” At first, our unruly mind may resist this practice, but with repeated reinforcement we will become accustomed to it and will bring real peace to our mind and life.

Engagement in Virtue (Action Bodhicitta)

*Thus, until I achieve buddhahood, I perform virtuous deeds
with body, speech, and mind.*

Until death, I perform virtuous deeds with body, speech, and mind.

*From now until this time tomorrow, I perform virtuous deeds
with body, speech, and mind.*

After first generating aspiration bodhicitta, we then focus on cultivating that mind and following the path to its perfection. With this prayer, we commit to engage in action bodhicitta with our *body, speech, and mind* from now until we *achieve buddhahood*. Slowly and gently, we need to change our negative thoughts into new habits. This requires a process of mindfulness and discipline. Sitting in meditation for one hour does not constitute discipline. Rather, we must apply a continuous and steady effort to avoid actions such as the ten non-virtues:

Physically taking another’s life, stealing the property of another, sexual misconduct, or becoming intoxicated with alcohol or drugs;

Verbally lying, engaging in divisive speech, harsh words, or senseless speech;

Mentally coveting, holding malice, or having a wrong view of causality or the ultimate meaning.

We must consistently engage in the practices of pure love and compassion based on wisdom, reason, and bodhicitta, the mind of enlightenment. In order to perfect the practice of bodhicitta, it is indispensable that we pursue the six perfections: generosity, moral ethics, forbearance, joyous effort, meditative absorption, and wisdom. To bring benefit to ourselves and all the sentient beings in samsara, we put this into practice by deeply and sincerely committing to follow the path until full buddhahood is achieved. This may come in one lifetime or it may take many lifetimes, so we say *until I achieve buddhahood*, whenever that may be. This is an immense project, and we must use all our physical, mental, and verbal resources. We must channel all our energy into performing virtuous deeds with our body, speech, and mind until our goal is achieved.

Until death, I perform virtuous deeds with body, speech, and mind - this line recognizes that we have a precious human life that constitutes a rare chance to study and practice Dharma, and is also an opportunity to attain complete enlightenment. A precious human life is the basis for enlightenment and it is because of this that we have the opportunity to purify all the obscurations that cause suffering, cultivate bodhicitta, and actualize the perfect qualities of mind. We must not waste it, but rather must use it in the best way until we die. When we practice these teachings, our body, speech, and mind will develop virtuous qualities. There are so many things in the world that we could do, but revealing the inner qualities of the mind is the highest achievement, because it is the ultimate solution for all problems both now and in the future. In order to accomplish this, we must put all our time and effort toward that goal. We must develop the necessary mental qualities and depth of mind that our precious human life makes possible. However, whether we take advantage of this precious opportunity is our own individual choice.

Take a moment to meditate on this. Contemplate that, within all the realms of existence, I have a precious human life. That gives me the mental capacity to understand the true nature of samsara and nirvana. I have the ability to free myself from the causes of samsara and to achieve nirvana. Therefore, I must use this life in such a way that I will achieve the ultimate goal before I die. That way, I will experience complete satisfaction, joy, and happiness.

The line *From now until this time tomorrow, I perform virtuous deeds with body, speech, and mind* brings to mind the need to begin now. Instead of postponing Dharma practice, consider that right now, your health is good. You understand the difference between virtue and nonvirtue. You have taken refuge and cultivated bodhicitta. Therefore, start meditation practice today. Within the next twenty-four hours, make every effort to enhance your bodhicitta and work on purifying all your limitations.

We should repeat this prayer every day to remind ourselves to practice more and more, to continue developing, and to make steady progress. When we read the life of Milarepa, we can see how much he sacrificed once he realized the rare opportunity granted to him. After studying the Dharma, he knew he could not waste one minute of his life on anything except practicing the teachings. Any time we waste cannot be regained, no matter how hard we try. Our human life is priceless, and for this reason we must not waste the opportunity. Who knows when death will come? The Buddha said, "We don't know which will come first, tomorrow or our next life." So we should all prepare for our next life, and not just for tomorrow!

Our life is transitory and fragile; it depends on just one short breath. Even though we have cultivated our mind to achieve enlightenment, we still have to live one day at a time. The time to practice is now. The past is gone; it is not here. The future is not here either. So this moment is all we have, but it is temporary and transitory. Seeing this reality, be aware of your mind at this very moment. This is called "Dharma practice." The instant negative thoughts arise in the mind - that is the time to practice Dharma. It does not matter where we are - at home, at work, while driving, anywhere. If we practice this way, we will become happier people, our mind will become clearer, and we will live in peace and harmony. With this kind of motivation, we are now ready to work toward enlightenment, not tomorrow or next week, but right now. That is why this is called "action" bodhicitta.

Cultivation of Bodhicitta (Bodhisattva Vow)

Until I attain the heart of enlightenment, I take refuge in the buddhas. Likewise I take refuge in the Dharma and in the assembly of the bodhisattvas.

As the previous buddhas cultivated the enlightened mind and progressed in the bodhisattva's trainings, I, too, for the benefit of all sentient beings, give birth to bodhicitta and gradually train in just the same way

This prayer starts with the Mahayana way of taking refuge. We take refuge not only during this lifetime, but continuously until we reach complete enlightenment, also called *the heart of enlightenment*. When we cultivate bodhicitta, the mind of enlightenment, we take the buddhas of the past as examples. When they were ordinary people they, too, cultivated aspiration bodhicitta and put it into action by practicing the three *bodhisattva's trainings*: moral conduct, meditative equipoise, and special insight. With that support, they gradually *progressed in the bodhisattva's trainings* until they achieved buddhahood. How many sentient beings have benefited!

All the buddhas of the past attained enlightenment by cultivating bodhicitta, the warrior mind that cannot be defeated. They practiced and gradually developed themselves through the Five Paths and Ten Bhumis. Buddha Shakyamuni, for instance, practiced for three countless eons. There are accounts of his progress through many lifetimes, including some in which he practiced bodhicitta while living as an animal. A great bodhisattva may appear as a lower being, but his special, awakened mind makes him different from ordinary animals, as this story shows:

Once, the Buddha was born as a bird, and each morning he drank water at the same spot in the forest. There, he met an elephant, monkey, and rabbit. Since these four saw each other every day, they became close friends over time. They wanted to act courteously toward one another, so they became curious about which of them was the oldest. The bird said, "We should measure ourselves against the age of this nearby tree, and that will tell us our ages." The elephant thought that he was the oldest because he could remember when the tree was the same height as his body when he was a baby. The rabbit was next, and he said that he was older because he could remember when the tree had only a few leaves. The monkey said, "In that case, I am older. I remember when this tree was just a sprout." Finally, the bird said, "I am definitely the oldest. I ate

fruit from another tree and came here to drink some water. I passed a seed here, and the tree sprouted from that seed." They were all glad to have this information. The wise, older ones knew to take care of the younger ones, and the younger ones could show the proper respect.

After a while, the bird told the others that this much was not enough. He suggested that they give up taking life, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct, and wrong views of the causality of phenomena. They all agreed, and after practicing that way for a while, the bird suggested that they should benefit the other animals. So, they divided the animals among themselves, with each one taking responsibility to teach moral discipline to a portion of the forest. Because they avoided unfavorable conditions and gathered favorable conditions, they influenced the surrounding area for many years. Rain fell at the right time, the four seasons appeared in order, and no famine, sickness, or quarreling occurred anywhere in the whole country as a result of their actions.

The local people noticed this, and speculated about the cause. The king thought it was because he did such a good job ruling the kingdom. The ministers thought it was their doing because they served the king so well. The ordinary people thought they were responsible because they paid their taxes on time and were obedient to the king. A highly realized practitioner who had a special ability to comprehend cause and effect lived in the forest. When asked, he said that the splendid environment was not the result of any of their actions. He explained that four great brothers lived in the forest and had observed the five moral ethics for many years. The favorable conditions that they were all experiencing were the result of the four animals' positive karma. Everyone was astonished and admiring, and started practicing in the same way.

Because they kept such virtuous discipline, everyone from that place was reborn in a god realm when they passed away. Eventually, that realm became crowded. The gods used their clairvoyance to find out why so many were being reborn there, and saw the virtue of the four great beings. Indra praised them highly, saying, "Even if bodhisattvas are born as animals, they

still continue to practice and benefit sentient beings according to their ability. How wonderful are the results of virtuous deeds!”

This is the purpose of our practice, to be sincere to ourselves and others by progressing on the bodhisattva’s path as the buddhas of the past did. It will take time, and we will encounter obstacles and hardships. But without suffering, we would not be inspired to renounce samsara or pursue the Buddhist path. So, suffering gives us a chance to become buddhas ourselves. We must study and practice to gain the confidence to face it without being defeated by negative emotions. It helps to regard suffering as a momentary illusion. When we come to see its real nature in this way, it won’t be so overwhelming.

At the same time, we look at the sufferings of others, and find that they are unbearable and unending. This inspires us to cultivate unbearable compassion and leads us to vow, “In front of all the buddhas and bodhisattvas, today I cultivate aspiration bodhicitta, the solution for all suffering and defilement. To achieve this goal, I will follow the Five Paths by studying and practicing the six paramitas.” Thus, we make an unyielding commitment to purification and to the development of the qualities of a bodhisattva and, eventually, those of a buddha.

In modern times, there was a famous teacher who totally embodied bodhicitta, Khunu Lama Rinpoche. He had absolutely no material wealth. When he was asked about this he said, “I have everything that I need because I have bodhicitta.” He wrote a book called *Vast as the Heavens, Deep as the Sea*, which contains lovely poetic descriptions of the characteristics and benefits of bodhicitta. *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* is another important foundation text that explains the importance of bodhicitta and shows how to capture it within your heart.

Bodhicitta is like a universal monarch - it provides anything and everything. Make every effort to bring bodhicitta into your heart. The essence of Dharma is the bodhicitta that you practice.

Short Refuge Prayer

*In the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha most excellent,
I take refuge until enlightenment is reached.*

*By the merit of practicing generosity and other good deeds,
may I attain buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings.*

When we engage in any religious activity, we should start out by recalling the source of our inspiration, the Three Jewels. The recitation of this refuge prayer is very helpful in bringing our mind to the right place.

The *Buddha* was the person who actualized all of the teachings, who totally dispelled all confusion, and who achieved the complete form of compassion, knowledge, and wisdom. From that state, he taught the *Dharma* teachings that show us the way to understand the causes of suffering and how to become free from them. The *Sangha* consists of the group of practitioners who successfully studied and practiced the Buddha’s teachings, so we take refuge in them as well. Ordinarily, sentient beings take refuge in mental afflictions like anger, greed, jealousy, hatred, and attachment. As long as they continue to do so, there will be no end to their suffering. Instead, we should take refuge in the Buddha as the teacher, Dharma as the path, and Sangha as companions on the way to liberation.

The Buddha was born as a prince, a regular person from a rich and powerful family. His father provided every luxury and pleasure to make him happy. The Buddha remained in the palace this way until he happened upon sights that were shocking to him. He saw an old person who could not see or hear well. For the first time, he saw someone very sick and full of pain. He encountered a corpse and the suffering of the family and friends of the deceased. He investigated why these particular people had such experiences while he lived so comfortably. Through his contemplations, he understood that suffering is universal and determined to find a way for everyone to become free of these sufferings. He thought to himself, right now, I am young, physically and mentally talented, but this will not last. I will be the same as these suffering persons. There must be something to prevent this from happening. With this big question mark, he left the kingdom, not out of hatred or weakness but out of great wisdom and compassion.

For six years, the future buddha went through every hardship, going without clothes, without food and without drink. He concluded that this was not the solution to freedom from suffering. Neither were luxuries and comforts the way to freedom from inevitable sufferings. Finally, he realized that it is the mind that must be understood. This is extremely difficult to do. Even

these days, no matter how modern technologies have advanced, they cannot show the nature of mind itself. Nonetheless, he put great importance on realizing that very nature and set out to meditate.

As I need peace and happiness, so all sentient beings need the same things. There is no difference. As I dislike suffering, so everyone dislikes suffering. There is not a single difference. On the basis of this powerful, pure, infinite, pristine wisdom, every single cause and condition was seen without mistake: the cause of suffering and the nature of suffering, the cause of happiness and the nature of happiness. From that wisdom, the Buddha taught the Four Noble Truths, which describe the way reality manifests and how we experience it. This was not the Buddha's invention; rather, he uncovered the law of the universe.

The Buddha is more than just a kind, gentle person from ancient times. He is our example of the state of enlightenment, of one who has achieved the goal of total peace and happiness to which we aspire. He is omniscient and perfectly compassionate. There are many different ways of explaining the qualities of a buddha. For instance, you may hear of two forms or three forms, or even four or five. What is important is that a buddha has completely purified all the obscurations, both gross and subtle, and completely developed the two wisdoms. In fact, this is the origin of the Tibetan word for buddha, *sangye*. The first syllable, *sang*, means fully awakened and signifies awakening from ignorance into complete purification. The second syllable, *gye*, means fully blossomed and signifies that the pinnacle of wisdom has been reached.

In the threefold description of a buddha, dharmakaya is the highest state of enlightenment. The *dharmakaya* doesn't have a physical form, but is infinite as space. It is a collection of all the qualities that form the basis for manifestation. A buddha manifests the *sambhogakaya* in order to give profound teachings to the great bodhisattvas who are highly accomplished in meditation. As a *nirmanakaya*, a buddha appears and teaches all levels of sentient beings. Through these three forms, a buddha can manifest infinite methods to benefit sentient beings in whatever way is best.

Images of the nirmanakaya of Buddha Shakyamuni are venerated in temples and shrines all over the world. It is important to understand that this is not idol worship. Without

understanding, this practice can indeed appear to be like idol worship. But when we come to a shrine with special awareness, the images are a source of inspiration, a physical reminder of our goal of complete enlightenment and our commitment to benefit others. They evoke our devotion to the Triple Jewel and our spiritual teachers because we recognize them as exemplars. We sense the presence of buddhahood, the state that we are yearning to achieve, so we feel deep respect for the achievements of these holy beings. They achieved enlightenment and can benefit all sentient beings. Since we are inspired to do the same, we regard them as models of ideal behavior. Therefore, when we have images of enlightened beings, we should treat them with respect, as the good qualities that we might have achieved come through their example, blessings, and teachings.

In order to attain buddhahood ourselves, we practice the *Dharma* teachings that come from the Buddha's wisdom and compassion. Dharma is the path, the key method to dispel our confusion. The Buddha said, "Dharma is good at the beginning, good in the middle, and good at the end." The same Dharma that we study right at the beginning, we practice until we achieve enlightenment. We shouldn't think, "I've already learned this, I need something new." The Buddha taught his monks, "The new monks who arrived today should study the same Dharma that the monks of a hundred years have been studying and practicing. Those who are 100 years old should study and practice the same as the monks who arrived today." Simply put, the teaching is to avoid all nonvirtuous, unwholesome thoughts and deeds, and to develop all virtuous, wholesome thoughts and deeds. Perfectly tame your mind this way. This is the core of the Buddha's teaching.

The first teaching that the Buddha gave is called the "Four Noble Truths." He said that it is important to identify suffering; because once we know suffering we will be inspired to learn the cause of suffering so that we can abandon it. Struggling with suffering will not free us; only uprooting its causes will lead to the cessation of suffering, or nirvana. In order to achieve cessation, we have to follow the eightfold path of right view, right conception, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right meditative absorption. The only purpose of practices such as these is to avoid the cause of suffering and to develop the causes of happiness. This

encompasses all of the Buddha's teachings, whether we practice basic shamatha, mindfulness, or the highest mahamudra. That one thought pulls all these together and organizes our practice.

Dharma is a mirror that reflects our different wholesome and unwholesome states of mind. When we study the Dharma, it reveals the inner quality of our mind, whether we are in a positive or negative state, whether we are causing happiness or suffering.

Dharma is the true light that dispels the darkness of ignorance. Dharma is the true medicine that cures the chronic disease of afflicting emotions. Dharma is the true ambrosia that transforms negative into positive. There is no better friend, refuge, or protector than Dharma. If we have Dharma in our heart, we can achieve fearless confidence. Dharma is not just a friend or protector in this life, but is for life after life until we achieve enlightenment. If we take the Dharma into our heart, it will take us to enlightenment. Dharma is always there when we need it. If we rely on Dharma and apply it in our lives on a daily basis, it will never let us down.

Milarepa is an example of one who really understood that Dharma is the solution to confusion and suffering. He had 100 percent confidence in Dharma and so was able to commit to practice without wavering. No matter how much his sister tried to persuade him to leave retreat, he remained steadfast and made history. Even today, people all over the world are inspired by accounts of his unfaltering dedication.

One time, some of his disciples said to him, "You must be the reincarnation of the Buddha or a great bodhisattva. You achieved enlightenment in a way that would be impossible for an ordinary person. Please tell us whose reincarnation you are." Milarepa replied, "It's wonderful that you have such pure vision that you perceive me as a buddha. But as for the Dharma, you are completely mistaken. You don't believe that Dharma has the ability to completely purify all obscurations within one lifetime. Any sentient being who has renunciation as powerful as mine, who trusts the inexorable nature of karma, and understands the nature of samsara can achieve buddhahood within a single lifetime. Dharma contains all the methods needed to purify every obscuration, whether gross or subtle."

Thus, we cannot think of the Dharma as a simple path, just

one small thing. Dharma includes every phenomenon, all the knowledge that exists in the world. Look at it from that point of view, and broaden the mind. With spaciousness, embrace the Dharma in your heart. There is no place for negotiation or compromise here. It is not enough to purify half our anger; we must purify all of our obscurations without exception. That's why we must follow the path and practice until we reach our goal.

The Sangha most excellent is the community of practitioners who are highly accomplished in spiritual quality, who have actualized the profound nature of the Dharma teachings through their indivisible confidence in the Dharma. They exemplify successful practice, and inspire us to find the courage to follow the path ourselves. Within the sangha there are many different levels. In order to be considered an object of refuge, one must have dispelled confusion. In the Mahayana, we take refuge in those who have attained at least the first bhumi. While we don't take refuge in the ordinary sangha community, we do support each other. Within the religious community we must make every effort to achieve harmony by applying what we have learned.

Taking refuge *until enlightenment is reached* means that we are taking refuge in the Mahayana way. There are differences in time and in motivation between this and the Hinayana tradition of taking refuge. For example, a Hinayana text would say, "until I die," not until enlightenment is reached. In the Mahayana we say, "I take refuge for the sake of all sentient beings;" this is not mentioned in the Hinayana.

Even though this is a short prayer, it is very rich in meaning. It contains such a marvelous thought, a great and precious thought - bodhicitta. All our efforts to attain enlightenment, our meditations and virtuous deeds, are done solely to benefit other sentient beings. When we have this thought, there is no need for any other expectations. When sentient beings are happy, we are happy. We get enjoyment when others are happy, so we have no need to work separately for our own peace and happiness. This is what is called "bodhicitta."

As mentioned earlier, the practice of *good deeds* is a matter of discipline, of doing the right thing. These methods will eventually bring the good results that we are seeking on the path to enlightenment. Specifically, *generosity and other good deeds* refer to the six paramitas:

1. Generosity. Generosity practice means opening our heart and making our mind flexible. Briefly, the texts mention giving wealth, giving fearlessness and giving Dharma teachings. Sharing whatever we have opens the tightness of mind, relaxes us, and makes the mind happy.

2. Moral ethics. Dharma practice is the cultivation of discipline or moral ethics based on developing virtue and avoiding non-virtues. By achieving, or at least improving, physical, verbal, and mental disciplines we can achieve the great qualities of enlightened beings and benefit others.

3. Patience. The practice of patience follows discipline. Patience is a feeling of ease or fearlessness. Patience doesn't mean being submissive or fragile, but rather it is strength based on virtue; it is a courageous mind. The more wisdom and compassion we have, the stronger our patience will be. There, no space remains for anger and other negative emotions.

4. Joyous effort. The fourth paramita is joyous effort. Here, we apply effort continuously and joyfully until we achieve enlightenment. Sometimes we encounter challenging situations, so we need to know how to transform our suffering into enlightenment. We appreciate how meaningful Dharma is, and must / should work at studying and practicing with a positive outlook even while we are suffering.

5. Meditative concentration. These qualities are established one after another. The next one is meditative equipoise, which means sustaining a virtuous, one-pointed mind. A river that flows in many different directions becomes weak and shallow; if the same amount of water were channeled in a single direction, it would become a powerful force. The mind is also like that. When the mind is not scattered here and there but rather is fully organized in the meditative state, it becomes sharp and powerful. The enlightenment of all buddhas is achieved this way.

We forget much of what we have learned due to a lack of mindfulness. Khunu Lama Rinpoche was very famous for his memory. Year after year, he never forgot anything. One monk thought he had some special technique, some mantra or siddhi that allowed him to have this quality, so he asked, "What should I do to improve my memory?" The lama answered, "Sustain

mindfulness." That level of mindfulness comes from meditative concentration.

6. Wisdom awareness. The last one is the wisdom awareness with which we can penetrate the nature of duality. It is not just a collection of information and skills. It is mental acuity through which we achieve direct valid cognition of the true nature of all phenomena. It is the primary means to dispel confusion. The ignorance that causes suffering and samsaric existence itself can be completely brought to an end with this wisdom. The other five paramitas may bring peace and happiness, but will not alone be the cause of freedom from samsara. For that, this sixth perfection must be developed.

The combination of these six perfections is the principal method for achieving full enlightenment.

Our achievement of enlightenment is not for ourselves alone, but for *all sentient beings*. Sometimes this thought can be intellectual; we may not feel deeply a wish for other beings to be free from suffering. If you continue to practice this thought frequently, it will become genuine and then you will truly see sentient beings as being as important as the Buddha. Both buddhas and sentient beings are equally needed as support for achievement of enlightenment. Without the support of sentient beings, we cannot perfect our bodhicitta. Without perfecting bodhicitta, how can we attain buddhahood?

Four Immeasurable

*May all mother sentient beings, boundless as the sky,
have happiness and the causes of happiness.*

May they be liberated from suffering and the causes of suffering.

*May they never be separated from the happiness that is
free from suffering.*

May they rest in equanimity, free from attachment and aversion.

This is the recitation and practice of the *Four Immeasurables*. In the Buddha's teachings, all sentient beings are believed to be *mother sentient beings*, because they have all, at one time or another, been our mother who showed us kindness when we were children. They nurtured us with patience and understanding,

even ready to sacrifice their life for our sake. If you prefer not to look at your mother this way, consider the person who is closest to you, whether a friend, a relative, or a child, and then look at all other sentient beings in the same way. This is a method you can use to recollect how much kindness you received from your mother or close friend, and extend that feeling to all sentient beings.

Boundless as the sky - this is such a marvelous thought! It transcends our self-cherishing and narrow mind. Just hearing these powerful words encourages us to develop a vast way of thinking. Just as space has no end, there are so many beings we cannot count them all.

Each line refers to one of the Four Immeasurable Thoughts: loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity. This is a crucial practice; whether we are Dharma practitioners or not, we all need to practice these four thoughts. Without them, the world would be without peace. They transform our environment into something positive.

All together, these four are a special means to enhance our bodhicitta. They are both the goal we want to achieve and the practice we do to achieve it. These practices were put in prayer form as an easily-recalled reminder to apply these thoughts every moment. Don't just leave them in a prayer book. For example, when you encounter someone you dislike, it is useful to repeat this prayer over and over to bring the meaning into your heart.

We begin by practicing loving-kindness. Our ordinary love is conditional, related more to attachment to those whom we like or feel close to. As a result, we don't feel much loving-kindness for those who hate us. Here, we are cultivating an altruistic feeling that reaches out to all beings without exception. Cultivating this mind of boundless loving-kindness is a special basis for the realization of mahamudra that is without center or boundary.

With all beings as a support for your practice, this practice has great effect. Even poisons can transform into medicine; weapons transform into flowers due to the power of the experience of this mind. When I find myself immersed in a deep problem and finally free myself from it, I feel overjoyed. This is what I wish for all mother sentient beings. Just as I desire happiness, so they desire it, too; I wish and pray that they can obtain it, along with

the causes of happiness.

It is significant that we are not just looking at happiness, but also at the *causes of happiness*. We observe the causes of happiness - all the virtuous thoughts and practices, including the ten virtues - in order to achieve happiness. We progress by learning what these causes are, how to cultivate them, and the methods to accumulate them.

The second immeasurable thought is compassion. Sentient beings, boundless in number, need happiness, but they are suffering without pause. Thus, we cultivate compassion and say prayers to end all their suffering. Here again, our focus is on liberation from the *causes of suffering*, not only from the experience of suffering. As long as we have the cause of suffering, suffering is bound to come sooner or later. Here we pray for their suffering to end. Some people find themselves in such a state of suffering, hopelessness, and helplessness that they commit suicide. We sacrifice so much in order to get a little happiness in this life, and sometimes those sacrifices can cause us great pain. Through Dharma study, we can learn to develop compassion for everyone who is suffering.

Generally, it is easier to develop compassion for those who are suffering than it is to develop compassion for those who are creating the cause of suffering. This verse reminds us that we have to develop compassion for those who are making mistakes and causing problems. We should see that, at the moment someone causes a problem, that person is already suffering and is also creating the cause for more suffering in the future. Sometimes there is a misunderstanding of this and people say, "I can't develop compassion when someone makes a mistake because then I would be rejoicing in what they are doing." It's not that we are rejoicing in the mistake, but that we see the whole situation. Compassion arises for evil people because we understand the suffering they are bringing upon themselves. They are the real victims of their negative acts. If possible, we can ask them gently and compassionately to stop creating the cause of suffering. But if there is no chance of that happening, then we just say prayers and hope that one day they may open their wisdom eye, see their error, and awaken from their delusion.

The third immeasurable thought is that of joy, or wishing that the happiness of others lasts a long time. This counters the

development of jealousy. Happiness is infinite; our own happiness won't diminish when someone else achieves some success. When anyone has happiness, we should join in their happiness and pray for them to maintain that state. When we have loving-kindness and compassion, joy will arise more easily. Just as we want happiness for ourselves, we also must learn to rejoice for the happiness of other beings, even our enemies.

The fourth immeasurable thought, equanimity, refers to a limitless mind without boundaries. It does not mean a feeling of indifference or apathy that cannot distinguish right from wrong. Equanimity is without attachment or aversion, an impartial mind that develops loving-kindness and compassion for all. The same love and compassion that we have for our relatives, friends, and family should be directed equally to all sentient beings. We wish that all sentient beings would learn to be free from attachment and aversion, and *rest in equanimity*, the quality of mind that can help everyone develop compassion. As we say this prayer, we maintain our mind in that state.

This prayer can be said at any time, not only during a practice session. Particularly, it is good when we are confronted with a difficult situation. We don't know if our prayers will bring happiness to other sentient beings, but we can rest assured that if we practice in this way, it will bring us happiness and harmony. Whether or not it benefits others, it will benefit us every time.

Just as mental afflictions and thoughts of anger and hatred will destroy us along with others, our wish for happiness for all sentient beings will bring harmony and peace to them and to ourselves.

These four immeasurable practices are the indispensable foundation from which to cultivate and practice bodhicitta. They are essential prerequisites that bring peace even to the secular and mundane world, so make every effort to allow them to become rooted in the mind.

Seven Limb Prayer

*Whatever small merit I have gathered
through prostration, offering, confession,
rejoicing, requesting, and beseeching,
all this I dedicate for the perfect awakening.*

This seven limb prayer summarizes the profound and vast meaning of Dharma practice, especially that of the accumulation of merit and wisdom. It is practiced in both the Vajrayana and sutra systems of practice. For example, in the Vajrayana, we have Lord Jigten Sumgön's beautifully written *Serkhangma* prayer. Here, all seven elements appear in one verse:

First, with full devotion and confidence, visualize all the enlightened beings in the space above and in front of you. Physically or mentally perform prostrations while praising the excellent qualities of the Buddha. Honoring the enlightened beings this way is a remedy for our pride and arrogance.

Second, make infinite offerings physically or with visualization, including your own body, speech, mind, and root virtues. This practice of generosity is the remedy for attachment and stinginess.

Third, purify all unwholesome deeds and afflicting emotions without remainder. This is the remedy for obscurations.

Fourth, rejoice in the excellent qualities of the achievement of enlightenment, as well as all the virtuous acts performed by anyone, anywhere, at any time as a remedy for jealousy.

Fifth, focus on all the buddhas, bodhisattvas, and great teachers. From the bottom of your heart, sincerely request them to turn the wheel of the Dharma teachings that dispel all our delusions that are the root cause of suffering. The light of Dharma teachings is the remedy for ignorance.

Sixth, reflect on the nature of all composite phenomena and how, not only sentient beings, but even the great enlightened beings must pass on. Beseech all the buddhas, bodhisattvas, and great teachers not to enter parinirvana, but rather to remain in this world for sentient beings' benefit. This remedies laziness.

Seventh, is dedication of these meditation practices. In your mind, gather together all the merit and wisdom - whatever virtues and wholesome deeds have ever been performed - and dedicate them to the achievement of complete enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. In this way, the accumulated virtue will not be wasted for small purposes, but rather will be

dedicated to bringing about the optimum result, the absolute goal. This is the remedy for attachment to possessions.

With these seven skillful methods, practitioners have an excellent opportunity to gather the great accumulations of merit and wisdom; and to polish their bodhicitta meditation practice. With that, they can easily experience bodhicitta and emptiness.

Auspicious Mantras

Sanskrit vowels and consonants

OM A Ā / I Ī / U Ū / RI RĪ / LI LĪ / E AI / O AU / ANG ĀH /
KA KHA GA GHA NGA / CA CHA JA JHA NYA /
TRA THRA DRA DHRA NA / TA THA DA DHA NA /
PA PHA BA BHA MA / YA RA LA WA /
SHA SHHA SA HA KSHYA SVAHA //

The Mantra of Dependent Origination

OM YE DHARMA HETU PRABHAVA HETUN TESHAN
TATHAGATO HYAVADATA TESHANTSA YO NIRODHA
EVAM VADI MAHA SHRAMANA YE SVAHA//

All phenomena in samsara arise from a cause. The cause is explained by the Tathagata, Mahashramana, who taught how to attain the cessation of the cause.

Before he met the Buddha, Shariputra once came upon Arya Katayana walking along a road in a very peaceful, calm, and gentle way. Shariputra was himself a spiritual leader with many hundreds of disciples, so as soon as he saw Arya Katayana, he recognized that this person must have special insight, perhaps even the realization of enlightenment. He inquired as to his name and so forth, and then asked, "What kind of teachings are you practicing?" Arya Katayana replied with this verse. Shariputra realized its meaning in that very moment. The knot of his mental delusions of grasping and fixation immediately loosened. His heart fully opened, and his face radiated peace.

Maudgalyayana was Shariputra's best friend. Soon after this event, Maudgalyayana saw Shariputra and noticed that a change had taken place. His friend's face had become calm and radiant.

He asked Shariputra what kind of ambrosia he had received. Shariputra repeated this verse and Maudgalyayana also quickly realized the nature of interdependence.

They went together to ask Arya Katayana to be their teacher. He declined, saying, "No, you should go to see the Buddha. He is my teacher." They did so and promptly became monks. Afterward, they went back to their own disciples and told them, "We have become followers of the Buddhas, so you don't have to rely on us any longer, unless you want to. Go whatever way you wish." The disciples said, "We have been depending on you up until now; we will continue to follow you." All of them became monks and followed the Buddha. This story shows just how profound this teaching is.

Mahashramana means a holy person, a most successful practitioner. The Buddha, the highest practitioner, first explained that we should understand suffering, and then avoid the cause of suffering. It is beneficial to understand the details of suffering because there is a way to be free of it. If there were no way to be free of suffering, there would be no use in learning about it. Instead of fighting the result, suffering, work with its cause. That is the only solution. When we stop the cause, the result ceases by itself without effort. But if we keep creating the cause of suffering, suffering will come no matter how much we deny or reject it. We must not be content with a superficial understanding of suffering and causality. Rather, we must completely penetrate the very nature of suffering and uproot its causes.

The 100 Syllable Mantra

OM BAZRA SATVA SAMAYAM/ ANU PALAYA/
BAZRA SATVA TVENOPA/ TISHTA DRIDO ME BHAVA/
SUTO SHYO ME BHAVA/ SUPO SHYO ME BHAVA/
ANU RAKTO ME BHAVA/ SARVA SIDDHIM ME
PRAYATSHA/ SARVA KARMA SU TSA ME/
TSITTAM SHREYA KURU HUNG/ HAHA HAHA HO/
BHAGAVAN SARVA TATHAGATA BAZRA MAME
MUN TSA/ BAZRI BHAVA/ MAHA SAMAYA SATVA A//

Increasing Mantras

OM SAMBHARA SAMBHARA BIMANA SARA MAHA

DZAMBHA HUNG//
 OM SMARA SMARA BIMANA SKARA MAHA
 DZABHA HUNG PHAT//
 OM SAMBHARA SAMBHARA MAHA
 DZABHU HUNG PHAT//

Mala Blessing Mantras

OM RUTSI RAMANI PRAVARTAYA HUNG PHAT//
 OM HRI PADMA NIRTI SHVARI HUNG//
 OM A HUNG//

Blessing of Vajra and Bell

From a vajra with a HUNG arises Vajrasattoa, who dissolves into the vajra, the nature of great bliss which is the method. From a bell with an A arises Vajragarvi who dissolves into the bell, the nature of emptiness which is wisdom. The vowels and consonants in your palms transform into sun and moon in your right and left hand.

OM SARVA TATHAGATA SIDDHI BAZRA SAMAYA
 TISHTHA ESHA STVAM DHARAYAMI HI HI HI HI HI
 HUNG HUNG HUNG PHAT SVAHA/
 OM BAZRA GANDHE HUNG/
 OM BAZRA DHARMA RANITA/
 PRARANITA/
 SAMPRA RANITA SARVA BUDDHA KSHETRA
 PRATSALINI/
 PRAJNA PARAMITA NADA SVABHAVA BAZRA HRIDAYA
 SANTO SHANI HUNG HUNG HUNG HO HO HO/

The Four Thoughts that Turn the Mind

1. *Oh! This kind of leisure and endowment is supremely difficult to obtain. Having obtained this body which is easily lost, without falling under the influence of meaningless distractions I will apply myself diligently to attain ultimate liberation, joyous result.*
2. *The nature of composite phenomena is impermanence and disintegration; therefore death is a certainty for all who are born. The time of death is uncertain like a drop of dew on a blade of*

grass. Now is the time to swiftly make effort for the essence of Dharma.

3. *Arising from causes, happiness is obtained by virtues, and the fruit of their opposite ripens as suffering. Hence happiness and suffering are phenomena whose natural way of abiding is the inexorable causality. From now on I will strive in what should be adopted and what should be given up.*
4. *In the three lower realms and also in the three higher ones, there is not even an instant of absolute happiness. Abandoning the root causes which bring about hundreds of mistakes of roaming around in samsaric existence, I will accomplish the supreme path of peace.*

These four foundations are very important, because they cause us to develop renunciation for samsara. By studying and practicing them, we cultivate a foundation of wisdom from which we come to understand that we are stuck in an undesirable situation. This allows us to develop a strong motivation to free ourselves that is based on reasoning instead of emotion and confusion. These thoughts create spaciousness in the mind.

1. Precious human life. A lama was giving a teaching in Tibet about the difficulty of obtaining a precious human life. A Chinese merchant heard the talk and remarked that perhaps that lama had not been to China and seen how many people lived there. He said, "It's definitely not difficult to be born as a human there!" Of course, the merchant had misunderstood. The lama was actually explaining how difficult it is to achieve a *precious* human life, not an ordinary one. Having a precious human life doesn't mean merely being a human. Rather, it means to be a human being with an opportunity to study and practice the Dharma. With such a life, we can achieve great things for our own benefit and for others' benefit as well.

However, the causes for such a life are difficult to create. Many causes and conditions must come together to support a human life, but the primary cause of human rebirth is moral ethics, particularly the keeping of the five precepts. As we know, nonvirtuous activities come very easily. Our mind is so full of afflicting emotions that negative thoughts and actions flow effortlessly, but they lead to nothing other than suffering. No

matter how hard we try, altruism and other virtuous thoughts are not easy for us to generate. We are so habituated to negativity that sometimes positive thoughts seem impossible. Even our best efforts result only in an artificial approximation of virtue. Therefore, without a firm foundation of moral ethics, human rebirth is *supremely difficult to obtain*.

The whole of samsara is comprised of six realms: the hell, hungry ghost, animal, human, demi-god, and god realms. There is little opportunity to study and practice Dharma in any realm other than the human. The minds of some beings are completely obscured by ignorance and confusion, some lack renunciation, and yet others are tortured by inconceivable suffering. Take the animal realm as an example. How many more millions of insects are there compared to the number of humans? When we analyze the situation this way, it becomes clear that human life is a rare condition.

The Buddha said, "Suppose the whole planet is an ocean. Floating on that ocean is a yoke with a single hole, endlessly being blown in the four directions. Under the ocean's surface, a blind turtle swims. Now suppose that the turtle lifts his head above the surface once every hundred years. The ocean is so huge that it would be extremely unlikely, but still possible, for the turtle's lifted head to go through the yoke's single hole. To be born in a human life is even rarer than that."

Just being human is not enough. There are many human beings, but only a small percentage of them have a precious human existence; that is, few have an opportunity to study and practice Dharma. They lack the positive karma to encounter authentic spiritual teachers and remain obscured by their circumstances. Even among those who encounter the Dharma, few are able to practice successfully, and only a tiny fraction of those attain realization. Understanding the rarity of this opportunity can be a source of inspiration that opens the door to the infinite qualities of enlightenment.

The qualities of a precious human life are summarized as leisure and endowment. Leisure means that one has time to study and practice. For example, if we are born in a hell realm, there is not a moment free of torment, so such a rebirth is not conducive to study or practice. Beings in the animal realm are not intelligent enough. If we are born in a place where no buddha

has appeared, there is also no chance to study and practice. Because we have all eight of the senses, we can hear of the Buddha's teachings and can pursue our interest in the Dharma. There are ten endowments, five of which are personal attributes such as possessing all the senses and devotion for the Dharma, and five of which are external conditions such as the continuation of the Dharma teachings and support for practice. Thus, a precious human life provides every opportunity to free ourselves from suffering, and even from samsara itself.

Unfortunately, a precious human life is *easily lost*. It is extremely fragile. We can get sick, if we don't eat we are drained of energy, if we eat too much we can't contemplate, we are aging every moment and will lose our ability to learn. We need to recognize this unimaginable opportunity and not waste it by *falling under the influence of meaningless distractions*. Life is not that long, so we must emphasize the main point, the Dharma teachings, by bringing them into our heart, exercising them, and enriching them through practice. Exert effort every day to free yourself from samsara.

It is up to us to decide whether to use our precious human life for small purposes or for the ultimate goal. We have an opportunity to uproot the entirety of samsara. We have a chance to become an embodiment of wisdom and compassion, to attain the infinite qualities of the Buddha. Recollect again and again how fortunate we are to have been born in a human life and have the freedom to meet with the glorious Dharma. Rejoice for yourself! We must have done something good in a previous lifetime to find ourselves here, but now our next life depends on this one. Whether we will be thrown into the lowest hell or achieve the highest enlightenment is in our own hands. We should meditate on this carefully. Once we become aware of the great potential of a precious human life, there is no time to waste on samsaric pleasures. The lord of death will not wait for us or listen to our excuses.

What you are reading here is just an introductory summary, and it would be good to study this subject more. Texts such as *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation or Transformation of Suffering* discuss this topic in much more detail.

2. Impermanence. Even though we have a precious human

life with all its great qualities and opportunities, this is not a permanent form. It, like all composite phenomena, is impermanent and changing every moment. Impermanence is not a concept that we create or introduce from somewhere else. It has been with us since the day we were born. We study and practice it in order to be able to recognize the way things really exist, and to comprehend our life within that context.

We all know that we will die one day, but we don't think that we might die today. We plan to live indefinitely, but even if we could live 1,000 years we still must die eventually. Some find thinking about death to be negative, a sign of weakness, or depressing. But since we are going to die anyway, it is beneficial to prepare ourselves by contemplating death. Dharma teachings are the complete solution to our problems and suffering. Since we have them, it is wise to take maximum advantage by reflecting on the impermanence of this life. The teachings explain the experiences we can expect to undergo at the time of death, which helps us so much when we actually encounter these sufferings. Therefore, reflect on death. It is like the saying: hope for the best, but prepare for the worst.

Generally, we are very attached to our bodies; they are the center of our world. Once we have a body, we need a house to protect it. We need machines like a stove and washing machine to help care for it. We need food and drink. How much do we work in order to maintain this body? This kind of relationship with the body is the basis of samsara. And so, it is far better to stop indulging the body out of attachment and, instead, use it as the basis for enlightenment.

Great masters are able to die consciously and with joy because of their Dharma practice. They face the inevitable with clear minds because they reflected upon and applied the teachings while they were alive. They lived their lives knowing that *the time of death is uncertain like a drop of dew on a blade of grass*. Morning dew can be so beautiful as the sun shines on it. But it doesn't last very long. Likewise, we can be perfectly healthy, but when we get a small headache we become powerless. Look at how fragile we are!

Milarepa said, "I escaped to the mountains in fear of death. I practiced Dharma persistently because of the uncertainty of the time of death. Therefore, I have captured the fortress of the

unchanging mind. Now I am free from the fear of death." We, too, can achieve fearlessness through Dharma practice. Ordinarily, we have fear due to hope and expectation. We are trapped between hoping to gain something and fearing loss. Milarepa pointed this out clearly to a deer and hunting dog:

A deer rushed toward the entrance to Milarepa's cave, trying to escape from a pursuing dog. It was running so hard that every hair was wet with sweat. As soon as the deer approached Milarepa, it felt great peace and fell at his feet. Milarepa said, "You are wandering in samsara, caught between fear and hope. You hope to escape from the dog, and you fear that the dog will catch you." Moments later, the panting dog arrived, and Milarepa repeated the same teaching, saying, "You fear losing the deer and hope to catch the deer. Trapped between hope and fear, you, too, wander in endless samsara."

If we examine our life, this is the way we, too, live, isn't it? We all waver between fear and hope. The Dharma teachings contain wisdom that can free us from hope and fear, especially if we practice bodhicitta. Bodhicitta is the best remedy for this and is the means to achieve fearlessness.

Impermanence isn't just about death; it has many refreshing and positive aspects. For example, understanding the philosophy of impermanence is an antidote to afflicting emotions because it dispels ignorance. Since our mind is constantly changing, we can see that anger, arrogance, jealousy, pride, attachment, and so forth are just momentary mental defilements. Application of this knowledge reduces the power of these thoughts, and eventually leads us to eliminate them completely. When truly we know that everything passes with time, we won't need to hold onto resentment and can learn forgiveness. Impermanence teaches us to endure hardships while we're developing good qualities, because hardship, too, will eventually disappear. Without an awareness of impermanence, we tend to waste our lives thinking that there will be time for Dharma practice later. These are just a few of the great qualities and strengths we can build from reflecting on impermanence.

The past has passed and does not exist here and now. The future has not yet arrived, and the present passes by more quickly than we can comprehend. In fact, we can say that it, too, does not exist.

If it did exist, then we would be able to identify a start, a middle, and an end. A single instant couldn't pass if it were permanent. Nothing exists the way we customarily think it does. Therefore, the study and practice of impermanence can lead us to the basic nature of reality itself.

You may have heard the mahamudra or dzogchen instructions to relax into the natural state of mind free of fabrication. What does this mean? We have to return to our own inner home where we naturally belong and abide there. In order to capture the full meaning of this it is indispensable to contemplate the ever changing nature of all composite phenomena. Whether we like it or not, impermanence is part of our life; we cannot separate from it. The moment we are born, we are changing and getting older every second. Because of this empirically everything is an illusion, like a flashing of light. We need to take full advantage of this precious human life and to use our human intelligence to dispel the obscurations and negative emotions. Therefore we need to study the Dharma, understand its meaning and apply it into practice to get substantial benefit. We can learn much from the life stories of the great masters that tell of their extraordinary efforts and accomplishments. Even so, they also were impermanent. This helps us to understand that we, too, will become stories just as they did. By understanding this, we have a better chance to release our attachment and grasping, and instead learn how to flow with impermanence. We have to accept this fact and live with it. In this way, Buddhism teaches a very practical way of living, not just theory.

Awareness of these basic principles is very important as we study and practice the Dharma. When we understand these teachings, we are introduced to natural joy and happiness. We then admire and appreciate the teachings, and develop profound respect for them. Sometimes we don't enjoy studying and sometimes we put off practicing. This is due to our habitual tendencies of samsaric thought that don't allow us to return to our own buddha nature. Our negative habits keep it from us. We should become aware of this so that we know how to work with our own mind.

Whether positive or negative, everything flows like a river without stopping, changing constantly. One day Milarepa was walking on a small trail holding his cooking pot in his hands.

He fell, dropped the cooking pot, and it shattered. Right at that moment, recollection of his contemplations on impermanence arose vividly. He used this ordinary experience as an astonishing teaching, and sang:

The pot that once was has broken into pieces.
This demonstrates that all composite phenomena are
impermanent.

In particular, it shows human life to be the same.

So, I will meditate and practice Dharma harder than before.

This was the only wealth I owned.

When it shattered, it became my teacher.

Thank you for this fresh, priceless teaching.

By transforming the incident into a meditation practice, he came to understand the nature of all phenomena. We ordinary beings can take heart from this, and continue to develop dedication and strength of mind. Impermanence, a great light of wisdom that is always with us, can dispel the darkness of confusion. If we contemplate carefully on this subject, it will give us an opportunity to free ourselves from attachment and aversion by realizing everything as an illusion. Use this special remedy for attachment to this life to inspire in yourself the pursuit of Dharma practice without wasting any time.

3. Karma. Karma is not merely a Buddhist belief. If karma were a belief system, then karma would exist if you believed in it, and would not exist if you didn't. In that case, it would be better not to believe in karma because your beliefs would just be creating an unnecessary burden for yourself. However, this is not the case. Karma means action. Any action we engage in with body, speech, or mind creates a cause. Thus, all happiness and suffering depend on the causes, the karma, that we create. Karma is the way all phenomena function. For our own benefit, we must understand it because karma is behind everything. Every moment of our life, we create karma or experience the results of karma. As you sow, so shall you reap; this saying describes karma exactly.

It is not so difficult to understand karma at the gross level, but its infinite subtleties cannot be perceived by anyone other than a buddha. Even the great disciples such as Shariputra, Maudgalyayana, and Mahakashyapa didn't have the profound

wisdom needed to penetrate the details. Profound, incisive wisdom is required to completely penetrate causality. Emptiness is easier to understand because it can be empirically investigated.

For example at the time of Buddha there was a householder called Palkye who was about hundred years old and incapable of taking care of the responsibilities of the house. Therefore all the family members looked down on him. For this reason he was depressed. Then one day Palkye heard about the great benefits of being ordained and went to see Buddha. However, Buddha was absent and therefore he asked for a senior monk who could ordain him instead. He was told to go to Shariputra who was a highly accomplished and gifted teacher. But because Shariputra still was not fully realized he perceived Palkye as an old man out of time without seeing his potential. Therefore with these thoughts Shariputra refused him. After that he went to see some of the other senior monks and everyone refused him. "If the venerable Shariputra cannot ordain you how could we?", they said. The old man was devastated and went crying outside the gate of the monastery. After some time Buddha passed by and saw Palkye. Buddha approached him kindly and asked why he was crying. "I wish to ordain, but none of the senior monks including Shariputra will accept me" Palkye responded. Then out of great compassion and infinite wisdom Buddha permitted him to ordain. Buddha called for Maudgalyayana and asked him to ordain and train Palkye. Maudgalyayana ordained him, taught him skillfully and trained him. And this way Palkye finally achieved arhatship. Buddha has that kind of profound incisive awareness to see all the gross and subtle reality nature of phenomena which even the Bodhisattvas of the 10th bhumi lacks.

Nonetheless, the more we meditate, the clearer our mind is, and the more we can comprehend the manifestations of causality.

At the gross level, these ten nonvirtues are the cause of suffering: killing human beings and animals; stealing and sexual misconduct are the three nonvirtues of the body; lying, especially about spiritual achievements; divisive speech; harsh words and idle talk are the three nonvirtues of the speech; covetousness; malice; and holding wrong view, especially about causality are the three nonvirtues of the mind. These are the causes of suffering everyone both individually and in society, for believers and non-believers, spiritual or non-spiritual. So it is important and in our

own best interest to investigate them and see how they cause suffering. Look at today's national or international news or just think about family life and you will see how involving in any of these ten nonvirtues bring predicament and suffering into our life and mind. Maintaining discipline and abstaining from these nonvirtues is in itself virtue.

The ten virtues is the constitution of peace in the whole world. If everyone follows this international constitution that itself is peace and is how peace is created. Furthermore, engaging in the ten virtuous actions is the obvious cause of both peace and happiness: preserving life; practicing generosity; practicing moral sexual behavior; speaking truthfully; speaking harmoniously; speaking peacefully and politely; speaking meaningfully; practicing contentment; practicing loving-kindness and compassion and practicing the perfect meaning, wisdom. It is important to understand the demarcation of causality as it is the foundation for world peace regardless of ideology, spiritual background, even for those who do not believe in any religion. So everyone has the responsibility to free themselves from the ten nonvirtues. And instead of dreaming for peace and harmony in our daily life we should respect each other and appreciate others contribution and good deeds. These are the foundations for spiritual development. These virtues and nonvirtues are also the demarcation of peace and suffering in the secular world. Anyone who maintains the ten virtues has peace and is creating the causes of peace. Anyone involved in the ten nonvirtues has suffering and is creating the cause of further suffering.

Because highly accomplished masters are aware of karma, they maintain superior moral conduct. They are keenly mindful of the causes they are creating. In ignorance, we are generally careless and heedless. But once we know better, we can practice the Dharma by distinguishing between *what should be adopted and what should be given up*. This is the way to become a better human being and a better citizen of the world.

4. Suffering of samsara. Of course, we do experience happiness, peace, and joy in this life, but that happiness is fleeting and subject to change at any moment. The good times we had in the past are gone, vanished like a dream. If they were real, they would still be here now. Use this example to see for yourself

how all of life has that same nature.

Also, when we are successful, we become quite attached to our success. But when business is bad we suffer from aversion. Additionally, nothing that happens during two years' time remains in the third year. These are examples of the illusory nature of samsara, where *there is not even an instant of absolute happiness*. Our time is completely taken up with these things. We suffer helplessly, alternating between happy and sad, good and bad, birth and death. Understanding these teachings helps to free us, to make our mind peaceful, balanced, and relaxed.

The *root causes which bring about hundreds of mistakes of roaming around in samsaric existence* are ignorance, attachment, and aversion. All three function interdependently. Without ignorance, there is no reason to have attachment. Without attachment, there is no reason to have anger. For instance, if I have attachment for an expensive cup, I will become angry if someone knocks it to the ground. If I don't have attachment to the cup, I will not be upset if someone breaks it. Those two reactions are both based on ignorance, on not realizing the nature of the cup as impermanent and empty. When ignorance ceases to have the upper hand, attachment and aversion have no place to manifest. With this wisdom, we can root out the causes of suffering and can focus on the causes of peace and happiness. Do you see how these teachings help to relax the mind in a deep way? Reflecting on the suffering of samsara is a special remedy for attachment to samsara, so real peace can come from these practices. When our afflictions are pacified, we experience calmness and happiness in the mind without any attachment or confusion. This is why skillful Dharma study and practice is the *supreme path of peace* to enlightenment.

This just touches the surface of the subject of suffering. Please study this further in texts such as *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation and Transformation of Suffering*.

These four thoughts that turn the mind are especially important for us. They provide a clear picture of samsara; remind yourself of them often and reflect on them repeatedly. If your understanding is superficial or you remain unconvinced of the truth of these teachings, there is a danger that your involvement in Dharma practice will be just emotional and temporary. I have seen this happen to many people. They spend

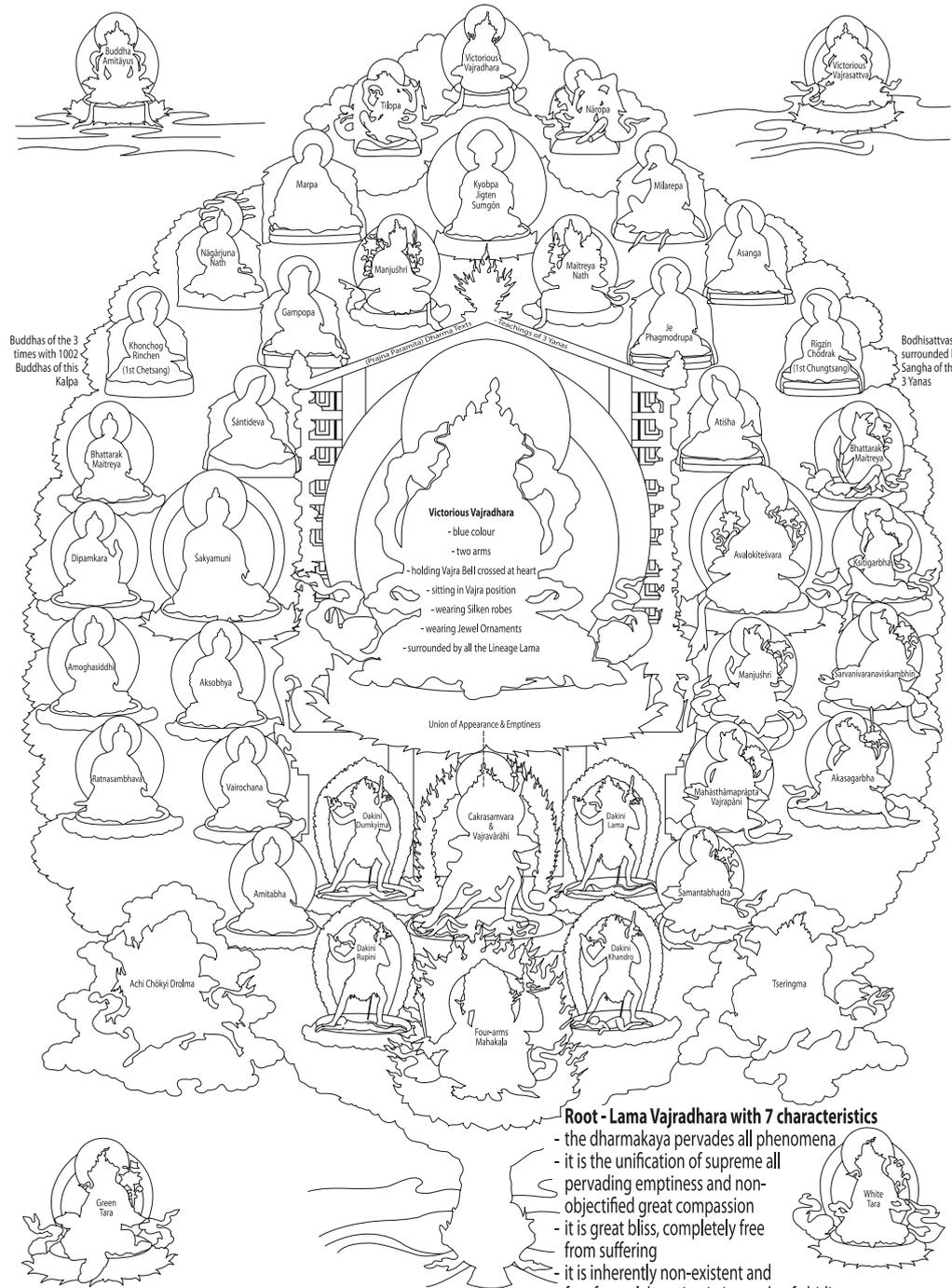
time with the Dharma very seriously for some years, but without learning how to purify the mind and reduce the cause of suffering, they lose interest and become derailed from the path. This is very unfortunate and is why Jigten Sumgön mentioned that these preliminary practices are more important than the higher ones. When these four foundations are deeply rooted, we will not hesitate to renounce samsara and follow the path of Dharma to its conclusion. By reminding us of the nature of samsara, they give us a reason to study and practice the Dharma.

CHAPTER 2
Refuge Meditation Practice



The Three Jewels are like the sphere of the sun.
Their compassion is impartial and unfailing.
Take refuge from the bottom of your heart.
This is my heart's advice.

by Drigung Dharmaradza
The Jewel Treasury of Advice



Buddhas of the 3 times with 1002 Buddhas of this Kalpa

Bodhisattvas surrounded by Sangha of the 3 Yanas

Victorious Vajradhara
 - blue colour
 - two arms
 - holding Vajra Bell crossed at heart
 - sitting in Vajra position
 - wearing Silken robes
 - wearing Jewel Ornaments
 - surrounded by all the Lineage Lama

Union of Appearance & Emptiness

Root - Lama Vajradhara with 7 characteristics

- the dharmakaya pervades all phenomena
- it is the unification of supreme all pervading emptiness and non-objectified great compassion
- it is great bliss, completely free from suffering
- it is inherently non-existent and free from elaboration in its mode of abiding
- it is the great embodiment of full compassion, unchanging from coemergent wisdom
- it never varies from all the qualities described above and is free from coming, going, increasing or decreasing
- it is unceasing and not "just nothing" but is, instead, the embodiment of the ultimate great bliss

4 Dakinis manifesting 4 activities

- Blue - Khandro - wrathful activities
- Green - Lama - peaceful activities
- Red - Dumkyima - power activities
- Yellow - Rupini - increasing activities

Lake with water of 8 Great Qualities

- cool
- refreshing
- tasty
- smooth
- clear
- without bad smell
- soothing to the throat
- harmless to the stomach



Introduction

If the merit of taking refuge in the Triple Gem manifested as a form, the whole universe could not contain it. Even attempting to describe the infinite benefits of practicing refuge is like attempting to empty the ocean with a ladle. There are eight benefits, as explained in the Jewel Ornament of Liberation:

1. One becomes a Buddhist.
2. Refuge becomes the basis of all the precepts and vows.
3. Refuge exhausts all previous nonvirtuous deeds.
4. Refuge protects us from obstacles created by human and nonhuman beings.
5. We accomplish all our wishes.
6. One gathers a great amount of merit.
7. One will not fall into the lower realms.
8. One attains buddhahood swiftly.

Refuge practice is the essence of all other practices. Therefore, one always should emphasize this practice. It has inconceivable beneficial effects and, through it, one can achieve the fearless state.

Sadhana

Weary of the whole of samsara focus your mind one-pointedly on the three jewels and engage in refuge

Visualization

NE KHANG OG MIN ZHING DANG YER ME PE/
RANG DÜN SENG CHEN PAD MA NYI DE TENG/
Ü SU DRIN CHEN TSA WE LA MA NI/
YEN LAG DÜN DEN DOR JE CHANG GI TSÜL/
NGO SANG CHAG NYI DOR DRIL THUG KAR NÖL/
ZHAB NYI DOR JE KYIL TRUNG GYING TSÜL ZHUG/
DAR DANG RIN CHEN NA TSO GYEN GYI DZE/
GYÜ PE SHE NYEN NAM DANG THAB CHIG ZHUG/

DÜN DU YI DAM KHOR LO DE WE CHOG/
YAB YUM NANG TONG ZUNG JUG NYOM ZHUG TSÜL/

YE SU DÜ SUM SANG GYE TSEN PER DEN/
KEL ZANG SANG GYE TONG DANG LHEN CHIG ZHUG/

GYAB TU SHE RAB PHA RÖL CHIN PE YUM/
DRANG NGE THEG SUM CHÖ KYI NGA RO DROG/

YÖN DU TSE DEN JANG CHUB SEM PE TSO G/
THEG SUM GEN DÜN NAM KYI YONG SU KOR/

THRI YI TSAM KÜN DAM PA CHÖ KHYONG WE/
SUNG MA GYA TSO TRIN THRIG TA BUR GYUR//

clearly bring this to your mind

Sadhana

Weary of the whole of samsara focus your mind one-pointedly on the three jewels and engage in refuge

Visualization

My dwelling place is inseparable from the Akanishtha buddhafield. In the space in front of me is a lion throne on which are a lotus and sun and moon disk seats, in the center of which sits my kind root lama in the form of Vajradhara with the seven characteristics. Blue in color, two arms, holding a vajra and bell crossed at the heart, he sits gracefully in the vajra posture, adorned by silks and various jewel ornaments and surrounded by the lineage lamas.

In front of the lion throne is the yidam Chakrasamvara, the male and female aspects in union, whose manifestation is simultaneously appearance and emptiness.

At the right side of the throne are the buddhas of the three times, possessing the major and minor marks, together with the thousand buddhas of this fortunate eon.

Behind the throne is Prajñāparamita proclaiming the provisional Dharma, the definitive Dharma and the teachings of the three yanās.

To the left of the throne is the assembly of the compassionate bodhisattvas, completely surrounded by the sanghas of the three yanās.

Around the throne are the Dharma protectors, an ocean of guardians gathered like clouds.

clearly bring this to your mind

Prayers

SANG GYE CHÖ TSOG YI DAM CHÖ KYONG CHE/
 KYAB CHOG NAM LA DAG SOG DRO WA KÜN/
 SI PE JIG TSOG NYAM NGA LE KYOB CHIR/
 JANG CHUB MA THOB BAR DU KYAB SU CHI//

repeat three times

DRO KÜN DE DEN DUG NGEL DREL WA DANG/
 NYUR DU LA ME THOB PAR DAG GA WE/
 DE'I CHIR DENG NE JANG CHUB MA THOB BAR/
 NGE PE DÖN CHOG LAM LA JUG PAR JA//

repeat three times

Refuge Prayers with Prostrations

DRIN CHEN TSA WA DANG GYÜ PAR CHE PE
 PEL DEN LA MA DAM PA NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O/
 YI DAM KYIL KHOR GYI LHA TSOG
 NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O/
 SANG GYE CHOM DEN DE NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O/
 DAM PE CHÖ NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O/
 PHAG PE GEN DÜN NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O/
 PA WO KHAN DRO CHÖ KYONG SUNG ME TSOG YE SHE
 KYI CHEN DANG DEN PA NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O//

repeat the refuge prayer as many times as possible

Dissolution

Finally the objects of refuge dissolve into oneself. Rest in this state without reference point.

Prayers

Buddha, Dharma, sangha, yidam and Dharma protectors:
 to the supreme objects of refuge,
 for protection from the frightful suffering of samsara
 we, all migrators, go for refuge until
 enlightenment is attained.

repeat three times

I rejoice when all sentient beings are happy,
 free from suffering, and swiftly attain
 ultimate buddhahood.

For this purpose, from now until I achieve enlightenment,
 I will follow the path of supreme definitive meaning.

repeat three times

Refuge Prayers with Prostrations

We take refuge in the glorious, holy, kind root and
 lineage lamas.
 We take refuge in the assembled deities of the
 mandalas of the yidams.
 We take refuge in the exalted buddhas.
 We take refuge in the perfect Dharma.
 We take refuge in the noble sanghas.
 We take refuge in the viras, dakinis, and
 Dharma guardians, possessors of the eye of wisdom

repeat the refuge prayer as many times as possible

Dissolution

Finally the objects of refuge dissolve into oneself. Rest in this state without reference point.

Commentary on the Introduction

If the merit of taking refuge in the Triple Gem manifested as a form, the whole universe could not contain it. Even attempting to describe the infinite benefits of practicing refuge is like attempting to empty the ocean with a ladle.

One time the Buddha gave extensive teachings on the beneficial effects of refuge to a group of disciples. There were so many benefits that some of the monks in attendance were a little disbelieving. Could that much benefit really exist? If there is that much benefit in merely taking refuge, they thought, then attaining enlightenment must not be too difficult. And in that case, perhaps the Buddha was exaggerating. The Buddha immediately perceived their thoughts, so he opened his mouth and showed the disciples his tongue. It was very thin, long, and red which is one of the thirty-two major marks of a buddha. In fact, his tongue could cover his whole face, and furthermore the whole universe could be seen manifested in it. The Buddha asked them, "Have you ever known anyone with this kind of tongue to lie?"

The reason for this infinite amount of benefit is that one who takes refuge has oriented his mind toward the attainment of buddhahood, the achievement of a buddha's infinite qualities. For example, the *Madhyamakavatara* mentions that if the Buddha himself gave teachings for a hundred kalpas just on the qualities of a buddha, he would still not be able to complete them. When one cultivates the mind to take refuge, he or she makes a connection to achieve enlightenment, to achieve the limitless qualities of a buddha. Thus, the benefits of taking refuge are inconceivably vast. Since it has inconceivable benefits, after taking refuge we must accumulate the vast causes to become a buddha ourselves.

When he was an ordinary being, the Buddha studied and practiced compassion and wisdom in order to completely purify his obscurations and afflicting emotions. By doing so, he exhausted his suffering and the causes of suffering, which is called "attaining buddhahood." This perfection of oneself is also known as "actualizing the dharmakaya," the ultimate form of buddhahood achieved for one's own benefit. For the benefit of sentient beings, a buddha manifests in different forms. For

those at the ordinary level, the form is called nirmanakaya, the emanation body. To inspire highly accomplished bodhisattvas to attain buddhahood, a buddha manifests as a sambhogakaya, the perfection-of-enjoyment body that exhibits all the Buddha's vast qualities.

After the Buddha attained enlightenment, he taught for forty-five years. Today, we are still able to dispel our confusion by studying and practicing what he taught. Gampopa summarized the Buddha's teachings in the first few sentences of *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*. In it he says that all phenomena can be divided into two categories: samsara and nirvana. The nature of samsara is emptiness; it is a mental projection based on confusion and is characterized by suffering. The nature of nirvana is also emptiness, but it is a mental projection based on the exhaustion and dissipation of confusion, and is characterized by peace and freedom. Those few lines have profound meaning if you reflect upon them.

Whether we experience reality as samsara or nirvana, it's a product of mind. The mind is an abstract, mysterious subject, even though it is always within us. We cannot easily reflect on it, which is why the Buddha's teachings are mostly focused on the mind. Nothing remained hidden from the Buddha. He revealed the complete nature of mind, and taught from that point of view.

We don't respect the Buddha just because he was an intelligent person; we respect him for having great compassion. The Buddha is connected to all sentient beings because of loving-kindness and compassion. When these are deeply rooted, one takes responsibility for sentient beings. That is our task, too; therefore we take refuge in the Buddha.

Dharma is the term we use for what the Buddha realized and taught so that beings could eliminate suffering and, especially, the causes of their suffering. By following these very same teachings, one day we can attain buddhahood ourselves just as the Buddha did. Dharma is the path toward enlightenment; all the perfect qualities of a buddha are Dharma. Dharma is so precious. Hearing just a single word of it gives an individual a chance to completely dispel the darkness of their ignorance because Dharma is wisdom, the remedy for ignorance. Dharma is peace, and through its practice we can experience deep peace. Buddhas and bodhisattvas cherish Dharma more than their lives

because they know their enlightenment depends on its study and practice. Every one of us who has a connection to the Dharma has a reason to feel fortunate. We should acknowledge this and take the Dharma to heart, taking care of it as we do our lives or eyes.

Dharma consists of three categories to study and contemplate, collectively called the Tripitaka or Three Baskets:

1. **Vinaya**, the teaching of physical, verbal, and mental moral conduct;
2. **Sutra**, the description of equipoise meditation and philosophy; and
3. **Abhidharma**, the teachings that lead to the actualization of critical insight.

Through the three trainings, we can obtain concrete benefit from the Dharma. These three meditation practices, which are indispensable for achieving enlightenment, are organized on the basis of the Three Baskets:

1. **Shila**, or moral ethics;
2. **Samadhi**, or meditative equipoise; and
3. **Prajña**, or special wisdom.

These three can be compared to baking bread. To prepare a loaf of bread, we start with pure ingredients and clean utensils. Then we place our full attention on the recipe, and proceed according to the instructions. When we mix and bake the ingredients properly, and the bread is finally ready, we can enjoy it and also share it with our guests. Likewise, on the spiritual path we first clean our mental “ingredients and utensils” by adopting physical and mental discipline. On that basis, we place our attention on objects of meditation as instructed by our spiritual master and relax in the virtuous, one-pointed state. With that support, special insight can arise and stabilize, like bread in an oven. Thus, these three steps can together purify all our delusions and free us from samsara, so that we are able to be of benefit to ourselves and others. This is what is called “Dharma practice.”

There are 84,000 types of mental affliction that are the root causes of samsara and suffering. The Buddha taught 84,000 different teachings so that we can remedy them. The Dharma

teachings lead one to freedom from all delusion and to full awakening. Dharma is peace, joy, and the perfect qualities of the mind. It is a method and a path to achieve the perfect and excellent achievements. Acharya Vasubhandu said:

Grounded in moral conduct,
and having heard and contemplated the teachings,
one should firmly enter the practice of meditation.

We should clearly understand what is meant by taking refuge in the Dharma. Of the Four Noble Truths, two are associated with the Dharma: the Truth of Cessation and the Truth of the Path. In particular, we are taking refuge in the Truth of Cessation, which means total peace and perfect purification of all the delusions of attachment, anger, and so forth. That state is described as being beyond contemplation, nondual, and nonconceptual. To realize that quality, we follow the Truth of the Path, also called the “Eightfold Noble Path:” right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right meditative absorption. With the support of these meditation practices, we have every opportunity to purify our obscurations and to clarify the enlightened nature; they are the antidote to all impediments.

Sangha means the supreme, excellent community. There are many communities in samsara, but the community of Dharma practitioners is supreme and excellent because this community is seeking a path to liberation from delusion, from samsara.

There are two categories of practitioners: householder and ordained, and both are based on taking refuge. The householders take one or more of the five precepts. Ordained practitioners take many more vows and are further divided into novice and fully ordained. They have a strong sense of renunciation of samsara and extreme yearning for the achievement of enlightenment, the fully awakened state.

There are two additional categories of practitioners: the unenlightened sangha and the sangha consisting of those who have attained a stage of enlightenment. Those who have achieved at least the third of the five paths that of special insight, are the real objects of refuge because they have uprooted the deluded mind that we ordinary beings still have. They no longer harbor

confusion because, due to the realization of critical insight, such thoughts have been cut off and have no place in their mind. After gaining special insight and until they achieve the tenth bhumi, they pursue the purification of all the imprints of habitual tendencies that were left over when the afflicting emotions were cut off and pursue the purification of the subtle obscurations to knowledge.

Within the unenlightened sangha, we are to respect each other and harmoniously support each other's study and practice of the precious Dharma. The sangha should be an example of inspiration for peace and joy in society instead of arguing with each other. Wherever Buddhist study and practice take place, there is great opportunity to dispel confusion and gather wisdom. With study and practice, we can develop the skills to create a place for peace and happiness both within the mind and outside ourselves.

The *Unsurpassed Tantra* explains some of the inexpressible qualities of the Three Jewels by comparing them to the most expensive diamond. First, the attributes of a commonplace precious gem are listed as:

1. Such a jewel is very precious and rare.
2. Such a jewel is stainless.
3. Such a jewel is very valuable. If the owner were to sell it, the proceeds could fulfill all his wishes.
4. Wherever such a jewel is located, it is that area's proudest possession.
5. Such a jewel is supreme over all other gems.
6. The quality of such a jewel will never change.

The same qualities are then described in terms of the Three Jewels - the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha:

1. The Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha appear rarely in samsara. Only a fortunate few are able to encounter them.
2. These three, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, are free of delusions and obscurations, both gross and subtle. Thus, their nature is completely pure. We all can purify our delusions by following their example.
3. These three objects of refuge have the ability to free us from suffering and bring happiness. When we take refuge in

them and study their qualities of wisdom and compassion, we gain every opportunity to create the causes of peace, happiness, and joy for ourselves and our surroundings.

4. Wherever the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha are situated, they become an ornament, a source of joy and happiness. As soon as one contemplates their qualities, it eases the mind.
5. Since the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha are free from all obscurations and adorned with the excellent qualities of wisdom and compassion, refuge practice surpasses any worldly possession. No matter how expensive, precious, or famous they are, worldly goods can only fulfill material wishes. The Three Jewels rank supreme because they are beyond samsara and can provide us with the ultimate enlightenment.
6. The enlightened nature of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha never changes. The absolute state of enlightenment is free of fabrication; it abides in its own nature that can never change. From that state, blessings pervade all sentient beings equally and without prejudice. Therefore, everyone has every opportunity to practice this refuge, receive its blessings of wisdom and compassion, free themselves from all suffering, and achieve enlightenment.

It is crucial to continually remind ourselves of the exceptional qualities of the Buddha, the preciousness of the Dharma teachings, and the successful practitioners of the Sangha. This will inspire us to joyfully pursue Dharma study and practice. Atisha's summary of the eight great benefits of taking refuge is mentioned in *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* as follows:

1. One becomes a Buddhist. The moment when you first go for refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha marks the time when you make a connection to enlightenment, enter the path, open a gate, and begin progressing toward buddhahood. So, take refuge from the bottom of your heart, and keep the five precepts with joy and devotion. This will make your life peaceful and joyous, and will prevent you from being drawn into the delusion of samsara. This is called being a "Buddhist practitioner."

2. Refuge becomes the basis of all the precepts and vows. All the different types of precepts that we may take (layperson, novice monk or nun, fully ordained, bodhicitta, or Vajrayana) are based on refuge. Without refuge, one cannot receive any precepts. Refuge is the foundation, and all the other precepts are built up from there, one upon another. The Buddha established this path in a very skillful, gradual way. The refuge ceremony is accompanied by just a few commitments so that we can begin to comprehend the practice; these will be described below. Once these few are well established, we may become inspired to take on more commitments, such as the five lay precepts. When one is well-trained in the first step, then next follow novice vows, and then full ordination. These are built up from the principle of restraining ourselves from confusion and negativity. These precepts consist of both physical and mental disciplines. After they are established, the bodhisattva vow, which focuses more on the discipline of benefiting others, can be added. When training in the bodhisattva path has been done well, then the Vajrayana, which consists of training in transformation from the unenlightened state to the enlightened state, can be practiced. Vajrayana practices are a special method to purify both gross and subtle obscurations through many skillful means. We engage in these methods gradually, one after another beginning with refuge. Thus, all of them are part of refuge practice.

3. Refuge exhausts all previous nonvirtuous deeds. When we have kept the refuge precepts well, it means that we have focused our life on virtuous activities. When we're in that state of virtue, the nonvirtues disappear of their own accord. If we keep our mind in the right state, the wrong state vanishes because the two cannot exist at the same time. In this way, refuge practice is a special method for purification of negative karma.

4. Refuge protects us from obstacles created by human and nonhuman beings. These obstacles are, of course, the result of our own negative thoughts and nonvirtuous actions. When our mind is suffused with wisdom and compassion, these obstacles also disappear by themselves. When we say we are free from obstacles, this does not necessarily mean that we don't encounter undesirable conditions. Rather, it means that we know how to relate to them positively. So much depends on how we handle

the situation. When we don't know how to handle things in a positive way, then anything can appear as our enemy. But if we relate to situations positively, then all appearances, obstacles and positive conditions alike, become a support for our practice. Suppose that, instead of perceiving obstacles as something negative, we could see them as an opportunity for purification and development of wisdom and compassion for all other sentient beings by thinking, "May this difficulty substitute for and purify the obstacles of all beings." When thinking this way, there is no chance for anyone, human or nonhuman, to create obstacles; they become completely powerless.

5. We accomplish all our wishes. Taking refuge in the Three Jewels reduces our suffering, and allows peace and happiness to prevail naturally even before we attain enlightenment. By studying and practicing refuge, we gain every opportunity to purify our obscurations and develop virtues. This is how we accomplish all our wishes.

6. One gathers a great amount of merit. The Buddha has limitless qualities. By meditating on them, we direct our mind toward enlightenment, develop devotion, and become inspired to do good things. There is no greater object on which to focus our meditation in order to purify our delusions. Through these meditation practices, we have a chance to gather a great amount of merit and wisdom.

7. One will not fall into the lower realms. With the support of refuge, it logically follows that we will abstain from nonvirtues and adopt virtues. In this way, we will have no fear of falling into the lower realms. Even if we should happen to fall, our mind will remain calmer and clearer than the minds of other beings there, and we will be freed from the lower realms much faster than others. We remain connected to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha and their protection is always present.

8. One attains buddhahood swiftly. Refuge practice is the essence of all other practices. Therefore, one should always emphasize this practice as it has inconceivable beneficial effects. Through this practice, one can achieve the fearless state. By studying and practicing refuge, one develops the wisdom and skill to utilize all the different types of obstacles as fuel for

enlightenment. Because all the Buddha's teachings can be comprehended within this practice, it is the ground, the path, and the fruition. Our mind is directly connected with the Buddha's mind especially during our refuge practice. That is how we can attain buddhahood quickly.

Refuge practice is the essence of all other practices. Therefore, one always should emphasize this practice. It has inconceivable beneficial effects. Through this practice, one can achieve the fearless state.

If we want to achieve true fearlessness, we have to practice refuge. There is no other method. Even if we built a palace that was surrounded by seven layers of protectors, we would still experience fear. But when we have accomplished this practice, there is no fear no matter what. It is said that the Buddha's qualities are inconceivable, likewise the qualities of the Dharma and Sangha. Because of this, when we take refuge we receive inconceivable beneficial effects beside fearlessness. Therefore, when we take refuge, we have reason to be joyful and to feel very fortunate.

During the refuge ceremony some training is suggested to us to do so that we will have a successful practice of refuge. It is crucial that we follow these trainings in order to experience the beneficial effects. The three general trainings are:

1. Make offerings of your body, speech, mind, wealth, and root virtue to train yourself in non-attachment. For example, before you eat or drink, visualize the Three Jewels and offer your meal to them by reciting the offering prayers. Then enjoy the meal as their blessing. Whenever you happen upon a beautiful forest, mountain scene, flowers, or lake, offer it with devotion to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. See them as a manifestation or reflection of the mind, and meditate on non-attachment.

2. Since you took refuge to free yourself from samsara and to achieve enlightenment, repeatedly renew your vow never to give up refuge, even at the risk of your life. Meditate on the thought, "This life is temporary and I will have to leave it one day. Meanwhile I will use it in the best way possible, in service to the Three Jewels and sentient beings."

3. Frequently reflect on the excellent qualities of the Three Jewels. Study and practice every day to learn more about them.

The three specific trainings are:

1. Taking refuge in the Buddha demonstrates that we have the desire to attain buddhahood, the full cessation of suffering and its cause. Therefore, never take refuge in unenlightened beings.

2. Taking refuge in the Dharma demonstrates that we wish for peace in both the relative and absolute states, for the total cessation of all the afflicting emotions. Therefore, abstain from harming any sentient being. Develop vigilance concerning the mental afflictions, as these are the direct cause of violence toward oneself and others. Maintain non-violence on the basis of wisdom and compassion.

3. Taking refuge in the Sangha demonstrates that we want to follow the path of right view. Therefore, don't be influenced by companions who hold wrong views. Basically, there are two right views to keep in mind:

- a) **An incisive understanding of causality.** Everything that functions in the world, both suffering and happiness, depends on the distinct causes we create both individually and collectively. All phenomena are products of causes and conditions and nothing stands or functions without them.
- b) **The ultimate view.** Since everything is in a state of interdependent causality, the very nature of all phenomena is emptiness and selflessness; emptiness itself constitutes all phenomena in both samsara and nirvana. Thus, in their essence, emptiness and phenomena are of an inseparable nature.

Understanding these two natures is called "right view."

The three trainings similar to refuge are:

1. Having taken refuge in the Buddha, respect any form or symbol of the Buddha, even pieces of a broken statue. This is a method of mindful awareness that continually reminds us of enlightenment.

2. Having taken refuge in the Dharma, respect any form of the precious texts that contain the meaning of the Dharma, even a scrap with a single word printed. Develop devotion for, and aspire to achieve, the realization of total peace.

3. Having taken refuge in the Sangha, respect the belongings, even a small shred of their clothing, of the sangha members who keep their precepts, study, and meditate. Develop devotion for and admire their efforts at reducing the cause of samsara and advancing the cause of enlightenment.

One can become enlightened solely through the practice of refuge. Milarepa is one of the most inspiring examples of the transformative power of refuge practice. One day a group of disciples approached Milarepa to ask for teachings. He consented and spoke to them of refuge and its beneficial effects. The disciples asked, "Are these your own refuge and meditation practices?" Milarepa replied, "Yes, I gained great comfort from these practices. You, too, without doubt or hesitation, should take refuge in the lama and the Three Jewels." He then sang this song about refuge and how to remind ourselves of Dharma practice:

I prostrate to the saints and gurus.

The Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha -

these three are the outer refuge.

I gained great comfort from them.

It would be good if you also took refuge in them.

The guru, yidam, and dakini -

these three are the inner refuge.

I gained great comfort from them.

It would be good if you also took refuge in them.

Chakras, pranas, and bindus -

these three are the secret refuge.

I gained great comfort from them.

It would be good if you also took refuge in them.

Appearance, emptiness, and inseparability -

these three are the ultimate refuge.

I gained great comfort from them.

It would be good if you also took refuge in them.

If you don't take refuge in what protects you from suffering

then the rain of day and night will fall onto

the rotten house of the illusory body,

the passing months and years will torture and destroy

the rotten house of this illusory body.

So now is the time to prepare for a joyous death.

Death moves like the sun in the sky.

No matter how far you go,

death comes closer.

I haven't seen anyone escape by running away.

When we see the death of a virtuous one,

that death is a master reminding us of virtue.

We should see the joy in this moment.

When we see the death of a nonvirtuous one,

that death is a master reminding us of sin.

We should see then what remorse is.

When we see the death of a rich person,

that death is a master showing how wealth is shared.

We should see then what generosity is.

When we see the death of an old person,

that death is a master showing life's impermanence.

We should see then how much sadness there is.

When we see the death of a youth,

that death is a master showing life's uncertainty.

We should see then just how much diligence we should have.

Generally, we feel joy and happiness in having parents -

what could we do with the suffering of the orphan?

The warm and smooth inner skin of suede -
how could we know what it's like if we haven't worn it?

The misery dispelled by the farmer's harvest -
how could we profit if we don't work?

The horse is swift -
how could we imagine it if we haven't ridden?

The happiness of practitioner's lives -
how could we know about that if we don't practice the
Dharma?

We should practice generosity by sharing our provisions.
Practice meditation by reducing sleep.
Recollect the suffering of the lower realms.
Practice the holy Dharma by contemplating suffering.

Thus Milarepa sang this song. His disciples were so deeply moved and inspired that they made a commitment to practice refuge for the rest of their lives.

Sadhana Commentary

Visualization

*My dwelling place is inseparable from the Akanishtha buddhafield.
In the space in front of me is a lion throne on which are a lotus
and sun and moon disk seats, in the center of which sits my
kind root lama in the form of Vajradhara with the seven
characteristics. Blue in color, two arms, holding a vajra and bell
crossed at the heart, he sits gracefully in the vajra posture,
adorned by silks and various jewel ornaments and surrounded
by the lineage lamas*

- a) The jeweled *throne* symbolizes all the perfect qualities of an enlightened being.
- b) The *lion* symbolizes fearlessness. Buddhahood is the perfect purification of samsara and the perfection of bodhicitta so, in that state, there is nothing at all to fear.
- c) The *lotus* on the lion throne symbolizes purity.
- d) The *sun disk* on top of the lotus symbolizes clarity of the Buddha's mind. At the moment of sunrise, all darkness is dispelled; in the same way, at the moment we have undefiled wisdom, all confusion is dispelled. Such a mind is pristine, completely unstained like a lotus rising above the mud.
- e) The *moon disk* on top of the sun disk symbolizes the coolness of wisdom. When we suddenly feel the cool of a shade tree in hot weather, we naturally feel relaxed and comfortable. The symbolic meaning here is of the coolness of synchronized wisdom and compassion, free from the heat of suffering.
- f) Seated on these is the kind *root lama* in the form of Vajradhara. This is a very skillful means of practice. We don't visualize the guru as having an ordinary body, but rather, Vajradhara appears as the dharmakaya, the Buddha's wisdom form, and the absolute state of enlightenment. Seeing this form, we are inspired to devotion, which is the key to revealing the dharmakaya within our own mind.
- g) He is *blue* in color. Blue symbolizes his limitless great attributes of wisdom, compassion, qualities, and activities. They are as

infinite as the blue sky, fresh and clear after a rainfall when there are no clouds or dust to obscure its vastness.

h) He is holding a *vajra and bell*. Here, the vajra symbolizes method or compassion. The bell symbolizes wisdom or emptiness. Holding them crossed at the heart symbolizes their inseparable nature, the nonduality of wisdom and compassion. The meaning is that Vajradhara is the embodiment of both.

i) He exhibits the *seven characteristics*. These are:

1. The dharmakaya pervades all phenomena.
2. It is the unification of supreme all-pervading emptiness and Nonobjectified great compassion.
3. It is great bliss, completely free from all suffering.
4. It is inherently nonexistent and free from elaboration in its mode of abiding.
5. It is the great embodiment of full compassion, unchanging from coemergent wisdom.
6. It never varies from all the qualities described above and is free from coming, going, increasing, or decreasing.
7. It is unceasing and not “just nothing” but is, instead, the embodiment of the ultimate great bliss.

j) He is seated gracefully in the lotus, or *vajra posture*, which means that he abides neither in samsara nor nirvana, but nonetheless benefits sentient beings without obstruction. This posture can also represent the nonduality of the two truths, relative and ultimate.

k) He is adorned by *silks and various jewel ornaments*. These attributes indicate the sambhogakaya form, which expresses the Buddha’s qualities to the great bodhisattvas in order to inspire them to achieve complete buddhahood.

l) He is surrounded by all the *lineage lamas*. At the top is the primordial Vajradhara, with the same characteristics as the root guru. Then come Tilopa, Naropa, Marpa, Milarepa, Gampopa, Phagmo Drupa, and Jigten Sumgön, and all the rest of the lineage that manifested until the present time. They comprise the three combined lineages:

1. In the center is the Blessing Meditation Lineage,

the source of all the Vajrayana blessings, which goes successively from Vajradhara to Tilopa, Naropa, Marpa Milarepa, and Gampopa.

2. On Vajradhara’s right is the Profound View Lineage, the “view” being that of the madhyamaka or mahamudra. It begins with Buddha Shakyamuni and comes down through Manjushri, Nagarjuna, Atisha, and Gampopa.
3. On Vajradhara’s left is the Vast Action Lineage, the “action” being the combined practices of relative and absolute bodhicitta. It begins with Buddha Shakyamuni, and comes down to us through Maitreya, Asanga, Vasubhandu, Atisha, and Gampopa.

These three were combined together and transmitted by Gampopa to Phagmo Drupa, Jigten Sumgön, and so forth. That is why Gampopa is called the “Life Tree of the Buddha’s Teachings.” A life tree is complete in all its branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits, thus this symbolism indicates that Gampopa holds the complete form of the Buddhas’ teaching. Sometimes Gampopa is also called the “Life Pole of the Teachings.” When a Buddhist statue is consecrated, the life pole is placed in the center, and is encased in mantras that symbolize the life force of the Buddha. Then it is no longer just a statue, but is regarded as having the presence of the complete blessing and energy of perfect enlightenment.

Here, the root and lineage lamas, yidams, viras, dakinis, and Dharma protectors are the inner refuge. According to the Vajrayana system, the root and lineage lamas are the Buddha, the yidam is the Dharma, and the dakas, dakinis, and Dharma protectors are the sangha.

In front of the lion throne is the yidam Chakrasamvara, the male and female aspects in union, whose manifestation is simultaneously appearance and emptiness.

Chakrasamvara is mentioned here as one example of a yidam. If you are familiar with others, you can place them around Chakrasamvara. In tantra practice, the male and female in union expresses the full purification of the duality of attachment.

Through that, one realizes the inseparability of the appearance and emptiness of all phenomena.

At the right side of the throne are the buddhas of the three times, possessing the major and minor marks, together with the thousand buddhas of this fortunate eon.

Right side refers to Vajradhara's right. Buddha Shakyamuni, the historical Buddha, is in the center surrounded by all the buddhas of the past, present, and future, including the 1,000 buddhas of this eon.

Behind the throne is Prajñāparamita proclaiming the provisional Dharma, the definitive Dharma and the teachings of the three yanās.

Behind the center branch are the *prajñāparamita* texts together with all the teachings of the three yanās. These are usually shown in book form, but we can also visualize them in the form of a female deity named Prajñāparamita, who is golden or white in color, in sambhogakaya form, with one face and two or four hands. Meditate that the texts are giving off the sound of bodhicitta, emptiness, and wisdom. The *three yanās* are the Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana, and encompassed in all those texts are the complete teachings of the Buddha.

To the left of the throne is the assembly of the compassionate bodhisattvas, completely surrounded by the sanghas of the three yanās.

The eight *compassionate bodhisattvas* are: Manjuśri, Vajrapāni, Avalokiteśvara, Kṣitigarbha, Sarvanivāraṇaviṣkambhin, Ākaśagarbha, Maitreya, and Samantabhadra. They are surrounded by enlightened beings from all three yanās such as Shariputra, Maudgalyayana, the other arhats, pratyekabuddhas, and shravakas. These are exemplars of the successful Dharma practitioners who are our guides toward enlightenment. They are on Vajradhara's left side.

Around the throne are the Dharma protectors, an ocean of guardians gathered like clouds.

Here, we usually visualize four-armed Mahakala, Achi Chökyi Drolma, and Tashi Tseringma. These three are unquestionable Dharma protectors, buddhas and bodhisattvas manifesting to protect practitioners and dispel obstacles.

This is the basic visualization to hold while doing prostrations. We visualize this in the space above and in front of ourselves. We should meditate that these figures are all in the enlightened state, the embodiment of wisdom and compassion, inseparable appearance and emptiness. They are insubstantial, like rainbows or reflections in a lake. They are all gazing with wisdom and compassion down toward sentient beings in order to dispel their delusion and suffering. As we take refuge, we visualize that all sentient beings take refuge along with us. Taking refuge in this way is the direct cause of freedom from samsara and the achievement of enlightenment.

Of course, it's not easy to visualize like this at first. We are not accustomed to it. But as you practice, it will slowly come. When I first did visualization, I found it to be very difficult. But as we keep doing it, it gets easier. There was one monk who would take hours to put all these figures in place. After several years, he could do the visualization without effort, but at first, he found it nearly impossible. Looking at a picture of the refuge tree can help establish a good visualization, but it is important to see these figures as vibrant and alive, and not as statues or pictures.

Prayers

Next are two short prayers that we recite three times each:

*Buddha, Dharma, sangha, yidam and Dharma protectors:
to the supreme objects of refuge,
for protection from the frightful suffering of samsara
we, all migrants, go for refuge until enlightenment is attained.*

With practice, you will come to the point where you have only to think of these enlightened beings, so full of compassion and wisdom, and they are there! This gives you great support and a feeling of being protected. Even if you are alone, if you do this visualization, it can give you the feeling of being surrounded by these enlightened beings.

*I rejoice when all sentient beings are happy,
free from suffering, and swiftly attain ultimate buddhahood.
For this purpose, from now until I achieve enlightenment,
I will follow the path of supreme definitive meaning.*

This second prayer is a contemplation on love, compassion, and bodhicitta. Motivation is very important in this practice, so we cultivate bodhicitta by reciting this prayer.

It's said that a lot of negative karma is purified through this practice. If we don't purify such karma in this life, it could cause us to be reborn in a hell realm or as a hungry spirit. But by engaging in these virtuous activities, negative karma ripen in this life and are purified. Thus, when problems arise, we should view them as purification. Instead of reacting to them as obstacles, rejoice that they are manifesting as a sign of purification. These techniques are described in the *Diamond Sutra*.

When you read profound teachings or when you study and practice extensively, sometimes a sudden obstacle or sickness will arise; these are signs of purification. Instead of feeling that Dharma caused the problem, we should know how to take such difficulties onto the spiritual path by thinking, "May this be a sign of purification. May this be a special method to purify all the negative karmas I have created up until now. May this suffering suffice to purify the suffering of all other sentient beings."

If you regard an obstacle as an obstacle, then it remains a great obstruction. Holding such a view can prevent you from practicing the Dharma. When you know how to regard an obstacle as purification, then it becomes a cause for rejoicing and is very effective for developing strength of mind. No matter what you experience, bring it onto the path without becoming distracted by attachment or aversion.

Refuge Prayers with Prostrations

In this section of the practice, we recite the six-line refuge prayer while performing prostrations. It is important to understand the meaning of what you are chanting. While you are contemplating the meaning, you can chant either in Tibetan or English. Once you are fully familiar with the meaning, you can say it freely. For centuries, this prayer has been said by thousands of great masters as well as ordinary practitioners, so it contains a spiritual

energy or blessing. It's best to memorize this prayer so you can concentrate on the visualization while you do prostrations.

**DRIN CHEN TSA WA DANG GYÜ PAR CHE PE
PEL DEN LA MA DAM PA NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O/**
We take refuge in the glorious, holy, kind root and lineage lamas.

**YI DAM KYIL KHOR GYI LHA TSOG
NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O/**
We take refuge in the assembled deities of the mandalas of the yidams.

SANG GYE CHOM DEN DE NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O/
We take refuge in the exalted buddhas.

DAM PE CHÖ NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O/
We take refuge in the perfect Dharma.

PHAG PE GEN DÜN NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O/
We take refuge in the noble sanghas.

**PA WO KHAN DRO CHÖ KYONG SUNG ME TSOG YE SHE
KYI CHEN DANG DEN PA NAM LA KYAB SU CHI'O//**
*We take refuge in the viras, dakinis, and Dharma guardians,
possessors of the eye of wisdom.*

"We" refers to all sentient beings. We are not taking refuge for ourselves alone, but for all beings without exception. Everyone is included, so it is very beneficial to meditate that everyone is taking refuge along with you.

Some texts mention dividing sentient beings into three categories. Your parents, family, relatives, and friends are to the right and left. Neutral sentient beings are behind you. Enemies are placed in front of you because they are more important than the others. Why? Even though your father and mother are very kind to you, they generally do not teach you how to achieve enlightenment. On the other hand, enemies will expose your faults and teach you how to tolerate criticism and negative actions. Your relatives and friends only help hide your faults when you do not behave well, saying, "My child is wonderful." By practicing with your enemies, you can recognize your mistakes and weaknesses, and gain an opportunity to improve yourself. This is a very important factor of spiritual development. Instead of having resentment or anger, think, "How wonderful this

difficult person has been. He helped me develop my strength of mind. He helped me recognize my errors. This enemy is my best teacher and I am grateful to him.”

With these thoughts, bring everyone into your heart and go for refuge, do prostrations before the visualized beings in front of and above you. If you find it difficult to visualize in this detailed manner, then go for refuge and visualize that you are prostrating together with all sentient beings in a nonspecific manner. During this practice, it is important to look at your mind, recognize your weaknesses, and purify them.

As you say each line of the prayer, focus on the corresponding six images:

1. When taking refuge in the *root and lineage lamas*, focus on the central Vajradhara and the lineage masters, as best you can. If you have other enlightened gurus, you can include them here with the lineage masters. Meditate on their kindness as the source of all the precious teachings.

Some people see this as worshiping a guru and think this practice is a little strange. However, we are doing the prostrations and cultivating devotion in order to connect our mind with their state, the state of enlightenment. When we develop our mind in this direction, we are hoping to attain that state ourselves. The principal purpose of going for refuge and doing prostrations is to purify our arrogance and humble ourselves. This develops us into proper vessels that can contain the undefiled ambrosia of the Dharma teachings.

Visualizing Vajradhara as your root lama is a skillful method, particularly in these times. As beginning practitioners, our minds are not well established in the Dharma. Some of the teachers we encounter are not as qualified as they might be. For both these reasons, visualizing Vajradhara as your root lama is both powerful and safe. An ordinary lama may not have completely dispelled his confusion; therefore you cannot dispel your own confusion by following him. In fact, perhaps even more confusion may arise when you see the lama making mistakes; you might get upset and your devotion can be destroyed. By holding Vajradhara as your root lama, you can still be grateful for the good instructions that you receive from the lama, but keep Vajradhara as your root lama. Of course, if you do encounter a

great teacher with excellent qualities, rejoice and see them in the form of Vajradhara as well. But until then, continue to visualize Vajradhara as your root lama. Vajradhara was very skillfully established as a root lama by the great teachers of the past who knew that conditions would degenerate.

2. *Mandala* means one complete circle of all the *yidams*, who are all manifestations of the Buddha. When taking refuge in the yidams, you can visualize whichever yidams you like in addition to Chakrasamvara. In thangkas and pictures, the yidams are usually represented by Chakrasamvara alone. If you wish, you can visualize other highest yoga tantra yidam deities such as Guhyasamaja, Hayagriva, Mahamaya, Yamantaka, Kalachakra, or Vajrayogini also. Or you can meditate that Chakrasamvara is the embodiment of all the hundreds of yidam deities.

Many of the yidam deities appear in a wrathful form or as a male and female in union. It is critical to have a correct understanding of this. Throughout the Vajrayana, but especially in the highest yoga tantra, we encounter sambhogakaya forms that manifest from the dharmakaya. Many people misunderstood these images in the past, and some confusion still remains. Without exception, these are all expressions of the purification of the five poisons that cause samsara: ignorance, attachment, aversion, pride, and jealousy.

From beginning to end, the Buddha's teachings are a remedy for confusion and suffering. We train the mind gradually until the subtle and gross obscurations are fully purified. Only then will we experience the nonduality of appearance and emptiness - the ultimate reality where there is nothing to achieve and nothing to abandon. Until that time, we must always be cautious not to give up any moral conduct in the name of Dharma. This way, all Buddhist practitioners can come together without disagreement.

3. When taking refuge in the Buddhas, meditate on all the *exalted buddhas* of the three times and in the ten directions, the thousand buddhas of this fortunate eon.

4. When taking refuge in the *perfect Dharma*, meditate on all the Dharma teachings. There are three categories of teachings, called the Tripitaka: the Vinaya, Sutra, and Abhidharma, which

respectively purify the three basic types of afflicting emotions. Vinaya is the teaching that dispels desire, the Sutras dispel anger and hatred, and Abhidharma dispels ignorance. All the teachings are encompassed by emptiness, dependent arising, or dependent origination. The afflicting emotions are all based in ignorance. When ignorance is eliminated by experiencing emptiness, all the other afflictions are dispelled as well.

5. When taking refuge in the *noble sanghas*, meditate on the great, accomplished practitioners who are an example to us - the bodhisattvas, pratyekabuddhas, and shravakas. These are the noble or supreme ones (*phag-pa* in Tibetan, *arya* in Sanskrit), the undefiled beings who are free from samsara.

6. Taking refuge in the *viras, dakinis and Dharma guardians* is found more in the tantra system than in other forms of Buddhism. Dakas, or pawo in Tibetan, are warriors who battle the mental afflictions. They develop the great compassion that nurtures one and all with love and compassion; there are no obstructors or evil beings that are beyond such compassion. These are our real heroes. Dakinis, or *khandro* in Tibetan, appear in a female form, signifying one who has experienced the wisdom of emptiness. The viras and dakinis are essentially the male and female form of the sangha. There are many different types of Dharma guardians. Some of them are not free from samsara, so we don't take refuge in them even if they have great power. We need to take refuge in those who are free of samsara, so that's why the text specifically mentions *possessors of the eye of wisdom*.

While you say this prayer and hold this visualization, do full prostrations. First, we join our hands together with the thumbs tucked inside so they form a jewel or flower bud. We touch them to our forehead, throat, and heart. Then we go down on our hands, then to our knees, and stretch all the way out on the floor. Then we stand up again, and repeat this many times. Spiritual masters of the past have passed down the following guidance regarding prostrations:

1. When you join your two hands like a blossoming flower and place them at the crown of your head, meditate that you are prostrating to the body of all the buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Contemplate, "May I and all sentient beings achieve a buddha's body adorned with the major and minor marks." This provides an opportunity to purify the three unwholesome acts of the body: taking life, taking objects that were not given, and sexual misconduct.

2. When your joined hands are placed at the throat, meditate that you are prostrating to the sixty aspects of the melodious speech of the buddhas and bodhisattvas. Contemplate, "May I and all sentient beings actualize the sixty aspects of melodious speech." This provides an opportunity to purify the unwholesome deeds of speech: lies, divisive speech, harsh speech, and idle talk.

3. When your joined hands are placed at the heart level, meditate that you are prostrating to the omniscient wisdom of all the buddhas and bodhisattvas. Contemplate, "May I and all sentient beings actualize all the excellent qualities of the buddhas and bodhisattvas." This provides an opportunity to purify the unwholesome deeds of the mind: coveting, malice, and holding wrong views.

4. When your right hand is placed on the ground, meditate, "As the Buddha touched his right hand to the ground when he triumphed in victory over the millions of maras and demons, so may I and all sentient beings triumph over the four demons, subdue them, and be able to practice Dharma, especially bodhicitta."

5. When your left hand is placed on the ground, meditate, "As the Buddha gathered sentient beings through the four skillful means of gathering and benefited them, so may I benefit all sentient beings through the four skillful means of gathering."

6. When your right knee is placed on the ground, meditate, "As the Buddha released sentient beings from the karmic appearance of the six realms, so may I also separate all sentient beings from their samsaric suffering."

7. When your left knee is placed on the ground, meditate, "As the Buddha establishes all sentient beings in the thirty-seven branches of enlightenment, so may I establish all sentient beings into that state."

8. When your forehead is placed on the ground, meditate, “As the Buddha achieved the *urna* signifying the complete achievement of a buddha’s qualities, so may I and all sentient beings achieve this supreme quality.”

9. When your whole body is placed on the ground with your two hands outstretched, meditate, “As the Buddha achieved the *ushnisha* signifying the perfection of the practice of bodhicitta, so may I and all sentient beings achieve this sublime quality.”

10. When you stand up again, meditate, “As the Buddha establishes sentient beings into the enlightened state, so may I lead all sentient beings to the states free from suffering.”

Doing even one prostration with this mental state of meditation bears infinite benefits. A sutra says, “There is as much merit here as there are dust particles between the surface and the lowest depths, as many particles as exist, enough merit to be reborn as a universal monarch. In the end, one will achieve nirvana. Such merit cannot be found anywhere else in the world.”

Prostrating with our body, speech, and mind purifies physical, verbal, and mental obscurations, which relate to the three poisons of desire, hatred, and ignorance. By purifying these three obscurations, we create the causes to achieve the nirmanakaya, sambhogakaya, and dharmakaya.

Doing a full prostration is called “touching the five branches of the body to the ground,” with the five branches being the head, two hands and two knees. This is said to purify the five afflicting emotions, which are the three mentioned above plus pride and jealousy. When we have pride, we won’t prostrate to others, doing prostrations reduces our pride. When we rejoice in the enlightened beings’ excellent qualities, we purify jealousy. When all five afflictions are purified, the cause to achieve the five wisdoms is created.

We prostrate 111,111 times to build strength in the mind. We may think, “100,000 prostrations, oh, that’s so much!” But if we have the strength to do them, we won’t find the more advanced practices to be so difficult. When you are very strong, even if you face difficult problems in your practice, you will be able to persist. Prostrations are similar to the hardships that Milarepa went through with Marpa’s instruction. Marpa was testing

Milarepa to see if he really had enough strength in his mind to actualize the teachings. Finally, when Milarepa proved that he did have great strength, Marpa gave him all the teachings and without disregarding any of them, Milarepa attained the result and became a great example to us. We should not think of 111,111 as the maximum number of prostrations. 111,111 is a very limited number; it’s the minimum we should do. We have to continue until we attain complete buddhahood, no matter what the number.

The prostrations really build up your strength, mental as well as physical. When we have both physical strength and mental clarity, we can practice for a long time without feeling tired. Although it is great physical purification, we should not do this practice just as exercise. When we do this with compassion, wisdom, and devotion for the enlightened beings it creates a sense of purification. Other exercises, such as jogging, accomplish a physical purpose, but don’t have any spiritual element. With prostrations, we find both together.

Before I went into three year retreat, I studied Buddhist philosophy for many years. Being in the hot weather of India without very good food, I was quite sick. I had tuberculosis and a problem with my liver. It was difficult for me to eat; if I had a plate of rice with some vegetables, it took me an hour to eat it. I was taking a lot of medicine, and getting many injections. It was in that condition that I began a three-year retreat. When I started with the prostrations, I was a little worried that my health would get worse. During that time the food was not very good either. I only had black tea and some tsampa. When I did prostrations, the pain in my chest was intense. The first practice session in the morning was fine, the second session was not too bad, but the third session was very difficult, and the fourth session was even worse. In the afternoon, my chest felt like it was full of piercing needles. Nonetheless, I just keep going and it helped so much. My health improved, and ever since then I have had a good appetite. There are such great blessings of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha in this practice.

Usually, our mind is confused, agitated, and afflicted; at times, we don’t know what to do. If we do prostrations well, it really calms this down because the energies of the body flow properly. The more we build strength through this kind of meditation

practice, the more profound and stable our mind will be and in this way, we can eventually attain enlightenment.

Prostrations and refuge practice are also good for dealing with the ego and cultivating a feeling of humility. Think, “I’m a samsaric being, not enlightened, and in a state of suffering. I want to be free from that state, so I have to rely on the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.” This makes our ego diminish. But at the same time, a big ego may develop on the other side, thinking, “Oh, I did so many prostrations. I am somebody special now.” When you press on the ego here, it comes out over there! We have to be very careful and watchful.

When you are starting out, just do twenty-one prostrations every day and gradually increase from there. If you’re working or going to school, doing 100 prostrations every morning is very good. When you are not used to it, it seems overwhelming, but once you are used to it, it doesn’t take much time.

When you want to end the session, sit down, re-establish your visualization clearly, and say the refuge prayer three more times. While you are doing the prostrations, counting the numbers, and reciting the prayer, the visualization may not be so clear. So, it is good to re-establish it at the end and say the refuge prayer meaningfully three times.

Dissolution

To dissolve the visualization, start with the Dharma guardians at the base. They all dissolve into Mahakala, who melts into light and then dissolves into the yidam Chakrasamvara. The sangha melts into light and dissolves into the Dharma teachings behind Vajradhara. The Dharma melts into light, and dissolves into the buddhas on Vajradhara’s right. The buddhas melt into light and dissolve into the yidam. Then, the yidam melts into light, which dissolves into the Vajradhara at the top of the lineage masters. That Vajradhara dissolves into Tilopa, Naropa, Marpa, Milarepa, Gampopa, Phagmo Drupa and Jigten Sumgön. Lord Jigten Sumgön and the rest of the lineage dissolve into the central Vajradhara, the root lama.

Then meditate that the central Vajradhara is the embodiment of all the refuges, all the buddhas’ compassion, wisdom, and qualities. He represents inseparable appearance and emptiness,

like the all-pervading, pure nature of space. With your complete confidence and devotion, Vajradhara then melts into light and dissolves into the top of your head. At that moment, meditate that you receive all the blessings; they permeate your body, speech, and mind. All the obscurations of your body, speech, and mind are purified and you attain the state of Vajradhara. Then meditate that you dissolve into emptiness. Relax and meditate in the uncontrived state that is free from all boundaries.

In that state, you embody the nature of refuge and are getting a small taste of what it means to be enlightened. Over time, perfect this through continual habituation. As you progress, you will see for yourself how refuge practice is the way to become free from delusion and to experience joy and happiness. At that point, you will think, “I am so fortunate to have met this path. What great positive karma I must have created! I will definitely take full advantage of this meditation.” Rejoice in this way and then say dedication prayers as explained in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 3
**Purifying Negative Actions and Downfalls.
Meditation and Recitation of Vajrasattva**



The stain of bad deeds and obscurations
is like mud covering a jewel.
Even though the alaya is pure, it cannot manifest the qualities.
The confession of four powers is essential.
This is my heart's advice.

by Drigung Dharmaradza
The Jewel Treasury of Advice



Introduction

Generally speaking, virtuous and nonvirtuous acts depend upon the mind. Mind is the master, and the body and speech are the servants. Driven by the power of afflicting emotions, controlled by desire, hatred, and so forth, we create nonvirtuous acts such as the five heinous karmas, the five close karmas, the ten nonvirtues, and the breaking of vows and samayas. It is nonvirtuous if we do these things ourselves, if we ask others to do them for us, or if we rejoice when these deeds are done by others. When the mind is under the control of desire, hatred, and so forth, we continue to create nonvirtue even if we hear, study, and practice the precious Dharma. These nonvirtues bring us suffering and undesirable conditions.

Nonvirtues can be created when we conquer our enemies, protect our relatives and friends, defend our own bodies, and accumulate wealth. We leave all these things behind when we face death, but nonvirtues will follow us like a shadow, life after life, and become a source of suffering. Therefore, it is wise to purify all the nonvirtues we created before their results arise.

Applying the four powers can be very effective purification. The four powers are remorse, antidote, resolve, and reliance. In the Vajrayana, Vajrasattva meditation is a special practice done for the purification of nonvirtues. With confidence and without hesitation, we can enter into the Vajrasattva practice. We must have sincere remorse for evil deeds, confess them, and resolve not to create any more negative karma even at the risk of our lives. Then we take refuge, cultivate the mind of enlightenment, recite the mantra and meditate on emptiness as the antidote and reliance.

Sadhana**Visualization**

CHI WOR PE KAR DA TENG HUNG YIG LE/
 DOR JE'I TE WAR HUNG TSEN Ö THRÖ PE/
 DRO DRUG DRIB JANG GYEL CHÖ TSUR DÜ PA/
 SA BÖN LA THIM YONG SU GYUR PA LE/
 TSA WE LA MA DOR JE SEM PA KAR/
 DOR JE DRIL CHE KYANG KUM GYING WE TSÜL/
 RIN CHEN GYEN CHANG CHA LUG YONG SU DZOG/
 THUG KE Ö THRÖ YE SHE SEM PA DRANG/
 DZA HUNG BAM HO NYI SU ME PAR GYUR//

Empowerment

WANG GI LHAR
 OM SARVA TATHAGATA ABHISHINTSA TU MAM
 SHE SÖL WA TAB PE WANG GI LHA NAM KYI/
 OM SARVA TATHAGATA ABHISHEKATA
 SAMAYA SHRI YE HUNG/
 WANG KUR KU GANG CHU YI LHAG MA LE/
 RIG NGE U GYEN WANG LHA'ANG DOR SEM THIM//

Offering

OM BAZRA SATVA SAPARIVARA ...
 ARGHAM / PADYAM / PUSHPAM / DHUPAM / ALOKAM /
 GHANDE / NEVIDYE / SHAPTA ... PRATITSHA SVAHA/

Praise

DOR JE SEM PA SEM PA CHE/
 DOR JE DE ZHIN SHEG PA KÜN/
 DOR JE DANG PO KÜN TU ZANG/
 CHAG TSEL CHAG NA DOR JE LA'O//

Sadhana**Visualization**

Above the crown of my head is a white lotus with a moon disk.
 On the moon disk is the syllable HUNG which transforms
 into a vajra, marked by a HUNG in its center. Light radiates
 from this HUNG, purifying the obscurations of the six types
 of beings and making offerings to the conquerors. The light
 returns and dissolves into the seed syllable. The vajra with the
 HUNG then transforms into Vajrasattva who is my root lama.
 Vajrasattva is white in color and holds a vajra and bell. He sits
 gracefully in the half lotus posture. He wears jewel ornaments
 and his garments are perfectly complete. Light radiates from
 the heart and invites the wisdom beings together with the five
 empowerment buddhas. Vajrasattva and the wisdom beings
 become inseparable through reciting DZA HUNG BAM HO.

Empowerment

The empowerment deities are requested to perform the
 empowerment ceremony:
OM SARVA TATHAGATA ABHISHINTSA TU MAM.

They reply:

**OM SARVA TATHAGATA ABHISHEKATA SAMAYA SHRI
 YE HUNG** and bestow empowerment. By water from a vase
 Vajrasattva's body is filled. The overflowing water transforms
 into the lords of the five families, adorning Vajrasattva's head.
 The empowerment deities dissolve into Vajrasattva.

Offering

OM BAZRA SATVA SAPARIVARA ...
 ARGHAM / PADYAM / PUSHPAM / DHUPAM / ALOKAM /
 GHANDE / NEVIDYE / SHAPTA ... PRATITSHA SVAHA/

Praise

Vajrasattva, Mahasattva, great courageous mind,
 vajra embodiment of all the tathagatas,
 Samantabhadra, primordial vajra,
 I prostrate to you, Holder of the Vajra.

Visualization during Mantra Recitation

DOR SEM THUG KAR DA TENG DOR JE YI/
 TE WAR HUNG THAR YIG GYE KOR WA LE/
 Ö THRÖ DRO WE DRIB PA KÜN JANG NE/
 DOR JE DZIN PE SA LA RAB KÖ CHING/
 Ö ZER DE DAG TSUR DÜ NGAG THRENG DANG/
 SA BÖN LA THIM DE LE DÜ TSI'GYÜN/
 ZHAB KYI THE BONG LE THÖN DAG NYI KYI/
 TSANG BUG NE ZHUG DIG DRIB NYE TUNG TSOG/
 OG GOR DÜ KHU TAR BAB DÜ TSI'GYÜN/
 ME TEN RANG LÜ SHEL TAR DAG PAR GYUR//

The 100 Syllable Mantra

OM BAZRA SATVA SAMAYAM/ ANU PALAYA/
 BAZRA SATVA TVENOPA/ TISHTA DRIDO ME BHAVA/
 SUTO SHYO ME BHAVA/ SUPO SHYO ME BHAVA/
 ANU RAKTO ME BHAVA/ SARVA SIDDHIM ME
 PRAYATSHA/ SARVA KARMA SU TSA ME/
 TSITTAM SHREYA KURU HUNG/ HAHA HAHA HO/
 BHAGAVAN SARVA TATHAGATA BAZRA MAME
 MUN TSA/ BAZRI BHAVA/ MAHA SAMAYA SATVA A//

*repeat many times***Dissolution Stage**

DAG SOG MONG PE DAM LE GEL GYUR PE/
 GÖN PÖ KYOB SHIG TSO WO DOR JE DZIN/
 DRO WE TSO WÖ DAG GI KYAB DZÖ CHIG//
 DE KE SÖL WE DOR SEM GYE TSÜL GYI/
 KHYÖ KYI DIG DRIB DAG GO ZHE SUNG TE/
 DAG LA THIM PE DRIB PA JANG WAR GYUR//

*I then become Vajrasattva, appearance and emptiness inseparable.
 Rest in the mind, as it is.*

Visualization during Mantra Recitation

At Vajrasattva's heart level is a vajra on a moon disk. At the center of the vajra is a HUNG syllable surrounded by the 100-syllable mantra. The radiating light from the rotating mantra completely purifies all the obscurations of beings and they become fully established in the vajra state. The light rays return and dissolve into the mantra and seed syllable. The stream of nectar produced from these syllables flows through the right great toe of Vajrasattva. It enters the crown of my head. All the accumulated negative actions, obscurations, faults, and downfalls flows down to the lower orifices leaving in the form of a smoky liquid. A stream of stainless ambrosia then fills up my body and it becomes pure as crystal.

The 100 Syllable Mantra

OM BAZRA SATVA SAMAYAM/ ANU PALAYA/
 BAZRA SATVA TVENOPA/ TISHTA DRIDO ME BHAVA/
 SUTO SHYO ME BHAVA/ SUPO SHYO ME BHAVA/
 ANU RAKTO ME BHAVA/ SARVA SIDDHIM ME
 PRAYATSHA/ SARVA KARMA SU TSA ME/
 TSITTAM SHREYA KURU HUNG/ HAHA HAHA HO/
 BHAGAVAN SARVA TATHAGATA BAZRA MAME
 MUN TSA/ BAZRI BHAVA/ MAHA SAMAYA SATVA A//

*repeat many times***Dissolution Stage**

Protector, as I and all sentient beings, deluded by
 our ignorance, have broken the vows, please protect us!
 Supreme Vajra Holder, Lord of Sentient Beings,
 please grant us refuge!
 Thus, Vajrasattva is pleased by our prayers and replies,
 "Your negative actions and obscurations are cleared away!"
 Vajrasattva then dissolves into myself and
 my obscurations are purified.

*I then become Vajrasattva, appearance and emptiness inseparable.
 Rest in the mind, as it is.*

Dedication

GE WA DI YI NYUR DU DAG/
DOR JE SEM PA DRUB GYUR NE/
DRO WA CHIG KYANG MA LÜ PA/
DE YI SA LA GÖ PAR SHOG//

recite other dedication and aspiration prayers as well

SARVA MANGALAM

Dedication

By this virtue,
may I swiftly accomplish Vajrasattva.
To this state may I come to lead every being -
not one left behind.

recite other dedication and aspiration prayers as well

SARVA MANGALAM

Commentary on the Introduction

Vajrasattva practice includes refuge and bodhicitta, but places particular emphasis on purification which is more than merely washing our dirty body or loading soiled dishes in a dishwasher. This purification deals with suffering and happiness and is related to the mind and the mental directions that control our life. When the mind has correct information and proper training, it tends to lead our life toward happiness and peace. On the other hand, if we have incorrect information or improper training, the mind leads us in a direction where we are more likely to encounter confusion and suffering. In reality, we all want peace and happiness, and naturally wish to be free from suffering. However, that state does not come through mere wishing and, because we don't know what to do, we become involved in many different projects and keep ourselves busy pursuing them.

In the human realm we are forever restless; we are always looking for something new. No matter how much we have, we still look for more.

Milarepa is an inspiring example to us of someone who spent his time and energy avoiding the causes of suffering and collecting the positive causes of happiness. Once his sister said to him, "I can't bear this way of life. We have no food and no clothes. Here I am, a beggar! How can this be? Can't we improve ourselves a little? Let's offer ourselves as servants to some lama so that at least we can get some food." In response, Milarepa explained that the optimal way to spend one's life is to release the causes of suffering and pursue the causes of happiness. He said to her, "Your talk is useless. If I wanted, I could be a wealthy man. But I see all of samsara as burning coals covered by ash. I cannot walk on the burning ashes of samsara. That is why I practice the precious Dharma day and night."

We, too, should come to view samsara as burning embers that seem safely cool on the outside but are dangerously hot underneath the surface. If we have any realization, we know that this is no exaggeration. If we don't have realization, we remain beguiled by samsara's false promises and our suffering continues without end. This doesn't mean that we ordinary people should not have food or clothes. Of course, we need all the necessary provisions. But it is also important to have a clear perspective of

what brings real peace and happiness and what causes suffering.

Unlike beings in the other realms, we human beings have the freedom to practice Dharma. At the same time, our lives are quite fragile. The urgency instilled by this understanding can inspire us to practice as fiercely as Milarepa did.

We have been suffering in samsara since beginningless time, and still we haven't had enough! Consider that thought and practice Dharma with enthusiasm.

*Generally speaking,
virtuous and nonvirtuous acts depend upon the mind.*

Mind is the center of the universe - samsara is a creation of mind and nirvana is also a creation of mind. We can see this in our own life. When the mind is tense, confused, depressed, or fearful, we experience suffering. Even our chest can feel congested, for example. That is samsara. At other times, when the mind is free, relaxed, and open, we feel light, optimistic, and confident. If we let the mind go in the wrong direction, it will be taken away by our negative habits and then we will suffer helplessly. When the mind does stray in the wrong direction, we must immediately apply positive remedies like meditation and mindfulness. If we consistently practice in this way, the mind will gradually be purified of confusion and disturbing emotions. This is why we need the Dharma.

Mind is the master, and the body and speech are the servants.

In other words, the mind is the boss, and the body and speech are employees. Be sure to make your "boss" clear, calm, and understanding. When the mind is calm and clear, the body and speech follow it and create virtuous actions, which in turn result in peace and happiness. This is quite obvious even to those who are not Dharma practitioners.

*Driven by the power of afflicting emotions, controlled by desire,
hatred, and so forth, we create nonvirtuous acts such as the
five heinous karmas, the five close karmas, the ten nonvirtues,
and the breaking of vows and samayas.*

Nonvirtuous actions are created by negative thoughts. As soon

as desire and hatred arise in the mind, there is no peace. It is as if we were enslaved by them. Even though we desire happiness, negative thoughts won't allow us to rest. We are continually running, always chasing after something. However, when the mind is peaceful and calm, we don't have a need for divisive speech or harsh words. But when the mind is disturbed by negative thoughts, we don't hesitate to harm others with the five heinous acts, five close acts, and so forth. The *five heinous karmas* are: killing one's father; killing one's mother; killing an arhat, one highly advanced in his realization of meditation practice; dividing the sangha; and injuring a buddha (while he is alive). The *five close karmas* are sexually violating a male or female arhat; knowingly killing a bodhisattva certain to attain enlightenment; killing a member of the sangha who has entered the path; misappropriation of the sangha's property; and destroying a stupa.

The *ten nonvirtues* are: killing; stealing; sexual misconduct or harassment; lying, especially about spiritual achievements; divisive speech; harsh words; idle talk; covetousness; malice; and holding wrong view, especially about causality. The strength of the nonvirtue varies depending on the strength of the underlying negative thought. These nonvirtues have nothing to do with being spiritual or non-spiritual, with belief or non-belief; anyone who engages in these activities is creating a cause to experience suffering, whether now or in the future.

The ten virtues are: refraining from killing, and preserving life; refraining from stealing, and practicing generosity; refraining from sexual misconduct, and practicing moral conduct; refraining from lying, and speaking truthfully; refraining from divisive speech, and speaking harmoniously; refraining from harsh words, and speaking peacefully and politely; refraining from idle talk, and speaking meaningfully; refraining from covetousness, and practicing contentment and appreciation; refraining from malice, and practicing loving-kindness and compassion; and refraining from holding wrong views, and practicing the perfect meaning. As we can see, when the mind is calm and clear, there is a better chance that we will perform these actions, which are the direct cause of peace and happiness. These are the fundamental foundation for the real peace in the world, as well as for spiritual development. Books such as *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*, *Words of My Perfect Teacher*, and *A Complete Guide to the Buddhist*

Path describe these virtues and nonvirtues in greater depth. Please study such sources thoroughly and gain a good understanding of why we must practice them.

There is a lot of misunderstanding concerning vows and samayas. Some practitioners think that these are merely a matter of various actions being prohibited by a more or less arbitrary authority. Concerning vows and samayas, some will say, "This activity is not allowed for monks and nuns, but it is acceptable for lay people to do it." That is looking at the issue from a dogmatic point of view. It would be better to consider whether we can realistically face the consequences of performing a particular action. For example, suppose there is poison in a cup. Is drinking from that cup a bad idea because someone said so, or because there is actual danger? The answer is obvious. Subtle dangers were equally obvious to the Buddha, so he set out "rules" to guide us away from them. Thus, when we take vows, we are renouncing suffering and its causes in a very practical way. However, even if we do not take a particular vow, it doesn't mean that there are no consequences if we engage in that activity. This is what is called "unyielding cause and result."

Consider killing. It's not a question of whether you are allowed to take life or not. It is a question of whether you can bear the results of this action when the consequences arise. By studying this subject, we can learn how to be sincere to ourselves and not destroy our own happiness through ignorance. We gain the wisdom to protect ourselves. The precious Dharma will always show us the right path, free from delusions.

*It is nonvirtuous if we do these things ourselves,
if we ask others to do them for us, or
if we rejoice when these deeds are done by others.*

In order to purify negative karma, we have to first be able to identify nonvirtue, as listed before. We must know what is wholesome and what is unwholesome, what causes suffering and what causes peace. For instance, if we ask someone to commit a negative act, or merely rejoice in someone else's nonvirtue, we become part of their deed and we share in the cause that created the result we so enjoyed. Thus, it is wise to be vigilant of our thoughts and actions, and take care not to create the causes of our own suffering.

*When the mind is under the control of desire, hatred, and so forth,
we continue to create nonvirtue even if we hear, study,
and practice the precious Dharma.*

We might pray, “May all sentient beings be free from suffering and the causes of suffering,” but in our minds, we may be thinking, “I like this person but I don’t like that person.” Even while we are saying those prayers, our thoughts are positioning themselves to create suffering! And perhaps while doing prostrations, we think something like, “People will respect me more if I do a lot of prostrations.” With that thought, we are looking for credit for being more pure than others. Such thoughts are related to attachment and hatred, and are a cause of suffering.

We must be mindful at all times. The purpose of studying Dharma is not to make ourselves special. We are not looking for magic. We engage in Dharma study and practice to purify negative thoughts, to free ourselves from samsara, and to attain enlightenment. Holding this right attitude will take our practice in the right direction, one that will bring us good results. This is a practical and realistic approach to freeing ourselves from suffering.

These nonvirtues will bring us suffering and undesirable conditions.

We practice the Dharma to avoid nonvirtues and undesirable conditions. As we sit, meditate, or chant mantras our focus is on avoiding negative karma and developing virtues. Why? Because nonvirtues bring the suffering that we don’t want.

Karma is not just a belief system; it is a universal law. If it were a belief system, then when you believed in karma, it would exist and when you didn’t believe in karma, there would be none. Why would we choose to believe in a system that makes for more suffering? But since that is not the case, we have to understand what causes suffering and then practice avoiding it.

*Nonvirtues can be created when we conquer our enemies,
protect our relatives and friends, defend our own bodies,
and accumulate wealth.*

We don’t create negative karma to achieve enlightenment. Nor do we create negative karma to benefit sentient beings. We create

negative karma out of attachment to our relatives, friends, body, our own wealth, and so on. This is the reality of samsara. This does not imply that you shouldn’t protect yourself or your relatives when problems come. Not only should you protect them, but you should protect all other sentient beings as well. Attachment and hatred encourage us to create negative karma; these are the real enemies to guard against. When we perniciously protect only our own concerns, it is called “attachment.” When we distance ourselves from or bring harm to what we don’t like, it is called “hatred.” This dualistic thinking is called “creating negative karma.” Investigate and meditate on this so that you can see clearly what is right or wrong on the basis of the law of causality.

*We leave all these things behind when we face death,
but nonvirtues will follow us like a shadow, life after life,
and become a source of suffering.*

You may successfully protect your relatives and close friends, you may even destroy your enemies, but then what happens at the time of death? These issues seem so important now, but when we face death, we leave them all behind. We cannot take them with us to the next life. This doesn’t mean that we don’t support our friends and family. We do our best to help sincerely, but we cannot help anyone with attachment or hatred in our mind. They only make the situation worse.

Many people misunderstand this point and think that we can’t care for our friends, family, and relatives if we don’t have attachment for them, or even that we are not to care for them in order to demonstrate our lack of attachment. However, this is saying the opposite. We are to love all equally, to regard all sentient beings, including our enemies, in an altruistic manner. This approach helps us to transcend attachment to a particular group or individual. With a calm and clear mind that is unbiased and without prejudice, we can actually help beings more effectively and avoid the unwanted side effects.

We cannot ignore or hide from karma. When a bird lands, its shadow is right there on the ground. When the bird flies up into the sky, its shadow on the ground disappears. The bird may fly like an eagle from coast to coast, but when it lands again, the

shadow always returns. Karma is like this. After we perform an act, we may not see it anymore, but inevitably, inconceivably, the result will come about sooner or later. The Buddha said, "If you fly in the sky, karma follows you. If you hide in the mountains or in a cave, karma follows you. There is no place you can hide from karma."

Therefore, it is wise to purify all the nonvirtues we created before their results arise.

There is no negative karma that cannot be purified. *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* contains famous accounts of Nanda, Angulimala, Ajatashatru, and Udayana, all of who purified very heavy negative acts. There are more stories in *Transformation of Suffering* and *A Complete Guide to the Buddhist Path*. In the Tibetan tradition, Milarepa is a very important example of this kind of purification. Look how much negative karma he created in his early life! Later he became completely convinced of the danger of negative karma and said, "If I die with this negative karma, there is only one way for me to go. There will be no choice. I will go directly to the hell realms!" This thought provided extremely powerful motivation for him, so he had no hesitation about enduring hardships under Marpa. With courage and discipline, he attained buddhahood in that single lifetime by purifying all his heinous acts.

Applying the four powers can be very effective purification.

If there were no method of purification, we would be helpless. But since there is a way to purify negative karma, afflicting emotions, and delusion, we should do the practice with enthusiasm. This is like undergoing surgery to eliminate a deadly disease. We willingly undergo that small pain in order to overcome future negative consequences. In the same way, we wisely sacrifice a little time to this practice in order to avoid facing great suffering in the future.

Our mind is like a mirror. When that mirror is covered with dust, it can't reflect objects clearly. Likewise, when our mind is obscured by negative thoughts, it becomes dull and cannot reflect the knowledge and clarity that are innately there. When a mirror is unsoiled, then any object can be clearly reflected.

Likewise, when our obscurations are purified and the mind is lucid, it is able to reflect all knowledge without error. This is the purpose of practicing purification.

The four powers are remorse, antidote, resolve, and reliance. In the Vajrayana, Vajrasattva meditation is a special practice done for the purification of nonvirtues. With confidence and without hesitation, we can enter into the Vajrasattva practice. We must have sincere remorse for evil deeds, confess them, and resolve not to create any more negative karma even at the risk of our lives. Then we take refuge, cultivate the mind of enlightenment, recite the mantra, and meditate on emptiness as the antidote and reliance.

The *four powers* are a spiritual technology that we apply to purification. Chapter 9 of *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* explains them in detail; here I will present just a short introduction to them.

Remorse means identifying the negative karma that we have created and sincerely acknowledging that it was wrong. We recognize that our negative act didn't result in much benefit for ourselves or others, and that it will only bring great suffering. This is different from a feeling of guilt. With guilt, we look down on ourselves and feel powerless or worthless. We end up depressed and hopeless. In contrast, the feeling of remorse forces our mind toward purification. It spurs us to look for a resolution for the problem, and inspires us to find the path to correct behavior.

The *antidote* to nonvirtue is to engage in virtuous practices, such as Vajrasattva meditation. The Vajrayana in general, provides very effective means of purification. With them, we can completely uproot all negative karma, just as Milarepa did. Within the Vajrayana, Vajrasattva meditation is specifically focused on purification. We can enter into Vajrasattva practice with confidence and without hesitation. When practicing, reflect on the impermanence of all composite phenomena. Look at the suffering of every sentient being. Use all the ten virtues, which are the direct antidote to the nonvirtues. What a wonderful practice!

Once you have sincere remorse for evil deeds, confess them,

and *resolve* not to create any more of them, even at the risk of your life. A very powerful resolve is necessary, one made with certainty and determination. It is like knowing that poison will definitely kill you and making a commitment never again to ingest it. This precious human life affords us with every opportunity to refrain from habitually performing the ten nonvirtues and to reverse the propensities of our negative habits that are neither good for our health nor for our mind. Joyfully resolve, "I am so fortunate to have this opportunity. I can do this! It won't be long before I am completely free from the causes of suffering."

Reliance is an aspect of taking refuge; we rely on the enlightened beings to lead us from samsara in many different ways. We take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha to free ourselves from samsara. We cultivate the mind of enlightenment, bodhicitta, which is based on love and compassion. We recite Vajrasattva's 100-syllable mantra, and meditate on emptiness. We can rely on these methods with complete confidence, knowing that purification and enlightenment will eventually take place. Up until now, we have relied on our confused and deluded mental afflictions and we are not free from any of samsara's predicaments. Having this precious human life gives us the excellent conditions to be able to see things wisely. Therefore, rely on the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and bring bodhicitta into the mind, fully embracing it. If you do this without a doubt, the results will avalanche effortlessly.

Sadhana Commentary

Visualization

Every meditation or deity yoga practice we do encompasses all of the Buddha's teachings; they all incorporate the cultivation of compassion and wisdom. Vajrasattva practice is a specialized method to purify the negative thoughts that oppose these practices. Before you begin the practice, take three deep breaths. Relax the body and mind without allowing the mind to wander. The mind should be where your body is. First, take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and cultivate bodhicitta, the mind of enlightenment. Then, with a strong sense of joy and a feeling of good fortune, engage in this meditation practice as instructed.

Above the crown of my head, is a white lotus with a moon disk.

When you meditate, sit in the correct body posture. About a cubit above the crown of your head, visualize a *lotus flower*. This symbolizes pure wisdom, free from the mud of afflicting emotions and obscurations. On the lotus flower is a flat, horizontal *moon disk* seat, which symbolizes great compassion.

On the moon disk is the syllable HUNG which transforms into a vajra, marked by a HUNG in its center.

The white *HUNG* syllable on the moon disk is pure awareness. Visualize that it transforms into a golden vajra of an insubstantial nature, not ordinary metal, with the white *HUNG* in its center. The Sanskrit word *vajra* is *dorje* in Tibetan. It symbolizes the indestructible aspect of wisdom awareness, inseparable luminosity and emptiness, the absolute nature of the mind itself.



*Light radiates from this HUNG,
purifying the obscurations of the six types of beings...*

Infinite white *light* radiates from the white *HUNG* in the center of the vajra toward all ten directions: the four cardinal directions, the four intermediate directions, the nadir, and the zenith. This

light permeates the entire universe, touching all sentient beings in samsara, human and nonhuman alike. It purifies their obscurations which, in turn, dispels their suffering.

...and making offerings to the conquerors.

Meditate that light from the white HUNG reaches the buddhahelds and transforms into limitless offerings for the buddhas and bodhisattvas. We meditate that the enlightened beings accept the offering and are pleased.

The light returns and dissolves into the seed syllable.

The vajra with the HUNG then transforms into Vajrasattva who is my root lama.

After making this offering, *the light returns* and dissolves back into the HUNG, bringing all the excellent qualities of the buddhas and bodhisattvas along with it. The HUNG and vajra together transform into Vajrasattva, or *Dorje Sempa* in Tibetan, who then sits on the moon disk seat above the crown of your head. Meditate that Vajrasattva is the essence of your own kind *root lama*, the embodiment of all the buddhas, bodhisattvas, root and lineage masters, all of them full of blessings and embodying inseparable complete wisdom and compassion. Thought of this way, Vajrasattva meditation also constitutes a guru yoga practice.

Root lama has many different meanings. Primarily, it is the person who transmitted the Vajrayana empowerments, teachings, and instructions to you. More generally, it is a person who transforms your life spiritually, someone who is very important to your spiritual progress because they inspire you to pursue the Dharma. More technically, it is the person who gives you the mahamudra teachings that cause you to recognize the nature of your mind. In this case, we see Vajrasattva as the root lama who can uproot the negative karma and obscurations in our mind. Seeing Vajrasattva as our root teacher is a skillful method that directly reveals the inseparability of Vajrasattva's mind and our own by connecting them with clear, full devotion in a way that resolves all our confusion.

Vajrasattva is white in color and holds a vajra and bell.

This starts the description of Vajrasattva's appearance. It's good to study an image in order to familiarize yourself with all the details. He is white in color, and holds a *vajra* at his heart and a *bell* at his waist. He is not merely holding material objects, but rather is exhibiting the qualities that they symbolize. The vajra represents great compassion, and the bell is great wisdom.

Without compassion, the mind is dry and intellectual, and doesn't bring us much benefit. We need compassion in order to use our wisdom to effectively bring peace and happiness to ourselves and others. Wisdom is more than a mere collection of information and knowledge. Here it refers to the incisive awareness, or special insight, that directly perceives causality together with the realization of emptiness. It is the direct method that uproots all misperception and delusion. Compassion is the state of mind that is permeated with peace and kindness, and abstains from nonvirtue. But compassion without wisdom doesn't have much power. Without wisdom we fall into a primitive kind of compassion; we feel sympathy but have no skill to actually help anyone. Emotionally we feel that something should be done, but that feeling just brings us more helplessness and suffering. Therefore, wisdom is necessary to make compassion useful. Thus, Vajrasattva is holding the vajra and bell to symbolize the unity, the nonduality, of wisdom awareness and great compassion.

He sits gracefully in the half lotus posture.

Vajrasattva is usually shown in the full lotus posture. But in this meditation only his left leg is in the sitting posture, symbolizing that Vajrasattva abides in the dharmakaya. His right leg is outstretched and directly above the crown of your head, signifying the power of great compassion, and the expression of the manifestation of activities to benefit sentient beings from within the dharmakaya state.

He wears jewel ornaments and his garments are perfectly complete.

Vajrasattva wears silken upper and lower garments, a belt, as well as many precious jewels and ornaments, such as a crown, earrings, necklaces, bracelets at both the wrist and near the

shoulder, and ankle bracelets.

The five-pointed crown on his head symbolizes that Vajrasattva is the embodiment of the wisdoms of the five buddhas: Buddha Akshobhya, Buddha Vairochana, Buddha Ratnasambhava, Buddha Amitabha, and Buddha Amogasiddhi. Their five respective wisdoms are the: dharmadhatu, or wisdom of the all-pervading elements of Dharma; mirror-like wisdom; equanimity wisdom; discriminating wisdom; and all-accomplishing wisdom.

The two earrings symbolize that Vajrasattva has perfectly realized the two truths. The six bracelets symbolize that he has perfected the practice of the six paramitas. The three necklaces symbolize that Vajrasattva is the embodiment of the three kayas: nirmanakaya, sambhogakaya, and dharmakaya. In other words, he has perfected buddhahood, and the ornaments symbolize each and every quality of enlightenment. All these robes and ornaments are expressions of an enlightened being's perfect qualities. This is the sambhogakaya form, a manifestation of dharmakaya that exhibits its activities and perfect qualities.

Vajrasattva's body is not an ordinary body of flesh and bones; it is a wisdom body. It is translucent like a rainbow. It is vivid, clear, and light, yet insubstantial, like the moon's reflection in a lake. This is a critical aspect of the visualization. When you visualize all sentient beings as transformed into Vajrasattva, visualize them in the same manner.

*Light radiates from the heart and invites the wisdom beings together with the five empowerment buddhas. Vajrasattva and the wisdom beings become inseparable through reciting
DZA HUNG BAM HO.*

The being visualized at the crown of your head is called the samaya or pledge being, and is the basis from which we will work. The wisdom beings who are being invited are the live buddhas and bodhisattvas. When the two *become inseparable*, it means that the samaya being is no longer just visualization; it is alive and vibrant.

We invite the wisdom beings in four stages. First, with DZA, the white goddesses of loving-kindness who hold hooks invite the wisdom beings from the pure lands. Then, with HUNG, red goddesses of compassion who hold lassos lead the wisdom

beings in front of you. With BAM, the yellow goddesses of joy come from space holding chains and cause the wisdom beings to dissolve into the samaya beings. With HO, green goddesses of equanimity holding bells cause the wisdom and samaya beings to become inseparable. The significance is that now Vajrasattva embodies all the buddhas' excellent qualities, and also the nature of the four immeasurables.

Empowerment

The empowerment deities are requested to perform the empowerment ceremony:

OM SARVA TATHAGATA ABHISHINTSA TU MAM.

They reply:

**OM SARVA TATHAGATA ABHISHEKATA SAMAYA SHRI
YE HUNG** and bestow empowerment. *By water from a vase Vajrasattva's body is filled. The overflowing water transforms into the lords of the five families, adorning Vajrasattva's head. The empowerment deities dissolve into Vajrasattva.*

This is the special skillful method of the Vajrayana system. Through this method we can attain buddhahood. In our actual meditation practice we come to understand how to purify all our different types of obscurations and eventually attain buddhahood by ourselves. Buddhahood is not achieved by one single cause. There are many causes and conditions. In brief we need a complete method of all the systems without missing any part of the practices. Here we can get the glimpse of awareness how one becomes buddha.

Offering

**OM BAZRA SATVA SAPARIVARA ...
ARGHAM / PADYAM / PUSHPAM / DHUPAM / ALOKAM /
GHANDE / NEVIDYE / SHAPTA ... PRATITSHA SVAHA/**

Now we make offerings to Vajrasattva. **BAZRA SATVA** refers to Vajrasattva in an old style of writing Sanskrit. **SAPARIVARA... PRATITSHA SVAHA** means "I make this offering with devotion, establish all the offerings in my mind and offer them freely as a means of purifying attachment.

The first offering, *argham*, is an ocean of water for the face and mouth being poured from a cone-shaped shell. This water signifies auspiciousness, all the positive causes and conditions that bring about positive effects. We offer water that is clean, fresh, cool, smooth, light, delicious, and comfortable to the throat and stomach, as these qualities are the qualities of auspiciousness. When we drink water like this, it is healthy. We offer the water, meditating that it will become a cause for all sentient beings to collect positive causes and conditions.

Padyam is a water offering presented in a bowl to cleanse the enlightened beings' feet. This is clear water mixed with incense or sandalwood and is symbolic of purification. With respect, devotion, and confidence, we offer an ocean of this kind of water to all enlightened beings to purify both our temporary obscurations and those of all other sentient beings. Obscurations are called "temporary" because they can be purified. If they were permanent, we could not purify them no matter what we did. Meditate on this as you make these offerings to purify all the different types of obscurations including the gross, subtle, negative karma, afflicting emotions, and obscurations to enlightenment.

Pushpam is an offering of flowers, enough to fill the sky. Flowers are offered to the heads of the enlightened beings, for them to wear on the crown of the head. This signifies the practice of generosity that opens the heart. Usually when we consider generosity, we think of giving wealth, but there are many different types of generosity such as giving fearlessness and wisdom. Milarepa said, "There is no special practice of generosity if one is free from stinginess." Meditate on that meaning when you offer these flowers, and wish for every sentient beings to achieve the freedom and endowment of a precious human life.

Dhupam is the incense offering; the sky is filled with an everlasting aroma that we offer to the noses of the enlightened beings. This symbolizes one of the most important practices, moral ethics or discipline. The enlightened beings are not attached to smell, but are attracted by our purity. People respect those who keep good moral ethics because they are trustworthy and dependable.

Moral ethics is a foundation, like the ground that supports the "crops" of enlightened qualities. In Sanskrit, discipline is called

"shila," and means coolness or freshness. Good discipline is said to cool the mind, freeing it from the heat of agitation. Without discipline, enlightenment would not be possible. Wisdom, or special insight, comes from a strong and stable mind of samadhi. Such strength of mind is based on discipline. So these three, called the three trainings, are all connected to each other, depend on one another, and are indispensable. Even if we have to lose our life to keep our moral discipline, it just affects that one life; the next lives will be better and better as a result.

Alokam is the light offering made to the eyes of the enlightened beings, who see clearly and without error. Just as the light of the sun dispels ordinary darkness, the light of patience dispels the darkness of our ignorance. The clear, stable nature of the mind can be achieved through the practice of patience because a patient mind is not disturbed by forces such as anger. Patience can be practiced in many different forms, not only when people are faced with anger. For example, there is the patience with Dharma practice and study that allows us to learn about the great qualities of enlightenment and then pursue them. Some people feel patience is a weakness, but actually, patience shows great strength of mind based on wisdom and compassion. However, we should not be patient with our afflicting emotions. Even if it is difficult, we must sacrifice our anger, desire, jealousy, pride in order to obtain the 112 major and minor marks of a buddha.

Ghande is perfume or saffron water, an ocean of scented water offered to the bodies of the enlightened beings. This signifies perseverance or joyous effort. Through that one quality we can develop all the qualities of enlightenment. Without joyous effort, nothing is achieved. Even in samsara, we have to work hard to achieve anything; we sacrifice our lives for our work, and yet gain very little happiness from it. In contrast, Dharma study and practice cause freedom from suffering. Why wouldn't we sacrifice our time and energy for that? Perfumes are offered to the buddhas because joyous effort is the core of enlightenment. Perfection of generosity, moral ethics, patience, samadhi, and wisdom all depend on joyous effort. Without joyous effort none of these can be accomplished, so it is the essence of our path. Meditate that through this perfume offering all sentient beings will persevere and progress in their attainment of the qualities of enlightenment.

Nevidye is an offering to the tongues of the enlightened buddhas and bodhisattvas of a mountain of delicious food and delicacies. This offering of excellent food signifies samadhi, the virtuous one-pointed mind that is like an ambrosia to feed the mind. In the same way that food nourishes the body, samadhi maintains the mind. Nutritious food strengthens our physical health; and the nutritious food of samadhi makes the mind healthy, clear, calm, and peaceful. Such a mind is the basis from which to achieve all the siddhis, as well as all the other enlightened qualities. Think, "Through this offering, may all beings have the health that results from the food of samadhi."

Shapta is magnificent music resounding throughout the entire universe that is offered to the ears of the enlightened beings. This represents wisdom, a special power of the mind that is able to penetrate the nature of all phenomena. All phenomena have the nature of interdependence. This is especially easy to understand by examining sound. For example, ask yourself where the sound of a guitar comes from. It does not come only from a piece of wood, a string, or from the movement of a finger. None of these alone is sufficient to produce sound. Sound comes from the interdependence of all those factors; the sound has no independent existence. Thus it is called an "illusion." That realization is wisdom, and through that realization we can attain supramundane qualities. When making this offering of music, think, "May wisdom arise within the minds of all sentient beings and free them from all confusion and ignorance."

Visualize that these offerings fill all space without limitation. Offer everything, including your own body, speech, mind, and root virtue, with full devotion while understanding them to be inseparable appearance and emptiness. It isn't that Vajrasattva needs or wants these offerings. We are making these eight general offerings to Vajrasattva as a practice of generosity. These materials are important in our life, so we share them and offer them to the enlightened beings. To accumulate great merit and virtue from these offerings, visualize them as being infinite. Such vast offerings are a skillful way to accumulate the great amount of merit and wisdom that enables us to actualize mahamudra. In other words, this is a means to generate the positive causes and conditions necessary for us to achieve enlightenment.

Praise

*Vajrasattva, Mahasattva, great courageous mind,
vajra embodiment of all the tathagatas,
Samantabhadra, primordial vajra,
I prostrate to you, Holder of the Vajra.*

This section expresses Vajrasattva's qualities and praises them. Vajrasattva is the embodiment of the Buddha's wisdom and compassion all the excellent qualities. *Vajra* refers to the indestructible wisdom which penetrates the nature of all phenomena, annihilates all obscurations, and captures the dharmakaya. *Maha* means great in Sanskrit. *Sattva* is the mind of indestructible courage, the mind of unconditional compassion that embraces every sentient being.

In the Buddha's mind, there are no distinctions among beings. A buddha is not biased toward one or against another, because he attained enlightenment for the benefit of *all* sentient beings. We must strive to develop this same unconditional compassion and wisdom. Right now, we ordinary persons are of two minds - one that wants to study and practice the Dharma with unbiased compassion and another that is consumed with anger and attachment. These two fight each other as if on a battlefield. When the mind of bodhicitta becomes more powerfully habituated, then the negative mind can be subjugated, purified, and eventually eliminated. But sometimes the negative mind wins and we are miserably enslaved by negativity. Vajrasattva's mind has already won this battle and completely uprooted all negative thoughts. Therefore, he has a *courageous mind*, one that enables him to fearlessly benefit all sentient beings. We take this as an example and follow in Vajrasattva's footsteps.

Samantabhadra refers to the dharmakaya, the absolute state of enlightenment, the ultimate state of buddhahood. We pay respect and homage to the one who holds all these qualities and inspire ourselves to actualize them.

Visualization during Mantra Recitation

*At Vajrasattva's heart level is a vajra on a moon disk.
At the center of the vajra is a HUNG syllable
surrounded by the 100-syllable mantra.*

This is the meditation to do while reciting the 100-syllable mantra. Vajrasattva is above the crown of your head. Inside his body at his heart level is a vajra on a moon disk. There is a white HUNG syllable in the center of the vajra, which is encircled by the mantra. As we repeat the mantra, the hundred syllables rotate clockwise around the HUNG led by the syllable OM.

The radiating light from the rotating mantra completely purifies all the obscurations of beings and they become fully established in the vajra state.

This is a special practice of love, compassion, and bodhicitta that we skillfully extend to all sentient beings. Light radiates from the rotating mantra, reaches every sentient being, and purifies their obscurations. This practice is a skillful method that stretches our ability to encompass all sentient beings within our mind. It helps us exercise the mind and gradually develop more strength, wisdom, and compassion. However, this is a gradual process and not an instant “magical formula.” This meditation can also be used as a practice to equalize yourself and others, which is an important part of a bodhisattva’s training. As we perform the following visualizations, keep in mind that all beings want to be free from suffering, just as we do. The visualization can be done in a more or less detailed manner. During a long practice session, you can purify yourself and all other sentient beings again and again.

At first you can repeat the mantra slowly. After you memorize it, you can chant the mantra faster. In the beginning, using a melody will help you to memorize the mantra. You can repeat the mantra many times but recite a minimum of twenty-one mantras during each session. If we repeat this mantra 111,111 times it will purify even the root downfalls, the very heavy negative karmas that cause rebirth in a hell. It is said that if we repeat this at least twenty-one times each morning with a pure motivation, whatever negative karma we might create that day will not intensify. Otherwise, it multiplies each moment.

Detailed Visualization

If you have more time, think first of the sentient beings in the

hell realms who are suffering immense physical torture in heat and cold. Light radiates from the mantra at Vajrasattva’s heart and enters this realm. It purifies the obscurations caused by their anger and hatred and ends their constant suffering. Their outer environment is transformed into a pure land and the beings transform into Vajrasattva.

Next, look at the suffering of the hungry spirits and develop great compassion for them. Hungry spirits generally lack food, drink, and clothes for an endless length of time. When the light from the rotating mantra touches them, the obscurations caused by their stinginess and greed are completely purified. As a result, the environment is transformed into a pure land and the hungry spirits are transformed into Vajrasattva.

Animals suffer being used, tortured, and killed by human beings and by one another. The compassionate light from the rotating mantra purifies the obscurations caused by their ignorance and stupidity. As a result, the environment is transformed into a pure land and the animals are transformed into Vajrasattva.

The human realm suffers from birth, aging, sickness, and death. During our time here, we often don’t get what we want and we are also burdened by what we don’t want. These sufferings and the obscurations caused by desire and ignorance become fully purified by the light from the mantra. As a result, the environment is transformed into a pure land and the people are transformed into Vajrasattva.

Then picture the demi-gods who suffer from jealousy and continual combat with the gods. The light purifies the obscurations caused by their jealousy. As a result, the environment is transformed into a pure land and the demi-gods are transformed into Vajrasattva.

Finally, inhabitants of the desire, form, and formless god realms suffer inconceivably when they must fall again into the lower realms at the end of their very long lives. The obscurations caused by their pride and heedlessness are fully purified. As a result, the environment is transformed into a pure land and the gods are transformed into Vajrasattva. Now the whole of samsara is transformed into a pure land, and all the beings of the six realms are identically in Vajrasattva’s form, free from all suffering and enjoying the peace and happiness of enlightenment.

Shorter Visualization

Motivated by powerful renunciation and compassion, send light from the rotating mantra simultaneously to all the realms. First, purify their environments by transforming the entire universe into a completely perfect buddhafiield. Then purify all the sentient beings of their suffering and the causes of their suffering. Meditate that they instantly transform into Vajrasattva, the embodiment of perfect wisdom and compassion. At that moment, rejoice, feel happy and peaceful.

After purifying all sentient beings and establishing them in the state of Vajrasattva, using either the detailed or shorter visualization, they all repeat the 100-syllable mantra along with you.

The light rays return and dissolve into the mantra and the seed syllable.

Before the light returns to Vajrasattva, make an offering of it to all the buddhas and bodhisattvas in the ten directions. Meditate that these buddhas are pleased and accept the offering. A buddha's mind is completely focused on sentient beings and how to free them from suffering. When we do this practice, it's a service and great offering to the buddhas, as well as to the sentient beings. It is a true practice of bodhicitta. Then the *light rays return* to Vajrasattva, bringing with it the wisdom and compassion of all the buddhas. It dissolves into the mantra and seed syllable HUNG at Vajrasattva's heart level.

The stream of nectar produced from these syllables flows through the right great toe of Vajrasattva.

The seed syllable and the 100-syllable mantra produce nectar that completely fills Vajrasattva's body. The nectar is undefiled and unafflicted, and is called wisdom nectar. It has the ability to purify negative karma and obscurations.

It enters the crown of my head. The accumulation of negative actions, obscurations, faults, and downfalls flows down to the lower orifices leaving in the form of a smoky liquid.

Vajrasattva's right leg is in the half-lotus posture with the great toe directly over the crown of your head. From the toe, a stream of white nectar flows onto the crown of your head, entering the body through the central channel. In this way, we receive the four empowerments that purify the obscurations of body, speech, and mind, and the subtle obscurations of duality step by step. When the nectar reaches your head, you receive the vase empowerment that purifies all the physical obscurations and purifies the negative karma associated with the body. When the nectar reaches the throat, you receive the secret empowerment that purifies all the obscurations related to chakras and channels, and the negative karma related to speech. When the nectar reaches the heart level, you receive the wisdom empowerment that purifies the negative karma related to mind. When the nectar reaches the navel level, meditate that your whole body and being are filled with the nectar, and receive the fourth empowerment that fully purifies all duality of the body, speech, and mind. As the nectar permeates your entire body from the top down, enjoy undefiled peace and joy by maintaining the nature of Vajrasattva.

Without allowing the mind to wander in other directions, meditate that all these defilements leave the body through your pores and lower openings. It's said that the afflicting emotions and obscurations leave the body in the form of a smoky, dark liquid. Physical or mental sicknesses leave in the form of pus. If you are possessed by spirits, they leave in forms such as snakes or scorpions. In any case, the negativity is forced out of the body until none of it remains. At that point in time, your form becomes a transparent wisdom body and is no longer a body of flesh and bone.

Meditate that underneath the ground are hungry spirits or the Lord of Death. As the dark liquid transforms into undefiled nectar, it rains down on them. Those beings are fully satisfied, their negative thoughts and suffering are completely purified, and they transform into Vajrasattva.

A stream of stainless ambrosia then fills up my body and it becomes pure as crystal.

Meditate that your body is like crystal, clear outside and inside. No obscurations or stains remain.

This is the meditation we do while we repeat the 100-syllable mantra. When you do this meditation, loosen all your tension. Relax. Meditate in a natural way with a feeling of great joy, thinking, "How wonderful this practice is!" Expectation can lead the mind in different directions; it will make the mind wander here and there and, in the end, it brings disappointment. So, practice without any expectation.

If you find that you forget the visualization and repeatedly have to bring it back, the visualization will be unclear and practice will become ineffective. This can cause discouragement and a feeling that you are not doing well. To avoid this discomfort, maintain mindfulness. At the beginning of the session, make up your mind that for this period you will be fully focused on this practice. If you can sustain that concentration during the entire session, it will be very effective. When you cannot keep the visualization, shorten the session while you are getting used to it, then gradually extend the duration of time.

The 100 Syllable Mantra

OM BAZRA SATVA SAMAYAM/ ANU PALAYA/
 BAZRA SATVA TVENOPA/ TISHTA DRIDO ME BHAVA/
 SUTO SHYO ME BHAVA/ SUPO SHYO ME BHAVA/
 ANU RAKTO ME BHAVA/ SARVA SIDDHIM ME
 PRAYATSHA/ SARVA KARMA SU TSA ME/
 TSITTAM SHREYA KURU HUNG/ HAH HA HA HO/
 BHAGAVAN SARVA TATHAGATA BAZRA MAME
 MUN TSA/ BAZRI BHAVA/ MAHA SAMAYA SATVA A//

The mantra is in Sanskrit and its meaning is:

OM. Vajrasattva, please bestow blessing on me. May you be pleased with me; may you be steadily pleased. May you bestow on me all of the actual accomplishments. May my mind be established firmly in all activities. HA HA HA HA HO. All the blessed Tathagatas, May I be liberated fully in the vajra. Please grant me the actual vajra mind, great pledge being. AH.

The four HA syllables represent the four empowerments, purification of the four obscurations, and the experience of the four joys, four kayas, and four wisdoms. HO means "May I have them."

You can practice this meditation any time of day, but the morning is especially good. At that time you are well rested and the mind is clear. Relax and the meditation will come well. If you cultivate bodhicitta when you first wake up in the morning when the mind has not yet been pulled in many directions, your inner channels will be blessed by that pure motivation and pure wind energy. The whole day will become positive. Even if some negative thoughts arise, they will not be very powerful. If negative thoughts arise before your morning meditation, the wind channels fill with negativity and the whole day can be spoiled. Thus, if you can develop this discipline, it will be very beneficial.

Our body and the physical environment are closely related. At night everything quiets and relaxes. Even the birds know when to go to sleep. If you, too, can follow this natural rhythm, it will be good for your health and your mind. Going to sleep around 10 o'clock and waking up at 4:30 or 5:00a.m. is very good for us. The tendency to stay up too late and then get up around noon can bring depression and an unclear foggy feeling into the mind. Try to habituate yourself to go to sleep early and to arise early.

Dissolution Stage

Protector, as I and all sentient beings, deluded by our ignorance, have broken the vows, please protect us!

Broken vows refer to negative karma of all kinds, including actions that we are unaware of, yet cause us suffering. From beginningless time until now we have not been freed from samsara because of our ignorance, delusion, and afflicting emotions. Under their influence we create many negative karmas and, as a result, our suffering continues unceasingly.

It is important that we realize how *deluded* and confused we are. This state has caused us to circle in samsara for many lifetimes. We have now recognized this and have come to understand that ignorance causes all of our suffering. We are confessing to Vajrasattva that we have caused all our own suffering by breaking our vows and samaya, and have caused others to suffer as well.

Supreme Vajra Holder, Lord of Sentient Beings, please grant us refuge!

Vajra Holder means that Vajrasattva is the embodiment of perfect wisdom. *Lord of Sentient Beings* refers to Vajrasattva's perfection of great compassion toward all sentient beings, making him the lord of beings.

If there were no cause, there would be no result. If there were no negative karma, no suffering would result. But because of the continuity of our negative karma, there is continuity of suffering. So we pray for protection from our own delusions and negative thoughts, and the subsequent suffering they cause.

*Thus, Vajrasattva is pleased by our prayers and replies,
"Your negative actions and obscurations are cleared away!"*

We meditate that Vajrasattva accepts our supplication, and especially our meditation practice, and then says these words to us with delight. This does not mean that Vajrasattva has magically dispelled our delusions. Vajrasattva is confirming that our negative karma has been purified by means of our meditation practice. You can practice this at the 10% level, the 100% level, or anything in between. The result that you achieve will be equal to the amount of effort you put into the practice. It is important to understand this.

*Vajrasattva then dissolves into myself and my obscurations
are purified.*

Vajrasattva, along with the lotus flower and moon disk, melts into light. That light dissolves into you through the top of your head and permeates your entire body.

I then become Vajrasattva, appearance and emptiness inseparable.

Vajrasattva, who is at your crown, dissolves into light, and that light dissolves into you. You become inseparable from Vajrasattva. Meditate that this fully purifies all the subtle obscurations. Vajrasattva is no longer external to you. You and Vajrasattva are not two separate entities, but are in the nondual state free from grasping and fixation. Meditate that your body is Vajrasattva's wisdom light body. As Vajrasattva, your outer form is clear and precise, includes all the ornaments and silken

robes. You are holding the vajra at your heart and the bell at your waist. Your form is like the moon's reflection in water; you can see it clearly, but if you try to touch it, you can't. Now rest your mind in the inseparability of appearance and emptiness.

As you know from the *Heart Sutra*, "Form is emptiness and emptiness is also form. Form is no other than emptiness and emptiness is also no other than form." This is the meaning of *appearance and emptiness inseparable*. Whatever we see is itself emptiness; emptiness appears in every form. This is the nonduality of emptiness and appearance.

Rest in the mind, as it is.

During this meditation, relax all mental and physical tension. Meditate that your mind is like space without any form or object, with no obscurations, no thoughts of duality, and with nothing to investigate. It is clear, calm wisdom. This is a very skillful way of meditation that combines shamatha and vipashyana, concurrent calm abiding and special insight. Meditating that you are in Vajrasattva's form helps the mind to abide calmly and when we see that its nature is emptiness, we develop critical insight. If the mind goes in any other direction, just bring it back. If you have difficulties keeping the mind in that state, reappear as Vajrasattva. Maintain this state without pushing or chasing thoughts for as long as you can. If you get drowsy, apply more awareness.

Through this meditation practice you really become Vajrasattva. In your mind, your body is no longer an ordinary body; it is Vajrasattva's form. This is called a "mental formation" since your mind forms this Vajrasattva-body. If you can meditate on this well, evil spirits and other entities won't be able to find your ordinary body and affect it. That actually happened at the time of Lord Jigten Sumgön. A man was sick for many years. He had not been helped by any medication because the illness was caused by spirits or entities. He went to Lord Jigten Sumgön and requested help. Lord Jigten Sumgön advised him to visualize himself as Chenrezig. He gave the sick man complete instructions on Chenrezig practice, and the man practiced them for a week. After a week, he could easily visualize that he was Chenrezig. The spirit came back and, not finding him, said, "Where is my man? Where has he gone?" The spirit became scared and ran

away, and the man was cured of his sickness.

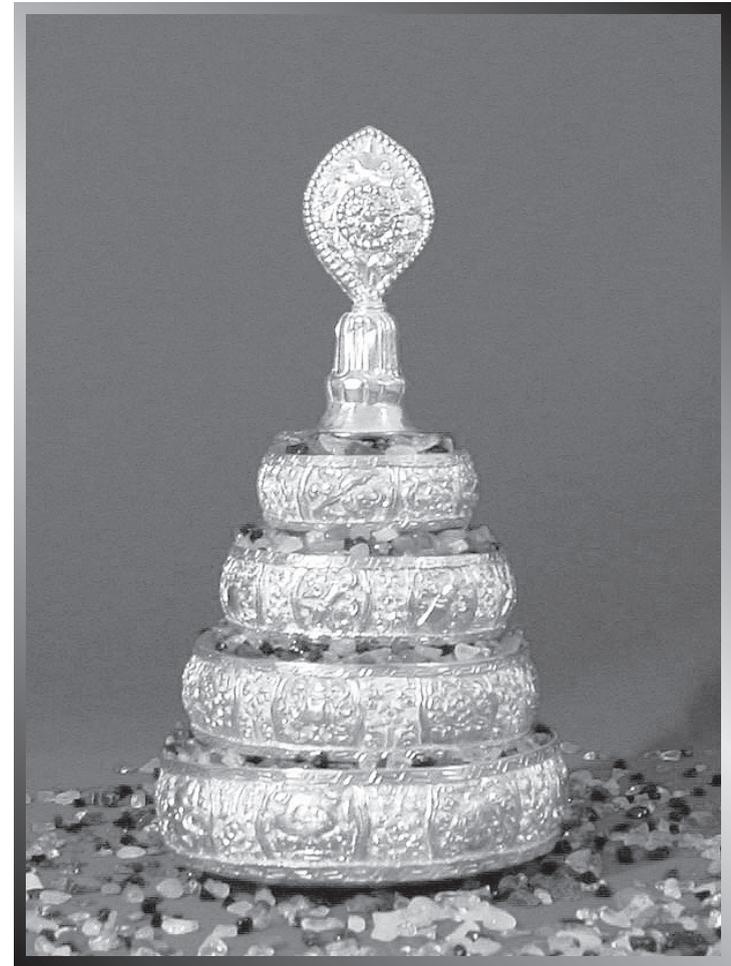
Lord Jigten Sumgön gave a special meditation instruction about this practice. At the moment you become Vajrasattva, he said to ask, “Where did this Vajrasattva come from?” Upon examination we find that it came from nowhere; we became Vajrasattva through this meditation technique. Then we ask, “Where did my ordinary body go?” And we find that it has gone nowhere. This very important instruction is unique to Lord Jigten Sumgön’s lineage. It is an especially powerful practice through which we can understand how we create our entire world with our mind. We acknowledge our absolute nature by dispelling all the adventitious obscurations. This gives us a glimpse of what enlightenment is like. When we become habituated to this and can remain without the impediment of obscuration, it is called “enlightenment.” On the other hand, as long as the mind remains habituated to the afflicting emotions, we will experience samsara, the state of suffering. Understanding this distinction clearly inspires us to do this practice.

Dedication

*By this virtue, may I swiftly accomplish Vajrasattva.
To this state may I come to lead every being - not one left behind.*

At the end, say this dedication prayer while your mind is still in the state of Vajrasattva. Vajrasattva’s great realization is enlightenment, complete buddhahood. We dedicate the virtue created here to the full actualization of this practice. Not even one small bug is to be left behind. Think, “May all sentient beings be in Vajrasattva’s form, the state free from suffering.” Then say the other dedication prayers, as outlined in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 4 Offering the Mandala: The Special Method of Perfecting The Two Accumulations



One who gathers the two accumulations is like a wise investor.
Though he enjoys his wealth, it is never exhausted.
Therefore, apply yourself to virtuous deeds.
This is my heart’s advice.

by Drigung Dharmaradza
The Jewel Treasury of Advice

Introduction

This is the practice of mandala offering, in which we create a universe containing all excellent things possible. Then we repeatedly offer that universe to the enlightened beings in order to achieve buddhahood. Realization of enlightenment does not come without a cause. It comes out of the great accumulation of virtue and merit, the purification of all obscurations, and the development of wisdom and compassion. These are the means for achieving enlightenment. Offering the mandala is a very skillful method to accumulate both merit and wisdom. Realization of pervading emptiness arises from the accumulation of merit and the more merit we accumulate, the fewer obstacles we encounter. Misfortune and other obstacles come from a lack of virtue or positive karma. Accumulating merit effectively counters these different obstacles. When we do encounter obstacles, we need great strength of mind to handle them and this, too, comes from the great accumulations. That is why this mandala practice is so important. Without such a skillful method, one cannot attain buddhahood.

Not only can we achieve buddhahood through this practice, making the mandala offering is also how you begin to establish your own buddhafiield. Each being who attains buddhahood has his own individual buddhafiield; it's something like having a house. For example, if someone wants to build a house, he first buys a piece of property and then designs a house according to his energy and resources. With an architect, he determines the size, shape, materials, and so forth. He contacts a builder, the house is constructed, and then ready to use. This mandala practice uses a similar process. In your mind visualize the whole universe with Mt. Meru in the center surrounded by the four continents and their subcontinents. Then fill that "property" with vast collections of excellent things; include everything, even your body, speech, and mind. In this visualization, there is nothing negative; we include only positive things and conditions. Extend your mind as far as you can, making it an offering to all enlightened beings. If you create a proper mandala, one with all the excellent qualities, it will result in your buddhafiield later. So, it is important to establish the mandala visualization well as a cause.

In Tibetan, the word for mandala is *kyil-khor*. *Kyil* means center and *khor* means a complete circle. This symbolizes the entirety of all phenomena. The significance of a mandala offering is that it brings the whole universe into your mind, and with full devotion and respect to the enlightened beings you then give it away. Visualize and bring every conceivable good thing into one place and then offer it. Include the essence of the entire universe, whatever we think is most important, and make the offering without attachment.

Some may think, “I don’t have anything suitable to offer. How can I ever accumulate merit?” There is no need for discouragement. When such thoughts come to mind, remember that if one knows how to perform this practice, everything in the universe is available and there can never be a lack of offerings.

Mandala practice is clearly related to the practices of generosity and non-attachment. This can be seen in the openness of your mind, your willingness to make offerings without hesitation or reservation, and the actual offerings made joyfully with devotion and confidence. However, all six of the paramitas are integrated within this practice. They are:

1. Gathering all the physical materials, whatever is possible, visualizing the whole universe, and offering them all to the enlightened beings without any reservation is the practice of generosity. We are to joyfully engage in this perfection with a feeling that it is a privilege to do so.

2. Ensuring that the different materials to be offered are clean and pure is the practice of discipline. Engage in the practice with a pure motivation, with a mind that is not involved with samsaric activities or afflicting emotions, is based on wisdom and compassion, and is cultivated to attain enlightenment. These mental practices also constitute moral ethics.

3. Gathering all the proper materials together is the practice of patience. Patience can also be seen when you build the mental strength to overcome fear and discouragement in the face of difficulties and suffering.

4. Performing the practice repeatedly is joyous effort. Developing a sense of joy and a feeling of being fortunate to

have the rare opportunity to make these offerings are also joyous effort.

5. Establishing the visualization clearly and performing all the physical movements very precisely is the practice of meditative concentration.

6. Cultivation of the mind is the more important aspect of this practice, not making the physical offering. Understanding that we do all this to attain enlightenment, to free ourselves from attachment and afflicting emotions and to be able to benefit sentient beings is wisdom awareness. We use the practice to realize that nothing is independent, rather that all phenomena are dependent on many causes and conditions. The material aspect is just a symbol to help us overcome our laziness. The critical focus of the practice is cultivation of a proper mental state that is based on wisdom and compassion.

The physical hand movements described here are meant to enhance or demonstrate the actual mental training. *Engaging in the Conduct of Bodhisattvas* says that when you first practice generosity and are unfamiliar with how it’s done, just give something to your left hand with your right hand. The left hand can give it back to the right, and so on. You can learn the practice of giving very well by this going back and forth. After that, you can practice giving an insignificant thing to someone else. This way of gradual practice builds strength of mind based on wisdom and compassion. As your practice progresses, give away a vegetable or a piece of fruit. When this practice is done well, you will eventually be able to give even your own body away as if it too, were a piece of fruit.

The mandala is a symbol. Just a handful of rice is offered, so we don’t mind doing it and it doesn’t feel like we are giving away too much. But as we do it, we visualize the rice as representing all the good things that exist in the entire universe. In this way, we become more and more accustomed to giving everything away, including our body, speech, and mind. Because we are working with our mind in this practice, when an opportunity arises to actually give something, we will be able to do it without fear or doubt. So, therefore, it is important to perform the offering carefully, neatly, and without mistake.

Sadhana**Visualization of the Fields of Accumulation**

NE KHANG OG MIN ZHING DANG YER ME PE/
 RANG DÜN SENG CHEN PAD MA NYI DE TENG/
 Ü SU DRIN CHEN TSA WE LA MA NI/
 YEN LAG DÜN DEN DOR JE CHANG GI TSÜL/
 NGO SANG CHAG NYI DOR DRIL THUG KAR NÖL/
 ZHAB NYI DOR JE KYIL TRUNG GYING TSÜL ZHUG/
 DAR DANG RIN CHEN NA TSOG GYEN GYI DZE/
 GYÜ PE SHE NYEN NAM DANG THAB CHIG ZHUG/

DÜN DU YI DAM KHOR LO DE WE CHOG/
 YAB YUM NANG TONG ZUNG JUG NYOM ZHUG TSÜL/

YE SU DÜ SUM SANG GYE TSEN PER DEN/
 KEL ZANG SANG GYE TONG DANG LHEN CHIG ZHUG/

GYAB TU SHE RAB PHA RÖL CHIN PE YUM/
 DRANG NGE THEG SUM CHÖ KYI NGA RO DROG/

YÖN DU TSE DEN JANG CHUB SEM PE TSOG/
 THEG SUM GEN DÜN NAM KYI YONG SU KOR/

THRI YI TSAM KÜN DAM PA CHÖ KHYONG WE/
 SUNG MA GYA TSO TRIN THRIG TA BUR GYUR//

Extended Thirty Seven Point Mandala

OM BAZRA BHUMI AH HUNG/
 ZHI NAM PAR DAG PA WANG CHEN SER GYI SA ZHI/
 OM BAZRA REKHE AH HUNG/
 CHI CHAG RI MU KHYÜ KYI YONG SU KOR WE Ü SU/

1. HUNG/ RI'I GYEL PO RI RAB/
2. SHAR LÜ PHAG PO/
3. LHO DZAM BU LING/
4. NUB BA LANG CHÖ/
5. JANG DRA MI NYEN/

Sadhana**Visualization of the Fields of Accumulation**

My dwelling place is inseparable from the Akanishtha buddhafiield. In the space in front of me is a lion throne on which are a lotus and sun and moon disk seats, in the center of which sits my kind root lama in the form of Vajradhara with the seven characteristics. Blue in color, two arms, holding a vajra and bell crossed at the heart, he sits gracefully in the vajra posture, adorned by silks and various jewel ornaments and surrounded by the lineage lamas.

In front of the lion throne is the yidam Chakrasamvara, the male and female aspects in union, whose manifestation is simultaneously appearance and emptiness.

At the right side of the throne are the buddhas of the three times, possessing the major and minor marks, together with the thousand buddhas of this fortunate eon.

Behind the throne is Prajñāparamita proclaiming the provisional Dharma, the definitive Dharma and the teachings of the three yanās.

To the left of the throne is the assembly of the compassionate bodhisattvas, completely surrounded by the sanghas of the three yanās.

Around the throne are the Dharma protectors, an ocean of guardians gathered like clouds.

Extended Thirty Seven Point Mandala

OM BAZRA BHUMI AH HUNG!

The base is the completely pure golden ground.

OM BAZRA REKHE AH HUNG!

A wall of iron mountains forms a full circle.

1. HUNG! At the center stands Mount Meru, the king of mountains.
2. To the east is Superior Body (Purvavideha).
3. To the south is Rose-Apple Continent (Jambudvīpa).
4. To the west is Wish granting Cow (Aparagodaniya).
5. To the north is Northern Unpleasant Sound (Uttarakuru).

- 6 - 7. SHAR DU LÜ DANG LÜ PHAG/
 8 - 9. LHOR NGA YAB DANG NGA YAB ZHEN/
 10 - 11. NUB TU YO DEN DANG LAM CHOG DRO/
 12 - 13. JANG DU DRA MI NYEN DANG DRA MI NYEN
 GYI DA/
 14. RIN PO CHE'I RI WO/
 15. PAG SAM GYI SHING/
 16. DÖ JO YI BA/
 17. MA MÖ PA'I LO TOG/
 18. KHOR LO RIN PO CHE/
 19. NOR BU RIN PO CHE/
 20. TSÜN MO RIN PO CHE/
 21. LÖN PO RIN PO CHE/
 22. LANG PO RIN PO CHE/
 23. TA CHOG RIN PO CHE/
 24. MAG PÖN RIN PO CHE/
 25. TER CHEN PO'I BUM PA/
 26. GEG PA MA/
 27. THRENG WA MA/
 28. LU MA/
 29. GAR MA/
 30. ME TOG MA/
 31. DUG PÖ MA/
 32. NANG SEL MA/
 33. DRI CHAB MA/
 34. NYI MA/
 35. DA WA/
 36. RIN PO CHE'I DUG/
 37. CHOG LE NAM PAR GYEL WE GYEL TSEN/

- 6 - 7. To the southeast is Body (Deha),
 To the northeast is Great Body (Videha).
 8 - 9. To the southwest is Tail (Camara).
 To the southeast is Other Tail (Aparacamara).
 10 - 11. To the northwest is Possessing Movement (Shatha).
 To the southwest is Walk in the Supreme Path
 (Uttaramantrina).
 12 - 13. To the northeast is Unpleasant Sound (Kurava).
 To the northwest is Companion of Unpleasant Sound
 (Kaurava).
 14. The precious mountain,
 15. the wish-fulfilling tree,
 16. the wish-granting cow,
 17. the grain that needs no toil.
 18. The precious wheel,
 19. precious jewel,
 20. precious queen,
 21. precious minister,
 22. precious elephant,
 23. precious steed,
 24. precious general,
 25. vase of great treasure.
 26. The goddess of grace,
 27. goddess of garlands,
 28. goddess of song,
 29. goddess of dance,
 30. goddess of flowers,
 31. goddess of incense,
 32. goddess of radiant light,
 33. goddess of fragrant water.
 34. The sun,
 35. the moon,
 36. the precious parasol,
 37. the victory banner triumphant in every direction.

Ü SU LHA DANG MI'I PEL JOR PHÜN SUM TSOG PA
 MA TSANG WA ME PA/
 ZHING KHAM NAM PAR DAG PA DI NYI/
 DRIN CHEN TSA WA DANG GYÜ PAR CHE PE
 PEL DEN LA MA DAM PA NAM DANG/
 YI DAM KYIL KHOR GYI LHA TSOG/
 KÖN CHOG RIN PO CHE NAM PA SUM/
 PA WO KHAN DRO CHÖ KYONG SUNG
 MA DANG CHE PA NAM LA BÜL WAR GYI'O/
 THUG JE DRO WE DÖN DU ZHE SU SÖL/
 ZHE NE JIN GYI LAB TU SÖL//

Seven Point Mandala

SA ZHI PÖ CHÜ JUG SHING ME TOG TRAM/
 RI RAB LING ZHI NYI DE GYEN WA DI/
 SANG GYE ZHING LA MIG TE PHÜL WA YI/
 DRO KÜN NAM DAG ZHING DU KYE WAR SHOG/

KU SUM YONG DZOG LA ME TSOG NAM LA/
 CHI NANG SANG SUM DE ZHIN NYI KYI CHÖ/
 DAG LÜ LONG CHÖ NANG SI YONG ZHE LA/
 LA ME CHOG GI NGÖ DRUB TSEL DU SÖL/

NYE CHIR MANDEL ZANG PO DI PHÜL WE/
 JANG JUB LAM LA BAR CHE MI JUNG SHING/
 DÜ SUM GYEL WE GONG PA TOG PA DANG/
 SI PAR MI THRÜL SHI WAR MI NE SHING/
 NAM KHA DANG NYAM PE DRO NAM DRÖL WAR SHOG/

CHAG TSEL WA DANG CHÖ CHING SHAG PA DANG/
 JE SU YI RANG KÜL ZHING SÖL WA YI/
 GE WA CHUNG ZE DAG GI CHI SAG PA/
 THAM CHE DZOG PE JANG CHUB CHIR NGO'O/

OM GURU DEWA DAKINI RATNA MANDALA PRATITSHA
 SVAHA

repeat as many times as possible

In the center of this mandala is
 the most perfect wealth of gods and
 humans with nothing lacking.
 I offer this completely pure buddhfield to the
 glorious, holy, kind root and lineage lamas,
 the assembled deities of the mandalas of the yidams,
 the three precious jewels, viras, dakinis,
 and Dharma guardians.
 Out of compassion, please accept these for the
 benefit of sentient beings.
 Accepting these, grant me your blessings.

Seven Point Mandala

The ground is sprinkled with scented water and
 strewn with flowers,
 adorned with Mount Meru, the four continents,
 and sun and moon:
 visualizing this as a buddhfield, I offer it.
 Thus, may all beings be born in the completely pure realm.

To the assemblies of lamas who perfected the three kayas,
 I offer the outer, inner, secret, and suchness offerings.
 Please accept my body, wealth, and all that appears and exists
 and grant me the unsurpassable, supreme siddhi.

By offering this excellent mandala for your delight
 May I not encounter obstacles on my path to enlightenment.
 May I realize the enlightenment of the Victorious Ones
 of the three times.
 May I not remain deluded in cyclic existence or abide in peace,
 but liberate sentient beings as boundless as the sky.

Whatever small merit I have gathered
 through prostration, offering, confession,
 rejoicing, requesting, and beseeching,
 all this I dedicate for the perfect awakening.

OM GURU DEWA DAKINI RATNA MANDALA PRATITSHA
 SVAHA

repeat as many times as possible

Request

DAG LÜ LONG CHÖ GE WE TSA WA CHE/
GYEL WA KHOR DANG CHE LA DENG BÜL GYI/
ZHE NE DAM PA NAM KYI GANG TOG PE/
NGE PE DÖN CHOG DAG GI TOG PAR SHOG/

DISSOLUTION

Finally the fields of accumulation dissolve into oneself. Rest in the non-referential state

Request

Now I offer my body and wealth, together with
the root of virtue
to the conquerors and their retinues.
By acceptance of these offerings,
may I realize the supreme definitive meaning
as the buddhas have realized.

DISSOLUTION

Finally the fields of accumulation dissolve into oneself. Rest in the non-referential state

Sadhana Commentary

Preparation

There are two mandalas associated with this practice, the “established” mandala in the center of your shrine and the one that is offered. The established mandala is the base for your visualization, and consists of five points. The tall point in the center of the established mandala represents Mt. Meru, and has sides of white, blue, red, and yellow. Mount Meru itself is made of four precious materials. The eastern slope is made of silver, and reflects white light toward the lands in the east. The southern slope is made of lapis lazuli, and reflects blue light toward the south. The western slope is ruby and reflects red toward lands in the west. The northern slope consists of gold and reflects yellow in that direction. The four surrounding continents are half the size of Mount Meru. Some practitioners in the West have found that marzipan (almond paste) works well to construct the established mandala. The sides can be painted with food coloring or acrylic paint. Precious or semi-precious stones can be crushed and used to fill up the center. This established mandala stays in place the whole time you are doing all 111,111 offerings.

This visualization is symbolic and gives great support for this meditation practice. During the actual practice, the center Mt. Meru is the place to visualize all the root and lineage masters. The eastern continent supports our meditation of the yidam deities. The southern continent supports our visualization of all the buddhas. The western continent supports our visualization of the Dharma teachings. All the sanghas, including great bodhisattvas and arhats, are to the north.

Before doing the practice, you must gather together the materials that are going to make up the offered mandala. The primary substances in the offering are usually grain and medicinal herbs. In Tibet, we use barley and wheat. Here, you may use rice or perhaps a mixture of rice with corn, beans, and other dry grains. They should all be very clean. Mix the grains with medicinal herbs, such as the six general medicines: large cardamom (Tib.: *ka-ko-la*), bamboo juice (Tib.: *cu-gang*), cloves (Tib.: *li-shi*), saffron (Tib.: *gur-kum*), nutmeg (Tib.: *dza-ti*), small cardamom (Tib.: *sug-smel*), and any others that are known to be used for healing. In this way, the practice also becomes a source of healing for our physical

and mental problems. Saffron is an especially important medicine that helps everything except high wind energy. Whatever semi-precious stones you have can also be mixed in with the grains.

The Actual Practice

Visualization of the Fields of Accumulation

My dwelling place is inseparable from the Akanishtha buddhafield. In the space in front of me is a lion throne on which are a lotus and sun and moon disk seats, in the center of which sits my kind root lama in the form of Vajradhara with the seven characteristics. Blue in color, two arms, holding a vajra and bell crossed at the heart, he sits gracefully in the vajra posture, adorned by silks and various jewel ornaments and surrounded by the lineage lamas.

In front of the lion throne is the yidam Chakrasamvara, the male and female aspects in union, whose manifestation is simultaneously appearance and emptiness.

At the right side of the throne are the buddhas of the three times, possessing the major and minor marks, together with the thousand buddhas of this fortunate eon.

Behind the throne is Prajñāparamita proclaiming the provisional Dharma, the definitive Dharma and the teachings of the three yantras.

To the left of the throne is the assembly of the compassionate bodhisattvas, completely surrounded by the sanghas of the three yantras.

Around the throne are the Dharma protectors, an ocean of guardians gathered like clouds.

This is the visualization of the figures to whom we offer the mandala. It is identical to the visualization for the refuge practice, as was described in Chapter 2. Please refer to that if needed. After the visualization is well established, start to construct the offering mandala.

First, sprinkle saffron water over all the rice mixture and work it in so the rice won't be too dry or too wet. Set some aside in a separate bowl to use later. Hold a small amount of rice in your

left hand, and take up the base plate in that hand. If the base is imprinted with the eight auspicious signs, the wheel of Dharma should be facing you. Clean the base by sprinkling it with a few drops of saffron water; then holding a pinch of rice between your right thumb and ring finger, wipe the base plate off with your right forearm three times in clockwise direction and three times counterclockwise. Recite the hundred-syllable mantra while you are doing this. Chanting the 100-syllable mantra while wiping, meditate that your mind, as the basis for construction of the mandala, is fully purified; no stain of obscuration remains. Your purified mind is the foundation for the entire universe. Then, on the basis of that pure mind, construct all the following elements, which represent the excellent qualities of the mind, and make offering to all the enlightened beings.

The translation, detailed description, and meaning of the following offerings will be described in the next section. The detailed instructions on how to perform this offering can be received from a master.

**OM BAZRA BHUMI AH HUNG/
ZHI NAM PAR DAG PA WANG CHEN SER GYI SA ZHI/
Take some rice and spread it evenly over the plate.**

**OM BAZRA REKHE AH HUNG/
CHI CHAG RI MU KHYÜ KYI YONG SU KOR WE Ü SU/
This goes around the periphery to make the wall, not too close
and not too shallow.**

**1. HUNG/ RI' I GYEL PO RI RAB/
This is Mt. Meru, so make a larger mound of rice in the middle.**

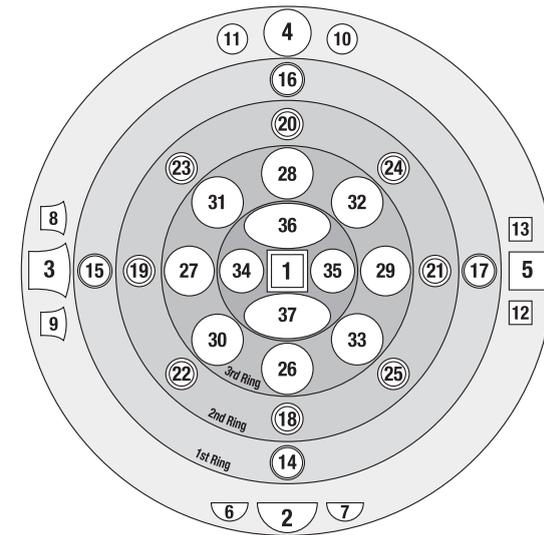
Then form the four continents:

**2. SHAR LÜ PHAG PO/
This heap of rice goes in the east, which is the side closest to you.**

**3. LHO DZAM BU LING/
This heap of rice goes in the south, which is to your left as
you go around the base clockwise.**

**4. NUB BA LANG CHÖ/
This heap of rice goes in the west, which is the side farthest from you.**

**5. JANG DRA MI NYEN/
This heap of rice goes in the north, which is on your right.**



Then add the eight islands or subcontinents:

**6 - 7. SHAR DU LÜ DANG LÜ PHAG/
These are two smaller heaps to the left and
right of the eastern continent (closest to you).**

**8 - 9. LHOR NGA YAB DANG NGA YAB ZHEN/
These are two smaller heaps to the back and
front of the southern continent (to your left).**

**10 - 11. NUB TU YO DEN DANG LAM CHOG DRO/
These are two smaller heaps to the right and
left of the western continent (farthest from you).**

**12 - 13. JANG DU DRA MI NYEN DANG DRA MI NYEN
GYI DA/
These are two smaller heaps to the front and
back of the northern continent (to your right).**

This completes the base of Mt. Meru. Place the first ring onto the mandala, and offer:

**14. RIN PO CHE'I RI WO/
Form a heap in the east, toward you.**

**15. PAG SAM GYI SHING/
Form a heap in the south, to your left.**

16. DÖ JO YI BA/

Form a heap in the west, farthest from you.

17. MA MÖ PA'I LO TOG/

Form a heap in the north, on your right.

Place the second ring onto the mandala, and offer the seven royal articles and the vase:

18. KHOR LO RIN PO CHE/

Heap rice in the east, toward you.

19. NOR BU RIN PO CHE/

Heap rice in the south, on your left.

20. TSÜN MO RIN PO CHE/

Heap rice in the west, farthest from you.

21. LÖN PO RIN PO CHE/

Heap rice in the north, on your right.

22. LANG PO RIN PO CHE/

Heap rice in the southeast, midway point, left and toward you.

23. TA CHOG RIN PO CHE/

Heap rice in the southwest, midway point, left and away from you.

24. MAG PÖN RIN PO CHE/

Heap rice in the northwest, midway point, right and away from you.

25. TER CHEN PO'I BUM PA/

Heap rice in the northeast, midway point, right and toward you.

Place the third ring onto the mandala, and visualize the eight offering goddesses, sun, moon and so forth:

26. GEG PA MA/

Heap rice in the east, toward you.

27. THRENG WA MA/

Heap rice in the south, to your left.

28. LU MA/

Heap rice in the west, farthest from you.

29. GAR MA/

Heap rice in the north, to your right.

30. ME TOG MA/

Heap rice in the southeast, midway point, left and toward you.

31. DUG PÖ MA/

Heap rice in the southwest, midway point, left and away from you.

32. NANG SEL MA/

Heap rice in the northwest, midpoint right and away from you.

33. DRI CHAB MA/

Heap rice in the northeast, midpoint right and toward you.

34. NYI MA/

Heap rice in the south, to your left.

35. DA WA/

Heap rice in the north, to your right.

36. RIN PO CHE'I DUG/

Heap rice in the west, farthest from you.

37. CHOG LE NAM PAR GYEL WE GYEL TSEN/

Heap rice in the east, toward you.

Place more rice in the center, then place the top piece on while saying:

Ü SU LHA DANG MI'I PEL JOR PHÜN SUM TSOG
 PA MA TSANG WA ME PA/
 ZHING KHAM NAM PAR DAG PA DI NYI/
 DRIN CHEN TSA WA DANG GYÜ PAR CHE PE
 PEL DEN LA MA DAM PA NAM DANG/
 YI DAM KYIL KHOR GYI LHA TSOG/
 KÖN CHOG RIN PO CHE NAM PA SUM/
 PA WO KHAN DRO CHÖ KYONG SUNG MA DANG
 CHE PA NAM LA BÜL WAR GYI'O/
 THUG JE DRO WE DÖN DU ZHE SU SÖL/
 ZHE NE JIN GYI LAB TU SÖL/

*In the center of this mandala is the most perfect wealth of
 gods and humans with nothing lacking.
 I offer this completely pure buddhfield to
 the glorious, holy, kind root and lineage lamas,
 the assembled deities of the mandalas of the yidams,
 the three precious jewels, viras, dakinis, and Dharma guardians.
 Out of compassion, please accept these for the
 benefit of sentient beings.
 Accepting these, grant me your blessings.*

Turn the completed offering around so that the front, indicated by the Dharma wheel, is facing the field of merit to which the offering is being made. Hold it up with both hands, and say the following prayers:

*The ground is sprinkled with scented water and strewn with flowers, adorned with Mount Meru, the four continents, and sun and moon: visualizing this as a buddhafiield, I offer it.
Thus, may all beings be born in the completely pure realm.*

*To the assemblies of lamas who perfected the three kayas,
I offer the outer, inner, secret, and suchness offerings.
Please accept my body, wealth, and all that appears and exists
and grant me the unsurpassable, supreme siddhi.*

*By offering this excellent mandala for your delight
may I not encounter obstacles on my path to enlightenment.
May I realize the enlightenment of the Victorious Ones
of the three times.
May I not remain deluded in cyclic existence or abide in peace,
but liberate sentient beings as boundless as the sky.*

*Whatever small merit I have gathered through prostration,
offering, confession, rejoicing, requesting, and beseeching,
all this I dedicate for the perfect awakening.*

OM GURU DEWA DAKINI RATNA MANDALA PRATITSHA SVAHA

*Now I offer my body and wealth, together with the root of virtue
to the conquerors and their retinues.
By acceptance of these offerings,
may I realize the supreme definitive meaning
as the buddhas have realized.*

Place the completed mandala in front of the shrine, near where you are going to do prostrations. A bowl of rice containing a set-aside portion of the initial mixture should be within reach. The accumulation of mandala offerings is usually accompanied by prostrations. Say this verse with each prostration:

SA ZHI PÖ CHÜ JUG SHING ME TOG TRAM/ RI RAB LING ZHI NYI DE GYEN PA DI/ SANG GYE ZHING LA MIG TE PHÜL PA YI/ DRO KÜN NAM DAG ZHING DU KYE WAR SHOG/

*The ground is sprinkled with scented water and strewn with flowers,
adorned with Mount Meru, the four continents,
and sun and moon:
visualizing this as a buddhafiield, I offer it.
Thus, may all beings be born in the completely pure realm.*

With each prostration, add a handful of rice to the mandala. It would be good to use a spoon for this as a convenience, but using your hand is fine, too. Each time you add rice, you are symbolically offering the whole universe to the buddhafiield, so 111,111 prostrations equal 111,111 offerings of the mandala.

Prostrations are very beneficial for your body and mind. However, if you cannot physically prostrate, sit comfortably, hold the plate in your hand, and make a seven point mandala offering while chanting the verse as above. The seven points are Mt. Meru, the four continents, the sun and moon. Construct a new mandala each time you recite the verse, until you reach 111,111 repetitions.

Do as many as possible in a session. A feeling of joy and fortune should arise, thinking, "I am so happy that I can offer the whole universe, including my body, speech, mind, and root virtues, to these enlightened beings." This is a special method of releasing attachment.

Dissolution

If you have been doing prostrations, sit down when you are finishing the session. Take a deep breath, and exhale all your physical and mental tension. Relax, and then dismantle the offered mandala as described in the next section, and make one more thirty-seven point offering, starting with the hundred-syllable mantra. Place this mandala on the shrine, and then do the dissolution portion of the practice.

All the Dharma protectors dissolve into the yidams. The sangha dissolves into the Dharma, Dharma dissolves into the buddhas, and the buddhas dissolve into the yidam Chakrasamvara. The

yidam's retinue dissolves into the yidam, who then melts into light and dissolves into the lineage masters. The lineage masters dissolve into Vajradhara in the center. Finally, Vajradhara, the embodiment of all the wisdom, compassion, qualities, and activities of these buddhas and bodhisattvas, melts into light and dissolves into you. The light pervades your entire body, so that you receive all their blessings and purify all obscurations of your body, speech, and mind. After the gross and subtle obscurations have been purified, meditate on the inseparability of appearance and emptiness, the nature of Vajradhara. Without any mental pushing, chasing, or expecting, rest the mind in that state free of elaboration and contrivance, which is a still and subtle state of wisdom. After meditating there, say the dedication prayers as described in Chapter 7.

When you have completed 111,111 offerings, it is good to offer the stones you used to make your mandalas to the throne of a buddha statue. Many jewels can be placed in the base of a statue. The established mandala from the altar should be discarded in a clean place.

**The Precious Vase of the Two Accumulations:
the Direct Instructions on the Thirty-seven Offerings
of the Exalted Mandala**

Written by Bhikshu Ngedon Gyatso

NAMO GURU!

A practitioner who wants to accumulate vast amounts of merit and benefit for limitless sentient beings should practice the mandala offering. There are many different systems of mandala offering. In the system of the Indian masters Buddha Guhya (Sangye Sangwa), Master Kampa, Lobpon Nyogme Dorje and so forth, one offers twenty-three heaps (of offerings): Mt. Meru; the four continents; the eight islands; the seven articles of the royal kingdom; the treasure vase; the sun and the moon. The offerings according to Master Manjushrikirti are the same as the previous twenty-three except that, in the place of the treasure vase, one puts one's own body. The system of Master Dzetari has seventeen heaps. The system according to Kalachakra adds, to the above twenty-three, the fire at the end of a kalpa and the planet Rahula, which makes twenty-five offerings. According to the ancient tantric system, most practitioners offer seven heaps. According to most of the earlier great masters of the Dagpo Kagyu, one should offer the twenty-three heaps. In some traditions, practitioners offer eleven or fifteen. There are many traditions in Tibet, the Land of the Snows.

Sakyapa Drogon Chögyal Phagpa founded the system of mandala offering based on the first set of twenty-three, as described above, plus the precious mountain, the wish fulfilling tree, the wish granting cow, the harvest that requires no toil, the eight goddesses, the parasol, and the victory banner, which equals thirty-seven offerings. This system is accepted by most lineages and is accepted by our own tradition. The explanation to follow is according to this system.

The Materials for the Mandala Offering

All the materials for the mandala must be pure and of good quality. Gyalwa Yangonpa said, "The metal [of the base and rings] should be free from rust and spots; and should be well washed and cleaned. Make the heaps with a variety of medicinal plants and precious jewels." The best materials for the mandala plate are gold or silver. The usual materials are copper or brass or, at least, stone, wood or clay; whichever one can obtain. No definite shape is described. However, according to tradition the shape should be round, well made, and so forth. The center of the offering plate should be higher and the surrounding areas should be lower.

It is very important for it to be free of all defects such as holes, rust, or spots. Gyalwa Yangonpa said, "If there is a hole, it shortens one's life. If there are rust and spots, they cause many illnesses, and one's morals decline. If the center is lower, one will not gather spiritual disciples. If there is a hole in the outside, one cannot accumulate wealth. If rust or spots appear on the outside, your wealth will diminish or be lost entirely. If there is a hole in the periphery, one will not gather disciples. If there are rust and spots, you will be surrounded by impure disciples."

Regarding the size of the mandala offering plate, if it is precious metal, it should be at least four inches in height; if stone, wood or clay, it should be at least one foot.

The substance of the offerings, if possible, should consist of precious jewels and metals such as gold, silver, coral, *vairata*, pearl, ruby, *suganda*, turquoise, shell, agate, crystal, emerald, sapphire, amber, onyx, *manaho*, jade, and so forth. Otherwise one may use the precious medicinal plants such as Yellow Myrobalan, sandalwood, nutmeg, Beleric Myrobalan, Emblic Myrobalan, clove, cardamom, long pepper, plumbago, aloewood, saffron, and so forth. At least, one should use various grains such as rice, white barley, wheat, and so forth, free from husks and dust, and mixed with saffron and the essence of medicinal plants, depending on what one can afford. It is necessary to properly prepare the offering.

The Method of Offering the Mandala

One must first wash and clean the hands to avoid defiling the offerings. If the mandala plate is not well cleaned, the practitioner's mind will not be clear and the elements will become imbalanced. The mandala should be held by the left hand. Clean the mandala plate with the edge of the right forearm (on the side with the little finger) while reciting the hundred syllable mantra once. One should meditate, as the mandala is being cleaned, that the dust and obscurations of all sentient beings' minds are cleaned. If the saffron water is not sprinkled on the mandala plate, it will cause the practitioner to be reborn in a desert. Therefore, saffron water is sprinkled clockwise on the plate.

After that, meditate that, in an instant, the mandala plate dissolves into the non-objectified state and from that visualize a great blue, clean, clear, salty ocean 800,000 *yojanas* deep. Distribute the materials of the offering, such as barley or other grains, evenly in a clockwise direction covering the plate and say:

**OM BAZRA BHUMI AH HUNG/
ZHI NAM PAR DAG PA WANG CHEN SER GYI SA ZHI/
OM BAZRA BHUMI AH HUNG!**

The base is the completely pure golden ground.

When you say that, meditate that on the ocean in the center arises the great golden foundation of the element earth, 320,000 *yojanas* high, as even as the palm of the hand. The width of both the water and earth is 1,203,450 *yojanas*. Its shape is round like a drum.

Then, inside the edge of the mandala plate, make a heap going clockwise which forms the outer wall while saying:

**OM BAZRA REKHE AH HUNG/
CHI CHAG RI MU KHYÜ KYI YONG SU KOR WE Ü SU/
OM BAZRA REKHE AH HUNG!**

A wall of iron mountains forms a full circle.

At that time, meditate that on the perimeter is a mountain wall made of iron. The height and width is 312 *yojanas* and four *kroschas*. The space inside the round wall is filled with 80,000 *yojanas* of water.

1. In the center of the mandala make one big heap and say:

HUNG/ RI' I GYEL PO RI RAB/

At the center stands Mount Meru, the king of mountains.

Then meditate that the center of the foundation is Mount Meru surrounded by the seven golden circular mountains and lakes. In the middle of the ocean is the seventh golden circular mountain named Nimidhara (Outer Rim). It is 625 yojanas high. Its shape is similar to the iron wall. Inside this is the seventh lake. Its width is 625 yojanas. Its water possesses the eight qualities.

Inside this is the sixth golden mountain named Vinataka (Bowed Down), 1,250 yojanas high, with the same shape as before. Inside this is the sixth lake. Its width is 1,250 yojanas and it contains water with the same eight qualities.

Inside this is the fifth golden mountain named Ashakarna (Horse Nose), 2,500 yojanas high, with the same shape as before. Inside this is the fifth lake. Its width is 2,500 yojanas and it contains water with the same eight qualities.

Inside this is the fourth golden mountain named Sudarshana (Good Looking), 5,000 yojanas high, with the same shape as before. Inside this is the fourth lake. Its width is 5,000 yojanas and it contains water with the same eight qualities.

Inside this is the third golden mountain named Khadiraka (Acacia Tree), 10,000 yojanas high, with the same shape as before. Inside this is the third lake. Its width is 10,000 yojanas and it contains water with the same eight qualities.

Inside this is the second golden mountain named Ishadhara (Plough Holder), 20,000 yojanas high, with the same shape as before. Inside this is the second lake, its width is 20,000 yojanas and it contains water with the same eight qualities.

Inside this is the first golden mountain named Yugandhara (Yoke Holder), 40,000 yojanas high, with the same shape as before. Inside this is the first lake. Its width is 40,000 yojanas and depth is 40,000 yojanas and it contains water with the same eight qualities.

In the center of that first lake stands Mount Meru, 160,000 yojanas high. The bottom half is under the water and the top half is above the water. The width is 160,000 yojanas. It is square shaped. Each of the four directions has four plateaus. On the top there are eight sections. The east side of the mountain is white crystal. The south is blue lapis lazuli. The west is red ruby. The north is yellow gold.

Within the seven golden mountains are palaces of the seven great yakshas named Bhumika, Suvarnapada, Balavan, Vishnu, Yashahshri, "Lifting Mountains" (tib.: *ri 'degs*), Vararuci and many other gods included in the four divisions of the great kings. In the seven lakes the naga king Nanda and an inconceivable number of different types of nagas abide.

Mount Meru has levels under the ocean. The fourth level is the city of the demigods. In the first level above the ocean on Mount Meru are the ten cities of the yakshas called Karotapani. In the second level above the ocean are the ten cities of the yakshas called Mali. In the third level above are the ten cities of Sadamatta, and the fourth level is the palace of the four guardian kings. On the four corners of the top of Mount Meru are the palaces of the four yakshas called "The Duty of the Four Times." On the top of Mount Meru are all the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty three.

All of this visualization is to be established clearly in one moment.

2. On the mandala plate, in front of the center heap of offerings, make a heap in the east and say:

SHAR LÜ PHAG PO/

To the east is Superior Body.

At that time meditate that, in between the outer golden mountain and iron wall, on the salty ocean, is a continent in which the beings are taller than beings in the other continents. The continent is made of white crystal, the sides are shaped like a crescent moon. The three long sides are 2,000 yojanas long and the front side which faces the iron wall is 350 yojanas long. In this continent are limitless lands, mountains, rivers, cities, wealth, and so forth.

3. In the south make one heap and say:

LHO DZAM BU LING/

To the south is Rose-Apple Continent.

At that time meditate that on the salty ocean is the continent of Dzambudvipa, named after the sound of the Dzampo tree when its fruit falls in the ocean. The continent is made of blue lapis lazuli. The shape is like a chariot (or the shoulder blade). The three sides are 2,000 yojanas each and the side towards the iron wall is 3 yojanas. In this continent are limitless lands, mountains, rivers, cities, wealth, and so forth.

4. In the west make one heap and say:

NUB BA LANG CHÖ/

To the west is Wish-granting Cow.

At that time meditate that on the salty ocean is the continent of Wish granting Cow, named this because the beings receive all their wealth from the Wish granting Cow. The land is made of red ruby. It is round like a drum, 7,500 yojanas in circumference. In this continent are limitless lands, mountains, rivers, cities, wealth, and so forth.

5. In the north make one heap and say:

JANG DRA MI NYEN/

To the north is Northern Unpleasant Sound.

At that time meditate that on the salty ocean is the continent of Northern Unpleasant Sound, named that because of an unpleasant sound (the people of that continent hear the sound of the voice of death from a tree, a week before they are going to die). The land is made of yellow gold. The shape is square - each side 2,000 yojanas long, totaling 4,000. In this continent are limitless lands, mountains, rivers, cities, wealth, and so forth. It is like the god realm; there is no suffering; and there is always enjoyment of the supreme happiness.

6. and 7. On the right and left sides of the heap of offerings in the east make heaps and say:

SHAR DU LÜ DANG LÜ PHAG/

To the southeast is Body and the northeast is Great Body.

8. and 9. On the right and left sides of the heap of offerings in the south make heaps and say:

LHOR NGA YAB DANG NGA YAB ZHEN/

To the southwest is Tail, to the southeast is Other Tail.

10. and 11. On the right and left sides of the heap of offerings in the west make heaps and say:

NUB TU YO DEN DANG LAM CHOG DRO/

**To the northwest is Possessing Movement,
to the southwest is Walk in the Supreme Path.**

12. and 13. On the right and left sides of the heap of offerings in the north make heaps and say:

JANG DU DRA MI NYEN DANG DRA MI NYEN

GYI DA/

To the northeast is Unpleasant Sound,

to the northwest is Companion of Unpleasant Sound.

The islands have the same color and shape as the continent which they surround and are half the size. Inside are cities and so forth. Visualize this well.

14. Then in the eastern direction make a heap and say:

RIN PO CHE'I RI WO/

The precious mountain.

Inside the eastern continent visualize a huge high mountain filled with gold, silver, lapis, ruby, sapphire, and other precious jewels.

15. Then in the southern direction make a heap and say:

PAG SAM GYI SHING/

The wish-fulfilling tree.

Inside the southern continent visualize the wish fulfilling tree. The root is gold, the trunk is silver, the branches are lapis, the leaves are crystal, the petals are karkatana and the flowers are red pearls. The fruits are the essence of stone, made from the seven different precious jewels. It immediately grants food, drink, ornaments, clothing, and so forth, just by wishing.

16. Then in the western direction make a heap and say:

DÖ JO YI BA/

The wish-granting cow.

Inside the western continent visualize the wish granting cow. It has hair the color of an orange cloud at sunset, as if a piece of the sunset had landed on the ground. The horns are white like a diamond. The hooves are blue and radiant like sapphire. The skin of the neck is beautifully ornamented. It immediately grants jewels, grains, milk, and so forth, just by wishing.

17. Then in the northern direction make a heap and say:

MAMÖ PAI LO TOG/

The grain that needs no toil.

Inside the northern continent visualize a big wild field of the grain that grows by itself, because of the power of merit, without the effort of people plowing and seeding. The stem is four inches without husks. When harvested in the evening, it grows back in the morning; when harvested in the morning, it grows back in the evening, it is white and round like the moon and the flavor is delicious.

The Seven Royal Articles

18. Again make a heap in the eastern direction and say:

KHOR LO RIN PO CHE/

The precious wheel.

In the east visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, a wheel 500 yojanas wide made of Dzambu river gold, manifested by the power of the merit of the universal king. It has 1,000 spokes, a hub, and rim, and radiates light to all ten directions. When the universal king travels to other continents, he holds the wheel in his hand and says, "Precious Wheel, bring the victory, as you did for the previous universal king," and throws the wheel into the sky. By the power of the wheel, the four types of the army of the king can walk in the sky like a bird flies. Also, for example, one can travel one million yojanas a day, so that one can see the four continents and the god realms, as one wishes, and return that same day. Visualize countless wheels with these great qualities.

19. Make a heap in the southern direction and say:

NOR BU RIN PO CHE/

The precious jewel.

In the south visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, the Wisdom Lapis Lazuli Jewel. It manifests from the relics of the Buddha, with blue and pure color and shape with eight sides and a ninth part in the center. It is manifested by the power of the merit of the universal king. At night, when it is put on the banner, it can be seen clearly for 100 yojanas, like sunshine. That light cools in the hot summer and heats in the cold winter. In the surrounding 100 yojanas there will be no epidemics or untimely death. When there is famine and drought one can put the jewel on the banner and, by making a wish, it will rain food, clothes, different types of jewels, grain, or whatever one wishes, over the entire continent. Visualize countless jewels with these great qualities.

20. Make a heap in the western direction and say:

TSÜN MO RIN PO CHE/

The precious queen.

In the west visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, the precious queen, manifested by the power of the merit of the universal king. She is beautiful, youthful and of perfect height and weight. Her body smells like camphor and from her mouth comes the fragrance of lilies. She cools in the heat and brings warmth in the cold. Just by her touch she satisfies the body and mind. She is free from the five faults of inferior women: thinking of other men, stinginess, attachment to undesirable things, liking undesirable objects, and wishing to kill her husband. She possesses the eight good qualities of superior ladies: being agreeable, giving birth to many sons, being of the same high clan, being diplomatic, and not being jealous of other women, not gossiping, not possessing the wrong view, and not giving in to the power of desire, even in the absence of her husband. She has the power to dispel, for the beings in that continent, all the suffering of the body and mind, hunger, thirst, and depression, just by remembering her. Thus visualize countless precious queens possessing such qualities, wearing silken garments and adorned with the eight different types of ornaments.

21. Make a heap in the northern direction and say:

LÖN PO RIN PO CHE/

The precious minister.

In the north visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, the precious minister of high clan. He is manifested by the power of the merit of the universal king. He possesses the eye of the gods and can see all treasures underneath the ground. Therefore, all the treasure vaults of the king can be filled without disturbing the subjects. With great awareness, he understands perfectly whatever the king wishes. With his gazes, he accomplishes all the activities without the king's effort. He sustains all the subjects with great love and compassion without harm. Visualize countless precious ministers with these great qualities.

22. Make a heap in the southeastern direction and say:

LANG PO RIN PO CHE/

The precious elephant.

In the southeast visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, the precious elephant manifested by the power of the merit of the universal king. It is white as a snow mountain, huge, with six tusks and seven limbs (trunk, four legs, male organ, and tail) touching the ground. It has the strength of 1,000 ordinary elephants. It can go around the southern continent six times in a day and still does not feel tired. With great awareness, it understands clearly the intention of the rider, and walks so smoothly the body of the rider does not shake. It can walk on water, land, and in space. It always brings victory in battle with the enemy. Visualize countless precious elephants with these great qualities.

23. Make a heap in the southwestern direction and say:

TA CHOG RIN PO CHE/

The precious steed.

In the southwest visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, the precious steed manifested by the power of the merit of the universal king. He is blue, like the color of the neck of the peacock, with a perfectly shaped body, ornamented with the auspicious signs and marks. Because of his awareness, he understands peoples' minds. He can travel around the whole world and return to the king's palace during the sixth part of the day at dawn. His saddle is made of jewels. Visualize countless precious steeds with these great qualities.

24. Make a heap in the northwestern direction and say:

MAG PÖN RIN PO CHE/

The precious general.

In the northwest visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, the precious general manifested by the power of the merit of the universal king. He is a great warrior, wearing very protective brocade, the armor of the diamond scepter and the helmet. He holds the sword and shield, and stands powerfully. His strength dominates the power of others. He leads the four types of military services (soldiers on foot, elephants, chariots and horses) as they proceed toward the enemies. He is expert in all the skills of the wrathful activities and, by merely calling upon the four military services, all others immediately surrender without harming even one life. Visualize countless precious generals with these great qualities.

25. Make a heap in the northeastern direction and say:

TER CHEN PO'I BUM PA/

The vase of great treasure.

In the northwest visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, the treasure vase manifested by the power of the merit of the buddhas and the bodhisattvas. It has an open mouth, a long neck, a round belly and a narrow base. It is perfectly shaped, containing all desirable things. When you make a wish for food, grains, jewels, or whatever you desire, they manifest without effort. Visualize countless precious vases with these great qualities.

The Eight Goddesses

26. Make a heap in the eastern direction and say:

GEG PA MA/

The Goddess of grace.

In the east visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, the graceful goddess, blue in color, beautiful and full of grace. Her two hands hold five-pointed vajras and she is leaning to the left. She wears the inconceivably beautiful silk and precious ornaments. Visualize countless precious goddesses with these great qualities.

27. Make a heap in the southern direction and say:

THRENG WA MA/

The Goddess of garlands.

In the south visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, the goddess of garlands, yellow in color, holding the garland of jewels in the gesture of offering. She wears the inconceivably beautiful silk and precious ornaments. Visualize countless precious goddesses with these great qualities.

28. Make a heap in the western direction and say:

LU MA/

The Goddess of song.

In the west visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, the goddess of song, pink in color. Her two hands hold hand-cymbals or a lute, singing the song of five harmonious tunes of inconceivable beauty. She wears the inconceivably beautiful silk and precious ornaments. Visualize countless precious goddesses with these great qualities.

29. Make a heap in the northern direction and say:

GAR MA/

The Goddess of dance.

In the north visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, the goddess of dance, green in color. Her two hands are making the lotus turning mudra or holding the three spoked vajra. She performs various dances. She wears the inconceivably beautiful silk and precious ornaments. Visualize countless precious goddesses with these great qualities.

30. Make a heap in the southeastern direction and say:

ME TOG MA/

The Goddess of flowers.

In the southeast visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, the goddess of flowers, white or yellow in color. Her right hand holds a jeweled basket filled with the flowers of the gods, and her left hand scatters the flowers. She wears the inconceivably beautiful silk and precious ornaments. Visualize countless precious goddesses with these great qualities.

31. Make a heap in the southwestern direction and say:

DUG PÖ MA/

The Goddess of incense.

In the southwest visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, the goddess of incense, blue or white in color. Her left hand holds the censer and her right hand is in the joined hands (prayer) gesture. She wears the inconceivably beautiful silk and precious ornaments. Visualize countless precious goddesses with these great qualities.

32. Make a heap in the northwestern direction and say:

NANG SEL MA/

The Goddess of radiant light.

In the northwest visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, the goddess of light, red in color. Her two hands hold a banner shaped lamp, radiating light, made of clear precious jewels. She wears the inconceivably beautiful silk and precious ornaments. Visualize countless precious goddesses with these great qualities.

33. Make a heap in the northeastern direction and say:

DRI CHAB MA/

The Goddess with fragrant water.

In the northeast visualize, in the space above the outer three mountains and lakes, the goddess of fragrant water, green or gray in color. Her left hand holds a shell filled with fragrant water and her right hand is in the protection giving mudra, applying the fragrant water. She wears the inconceivably beautiful silk and precious ornaments. Visualize countless precious goddesses with these great qualities.

34. Make a heap on the right (i.e., the practitioner's left) of the mandala; and say:

NYI MA/

The sun.

In the space above the south of Yugandhara, the Yoke holding mountain visualize the sun, round in shape. It has a diameter of 30 yojanas and a height of 3 yojanas. The lower side is made of a fiery magnifying crystal lens, red and hot, radiating light in all directions. The upper surface of the sun contains the golden palace of the sun god with entourage, along with many other towns of the gods, with swimming pools, gardens, picnic parks, and so forth. They are fully decorated, and spontaneously established.

35. Make a heap on the left (of the mandala; i.e., the practitioner's right) and say:

DA WA/

The moon.

In the space above the north of Yugandhara, the Yoke holding mountain visualize the moon, round in shape. It has a diameter of 48 yojanas and a height of 5 yojanas. The lower side is a cooling watery crystal lens, white in color, radiating light in all directions. The upper surface of the moon contains the golden palace of the moon god with entourage, along with many other towns of the gods, with swimming pools, gardens, picnic parks, and so forth. They are fully decorated, and spontaneously established.

36. Make a heap behind and say:

RIN PO CHE'I DUG/

The precious parasol.

In the space above the west of Yugandhara, the Yoke holding mountain visualize the precious parasol. It has a ruby handle and 1,000 golden spokes. The parasol cloth is white silk of the gods. The edging is blue, yellow, and red. On the edge there are hanging strings of pearls and golden bells. The ornament on the top is lapis lazuli. Visualize countless precious parasols with these great qualities.

37. Make a heap in front and say:

CHOG LE NAM PAR GYEL WE GYEL TSEN/

The victory banner triumphant in every direction.

In the space above the east of Yugandhara, the Yoke holding mountain visualize a banner victorious in all directions, with a white crystal handle octagonal in shape. On the side is a white crescent moon, above that is a yellow bedurya, above that is a blue vajra. It is made of brocade cloth. The centers of the three panels of cloth on the edge are ornamented with a lion with eight legs and the fish with hair. It is adorned with three marks: crocodiles, pearl malas, and the golden bell and small bells. When the wind blows it makes a soothing sound.

Make this properly and beautifully. Hold it in front of the heart and bend your head slightly to the front. Then say:

**Ü SU LHA DANG MI'I PEL JOR PHÜN SUM TSOG PA MA
TSANG WA ME PA/**

**In the center of this mandala is the most perfect wealth of gods
and humans with nothing lacking.**

Generally speaking, the mandala offering is a great technique using interdependence to establish the buddhafield. Therefore, one should carefully perform it. It is said if the offering materials are not clean, with dust and husks and so forth that will cause the practitioner to be reborn in the land of the poor barbarians. If the center heap is lower, one cannot lead one's disciples. If the heaps are very close together, one may be born in a very narrow place. If the heaps are scattered, one will be born in the border lands, far from the central Dharma land. If the heaps are too close to the center, one will have more lethargy (sinking mind). If the faces of the flowers, conch shells and so forth are facing away from you, obstacles to attainment will arise.

When you dismantle the mandala, if it is done all at once, you may break the samaya with your Dharma friends. So therefore, one should avoid all these faults. If the practitioner has more lethargy, make the heaps taller. If one has more excitement, make the heaps smaller. If one does this it is an auspicious sign of dispelling these obstacles.

Then when disassembling the mandala, first touch the top and center and then bring it toward you in a counter clockwise direction. Meditate that you receive the ordinary and extraordinary attainments.

Regarding the beneficial effects of the offering of the mandala, in the Karandavyuha sutra, it is said:

All the supreme Sugatas said,
 one will be born inside the excellent palace
 with a golden complexion,
 free from all the various diseases,
 superior to gods and humans,
 elegant like the circle of the sun,
 possessing many jewels and gold.

One will become king of the king's clan
 and will be made offering by the three worlds.
 If one makes offerings of the mandala
 with flowers to the buddhas,
 one will become Lord of Beings
 and have a long life,
 free from all fears of the various sickness,
 this will be achieved by that person.

One who makes the Sugata mandala
 will be perfect in the six paramitas.
 Anointing with water and earth is generosity.
 Removing the husks is moral ethics.
 Mixing the medicine well is patience.
 Making effort is perseverance.
 One-pointed mind in that moment is samadhi.
 Watchfulness is the wisdom.

Making offering of this ground
 ornamented by various merits,
 one will obtain all the happiness of the gods
 and all the excellent enjoyments,
 be born in the human realm
 with a body more beautiful and brighter than gold,
 with perfect limbs and complexion like a lotus,
 and eyes that are beautifully elongated.

When Atisha was staying in Tibet, a practitioner in eastern India was practicing only the mandala offering, without engaging in any other meditation practice. One day a lotus flower blossomed in the center of the mandala plate. Not long after he became a siddha.

Another time, at a cemetery place called Land of Grass, in India, Acharya Aryadeva practiced only the mandala offering and actualized the supreme wisdom. He attained the rainbow body without leaving anything behind after death. There are many marvelous stories like this.

In Tibet, the land of the snow, Atisha also always cherished the practice of the mandala offering. Even in the bitter winter, because of offering the mandala, his hand became cracked in many places. The great scholar of Kashmir, Shakya Shri Bhadra, also followed the same path. So in the Kadampa tradition this practice became well known.

Likewise, the Precious Lama Lord Jigten Sumgön followed the same path. My most precious lama said, "Therefore, we as followers should imitate the life stories of the previous great masters. It is important to make this human life useful."

Generally speaking, the mandala of thirty-seven offerings is well known in all the different traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. I have seen many different commentaries written by scholars and non-scholars. On that basis I have included more of the clear oral tradition. So this can be called the Drigung Kagyu tradition of mandala offering instruction.

The direct instruction of the visualization of the thirty-seven offering mandala is called the *Precious Vase of the Two Accumulations*. This was written by my kind root lama Bhikshu Ngedon Gyatso (Ocean of Ultimate Meaning) who possessed the treasure teaching of Kadampa and Mahamudra lineage. His supreme wisdom matches his name. This was written on Lapchi Snow Mountain where the dakinis gather.

Mangalam

Title of the text in Tibetan: *'Phags pa'i mandal so bdun ma'i dmar khrid tshogs gnyis bum bzang zhes bya ba bzhugs so.*

CHAPTER 5
**The Marvellous Guru Yoga
pouring Blessings into
one's Mindstream**



The spiritual master is like a guide on the path.
He protects one from the lower realms
and leads one to liberation.
Attend him respectfully with body, speech, and mind.
This is my heart's advice.

by Drigung Dharmaradza
The Jewel Treasury of Advice

Introduction

Guru Yoga bestows blessings. The teacher is the example, the model. If we see the teacher as ordinary, our minds will remain in the ordinary state, but seeing him or her as Vajradhara will lift our state of mind. Viewing one's teacher as Vajradhara with utmost devotion is a way of uniting one's mind with the Vajradhara state. By thinking of the teacher as Vajradhara, we receive blessings, empowering us to achieve that state ourselves. When we view the teacher as compassionate and wise, the power of our devotion eliminates the hesitation in our minds. This is what we call the guru's blessing. The teacher must indeed have good qualities and realizations, but the important energy in Guru Yoga is that of the practitioner, the student's admiration and gratitude.

When we really study and practice, even if just a little bit of experience dawns in the mind, an inexpressible confidence and joy will arise. When this occurs, we feel a true, non-artificial devotion.

Devotion that arises not merely from faith in the teacher but from our own experience is the experience of true Guru Yoga. Within this deep devotion, we receive the four empowerments, which carry the special blessings that enable us to develop the four forms of a buddha.

The esteemed Gampopa said:

We are of the Blessing Lineage.

If we do not receive the guru's blessing,
there is no way to realize the mahamudra.

But for those who have the guru's blessings,
that realization is not difficult.

Therefore, in order to practice Guru Yoga, the mind must be strong and confident. If, when we are practicing, there is a limitation to our devotion, it will not work. To practice successful Guru Yoga, we must meditate from the very depths of our heart on the kindness of the root and lineage lamas, and on the excellent qualities of their body, speech, and mind. This devotion should be so powerful that the hairs of our body will stand on end, tears will well up in our eyes, and our voice will break. We have only the guru in our mind. When our mind is attracted to the guru, we will wish to pray to him day and night. Until such blazing experiences of successful Guru Yoga arise, we must continue to make effort in practice.

Sadhana

The only method of realizing the fundamental reality of mahamudra is to rest in the perception of the guru as the real buddha. Therefore, be diligent in the supplication from the depth of your heart.

Visualization

RANG NYI YI DAM L HAR SEL DÜN GYI KHAR/
 SENG THRI PAD MA NYI DE DEN TENG DU/
 NGO WO DRIN CHEN TSA WE LA MA NI/
 NAM PA CHOM DEN DOR JE CHANG GI KU/
 NGO SANG GEG CHE TSEN DANG PE JE GYEN/
 DOR JE DRIL BU THUG KAR NÖL TAB DZIN/
 DOR JE KYIL TRUNG GI ZHUG ZI Ö BAR/
 RIN CHEN NA TSOG RÜ GYEN DAR CHANG CHANG/
 KU LA ZHING KHAM KÜN DZOG CHU DA TAR/
 NANG LA RANG ZHIN MA DRUB Ö NANG ZHUG/
 DE LA GYÜ PE LA MA YI DAM DANG/
 KHAN DRO CHÖ KYONG GI KOR NE SUM DU/
 YI GE SUM DEN DE LE Ö TRÖ PE/
 CHOG CHU LA MA YI DAM CHÖ SUNG CHE/
 CHEN DRANG TSA WE LA ME KU LA TIM/
 SANG GYE KÜN DÜ RANG ZHIN LA MA GYUR/

Golden Lineage Prayer

NA MO GU RU/
 RIG KÜN TSO WO DRUG PA DOR JE CHANG/
 DÜ SUM GYEL WE RIG TRÜN TI LI'I ZHAB/
 KU SUM NGÖN GYUR KHE CHOG NA RO PAR/
 SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

Sadhana

The only method of realizing the fundamental reality of mahamudra is to rest in the perception of the guru as the real buddha. Therefore, be diligent in the supplication from the depth of your heart.

Visualization

I appear as the yidam deity. In the space in front of me is a lion throne on which are lotus, sun, and moon disks. On this, the essence of my kind root guru appears in the form of the exalted Vajradhara.

He is blue in color, graceful and adorned with the major and minor marks, and holds the vajra and bell crossed at the heart.

He sits in the lotus posture and radiates with dignity the light of the supreme qualities. He wears the various jewel and bone ornaments and silken robes.

Within his body every buddha field is perfectly complete. Like the reflection of the moon in water, he abides as a visible body of light, apparent yet without inherent existence.

He is surrounded by the lineage gurus, yidam deities, dakinis, and Dharma guardians. From the three syllables in the three places, light radiates and invites the wisdom beings of gurus, yidam deities, and Dharma guardians from the ten directions, absorbing them into the root guru's body and surrounding retinues. The guru becomes the embodiment of all the buddhas.

Golden Lineage Prayer

Namo Guru!
 Vajradhara, the sixth lord, principal of all families;
 Tilopa, who established the buddha families
 of the three times;
 Naropa, excellent scholar, who actualized the three kayas;
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

DRA KE GYA TSÖ THAR SÖN MAR PA DANG/
TOG PA NGÖN GYUR JE TSÜN MI LE ZHAB/
GANG CHEN TEN PE SOG SHING GAM PO PAR/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

NEL JOR MA YI JE ZUNG DOR JE GYEL/
LU DRUB NYI PA JIG TEN SUM GÖN ZHAB/
TEN PE SEL JE KHEN CHEN TSÜL DOR LA/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

NYI ME TOG PA NGÖN GYUR SANG GYE ÖN/
GYÜ DZIN DAM PE CHOG GYUR CHEN NGE ZHAB/
TI LI' I NAM THRÜL DOR JE DRAG PA LA/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

THUG JE CHEN PÖ NAM THRÜL THOG KHA WA/
NYI DZIN THRÜL DRÖL DRAG PA SÖ NAM ZHAB/
SA RA HA YI JE ZUNG DOR RIN LA/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

PAD ME NAM THRÜL DOR JE GYEL PO DANG/
THUB TEN GYE DZE CHÖ KYI GYEL PÖ ZHAB/
DRUB PE TSUG GYEN DÖN DRUB GYEL PO LA/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

CHOG LE NAM GYEL DAG PO WANG GI TSEN/
MI YI WANG PO CHÖ GYEL RAT NE ZHAB/
CHOG DOR THRÜL KU RAT NA DWA DZA LA/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

JAM YANG NAM THRÜL RIN CHEN CHÖ KYI GYEL/
GYEL WANG NYI PA TSUNG ME KÜN GE ZHAB/
TEN NYI SÖL DZIN JE TSÜN RAT NA LA/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

MEN NGAG DZÖ DZIN PEL GYI GYA TSO DANG/
KAN DRIN KHOR ME DHAR MA RA DZE ZHAB/
GYEL WE DUNG DZIN DRAG PE TSEN CHEN LA/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

Marpa, perfection of the ocean of linguistics;
Milarepa, perfection of realizations;
Gampopa, life-pole of the Buddha's teachings in the Snow Land;
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Dorje Gyalpo, Vajrayogini's chosen follower;
Lord Jigten Sumgön, the second Nagarjuna;
Tsultrim Dorje, great abbot, illuminator of the teachings;
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Sangye On, who actualized the realization of non-duality;
Chenga Drakpa Jungne, most excellent lineage holder;
Dorje Dragpa, manifestation of Tilopa;
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Thogkhawa, manifestation of the supreme Compassionate One;
Drakpa Sonam, who is free from the delusion of duality;
Dorje Rinchen, chosen follower of Saraha;
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Dorje Gyalpo, manifestation of Padmasambhava;
Chokyi Gyalpo, proponent of the sage's teachings;
Dondrup Gyalpo, crown jewel of all siddhas;
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Dhakupowang, Victorious One triumphant in every direction;
Chogyal Ratna, lord of human beings;
Ratna Dwaza, Vajrapani's emanation;
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Rinchen Chökyi Gyalpo, manifestation of Manjughosha;
Kunga Rinchen, peerless second buddha;
Jetsun Ratna, holder of the tradition of the two lineages;
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Palgyi Gyatso, treasure holder of the pith instructions;
Dharma Radza, whose kindness is without compare;
Drakpa Gyaltsen, holder of the victorious family lineage;
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

DREN PA DA ME DAG PO KA GYÜ KYI/
TEN PE NYING PO DOM SUM NE CHIG DÖN/
NGÖN PAR SEL DZE KÖN CHOG RAT NA LA/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

NE LUG RANG DRÖL KYE ME CHÖ KU LE/
MA YÖ DZIN DREL LONG CHÖ DZOG PE KU/
GANG DÜL DER TÖN CHÖ KYI DRAG PE ZHAB/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

CHI TAR DÜL NGÖN THUB TEN GYEL TSEN DZIN/
NANG TAR JANG SEM DRO LA BU ZHIN TSE/
RIM NYI ZUNG JUG THRIN LE NAM GYEL LA/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

GYEL WE SUNG RAB DO NGAG MA LÜ PA/
MA NOR THUG CHÜ ZHEN LA TÖN PAR DZE/
KYAB NE KÜN DÜ THRIN LE ZANG PÖ ZHAB/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

GANG GI ZAB SANG MIN DRÖL CHÖ KYI GÖ/
DRO KÜN LA ME JANG CHUB GÖ DZE PA/
KAN DRIN SUM DEN DÖN DRUB CHÖ GYEL LA/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

GYEL KÜN NGO WO CHAG NA PE KAR CHANG/
THRIN LE ZHI YI KHA KHYAB JANG DRÖL LA/
GÖ DZE KÖN CHOG TEN DZIN DRO DÜL ZHAB/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

ZAB SANG CHAG GYA CHEN PO NE LUG DÖN/
GYÜN ZANG NYAM ME TAG PAR BEB DZE PA/
RANG RIG NGÖN GYUR CHÖ KYI GYEL TSEN LA/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

Konchog Ratna, who illuminates the vital point
of the three vows,
which are the essence teachings
of the Dagpo Kagyu, the peerless guide:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Dharmakirti, the unborn dharmakaya,
the self-liberated mode-of-abiding,
manifests the unwavering sambhogakaya free from
grasping according to the needs of the trainees:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Thrinle Namgyal, outwardly holding the banners of the
Vinaya and Abhidharma, the teachings of the sage;
inwardly, through bodhicitta, compassionate to each
sentient being as if it was his only child;
union of the two stages:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Thrinle Sangpo, embodiment of all objects of refuge,
authentic master of all the words of the
Victorious One in sutra and tantra,
and who imparts them to others:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Döndrub Chögyal, who possesses the three kindnesses and
through the gate of the profound and secret teachings
of ripening and liberation leads all beings
to awakening:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Konchog Tenzin Drodul, essence of all the Victorious Ones,
holder of the white lotus,
who through the four activities brings all sentient beings
pervading space to awakening and liberation:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Chökyi Gyaltzen, who fully actualized self-awareness
and causes the excellent stream
of the profound, secret nature of mahamudra,
to flow without decline:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

NGE DÖN ZAB MO CHÖ KYI KHA YING LE/
 DAM PE CHAR GYI LÜ CHEN KYE ME PAR/
 TRI WAR DZE KHE CHÖ KYI NYI ME ZHAB/
 SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

RANG RIG KYE ME CHÖ KU NAM KHA LA/
 GAG ME RANG TSEL LONG KU ME SHEL KHAM/
 NYI ME Ö ZER THRÜL KU PAD ME TSEN/
 SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

DRUB GYÜ RIN CHEN JUNG DEN KHYÖN YANG SU/
 NGE DÖN ZAB SANG NOR BÜ DRO KÜN LA/
 DÖ GU TSÖL DZE DHAR MA DWA DZE ZHAB/
 SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

KYE ME Ö SEL CHEN PÖ LONG YANG LE/
 MA GAG DOR JE DZIN PE NGO WO NYI/
 KÖN CHOG TEN DZIN CHÖ WANG LO DRÖ LA/
 SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

JAM GÖN ZUR PHÜ NGA PE GYU THRÜL GAR/
 DRANG NGE CHÖ KYI DRO NAM DRÖL DZE PA/
 TSUNG ME DHAR MA MA NI' TSEN CHEN LA/
 SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

NYING JE LHA YI TRÜL PE GAR KHEN GYI/
 DRO NAM JANG CHUB CHOG LA GÖ DZE PA/
 KÖN CHOG KÜN DÜ TJUG JE NYI MA LA/
 SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

NGO TSAR DRUB PE KHYU CHOG SHIRI SING/
 GANG CHEN TEN DRÖ PEL DU LEG JÖN PA/
 RIG DZIN DRUB WANG NÜ DOR JE LA/
 SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

Chökyi Nyima, who guides sentient beings
 to the unborn state by the sublime rains which
 descend from the ultimate, profound Dharma space:
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Peme Gyaltzen, who manifests in the unborn self-awareness
 space of the dharmakaya as the unceasing,
 self-risen sun of sambhogakaya
 and the radiating non-dual light of nirmanakaya:
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Dharma Dwaza, who fulfills the wishes of all beings
 by granting the jewel of profound and secret teachings
 from the vast ocean of the precious practicing lineage:
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Konchog Tenzin Chöwang Lodrö,
 essence of the Vajra holder, unborn and unceasing,
 from the expansive vastness of the great luminosity:
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Peerless one named Dharmamani,
 illusory display of Manjushri with the five tresses of hair,
 who liberates sentient beings through
 the provisional and definitive Dharma:
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Thukje Nyima, embodiment of the three jewels,
 dancer with the appearance of the compassionate deity,
 who establishes sentient beings in supreme awakening:
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Mahasiddha Vidhyadhara Nuden Dorje,
 emanation of the amazing yogi Rshaba Shri Singha,
 you manifested in the Snow Land for the glory of
 Dharma and sentient beings:
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

PANG TOG YÖN TEN DÜ SUM GYEL KÜN DANG/
YER ME NYI KYANG BE PE NGANG TSÜL GYI/
DRO DÜL PA WO JE TSÜN CHÖ KYAB JER/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

JI TA JI NYE KHYEN PE CHEN RE KYI/
SHE JA KÜN ZIG DÖN GYI DOR JE DZIN/
KHYAB DAG TEN DZIN CHÖ KYI LO DRÖ LA/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

SHEG ZHÜ KYE CHI TRÖ TSEN RING PANG KYANG/
SAM ZHIN KYE WE GYU THRÜL ME PO CHE/
DRO KÜN DREN DZE ZHI WE LO DRÖ LA/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

JAM GÖN LA ME THUG JE GYU THRÜL LE/
SHE DRUB TEN PA NYI TAR SEL DZE PA/
TSUNG ME TEN DZIN CHÖ KYI JUNG NE LA/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

RANG RIG NGÖN GYUR TSA WE LA ME ZHAB/
NGÖ DRUB CHOG TSÖL YI DAM KYIL KHOR LHA/
BAR CHE SUNG DZE KHAN DRO CHÖ KYONG LA/
SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

DE TAR KA GYÜ YI ZHIN NOR BU LA/
GÜ PE SÖL TAB GE WA DI TSÖN TE/
DAG SOG LÜ CHEN DRO WA MA LÜ KÜN/
CHOG THÜN DRE BU TSE DIR THOB GYUR CHIG/

KYE WA KÜN TU YANG DAG LA MA DANG/
DREL ME CHÖ KYI PEL LA LONG CHÖ CHING/
SA DANG LAM GYI YÖN TEN RAB DZOG NE/
DOR JE CHANG GI GO PHANG NYUR THOB SHOG/

The great hero Jetsun Chökyab, though your excellent
qualities of abandonment and attainment equal
those of the buddhas of the three times,
you skillfully tame the minds of all sentient beings
by hiding these qualities:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Tenzin Chökyi Lodrö, presiding master
and all-knowing vajra-holder, seeing through
wisdom eyes that know the limitless diversity
of all phenomena and their nature:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Shiwe Lodrö, although having fully transcended all conceptions
of coming and going, birth and death,
you guide all beings with your wonderful illusory
display of birth at will:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Peerless Tenzin Chokyi Jungne,
emanation of the guru and protector Manjushri,
like the sun, you illuminate the teachings of
study and practice:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Root Guru, who has actualized the self-awareness wisdom;
mandala of the yidam deities who
grant the extraordinary attainments;
dakinis and Dharma guardians,
who protect against hindrances:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Thus, I supplicate respectfully
to the wish-fulfilling Kagyu lineage.
By this and other virtues, may I and all sentient beings
achieve the ordinary and extraordinary attainments
in this very lifetime.

In all lifetimes, may I not be separated from the perfect gurus,
may I enjoy the glorious Dharma.
By perfecting the qualities of the bhumis and the paths,
may I quickly attain the state of Vajradhara.

Short Lineage Prayer

DOR JE CHANG WANG TI LI NA RO DANG/
 MAR MI DAG PO PHAG DRU JIG TEN GÖN/
 KAN DRIN SUM DEN TSA WE LA ME ZHAB/
 TSA GYÜ LA MA YI DAM CHÖ KYONG LA/
 SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

Offerings

OM GURU BUDDHA SAPARIVARA BAZRA ...
 ARGHAM / PADYAM / PUSHPAM / DHUPAM / ALOKAM /
 GHANDE / NEVIDYE / SHAPTA ... PRATITSHA SVAHA

PEL DEN LA MA KU ZHI'I WANG CHUG LA/
 DAG LÜ NGAG YI CHI NANG ZHEN SUM GYI/
 NGÖ POR DRUB GU CHÖ PE DZE SU BÜL/
 CHÖ JA CHÖ JE CHÖ PA RANG ZHIN CHIG/
 THA DREL RO NYAM CHEN POR BÜL LAG NA/
 JA TSÖL DREL WE NGÖ DRUB TSEL DU SÖL/

Abbreviated Praise

JE SANG GYE THAM CHE DÜ PE KU/
 DOR JE DZIN PE NGO WO NYI/
 KÖN CHOG SUM GYI TSA WA TE/
 LA MA NAM LA CHAG TSEL TÖ/

Detailed Praise

LA ME KU NI DOR JE'I KU/
 DZE SHING TA WE CHOG MI SHE/
 SAM GYI MI KHYAB YÖN TEN DEN/
 LA ME KU LA CHAG TSEL TÖ/

LA ME SUNG NI TSANG PE YANG/
 GAG ME SENG GE'I DRA DANG DEN/
 MU TEG LOG TA JOM DZE PA/
 LA ME SUNG LA CHAG TSEL TÖ/

Short Lineage Prayer

I supplicate the mighty Vajradhara, Tilopa, Naropa, Marpa,
 Milarepa, Gampopa, Phagmo Drupa, Jigten Sumgön,
 the venerable root guru, who possesses the
 three kindnesses, and all the root and lineage gurus,
 yidam deities and Dharma guardians:
 please permeate my mind with your blessings.

Offerings

OM GURU BUDDHA SAPARIVARA BAZRA ...
 ARGHAM / PADYAM / PUSHPAM / DHUPAM / ALOKAM /
 GHANDE / NEVIDYE / SHAPTA ... PRATITSHA SVAHA

Glorious guru, lord of the four kayas,
 I offer my body, speech, and mind,
 and all that exists as offering substances in
 outer, inner, and secret offerings.
 These offerings, the one who offers, and
 the act of offering are of one nature,
 limitless and of the great equal taste, all these I offer:
 Please bestow the attainment of effortlessness.

Abbreviated Praise

The lord, embodiment of all buddhas,
 essence of the vajra holder,
 root of the Triple Gem,
 I praise and prostrate to all the gurus.

Detailed Praise

The guru's body is the vajra body,
 beautiful, compelling my full attention,
 and possessing inconceivable qualities:
 I praise and prostrate to the guru's body.

The guru's speech is like the melodious voice of Brahma,
 possessing the steady lion's roar,
 defeating the wrong views of the Tirthikas:
 I praise and prostrate to the guru's speech.

LA ME THUG NI NAM KHA DRA/
 DE SEL MI TOG TONG PE NYAM/
 NAM THAR SUM LA LEG NE PE/
 LA ME THUG LA CHAG TSEL TÖ/

LA MA SANG GYE LA MA CHÖ/
 DE ZHIN LA MA GEN DÜN TE/
 KÜN GYI JE PO LA MA YI/
 LA MA NAM LA CHAG TSEL TÖ/

Recitation

PEL DEN LA MA/
 KU ZHI'I WANG CHUG/
 DAG PO KA GYÜ/
 YONG KYI TSUG GYEN/
 DRO WE DE PÖN/
 DAM PE LAM TÖN/
 THUG JE'I NGA DAG/
 GYEL WE GYEL TSAB/
 KAN DRIN DA DREL/
 TÖN PA DA ME/
 DOR JE CHANG WANG/
 GÖN PO DRI GUNG PA CHEN PO KHYEN NO/
 SÖL WA DEB SO/
 THUG JE ZIG SHIG/
 JIN GYI LOB SHIG/
 NGÖ DRUB NAM NYI/
 DA TA TSÖL CHIG/
 DÖN NYI LHÜN DRUB/
 DRE BU TSÖL CHIG/

repeat as much as possible

Short Lineage Prayer

DOR JE CHANG WANG TI LI NA RO DANG/
 MAR MI DAG PO PHAG DRU JIG TEN GÖN/
 KAN DRIN SUM DEN TSA WE LA ME ZHAB/
 TSA GYÜ LA MA YI DAM CHÖ KYONG LA/
 SÖL WA DEB SO DAG GYÜ JIN GYI LOB/

The guru's mind is like space,
 experience of emptiness of bliss, clarity,
 and nonconceptuality,
 excellently abiding in the three complete liberations:
 I praise and prostrate to the guru's mind.

The guru is the Buddha, the guru is the Dharma,
 and likewise, the guru is the Sangha.
 The guru is the benefactor of all.
 I praise and prostrate to the gurus.

Recitation

I pray to the glorious guru,
 lord of the four kayas,
 crown jewel of the entire Dagpo Kagyu,
 leader of sentient beings,
 teacher of the supreme path,
 master of compassion,
 regent of the Victorious One,
 peerless in kindness,
 incomparable teacher,
 mighty Vajradhara.
 Protector, Great Drigungpa please take heed of me!
 I pray to you!
 Please look upon me with compassion!
 Empower me with blessings!
 Bestow the two attainments now!
 Bestow the fruit of the spontaneous
 establishment of the two benefits!

repeat as much as possible

Short Lineage Prayer

I supplicate the mighty Vajradhara, Tilopa, Naropa, Marpa,
 Milarepa, Gampopa, Phagmo Drupa, Jigten Sumgön,
 the venerable root guru, who possesses the
 three kindnesses, and all the root and lineage gurus,
 yidam deities and Dharma guardians:
 please permeate my mind with your blessings.

Conclusion**Brief form of Taking The Four Empowerments**

LA ME TREL DRIN THUG KA TE WA LE/
 KAR MAR THING SER Ö THRÖ DAG NYI KYI/
 NE ZHIR THIM PE WANG ZHI DZOG PAR THOB/
 LÜ NGAG YI SUM SHE JE DRIB PA JANG/
 KYE DZOG CHAG CHEN DEN NYI GOM LA WANG/
 KU ZHI DRUB JE KHOR TSOG TSO WOR DÜ/
 TSO WO Ö ZHU DAG GI MIN TSAM THIM/
 DAG DANG LA MA NGO WO YER ME GYUR/

Longer Form of Taking The Four Empowerments**The First Empowerment**

PEL DEN LA MA TSEN NAM KUN RANG ZHIN/
 DAG GI CHI WOR LÜ GYI THIG LE LA/
 NYE WAR ZHUG NE BUM WANG GA WE CHÜ/
 SE PE BAG CHAG DAG PAR DZE DU SÖL/

ZHE SÖL WA TAB PE LA MA DAM PE TREL WA
 NE Ö ZER KAR PO THRÖ/
 RANG GI TREL WAR THIM/
 SE PE NE KAB KYI DRIB PA JANG/
 BUM PE WANG THOB/
 KU DOR JE TRÜL KU NGÖN DU JE/

The Second Empowerment

LONG CHÖ DZOG KU SEM CHEN KÜN GYI KE/
 DAG GI DRIN PAR NGAG KI THIG LE LA/
 NYE WAR ZHUG NE SANG WANG CHOG GE ME/
 MI LAM BÜ SHING SEG PAR DZE DU SÖL/

ZHE SÖL WA TAB PE LA MA DAM PE DRIN PA
 NE Ö ZER MAR PO THRÖ/
 RANG GI DRIN PAR THIM/
 MI LAM GYI DRIB PA JANG/
 SANG WE WANG THOB SUNG DOR JE LONG KU NGÖN
 DU JE/

Conclusion**Brief form of Taking The Four Empowerments**

From the guru's forehead, throat, heart, and navel,
 radiate the white, red, blue, and yellow lights respectively,
 which in turn dissolve into my four places.
 Thus I completely receive the four empowerments.
 Obscurations of body, speech, and mind, and obscurations to
 knowables are purified. I am empowered to meditate
 on the arising and completion stages, mahamudra,
 and the two truths. The four kayas are established.
 The surroundings dissolve into the central figure who melts
 into light and is absorbed into the spot between my
 eyebrows. I become inseparable from the guru's essence.

Longer Form of Taking The Four Empowerments**The First Empowerment**

Glorious guru, whose nature is all good qualities,
 please enter the body chakra at the crown of my head.
 Please purify the tendencies of the waking state with
 the water of the vase empowerment of delight.

By the power of this prayer, white light radiates from
 the forehead of the precious guru and dissolves into my
 forehead, purifying the obscurations of the waking state.
 I obtain the vase empowerment and
 actualize the nirmanakaya, the vajra body.

The Second Empowerment

Complete enjoyment body, the speech of all sentient beings,
 please enter the speech chakra at my throat.
 May the fuel of dreams be burned with the fire of the
 secret empowerment of supreme joy.

By the power of this prayer, red light radiates from
 the throat of the precious guru, and dissolves into my
 throat, purifying the obscurations of the dream state.
 I obtain the secret empowerment and
 actualize the sambhogakaya, the vajra speech.

The Third Empowerment

JE TSÜN LA MA MI TOG CHÖ KYI KU/
 DAG GI NYING GAR YI KYI THIG LE LA/
 NYE WAR ZHUG NE SHE RAB YE SHE KYI/
 NYI THUG MÜN PA SANG PAR DZE DU SÖL/
 ZHE SÖL WA TAB PE LA MA DAM PE THUG KA
 NE Ö ZER THING GA THRÖ/
 RANG GI NYING GAR THIM/
 NYI THUG GI DRIB PA JANG/
 SHE RAB YE SHE KYI WANG THOB/
 THUG DOR JE CHÖ KU NGÖN DU JE/

The Fourth Empowerment

DRO WE GÖN PO LHEN CHIG KYE PE KU/
 DAG GI TE WAR YE SHE THIG LE LA/
 NYE WAR ZHUG NE SHE RAB CHEN PÖ WANG/
 KUR WE PHO ME GA WA THOB PAR DZÖ/
 CHE SÖL WA TAB PE LA MA DAM PE TE WA
 NE Ö ZER SER PO THRÖ/
 RANG GI TE WAR THIM/
 PHO WE NE KAB KYI DRIB PA JANG/
 WANG ZHI PA THOB/
 YE SHE DOR JE NGO WO NYI KU NGÖN DU JE/

The Fifth Empowerment

KÜN TU DAG DANG KHA NYAM SEM CHEN GYI/
 DÖ ME LÜ NGAG YI DANG YE SHE NAM/
 KHYÖ KYI DOR JE ZHI DANG NYAM JOR WE/
 CHOG DE NGÖN DU GYUR WAR DZE DU SÖL/
 ZHE SÖL WA TAB PE LA MA DAM PA Ö ZER KYI GONG
 BUR ZHU NE RANG LA THIM PE/
 LA ME KU SUNG THUG DANG RANG GI LÜ NGAG YI
 SUM YER ME DU GYUR PAR SAM LA NYAM PAR ZHAG GO/

Visualize like this and rest the mind, as it is, in the nonreferential state

Dedication

GE WA DI YI NYUR DU DAG/
 PEL DEN LA MA DRUB GYUR NE/
 DRO WA CHIG KYANG MA LÜ PA/
 DE YI SA LA GÖ PAR SHOG/

The Third Empowerment

Exalted guru, non-conceptual truth body,
 please enter the mind chakra at my heart and
 awaken the dark thickness of sleep with
 primordial wisdom awareness.
 By the power of this prayer, blue light radiates from
 the heart of the precious guru and dissolves in my heart,
 purifying the obscurations of deep sleep.
 I obtain the empowerment of the exalted primordial wisdom
 awareness and actualize the dharmakaya, the vajra mind.

The Fourth Empowerment

Protector of sentient beings, co-emergent awareness body,
 please enter the primordial awareness chakra at my navel.
 May I obtain the unchanging joy by the
 empowerment of great wisdom awareness.
 By the power of this prayer, yellow light radiates from the
 navel of the precious guru and dissolves into my navel,
 purifying the obscurations of the state of transference.
 I obtain the fourth empowerment and
 actualize the svabhavikakaya, the vajra wisdom.

The Fifth Empowerment

May the primordial body, speech, mind, and wisdom
 of myself and sentient beings boundless as the sky
 always unite with your four vajras and
 attain the supreme joy.
 By the power of this prayer, the precious guru melts into
 a ray of light and dissolves into me.
 My body, speech, and mind become inseparable
 from the guru's body, speech, and mind.
Visualize like this and rest the mind, as it is, in the nonreferential state

Dedication

By this virtue, may I quickly
 attain the state of the glorious guru
 and may I lead all sentient beings
 to that state.

Commentary on the Introduction

Guru Yoga bestows blessings. The teacher is the example, the model. If we see the teacher as ordinary, our minds will remain in the ordinary state, but seeing him or her as Vajradhara will lift our state of mind. Viewing one's teacher as Vajradhara with utmost devotion is a way of uniting one's mind with the Vajradhara state. By thinking of the teacher as Vajradhara, we receive blessings, empowering us to achieve that state ourselves. When we view the teacher as compassionate and wise, the power of our devotion eliminates the hesitation in our minds. This is what we call the guru's blessing. The teacher must indeed have good qualities and realizations, but the important energy in Guru Yoga is that of the practitioner, the student's admiration and gratitude.

The teacher-student relationship is based on interdependence. First, the teacher, *lama* or *guru*, should possess the necessary qualifications, not just superficial skills or a high title, but actual inner realization of the great teachings. He or she must have extensive knowledge of both the sutras and tantras. The guru needs experience with the Dharma so that he has the ability to dispel doubts and misunderstanding. He must have good experience in meditation practice, have kept the vinaya, bodhisattva and Vajrayana vows, and be disentangled from self-interest so that he can be admired and accepted by the disciples. A guru who has the skill to show the differentiation of samsara and nirvana, the causality of suffering and happiness, can be followed with confidence.

The disciple must also be well qualified. He or she should have great confidence in the guru, because doubt will prevent the guru's qualities from arising in the mind. He must also have a deep interest in studying and practicing the Mahayana, be part of the Mahayana family, be interested in the Mahayana sutras, have gifted intelligence and discernment, be sincere in practice, and be honest in his relationship with the spiritual master. This just touches the surface of this subject. Other books should be consulted for detailed information.

With the combination of good qualities on both the teacher's and the student's sides, realization of enlightenment will not be difficult for the disciple. On the other hand, if the teacher has no

realization of the different teachings, especially of the vast and profound nature of mahamudra, and the student lacks confidence and devotion, enlightenment will only be like a beautiful flower in the sky or a dream.

Taking Vajradhara as your root guru is a very skillful technique. Countless buddhas achieved the ultimate state in this way. He is the definitive example of the achievement of enlightenment, the dharmakaya, so if we take him as the focus of this Guru Yoga practice, our realization will be that same state. When we have full confidence in Vajradhara, our realization will be the same as his. Yoga means to yoke or unite the mind, in this case, with enlightenment. This does not mean that we become enslaved by the guru. Rather, Guru Yoga is a method by which we achieve enlightenment by our own efforts with the guru's support and blessings.

Here, we are studying and practicing a very serious subject, so the qualifications of the spiritual master are even more important. If we go to a regular school or college, the lecturers must be well qualified to teach. The more education they have, the better chance the student has to learn.

When we make a copy, the original version needs to be clear. If we print a text from a woodblock, for example, the text must be precisely engraved. If the woodblock doesn't contain the proper characters, a clear text will not result no matter how good the paper is. This is a metaphor for the qualifications of the teacher. Similarly, if the paper, representing the student, is of poor quality, a good copy will not result even if the original woodblock is good. However, a good woodblock together with good paper will produce an excellent result.

When we really study and practice, if even a little bit of experience dawns in the mind, an inexpressible confidence and joy will arise. When this occurs, we feel a true, non-artificial devotion.

After we gain some experience with the Dharma teachings, especially when we are able to handle obstacles successfully, we appreciate the Dharma teachings more and more. Natural devotion arises from that experience. When genuine devotion arises, it brings our mind closer to the Dharma teachings, closer to enlightenment. It gives us encouragement and builds confidence.

Practice is essential because, without these experiences, Guru Yoga becomes like guru worship and that is not healthy; instead of leading to a clear mind, it can create problems and confusion.

Devotion that arises not merely from faith in the teacher but from our own experience is the experience of true Guru Yoga. Within this deep devotion, we receive the four empowerments, which carry the special blessings that enable us to develop the four forms of a buddha.

The *four forms of a buddha* are the nirmanakaya, sambhogakaya, dharmakaya, and svabhavikakaya. The *four empowerments*, which are discussed in detail later on, are a special link that unites our mind with the guru's mind. Receiving them gives us an opportunity to purify our obscurations and become one with the enlightened buddha. They plant the seed for accomplishment of the four forms, or in other words, for complete buddhahood. However, successfully receiving them depends on our devotion and confidence.

Guru Yoga is the essence of all Vajrayana practices. It gives practitioners an opportunity to experience a taste of enlightenment. Guru Yoga contains skillful methods that dispel our obstacles and allow us to see enlightenment directly. However, the methods must be put into actual practice in order for us to benefit from them. We can read books for many years, but without practice we will not gain experience of the teachings and will not progress.

*The esteemed Gampopa said:
We are of the Blessing Lineage.
If we do not receive the guru's blessing,
there is no way to realize the mahamudra.
But for those who have the guru's blessings,
that realization is not difficult.*

The *Blessing Lineage* emphasizes practice and not mere intellectualization. This is made very clear by the examples of its founding masters. Marpa traveled on foot to India three times in order to see Naropa and receive his teachings. Then Marpa practiced those teachings and personally experienced all he had been taught. He transmitted those teachings to Milarepa, who

had the devotion to see Marpa as an embodiment of all the buddhas. As a result, he spent the rest of his life in retreat and attained enlightenment. Milarepa, in turn, passed the teachings on to Gampopa. Like the others before him, Gampopa practiced until he realized Milarepa to be a buddha, and his whole being was transformed into the Buddha's qualities. Gampopa became the true founder of Buddhism in Tibet by combining, without contradiction, all the different teachings. Phagmo Drupa and Jigten Sungön followed Gampopa. The history of the Kagyu lineage is filled with disciples who were inspired by devotion to go into retreat after learning the Dharma.

It is called the Blessing Lineage because it bears the great blessing of both academics and practice. Both are needed, side by side. Without understanding, we cannot practice; without practice, we cannot receive the blessings and progress. Intellectual analysis alone cannot uproot the afflicting emotions, the confusion that causes our suffering. One can have an excellent understanding of Dharma, but without meditation practice the afflictions will remain unchanged.

I have seen many people who start out with a keen interest in the Dharma, but they fade away after some time because they do not gain experience with the teachings. Without the life-blood of experience, the teachings alone can become dry and boring, and this causes people to give up. Therefore, I advise everyone to make every effort to practice the Dharma and gain concrete benefit by internalizing it. This will make an important difference in your life. The *Unsurpassed Tantra* says that realization of the ultimate meaning depends on devotion, faith, and confidence. Without them, the teachings cannot penetrate our mind and we cannot attain enlightenment. With strong devotion and confidence in the teachings, we will receive the blessings from the buddhas and great teachers, and realization will arise without much effort.

Here, the term "receiving blessings" means reducing the amount of mental affliction and obscuration we encounter. When we implement these teachings, the experiences of peace and joy manifest as the mental defilements decrease. The blessings that we receive occur due to our own effort, devotion, and confidence. With them, we will not be derailed from the path and will be able to follow it in a consistent way.

Therefore, in order to practice Guru Yoga, the mind must be strong and confident. If, when we are practicing, there is a limitation to our devotion, it will not work. To practice successful Guru Yoga, we must meditate from the very depths of our heart on the kindness of the root and lineage lamas, and on the excellent qualities of their body, speech, and mind. This devotion should be so powerful that the hairs of our body will stand on end, tears will well up in our eyes, and our voice will break. We have only the guru in our mind. When our mind is attracted to the guru, we will wish to pray to him day and night. Until such blazing experiences of successful Guru Yoga arise, we must continue to make effort in practice.

From Buddha Vajradhara up to the present teachers, through all the great masters of the past, the lamas of this lineage have continually sacrificed and endured hardships for the sake of the Dharma. The Buddha lived more than 2,600 years ago, but his teachings are still fresh and alive today. This is because the Dharma is valuable to us here and now, a true counterweight to the problems of mental delusion. No one forced Marpa to go to India; he voluntarily worked hard because he recognized the value of the Dharma and understood how it could be of great service to countless sentient beings. Imagine how many have benefitted from Marpa's great sacrifices and how many have benefitted from Milarepa's songs! There is no need to mention the great value of Jigten Sumgön's teachings. When we hear these stories, gratitude and devotion inevitably arises. Compassion and the blessings of the lineage gurus are always available to us when we have devotion. Because the lineage gurus cultivated and perfected bodhicitta, they continue to help us until the end of samsara. When we recognize their achievements and understand how they are benefiting sentient beings, we will wish to pray to them day and night.

The purpose of Guru Yoga is to unite our mind with Vajradhara's mind and make his qualities our own. Devotion softens and tames our unruly mind and makes us receptive to receiving his blessings. The enlightened beings' blessings and activities are constant. Whether we receive them depends on our interest, effort, and devotion. The blessings are like water that nourishes the seed of enlightenment, our buddha nature. If the

water falls on a rock, it will not penetrate and there will be little result. However, if the water falls on soft, fertile soil the seed can grow quickly and the tree of enlightenment will grow and, in turn, nourish others.

We have to experience this realization personally. No matter how powerful a guru may be, he cannot give his realization to you. He can show you a path and demonstrate a method, but you have to experience it through your own effort using the skillful methods.

Take a moment to rejoice for your own life by reflecting, "I have a precious human life. I have encountered the Vajrayana teachings of the Buddha, which constitute a complete method to uproot all the mental delusions, the direct cause of my suffering. These teachings reveal the nature of my mind, absolute peace and joy." Bring this deeply into your heart and commit yourself to accomplishing buddhahood by saying, "I will pursue this path until I totally capture buddhahood, no matter what happens." Repeatedly remind yourself of this commitment.

Sadhana Commentary

The only method of realizing the fundamental reality of mahamudra is to rest in the perception of the guru as the real buddha. Therefore, be diligent in the supplication from the depth of your heart.

To engage in this practice, we first establish a proper visualization. The image here is the same as that described in the refuge practice and very similar to the one in the mandala practice. You can visualize yourself as a yidam or as a regular person. The yidam could be Vajrayogini, Chakrasamvara, Chenrezig, or Vajrasattva; any yidam that you are practicing is fine.

Visualization is a very skillful method. However, some people tell me that they have trouble using this method; that they cannot bring visual images to mind. But we don't have to make visualization into something strange or difficult, because we all use visualization in our daily life, perhaps without realizing it. For example, an architect starts his design by visualizing the layout of a house: the slope of the roof, placement of the doors, the shape of windows, and so on. Only after clearly visualizing the house can he reduce it to drawings for the builder to follow. We also use visualization when we just recall a friend's face or think about where we are going next. In fact, it would be very difficult to express ourselves without visualization.

In the beginning, we can visualize roughly with the support of a thangka or picture. Examine it carefully and accustom yourself to the image. At the very least, you should visualize the central Vajradhara as your root guru and an embodiment or representative of all the enlightened beings. If you can visualize more detail, then add the surrounding retinue consisting of the Vajradhara at the top, the lineage masters, yidams, Dharma protectors, and so forth. In an extensive visualization, you can include all the individuals mentioned in the Golden Lineage Prayer. Do as much as you can.

Visualization

I appear as the yidam deity. In the space in front of me is a lion throne on which are lotus, sun, and moon disks. On this, the essence of my kind root guru appears in the form of the exalted Vajradhara.

The *throne* is jeweled and supported by lions. When one actualizes mahamudra one is freed from all fear; the *lion* is used to symbolize this fearlessness. A *lotus* flower develops in the mud underneath a pond, but blossoms purely above the surface of the water. Thus, the lotus symbolizes purity, the very pure nature of wisdom. The *sun* symbolizes the clear nature of wisdom that cuts through delusion the way the sun's light cuts through darkness. The *moon* symbolizes compassion that cools the passions of samsara the way the moon brings fresh breezes on a hot summer night.

Upon this throne is one's own *root guru*, appearing in the dignified form of Vajradhara, the dharmakaya form of buddhahood.

He is blue in color, graceful and adorned with the major and minor marks, and holds the vajra and bell crossed at the heart.

On a clear day when the air is completely pure, the sky takes on a deep *blue* color; this is the color of profound, pervasive infinity. The 32 *major marks* and 80 *minor marks* are the expression of the complete perfection of the form bodies of a buddha, which are achieved through meditation practice. The *vajra* that Vajradhara holds symbolizes great, indestructible compassion. His *bell* symbolizes indestructible wisdom.

Holding these *crossed at the heart* symbolizes their inseparable nature. Generally, wisdom is defined as the power of intelligence, the knowledge of all things, the incisive wisdom that knows reality as it is and is omniscient. All sentient beings are within that mandala of wisdom. Such wisdom is inseparable from great compassion. If wisdom were separated from compassion, the Buddha's activities would be limited. When we have the wisdom that really understands the nature of samsara, sentient beings, and causality, and that wisdom is roused by great compassion to act for sentient beings, then the great enlightened activities unceasingly manifest. Thus, it is critical for these two to be joined together, and that is why the bell (wisdom) and vajra (compassion) are shown crossed at the heart.

He sits in the lotus posture and radiates with dignity the light of the supreme qualities. He wears the various jewel and bone ornaments and silken robes.

Sitting with his legs gracefully in the *lotus posture* indicates nonabiding; meaning that Vajradhara remains neither deluded in samsara nor resting in nirvana. It can also symbolize the nonduality of the two truths. His whole being is in the state of enlightenment, yet he remains connected to the sentient beings in samsara and continually manifests enlightened activities. *Dignity* refers to the fact that he possesses all the *supreme qualities* of compassion, wisdom, activities, and fearlessness. His infinite supreme qualities are expressed through endless, effortless activities to all sentient beings in accordance with their needs in the same way that the sun radiates light.

The jewels and other ornaments that adorn Vajradhara are all metaphors. If we do not understand them, then our practice becomes an exercise in ancient Indian culture. On the other hand, knowing their meaning will increase our awareness of the qualities they represent, aid in the development of our devotion, and inspire us to achieve those same qualities within ourselves.

1. The five-pointed crown symbolizes the five wisdoms and the embodiment of the five buddhas.
2. The two earrings symbolize the two truths, relative and ultimate.
3. The three necklaces extending to the neck, breast, and navel levels show that Vajradhara is the embodiment of all three kayas: dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, and nirmanakaya.
4. The six bracelets: arm bands, wrist bracelets, and ankle bracelets symbolize his perfection of the six paramitas.
5. The five silk garments are a ribbon knotting the hair, a scarf around his shoulders, an upper garment or shirt, a belt, and a lower garment or skirt. They symbolize other excellent qualities.

Altogether, these are called the thirteen ornaments of the sambhogakaya. Since the dharmakaya has no form, we utilize the skillful method of visualizing Vajradhara in the sambhogakaya form.

*Within his body every buddha field is perfectly complete.
Like the reflection of the moon in water, he abides as a visible
body of light, apparent yet without inherent existence.*

As with all visualizations, do not take this figure to be mere imagination; rather see Vajradhara as a live, vibrant figure, inseparable in appearance and emptiness. Countless *buddhafields* are found within his body; all the buddhas in all the buddhafields are reflected there. What do we mean when we say they are reflected? Consider the example of a mirror. A small mirror can reflect an entire countryside. It's only a small mirror, but you can see everything reflected in it in precise detail. The mirror has not grown larger and the countryside has not become smaller, yet you can perceive the scene very clearly in the mirror. Similarly, all the buddhas of the ten directions can be seen manifested within Vajradhara.

This was demonstrated by Milarepa, and recounted in his *Hundred Thousand Songs*:

One time, Milarepa's disciple Rechungpa came back from a trip to India, where he had studied philosophical systems, including logic, and had become a notable scholar. Rechungpa thought, "My guru is very accomplished in realization, but in relative matters, I'm more of a scholar than he is." This gave rise to arrogance and pride in his mind. Milarepa perceived his mental state and thought he would help Rechungpa reduce that obstacle.

Rechungpa was following Milarepa on a road. Milarepa saw a yak horn on the roadside and asked Rechungpa, "Would you bring this yak horn along?" Rechungpa thought, "Usually he doesn't care about anything. What is he going to do with this? There is a saying that as a man gets older, he gets greedy. What purpose could he have for that useless, dry yak horn?" Milarepa immediately read Rechungpa's mind, so he picked up the yak horn himself. After a while, they came to a clearing with no shelter, no caves, no trees, nothing. Suddenly storm clouds gathered and powerful hail began to fall. Rechungpa wrapped his head in a cloth to protect himself, but to no avail. He could hardly see through the rain, and had to search for Milarepa.

Soon, he could hear Milarepa singing, "You, Rechungpa, went to India and endured hardships. Here is a beautiful place to protect you from the hail - this yak horn. I'm sitting in the

narrow part. Why don't you come inside the larger end of the horn?" Rechungpa wondered where the sound was coming from. He looked all around until he found the horn and looked inside. The horn was not bigger and Milarepa was not smaller, yet, Milarepa fit perfectly inside. Milarepa said to him, "Come in here." To gain shelter from the hailstorm, Rechungpa tried to get in but not even his hand would go into the horn. Milarepa said, "Even though I'm not so attached to horns, sometimes they can be very useful."

Another time, Milarepa was at Manasarovar, the huge lake near Mt. Kailash. It is so big that circumambulation of it takes an entire day. He showed his miracle power by sitting on the lake. The lake was not smaller and Milarepa was not bigger, but he completely covered the lake.

These stories give us a clear idea of what is meant by all the buddhafi elds manifesting in Vajradhara's body and Vajradhara manifesting in all the countless buddhafi elds. They show how everything is an illusion and how illusions manifest. When our mind becomes more flexible with training and practice, anything can manifest; everything can be changed. All phenomena depend upon causes and conditions; nothing manifests without them. When the appropriate cause has been created, anything can manifest. This is what the Buddha realized as the perfect nature of all phenomena. His mind pervades the entire universe; no knowledge is hidden from him. With enough meditation practice, all knowledge and every phenomenon will become obvious to your mind as well.

He is surrounded by the lineage gurus, yidam deities, dakinis, and Dharma guardians. From the three syllables in the three places, light radiates and invites the wisdom beings of gurus, yidam deities, and Dharma guardians from the ten directions, absorbing them into the root guru's body and surrounding retinues. The guru becomes the embodiment of all the buddhas.

The lineage gurus from the original Buddha Vajradhara up until now surround the central Vajradhara. Visualize the same as you did in the refuge and mandala practices, but focus more closely on Vajradhara and his qualities. He embodies all the buddhas of

the ten directions, and he represents the entirety of the buddhas from the past, present, and future.

If you are able to do a more extensive visualization, then the *lineage gurus* would include figures such as Tilopa, Naropa, Marpa, Milarepa, Gampopa, Phagmo Drupa, Jigten Sumgön, and so forth. The *yidam* here is Chakrasamvara surrounded by four *dakinis* of blue, green, yellow, and red color. These four represent the four immeasurables, the four activities of a buddha, or the four elements. *Dharma guardians* such as Mahakala and Achi Chökyi Drolma can also be visualized.

The *three syllables* that appear are a white OM at Vajradhara's forehead, a red AH at his throat, and a blue HUNG is at his heart. Respectively, these represent his body, speech, and mind. *Light* manifests from these three and *radiates* in all directions, inviting the wisdom beings from the ten directions. Like two bodies of waters being seamlessly mixed together, the wisdom beings are absorbed into the visualized root guru and his retinue, and they then become the embodiment of all the buddhas. This serves to cut doubts about our visualization. By merging it with the wisdom beings, we feel that we are no longer in the presence of mere imagination, but rather that the enlightened beings are actually there in front of us.

Recite the Long Lineage Prayer:

The Golden Lineage Prayer that we recite next was written by Drigung Ratna, Rinchen Phuntsog (1509 -1557). The short lineage prayer may be substituted if necessary.

Golden Lineage Prayer

NAMO GURU!

*Vajradhara, the sixth lord, principal of all families;
Tilopa, who established the buddha families of the three times;
Naropa, excellent scholar, who actualized the three kayas;
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.*

*Marpa, perfection of the ocean of linguistics;
Milarepa, perfection of realizations;
Gampopa, life-pole of the Buddha's teachings in the Snow Land;
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.*

Dorje Gyalpo, Vajrayogini's chosen follower;
 Lord Jigten Sumgön, the second Nagarjuna;
 Tsultrim Dorje, great abbot, illuminator of the teachings;
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Sangye On, who actualized the realization of non-duality;
 Chenga Drakpa Jungne, most excellent lineage holder;
 Dorje Dragpa, manifestation of Tilopa;
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Thogkhatwa, manifestation of the supreme Compassionate One;
 Drakpa Sonam, who is free from the delusion of duality;
 Dorje Rinchen, chosen follower of Saraha;
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Dorje Gyalpo, manifestation of Padmasambhava;
 Chokyi Gyalpo, proponent of the sage's teachings;
 Dondrup Gyalpo, crown jewel of all siddhas;
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Dhakupowang, Victorious One triumphant in every direction;
 Chogyal Ratna, lord of human beings;
 Ratna Dwaza, Vajrapani's emanation;
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Rinchen Chökyi Gyalpo, manifestation of Manjughosha;
 Kunga Rinchen, peerless second buddha;
 Jetsun Ratna, holder of the tradition of the two lineages;
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Palgyi Gyatso, treasure holder of the pith instructions;
 Dharma Radza, whose kindness is without compare;
 Drakpa Gyaltsen, holder of the victorious family lineage;
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Konchog Ratna, who illuminates the vital point of the three vows,
 which are the essence teachings
 of the Dagpo Kagyu, the peerless guide:
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Dharmakirti, the unborn dharmakaya,
 the self-liberated mode-of-abiding,
 manifests the unwavering sambhogakaya free from grasping
 according to the needs of the trainees:
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Thrinle Namgyal, outwardly holding the banners of the
 Vinaya and Abhidharma, the teachings of the sage;
 inwardly, through bodhicitta, compassionate to each
 sentient being as if it was his only child;
 union of the two stages:
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Thrinle Sangpo, embodiment of all objects of refuge,
 authentic master of all the words of the Victorious One
 in sutra and tantra,
 and who imparts them to others:
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Döndrub Chögyal, who possesses the three kindnesses
 and through the gate of the profound and secret teachings
 of ripening and liberation leads all beings to awakening:
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Konchog Tenzin Drodul, essence of all the Victorious Ones,
 holder of the white lotus,
 who through the four activities brings all sentient beings
 pervading space to awakening and liberation:
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Chökyi Gyaltzen, who fully actualized self-awareness
 and causes the excellent stream
 of the profound, secret nature of mahamudra,
 to flow without decline:
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

Chökyi Nyima, who guides sentient beings
 to the unborn state by the sublime rains which descend
 from the ultimate, profound Dharma space:
 I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.

*Peme Gyaltzen, who manifests in the unborn
self-awareness space of the dharmakaya
as the unceasing, self-risen sun of sambhogakaya
and the radiating non-dual light of nirmanakaya:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.*

*Dharma Dwaza, who fulfills the wishes of all beings
by granting the jewel of profound and secret teachings
from the vast ocean of the precious practicing lineage:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.*

*Konchog Tenzin Chöwang Lodrö,
essence of the Vajra holder, unborn and unceasing,
from the expansive vastness of the great luminosity:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.*

*Peerless one named Dharmamani,
illusory display of Manjushri with the five tresses of hair,
who liberates sentient beings through the provisional and
definitive Dharma:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.*

*Thukje Nyima, embodiment of the three jewels,
dancer with the appearance of the compassionate deity,
who establishes sentient beings in supreme awakening:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.*

*Mahasiddha Vidhyadhara Nuden Dorje,
emanation of the amazing yogi Rshaba Shri Singha,
you manifested in the Snow Land for the glory of
Dharma and sentient beings:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.*

*The great hero Jetsun Chökyab, though your excellent qualities
of abandonment and attainment equal those of the
buddhas of the three times,
you skillfully tame the minds of all sentient beings
by hiding these qualities:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.*

*Tenzin Chökyi Lodrö, presiding master
and all-knowing vajra-holder, seeing through wisdom eyes
that know the limitless diversity of
all phenomena and their nature:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.*

*Shiwe Lodrö, although having fully transcended
all conceptions of coming and going, birth and death,
you guide all beings with your wonderful illusory
display of birth at will:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.*

*Peerless Tenzin Chokyi Jungne,
emanation of the guru and protector Manjushri,
like the sun, you illuminate the teachings of study and practice:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.*

*Root Guru, who has actualized the self-awareness wisdom;
mandala of the yidam deities who grant the
extraordinary attainments;
dakinis and Dharma guardians, who protect against hindrances:
I pray that your blessings may permeate my mind.*

*Thus, I supplicate respectfully to the
wish-fulfilling Kagyu lineage.
By this and other virtues, may I and all sentient beings
achieve the ordinary and extraordinary attainments
in this very lifetime.*

*In all lifetimes, may I not be separated from the perfect gurus,
may I enjoy the glorious Dharma.
By perfecting the qualities of the bhumis and the paths,
may I quickly attain the state of Vajradhara.*

We say this prayer to the root and lineage gurus with strong devotion and one-pointed awareness.

Short Lineage Prayer

*I supplicate the mighty Vajradhara, Tilopa, Naropa,
Marpa, Milarepa, Gampopa, Phagmo Drupa, Jigten Sumgön,
the venerable root guru, who possesses the three kindnesses,
and all the root and lineage gurus, yidam deities and
Dharma guardians:
please permeate my mind with your blessings.*

Offerings

**OM GURU BUDDHA SAPARIVARA BAZRA ...
ARGHAM / PADYAM / PUSHPAM / DHUPAM / ALOKAM /
GHANDE / NEVIDYE / SHAPTA ... PRATITSHA SVAHA**

Having invoked the presence of the lineage by reciting one of the Lineage Prayers, we make *offerings* to the assembled masters. These are the same eight offerings that were explained in detail in Chapter 3: water offerings to the face, mouth, and feet; flower offering to the head; incense offering to the nose; light offering to the eyes; fragrance offering to the mind; food offering to the body; and music offering to the ears.

*Glorious guru, lord of the four kayas,
I offer my body, speech, and mind,
and all that exists as offering substances in
outer, inner, and secret offerings.
These offerings, the one who offers,
and the act of offering are of one nature,
limitless and of the great equal taste, all these I offer:
Please bestow the attainment of effortlessness.*

This offering prayer contains vast and profound meaning since it is made from within the state of mahamudra. We again make offerings, this time regarding Vajradhara as being in the nature of the *four kayas*, the four forms of buddhahood mentioned earlier. *Outer offerings* consist of the entire universe. The *inner offering* is our manifestation of offering goddesses. The *secret offering* is the ultimate offering. Whatever exists in any of the six realms of beings, offer it without reservation.

This prayer of offering has a very profound meaning. That which we give away is never wasted or lost; we ourselves receive

all the benefits. We make offerings with great devotion to the enlightened beings, especially the root guru. We do this offering, not just to please them, but to gain enlightenment in order to benefit all sentient beings. As a result, we purify the bondage of mental obscuration and gain the excellent qualities of buddhahood. What more do we need than that?

This practice is powerful mental training. It gives us an opportunity to develop wisdom and compassion, first by seeing the root and lineage gurus as enlightened beings and then by yearning to achieve the enlightened state ourselves. As we develop great compassion based on the suffering of sentient beings, we purify our own gross and subtle obscurations and dedicate ourselves to service for all beings, both enlightened and unenlightened. In addition to bringing us great merit, offering in this way releases our attachment and relaxes the mind in nonduality.

Here, the objects being offered, *the one who offers* (oneself), *and the act of offering* are perceived in their empty nature. By thus making this offering in a state free of these three spheres, we concurrently develop our wisdom. All three are of an illusory nature: I, the offeror, am illusory; the act of offering is illusory; and the substance being offered is illusory. All three are of *one nature*, one taste.

Limitless means infinite. When something is infinite, it has no boundary. Because it is limitless, it constitutes the emptiness of the entire universe; it cannot be elaborated or expanded further. When our offerings are infinite and no more elaboration is possible, they become inexpressible. In the same way, emptiness itself is infinite and free of elaboration.

Space is also said to be free from elaboration or infinite in the same way. In an absolute sense, space cannot be made more extensive. On the relative level, we can elaborate the space defined by a room and make it larger or smaller. But the real nature of space itself cannot be elaborated. When the mind is unfabricated, free from all boundaries, it is called the “mind free from elaboration” and is as limitless as space.

At the end of this prayer, we supplicate Buddha Vajradhara to *bestow the attainment of effortlessness*. The activities of a buddha manifest spontaneously, without effort. We are practicing this Guru Yoga to achieve the same state of effortless activity. For example, it takes a lot of labor to manufacture a car, but once

it's finished, you just turn the switch and it goes. You don't have to make any further effort. Attaining buddhahood is like that. At first we have to exert a lot of effort, but then it becomes effortless after we are fully familiar with it.

Abbreviated Praise

*The lord, embodiment of all buddhas,
essence of the vajra holder,
root of the Triple Gem,
I praise and prostrate to all the gurus.*

Here, *Lord* means the one who holds the essence of the qualities of a buddha, the one who leads sentient beings to the pristine, dry shore on the far side of the ocean of suffering. *The embodiment of all buddhas* means that Vajradhara represents all the buddhas. This is where we focus our full, unwavering attention.

The essence of the vajra-holder refers to one who has realized the complete mode of abiding of all phenomena. The vajra is symbolic of that which cannot be destroyed or divided. Its nature is the all-pervading, indestructible nature of wisdom, the basic reality, the nature of all phenomena. Whether we realize it or not, that nature pervades all phenomena. It was not invented by sentient beings nor constructed by the buddha; it is simply how reality exists. The moment we realize that nature by seeing all phenomena as illusion, all our misperceptions and wrong views will be destroyed. Anyone who has this realization can also be called "the essence of the vajra-holder."

The root of the Triple Gem means that the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha all manifest from that realization. The Buddha became a buddha by realizing that nature. Dharma is the teaching that the Buddha embodies. The Sangha achieves buddhahood by practicing the Dharma.

Praise means recollecting the excellent qualities that are possessed by the guru, Vajradhara. Meditate on them while reciting this prayer of praise. *Prostrate* means looking at the gurus with full devotion of body, speech, and mind and humbling ourselves. We *praise and prostrate to all the gurus* because any guru who realizes that teaching is no different from Vajradhara. We can also say that by praising and prostrating to Vajradhara, we praise and prostrate to all gurus. The body of Vajradhara that we

see is the Sangha. His speech that we hear is the Dharma, and his mind is that of all buddhas. The Three Jewels are complete within the ultimate state, dharmakaya or Vajradhara. He is the ultimate refuge, so we aspire to become Vajradhara. Thus, we make offerings, sing praises, and supplicate so that our mind can unite with the buddha's mind.

Detailed Praise

*The guru's body is the vajra body,
beautiful, compelling my full attention,
and possessing inconceivable qualities.
I praise and prostrate to the guru's body.*

Here, *guru* refers to Guru Vajradhara. The *vajra body* is the all-pervading, indestructible wisdom body. The infinite physical qualities of Vajradhara cannot be expressed. His body is the visible, yet insubstantial, perfection of wisdom. If you perceive it merely as a material form, that is an error. One should recognize the inseparability of appearance and emptiness, called the wisdom body, which is marked by the thirty-two major and eighty minor marks. The *Diamond Sutra*, for instance, says we should see the true Buddha as the dharmakaya, not as a form body.

One time, Maudgalyayana, the disciple usually shown standing to the Buddha's left, noticed that the Buddha was a little taller than other people. He wanted to see the full extent of the Buddha's body, so he flew a little above the assembly and he found it was still a little taller. He flew higher and higher, but the Buddha's body was taller. He even flew to a god realm and found it was the same. He returned without finding the measure of the Buddha's body.

*The guru's speech is like the melodious voice of Brahma,
possessing the steady lion's roar,
defeating the wrong views of the Tirthikas:
I praise and prostrate to the guru's speech.*

The *Brahma-like melodious voice* means that the Buddha's speech is inconceivable. When the Buddha taught, there were thousands in the audience. Although they spoke many different languages, everyone would understand the teaching simultaneously without translation. The listeners ranged from very advanced to beginning

practitioners, and each received the level of instruction that was appropriate for him. One time Maudgalyayana attended such a teaching by the Buddha. Of course, at that time there were no microphones or speakers. Maudgalyayana was sitting next to the Buddha and could hear him very clearly, but he wondered about those in the audience who were far away. It appeared that the Buddha's voice was not loud enough to reach them. Maudgalyayana stood up and walked to the far end of the gathering. He heard exactly the same sound, no more, no less, not louder, and not softer. This made him curious, so he went farther away. Maudgalyayana possessed miracle powers and could fly, so he flew out over the Indian Ocean and perfectly heard the same sound. When he flew yet further over the ocean, he could still hear the Buddha's voice just as clearly as before. Finally he returned, understanding what is meant by a buddha's inconceivable speech.

Bodhisattvas who reach the ninth bhumi have a similar quality of speech. They can give teachings to others, and be understood in all the different kinds of languages. For example, Milarepa gave teachings to a deer and dog. Lord Jigten Sumgön taught a horse and a vulture.

Possessing the steady lion's roar refers to the fact that all wrong views are dispelled by a buddha's speech. When a lion roars, all the lesser animals flee from the sound. In the same way, delusion is chased away by the words of wisdom.

*The guru's mind is like space,
experience of emptiness of bliss, clarity, and nonconceptuality,
excellently abiding in the three complete liberations:
I praise and prostrate to the guru's mind.*

The Buddha's wisdom body and wisdom mind are inseparable. The *guru's mind* experiences *bliss* because it is free from all suffering. When confusion and mental afflictions occupy the mind, we undergo suffering and pain. When confusion and delusion are fully purified, we experience bliss.

Clarity means that everything can be plainly seen as if it were in your hand; nothing is hidden; all the qualities are clear. In the absolute sense, the nature of mind itself is clear. Wisdom and compassion are the flavors of that clarity. They manifest effortlessly within nonduality. In the duality state, conceptual

thoughts are trapped between fear and hope, right and wrong. Since a buddha is free from all this duality, that state is called "nonconceptuality." *Nonconceptuality* means that the afflicting emotions have been purified and one has achieved effortless; everything is perfectly present in the mind.

The *three complete liberations* are: emptiness as the ground (meaning cause or foundation); signlessness as the path; and absence of expectations for the result (i.e., liberation). *Abiding* there means that all three have been fully perfected in the state of nonelaboration. The Buddha has realized the one-taste nature of these three.

*The guru is the Buddha, the guru is the Dharma,
and likewise, the guru is the Sangha.
The guru is the benefactor of all.
I praise and prostrate to the gurus.*

The Vajradhara state is the state of complete enlightenment that embodies the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Put another way, the guru's body is the Sangha, his speech is the Dharma, and his wisdom mind is the Buddha. We *praise and prostrate to all the gurus* who have achieved this state.

Guru Vajradhara is *the benefactor of all* sentient beings. In fact, all the benefits and goodness that exist in the world are manifestations of the Buddha. We know that positive thoughts and actions bring good results. Whatever positive thoughts arise within us are based in our buddha nature, so whatever benefits we receive are from the goodness of buddhahood. That is why we say that the guru is the benefactor of all, and also why we are so inspired to become better human beings.

Recitation Overview

The following prayer is a supplication to the guru. In this practice, we recite it repeatedly as a mantra using a lovely melody. It was written by Drigung Dharmakirti, the first Chungtsang Rinpoche, in the *Ser Khang*, a golden-roofed temple at Drigung Thil Monastery that was built by Lord Jigten Sumgön. The account goes like this:

There was a bridge over a river in the vicinity of Drigung Thil Monastery. One day, Lord Jigten Sumgön said to Gar Chödingpa, “Go to that river next to the bridge and make an offering to the nagas. You may receive some special wealth.” So Garchen went there and made an offering. The naga king from Bodh Gaya traveled through the ocean, appeared in the river, and made an offering to Garchen consisting of a tooth from the Buddha and many wish-fulfilling jewels. Garchen took them all to Lord Jigten Sumgön, who picked up the tooth and said, “Very good. It’s good to return wealth to its owner.” This means that Lord Jigten Sumgön accepted that he was a reincarnation of the Buddha.

Then he told Garchen, “If you make a statue of me and put the tooth in its heart center, it will benefit many sentient beings.” Gar Chödingpa did so and the statue was placed in the *Ser Khang* temple. Lord Jigten Sumgön consecrated it 100 times, and said, “This statue represents me. Even after I die, it will continue to give rise to activities that will benefit many sentient beings.” Because of the consecrations and the tooth, a slight heat could always be felt at the heart of the statue. After Lord Jigten Sumgön passed away, the shrine keepers occasionally heard voices from the statue. One shrine keeper received the complete teachings of the Six Dharmas of Naropa from that statue. It stood inside the *Ser Khang* temple for hundreds of years.

Around the 13th Century, a war came to the Drigung area of Tibet, and Drigung Thil Monastery was destroyed in a fire. Just prior to that incident, some monks hid the statue under the sand, where it stayed for many years. When they came back to rebuild the monastery, they had forgotten where the statue was hidden. The monks were searching all around for the statue when it came out of the sand and said, “Here I am!”

Many of our lineage holders spoke of this statue. In the 17th century, Drigung Dharmakirti went to the *Ser Khang* temple, closed the door, and started saying the Seven Limb Prayer while visualizing Lord Jigten Sumgön. His environment completely transformed into a buddhafield and the statue came alive. In its place, Lord Jigten Sumgön manifested as red Chakrasamvara, and gave Drigung Dharmakirti detailed

teachings on the Four Kayas Guru Yoga practice, after which Drigung Dharmakirti wrote this prayer to include in that practice. Thus, this prayer possesses manifold blessings.

Recitation

The following prayer is a supplication to the guru. In this practice, we recite it repeatedly as a mantra using a lovely melody. It was written by Drigung Dharmakirti, the first Chungtsang Rinpoche, in the *Ser Khang*, a golden-roofed temple at Drigung Thil Monastery that was built by Lord Jigten Sumgön. The account goes like this:

Recite the following mantra as many times as possible:

*I pray to the glorious guru,
lord of the four kayas,
crown jewel of the entire Dagpo Kagyu,
leader of sentient beings,
teacher of the supreme path,
master of compassion,
regent of the Victorious One,
peerless in kindness,
incomparable teacher,
mighty Vajradhara.*

*Protector, Great Drigungpa please take heed of me!
I pray to you!
Please look upon me with compassion!
Empower me with blessings!
Bestow the two attainments now!
Bestow the fruit
of the spontaneous establishment of the two benefits!*

1. *Glorious* indicates that Guru Vajradhara has overcome all the obscurations, attained buddhahood, and benefits all sentient beings without exception. Thus, he is the glory of the precious Dharma teachings and sentient beings.
2. He has attained complete enlightenment, and is the *Lord* or possessor of the *four kayas* of a Buddha: the dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, nirmanakaya, and svabhavikakaya. These

four encompass all of the Buddha's enlightened qualities of infinite wisdom, infinite compassion, and infinite activities.

3. The *Dagpo Kagyu* is comprised of all the lineages that trace themselves from Lord Gampopa. Among all Buddhist teachers, Vajradhara Jigten Sumgön is peerless, truly their *crown jewel*.
4. Sentient beings can rely on Vajradhara to *lead* them toward enlightenment and freedom from samsara because he embodies the perfection of bodhicitta.
5. He teaches the precious fivefold path that leads to the ultimate state, beginning with the state of the path - the four thoughts that turn the mind toward Dharma - all the way to complete buddhahood. He displays all the methods step-by-step so that anyone with sufficient time and ability can follow the path to the ultimate result, buddhahood.
6. Being *masters of compassion*, the buddhas uninterruptedly benefit sentient beings until the end of samsara. Reflect on these qualities and infuse the center of your heart with devotion.
7. At this time, we do not have enough fortune to see the Buddha in person. But we can still receive his teachings from those who represent the Buddha, the gurus who are his *regents*.
8. They dispel confusion so that we can become enlightened ourselves. Can you imagine a greater *kindness*? The compassion and wisdom of the guru are so powerful that they cannot be compared to any samsaric kindness.
9. There are many, many teachers, but Vajradhara Jigten Sumgön is *incomparable*. No one taught more profound teachings to lift us from samsara and place us in the enlightened state.
10. The *Great Drigungpa* is Jigten Sumgön, the founder of the Drigung Kagyu lineage. He and *Vajradhara* are of an inseparable nature. We pray from our heart that he hears us, and helps us to escape the intractable suffering of samsara. Also, our root guru is the great Drigungpa, who is in the form of Vajradhara.

11. We invoke his *compassion* and activities, and request his *blessings* in the form of the *four empowerments* that come later in the practice.
12. The *two attainments* are the ordinary and extraordinary accomplishments. Ordinary accomplishments consist of activities such as making footprints in rock, flying, telepathy, levitation, and meditative equipoise. The extraordinary accomplishment is to free oneself from samsara by uprooting all the mental delusions and disturbing emotions. Only those who have attained buddhahood can exhibit both of these attainments. Those who have the extraordinary accomplishment can use the ordinary attainments to manifest activities that benefit sentient beings, to help people turn their mind to Dharma practices, especially the meditative equipoise that is the indispensable basis for the development of special insight.
13. The *two benefits* are benefiting oneself and benefiting all other sentient beings. When you attain the dharmakaya, the Vajradhara state, you are fully perfected, meaning that you yourself have received the absolute benefit. From that state, you can benefit all sentient beings and establish them in buddhahood. Due to our strong devotion and our interdependent connection with Buddha Vajradhara, praying like this will definitely have an effect.

Short Lineage Prayer

*I supplicate the mighty Vajradhara, Tilopa, Naropa,
Marpa, Milarepa, Gampopa, Phagmo Drupa, Jigten Sumgön,
the venerable root guru, who possesses the three kindnesses,
and all the root and lineage gurus, yidam deities and
Dharma guardians:
please permeate my mind with your blessings.*

Recite a long or short lineage prayer each time you complete 100 recitations of the mantra. If you find it difficult to say the long lineage prayer, you can recite this abbreviated prayer. The *three kindnesses* mentioned here are: giving empowerment; transmission; and practice instructions.

Conclusion

With a mind full of devotion and yearning to receive the blessings, we receive the four empowerments. In the brief form we focus on the visualization without much recitation. In the longer form there are supplications for each empowerment individually, followed by a more complete description of each meditation. The central figure of the visualization is always Vajradhara, the embodiment of all the buddhas. It is important to develop confidence, devotion, and a feeling of closeness to Vajradhara, especially when we receive the empowerments.

In both the brief and longer forms, we begin with the surrounding retinue of lineage masters, yidams, dakinis, and Dharma guardians dissolving into the central Vajradhara. We remain alone with him and, with devotion, concentrate completely on his presence.

Brief Form of Taking The Four Empowerments

From the guru's forehead, throat, heart, and navel, radiate the white, red, blue, and yellow lights respectively, which in turn dissolve into my four places. Thus I completely receive the four empowerments. Obscurations of body, speech, and mind, and obscurations to knowables are purified. I am empowered to meditate on the arising and completion stages, mahamudra, and the two truths. The four kayas are established.

This is where devotion and confidence become especially important. To become one with Vajradhara is not mere "guru worship," where the guru is forever superior and we are always inferior. It is not that way. We, too, become the guru by using the magnet of devotion to receive his qualities.

Meditate that *white light* radiates from Vajradhara's forehead and dissolves into your forehead. The light pervades your entire body like snow melting into water in bright sunshine. Meditate that this purifies the physical obscurations and negative karma related to the body. Your body is transformed into the Buddha's body, which is inseparable appearance and emptiness.

Meditate that the *red light* of wisdom speech radiates from Vajradhara's throat and dissolves into your throat center. Meditate that the light pervades your entire body as before, especially the

chakras and channels, purifying all the afflictions and negative karma related to speech. Your speech is transformed into the Buddha's speech, which is inseparable sound and emptiness.

Meditate that this is followed by *blue light* from Vajradhara's heart dissolving into your heart and pervading your entire body, especially the mind. At that time, meditate that the mental obscurations and negative karmas related to mind are fully purified. Your mind is transformed into the Buddha's mind, which is inseparable luminosity and emptiness.

Last, meditate that *yellow light* from Vajradhara's navel dissolves into your navel and pervades your entire body, speech, and mind. Meditate that the most subtle obscurations to enlightenment are purified. Vajradhara's qualities related to body, speech, mind, and activities then prevail throughout your whole being.

By thus receiving the four empowerments, you are now authorized to practice the meditation of arising and completion. The *arising stage* consist of becoming Vajradhara physically and chanting the mantra verbally. The *completion stage* include *mahamudra* meditation and meditation on the inseparable nature of the *two truths*, the relative and ultimate.

Relative, or conventional, truth consists of all the phenomena that we hear, see, and think. All expressions are communicated via relative truth. However, its very nature is nonexistence, which is the inexpressible absolute truth, otherwise called mahamudra. For example, we can talk about the taste of hot chili pepper in a conventional way. Suppose you encounter someone who has never tasted chili pepper before. You tell that person that chili pepper is very hot, but he may not have any idea of what the experience of hot is. But when that person puts a piece of pepper on his tongue, he quickly experiences hot first hand. That experience is inexpressible, in the same way that the ultimate truth is inexpressible. Absolute truth cannot be found using relative truth, but without the relative no absolute could exist.

The surroundings dissolve into the central figure who melts into light and is absorbed into the spot between my eyebrows. I become inseparable from the guru's essence.

If not done before the empowerments, dissolve the retinue into the central Vajradhara at this point.

Vajradhara dissolves into light. You absorb the light through your forehead, and it pervades the entirety of your body, speech, and mind. Then meditate that you are inseparable from Vajradhara, who is indivisible appearance and emptiness. All delusions and obscurations dissolve into that state like a cloud dissolving into the sky. This is how to reveal your buddha nature and achieve the perfect form of a buddha. Maintain that state of equipoise in the unfabricated state of mahamudra. Then seal the practice with dedication prayers.

Longer Form of Taking The Four Empowerments

If you have time, you can perform this longer form of receiving the four empowerments. First visualize in the manner described above as clearly as possible; make offerings; recite the praises; and supplicate as many times as possible. Then relax physically and mentally with strong devotion. Dissolve the surrounding retinues into the central Vajradhara. Focus your mind directly on Vajradhara and then receive the four empowerments.

This is a vast and profound way of purification and transformation. These four empowerments contain a complete means to achieve enlightenment. Therefore, it is particularly important to focus carefully without allowing your thoughts to wander. Then meditate step-by-step through each empowerment.

The First Empowerment

*Glorious guru, whose nature is all good qualities,
please enter the body chakra at the crown of my head.
Please purify the tendencies of the waking state with
the water of the vase empowerment of delight.*

This is the skillful method of requesting the first empowerment from the *glorious guru*, Vajradhara. Directly focus on the guru, Vajradhara, as a living being, embodiment of all excellent qualities. The *tendencies of the waking state* are to misperceive phenomena as being real, substantial, and permanent. This error leads us into attachment and aversion. Therefore, we supplicate Guru Vajradhara to dispel our confusion and purify our misconceptions. In response to our request, Guru Vajradhara performs the empowerment as described next.

*By the power of this prayer, white light radiates from the forehead
of the precious guru and dissolves into my forehead,
purifying the obscurations of the waking state.
I obtain the vase empowerment and actualize
the nirmanakaya, the vajra body.*

The *power of this prayer* is devotion. After supplicating, you receive the blessing of the emanation body, or *nirmanakaya*, by visualizing *white light*, symbolizing the absolute qualities of a buddha's body, radiating from the *guru's forehead*, dissolving into your own forehead, and filling your whole body. This purifies the obscurations associated with the physical, such as killing and so forth, and you receive all the wisdom body blessings. You are transformed into Vajradhara's physical form. This is called the "vase" empowerment. Meditate in the inseparable nature of appearance and emptiness, which is called "vajra form." This plants the seed to actualize the *nirmanakaya*.

In particular, we are accustomed to regarding our body as substantial and real. By repeatedly meditating on the inseparable nature of appearance and emptiness, we become accustomed to it and purify our misconceptions. As a result, we experience the illusory nature of all phenomena.

The Second Empowerment

*Complete enjoyment body, the speech of all sentient beings,
please enter the speech chakra at my throat.
May the fuel of dreams be burned with the fire of the
secret empowerment of supreme joy.*

This is the request for the second empowerment ceremony. By again focusing on the guru, Vajradhara, with a one-pointed mind, devotion, and confidence, we request him to perform the empowerment that purifies the obscurations related to speech. This is related to the *complete enjoyment body*, or *sambhogakaya*. A *sambhogakaya* can be understood by each sentient being in his own language without a translator or other artificial intervention. We are requesting that our own *speech* become suffused with this quality.

The fuel of dreams refers to the obscurations that cause us to

perceive duality. While we are dreaming, we see places as actually existent; we greet real people, and so forth. We do not perceive them as unreal as long as we remain dreaming. Here, we supplicate Vajradhara to burn our misconceptions with the fire of wisdom. We ask for the sharpness of mind that will purify our ignorance and allow us to recognize dream as dream. When we can see through the dream that we call “reality,” attachment and aversion will disappear of their own accord.

*By the power of this prayer, red light radiates from the throat
of the precious guru, and dissolves into my throat,
purifying the obscurations of the dream state.
I obtain the secret empowerment and actualize
the sambhogakaya, the vajra speech.*

By the power of your supplication and devotion, the red light that is the nature of the wisdom speech of all buddhas radiates from the throat of the precious guru, Vajradhara. It is absorbed into your throat, purifying the obscurations of the dream state as it pervades your entire body, especially the chakras and channels. This is called the secret empowerment. Meditate that the light permeates your throat and then your whole body, purifying all the obscurations and negativity related to speech. You realize the inseparable nature of sound and emptiness. This plants the seed to actualize the sambhogakaya. Rest the mind in that state.

In particular, this empowerment provides an opportunity to purify the obscurations caused by negative speech, such as lying, divisive speech, harsh speech, and idle talk. These nonvirtues obscure the quality of our speech because they cause suffering for others as well as ourselves. When we receive this blessing, our mental state becomes more subtle. This will not happen through magical power or intellectual effort; it has to come from meditation practice. There are some people who like to investigate the Dharma intellectually, but until they have the experience of these practices, they will have little result. In order to gain experience, we must purify our obscurations; the more the obscurations are purified, the more subtle the mind becomes, which leads to realization. Then there is a better chance to recognize the dream as dream, and all sound as nothing more than echoes. This is a very important point.

The Third Empowerment

*Exalted guru, non-conceptual truth body, please enter the
mind chakra at my heart and awaken the dark thickness
of sleep with primordial wisdom awareness.*

For the third empowerment, we supplicate the exalted guru, who possesses completely pure ethical discipline inseparable from mahamudra. The precious guru is the non-conceptual truth body, the pure spacious mind to which everything is obvious. When there is turmoil, we have a lot of mental traffic; our mind is filled with honking and smoke. But when our wisdom is clear and precise, there is no doubt. We have nothing to think about and only beautiful open space remains.

When we request this third empowerment, we are asking for the primordial wisdom awareness that can awaken us from the dark thickness of sleep. Usually when we sleep, we become unconscious and completely lose awareness. The mind withdraws inside and we cannot see or hear anything external. Internal processes are also blocked from awareness, so we are lost in thick darkness. The result of this empowerment is a very subtle and stable mind that can sleep without losing awareness. Being able to sleep consciously is called “purified deep sleep;” this allows us to meditate twenty-four hours a day.

*By the power of this prayer, blue light radiates from the heart
of the precious guru and dissolves in my heart,
purifying the obscurations of deep sleep.
I obtain the empowerment of the exalted primordial wisdom
awareness and actualize the dharmakaya, the vajra mind.*

By the power of this prayer, the guru’s heart radiates a clear, deep, blue light, which is the nature of the Buddha’s wisdom mind. It dissolves into your heart and permeates your whole being. It purifies the thickness of ignorance and all the obscurations, especially those related to the mind such as covetousness, malice, and wrong view. Your whole mind is directly revealed, so this is called the wisdom empowerment. With devotion, you receive the blessing of the buddhas’ wisdom mind, which is inseparable luminosity and emptiness. This plants the seed to actualize the dharmakaya. Now rest the mind by meditating in the nondual nature of the dharmakaya state.

The Fourth Empowerment

*Protector of sentient beings, co-emergent awareness body,
please enter the primordial awareness chakra at my navel.
May I obtain the unchanging joy by the empowerment of
great wisdom awareness.*

With one-pointed devotion, we supplicate Vajradhara to perform the fourth empowerment. Vajradhara is the impartial protector of all beings, so he is addressed here as the protector of sentient beings. The *co-emergent awareness* body is the complete nature of buddhahood, not reducible to a form. *Co-emergent* refers to the inseparable establishment of the ultimate truth right from the beginning; it is eternally present and unchanging. It is also called the unfabricated awareness or “ordinary mind.”

Here, we request actualization of *unchanging joy*. This signifies the mind’s absolute nature, unafflicted wisdom that is the absence of all obscurations. This is the *svabhavikakaya*, or absolute nature of all buddhas’ forms. In actuality, we have never been, and can never be, separated from this nature. It is not something temporary, imagined, or made up, but is there all the time. Receipt of this empowerment gives us the opportunity to remove the subtle obscuration of duality so that we can realize this truth.

*By the power of this prayer, yellow light radiates from the navel
of the precious guru and dissolves into my navel,
purifying the obscurations of the state of transference.
I obtain the fourth empowerment and actualize
the svabhavikakaya, the vajra wisdom.*

From his navel, the *precious guru* Vajradhara radiates *yellow light* that embodies all the qualities of buddhahood. The light dissolves into your navel, purifying the subtle obscurations of body, speech, and mind as it permeates your entire being. This is the fourth, or precious word, empowerment. Generally, the mind is constantly moving, the very opposite of unchanging. When that is purified by this fourth empowerment, we attain the unchanging, ultimate state of the mind, nonduality of wisdom body, speech, and mind. This empowerment plants the seed to actualize the *svabhavikakaya*. Rest the mind as it is, free from contrivance or fabrication, in the mahamudra state.

The Fifth Empowerment

*May the primordial body, speech, mind, and wisdom of
myself and sentient beings boundless as the sky always
unite with your four vajras and attain the supreme joy.*

This special fifth empowerment enthrones you as a buddha by completely uprooting any remaining habitual imprints and obscurations of any kind whatsoever. In the uncontrived, unfabricated state of reality, your body, speech, and mind, those of sentient beings, and those of the Buddha are inseparable. The Buddha revealed that truth for himself and remains in the pure state. Sentient beings who have not revealed that truth remain endlessly bewildered in the state of misperception and confusion, until the natural, unfabricated effulgence is revealed.

This empowerment gives you the opportunity to break the habit of perceiving duality and, instead, to perceive all phenomena in their pure, primordially unfabricated nature. This is called *supreme joy*. The nature of mind is like space, infinite and unchanging. The *four vajras* (body, speech, mind, and wisdom) of all beings have never been stained by delusion, and are indivisible. No matter how thick the cloud of obscuration, it cannot dilute the nature of mind. This is the heart essence of the profound Vajrayana method that gives you an opportunity to experience enlightenment by receiving this empowerment.

*By the power of this prayer, the precious guru melts
into a ray of light and dissolves into me.
My body, speech, and mind become inseparable from
the guru’s body, speech, and mind.*

In response to your supplication, the precious guru dissolves into a ray of multi-colored light that is absorbed into you at the forehead, and then permeates your body, speech, and mind. Meditate that all the subtle obscurations are fully purified and that not a single obscuration exists now; this is no different from buddhahood itself. Here, the *nonreferential* state means that Vajradhara has been absorbed into your being. You are in the state of Vajradhara and have been enthroned as a buddha in the absolute state.

Dissolve yourself into all-pervading emptiness, free from the

three spheres. Set the mind there and rest absorbed in uncontrived equipoise for as long as you can. Resting without fabrication is the inseparable combination of shamatha and vipashyana called “critical insight.” This is an especially powerful method by which to remain within the enlightened state of inseparable luminosity and emptiness. It facilitates your transformation into the absolute nature of qualities, buddhahood, and is a wonderful way to practice mahamudra. This exhibits the skill of the Vajrayana practices to reveal your true nature and unite it with buddhahood. It gives you the full opportunity to purify all obscurations without remainder and to perceive who you really are. You cannot find a more profound way to experience undefiled joy and happiness. No matter what sort of so-called higher practice you find, it cannot be more effective than what is described here. Therefore, rejoice in this opportunity, appreciate it, and be persistent in this practice.

Dedication

*By this virtue, may I quickly
attain the state of the glorious guru
and may I lead all sentient beings
to that state.*

In between sessions, seal the virtue you have created by dedicating it to achievement of complete buddhahood for all sentient beings. After receiving all the empowerments, bring your attention to one point and meditate on the virtues of the buddhas, bodhisattvas, and sentient beings, including yourself. Gather them together within the mandala of your mind and dedicate by saying, “By these virtues, may I quickly attain the state of the glorious Vajradhara. May I lead every sentient being from the unending suffering of samsara to that state. May they experience total peace and undefiled joy.” With this way of dedicating, even your small amount of merit can be extended infinitely, as limitless as the number of sentient beings.

CHAPTER 6 The Special Preliminaries. Meditation Practice of Love, Compassion, and Bodhicitta



The supreme mind of bodhicitta
is like an unspoiled seed.
Without it, it is impossible to
achieve perfect enlightenment.
Therefore, cherish the cultivation
of the mind of Mahayana.
This is my heart’s advice.

by Drigung Dharmaradza
The Jewel Treasury of Advice



Introduction

There is no need to ask whether we like peace or if happiness is good. All beings, even small insects, want peace and happiness. The reason is the buddha nature that is the very essence of us all. Buddha nature, the seed of enlightenment, is the total peace and undefiled joy with which every sentient being is endowed. It is the basic goodness that pervades every being, the potential for freedom from suffering and the achievement of enlightenment. Since buddha nature is peace and happiness, suffering is incompatible with it. This is also the reason why we have not become habituated to suffering, why we haven't adjusted to it, or become accustomed to it yet even though we have been experiencing it since beginningless time. No matter how much suffering we create, we still don't like it because buddha nature, or ultimate bodhicitta, remains our own natural state, even though we may not be able to experience it now due to adventitious defilement.

This precious teaching is a very powerful way to recognize our own potential and it gives us full confidence to pursue the path. In our confusion, we do not recognize our own home as buddha nature. We have traveled far away from our basic goodness and suffer greatly in that confusion. This practice gives us a method to dispel confusion and return home. These Dharma teachings, especially those concerning bodhicitta, give us an opportunity to completely reveal our buddha nature that has been hidden by afflicting emotions and negative karma. Bodhicitta is indispensable; even if we practice the highest yoga tantra, we cannot attain buddhahood without it. Atisha told of a practitioner in India who practiced the Hevajra tantra for a long time, but because he lacked bodhicitta, he only attained the arhat state. This doesn't mean that we shouldn't practice highest yoga tantra, but rather that those skillful methods become most productive when based on bodhicitta. If we have bodhicitta, attaining buddhahood is just a matter of time.

All samsara and nirvana is nothing other than a mental formation, a creation of mind no more substantial than a mirage, rainbow, magician's phantasm, or dream. A person who has a good outlook and knows how to stabilize his mind can live anywhere and it will seem like a pure land. For someone with a

rigid, obscured mind that is overpowered by hatred, the same place can seem like a hell realm. In the same way, buddhahood is the mental formation of bodhicitta. When the mind is pure, calm, and spacious it becomes that of a buddha. Thus, it is important to maintain the momentum of our practice with consistent application of reflection and mindfulness.

Bodhicitta is the essence of all the teachings of the Buddha; it is regarded as the consummate practice. The *Gong-chig* includes a vajra statement that says that Mahayana and Hinayana practitioners are to be distinguished on the basis of whether they have bodhicitta. Without bodhicitta, one cannot be called a Mahayana practitioner. We should all undertake the responsibility to practice it, not just because we, ourselves, will benefit, but so that someday we will embody that blessing and be able to help all sentient beings.

When that universal mind infused with kindness and compassion is well-established, we will treat all sentient beings equally. This is the way we purify the distorted views of our mental afflictions, pacify our harmful delusions and actions, and follow the path of peace. The path is peaceful because we stop trying to control others; instead we just purify our own negative thoughts that manifest. Then, when our mind is peaceful, we will not be tempted to engage in negative or harmful acts.

I invite you to investigate these teachings and meditate on them to reveal your true nature. This is real Buddhism. We might attend many Dharma talks, read piles of books, and become very well informed about the Buddhist path. But without bodhicitta, we will not actually progress and buddhahood will not result. The Buddha taught the Dharma to free us from suffering, not to add to the body of intellectual knowledge. When we are hungry and are sitting at a table laden with delicious food, that food will not be of any use unless we actually eat it. Likewise, we have to practice the teachings in order to benefit from them.

Even though various technologies were invented to give us more free time and make our lives easier, we can see that, in reality, we just get busier. In earlier days, of course, people were more primitive, but they had time to spend together and relax. Now, we have more comfort and luxury, but there are also more pressures and deadlines due to technological developments. Our minds are so agitated that we can't even sleep well and there is

little time to meditate. There is a saying in Tibetan that when the ocean waves move, the fish cannot sit still. We are like those fish, being tossed around by the demands of our modern society. This practice invites us to do something different. It asks us to stop for just a little while, lose our tension, and rejoice that we have another day to study and engage in something that will make us genuinely, unalterably, happy. We are so fortunate to have the rare opportunity to engage in this practice!

Sadhana

For practitioners of the Mahayana family in order to cultivate bodhicitta in their mind stream, these methods are necessary: first, the perception arises that the guru from whom you are taking the bodhisattva's vow is the buddha; second, gathering the vast accumulation; third, practicing the four immeasurables; and fourth, taking the special refuge.

Loving-Kindness

KHA NYAM DRO DI KEL PA THOG ME NE/
DA TE BAR DU DAG GI MAR GYUR CHING/
DE WE TSO ZHING DANG WA KÜN PANG NE/
DRIN CHEN MA NAM JAM PE KYANG WAR RIG/

Compassion

MA NAM DE WAR DÖ KYANG LE NGEN GYI/
DRE BU NGEN SONG SUM DU RAB NAR ZHING/
MI ZÖ DUG NGEL DRAG PÖ NYEN PA DAG/
KÜN TU MI ZÖ NYING JE NE SU GYUR/

Joy and Equanimity

DE NAM DE DEN DUG NGEL TSOG DREL ZHING/
DUG NGEL ME PE DE DANG MI DREL WAR/
TANG NYOM CHOG LA NE PAR DAG YI MÖN/

Bodhicitta

DE TAR SEM LA JUG PE TSÖN DRÜ KYI/
DRO NAM DE LA GÖ NÜ DAG CHAG LA/
ME CHIR DAM PE GO PHANG CHOG DRUB NE/
MA TSOG DE WE SA LA GÖ JA ZHING/
TONG NYI NYING JE ZUNG JUG JANG CHUB SEM/
DÖN DAM LO DE CHÖ LA BE PAR JA/

Sadhana

For practitioners of the Mahayana family in order to cultivate bodhicitta in their mind stream, these methods are necessary: first, the perception arises that the guru from whom you are taking the bodhisattva's vow is the buddha; second, gathering the vast accumulation; third, practicing the four immeasurables; and fourth, taking the special refuge.

Loving-Kindness

Sentient beings, boundless as the sky,
have been our mothers from
beginningless kalpas until now.
Nourishing them with joy and abandoning all hatred
it is necessary to nurture the kind mothers
with loving-kindness.

Compassion

Even though these mothers desire happiness,
by the force of nonvirtuous actions they are
tortured in the three lower realms.
Suffering unendurable agonies
they become object of my unbearable compassion.

Joy and Equanimity

May they have happiness and be free from suffering.
I aspire may they rest in equanimity
without separating from the happiness
that is free from suffering.

Bodhicitta

Now I lack the ability to lead sentient beings to happiness.
Therefore, I engage my mind diligently
to accomplish the supreme, ultimate state,
and lead these mother beings to complete happiness.
I make effort to practice ultimate Bodhicitta,
the unity of emptiness and compassion,
the Dharma beyond conceptual thoughts.

Actual Bodhicitta Practice

The first cause: Perceive the lama as the buddha.

RANG NYI DÜN GYI NAM KHA YANG PE Ü/
 SENG THRI PAD MA NYI MA DA WE TENG/
 TSA WE LA MA CHOM DEN SHA KYA THUB/
 SER DOG TSHEN PE DZOG SHING KYIL TRUNG ZHUG/
 CHAG YE SA NÖN YÖN PA NYAM ZHAG DANG/
 CHÖ GÖ SUM DEN ZI Ö THRO WA LA/
 LA MA YI DAM SANG GYE JANG SEM DANG/
 KHAN DRO CHÖ KYONG DU ME TSOG KYI KOR/
 NE SUM LE NI Ö ZER CHOG KÜN THRÖ/
 YE SHE SEM PA CHEN DRANG YER ME THIM/
 BAZRA SAMADZA/

*They are the embodiment of loving-kindness, compassion and bodhicitta
 - all of the excellent qualities.*

Offering

OM SARVA TATHAGATA SAPARIVARA ...
 ARGHAM / PADYAM / PUSHPAM / DHUPAM / ALOKAM /
 GHANDE / NEVIDYE / SHAPTA ... PRATITSHA YE SVAHA

Praise

THAB KHE THUG JE SHA KYE RIG SU THRUNG/
 ZHEN GYI MI THUB DÜ KYI PUNG CHOM PA/
 SER GYI LHÜN PO TA BU JI PE KU/
 SHA KYE GYEL PÖ ZHAB LA CHAG TSEL TÖ/

*The second cause: To accumulate great merit, recite the abbreviated or
 detailed seven limb prayer. For the accumulation of wisdom, rest the
 mind in the non-conceptual state afterwards.*

The third cause: Recite and contemplate the four immeasurables.

The fourth cause: Recite the special mahayana refuge prayer:

Recitation

JANG CHUB NYING POR CHI KYI BAR/
 SANG GYE NAM LA KYAB SU CHI/

Actual Bodhicitta Practice

The first cause: Perceive the lama as the buddha.

In the space in front of me is a lion throne on which are a lotus,
 sun, and moon disks. On top sits my root lama, the
 Bhagavan Shakyamuni. He is golden in color, with all the
 perfect major and minor marks, sitting in the vajra posture.
 His right hand touches the ground and his left hand is in the
 meditation position. He wears the three Dharma robes
 and radiates with light.

He is surrounded by many assemblies of lamas, yidams,
 buddhas, bodhisattvas, dakinis, and Dharma guardians.

From their three places, light radiates in all directions,
 inviting the wisdom beings, who dissolve inseparably
 into the visualized beings.

BAZRA SAMADZA.

*They are the embodiment of loving-kindness, compassion and bodhicitta
 - all of the excellent qualities.*

Offerings

OM SARVA TATHAGATA SAPARIVARA ...
 ARGHAM / PADYAM / PUSHPAM / DHUPAM / ALOKAM /
 GHANDE / NEVIDYE / SHAPTA ... PRATITSHA YE SVAHA

Praise

Through skillful means and compassion you were born into
 the family of Shakyas, you conquered
 the hordes of maras, which others could not.

Your body is as splendid as a golden Mt. Meru.

I prostrate and praise the King of the Shakyas

*The second cause: To accumulate great merit, recite the abbreviated or
 detailed seven limb prayer. For the accumulation of wisdom, rest the
 mind in the non-conceptual state afterwards.*

The third cause: Recite and contemplate the four immeasurables.

The fourth cause: Recite the special mahayana refuge prayer:

Recitation

Until I attain the heart of enlightenment,
 I take refuge in the buddhas.

CHÖ DANG JANG CHUB SEM PA YI/
 TSOG LA'ANG DE ZHIN KYAB SU CHI/
 JI TAR NGÖN GYI DE SHEG KYI/
 JANG CHUB THUG NI KYE PA DANG/
 JANG CHUB SEM PE LAB PA LA/
 DE DAG RIM ZHIN NE PA TAR/
 DE ZHIN DRO LA PHEN DÖN DU/
 JANG CHUB SEM NI KYE GYI ZHING/
 DE ZHIN DU NI LAB PA LA/
 RIM PA ZHIN DU LAB PAR GYI/

recite many times while prostrating

Dissolution

Thus after repeating this ritual of cultivating bodhicitta as much as possible, the fields of accumulation dissolve into oneself. Remain in equanimity.

Conclusion

1. *Generating joy about oneself*

DENG DÜ DAG TSE DRE BU YÖ/
 MI YI SI PA LEG PAR THOB/
 DE RING SANG GYE RIG SU KYE/
 SANG GYE SE SU DA GYUR TO/

2. *Promise not to dishonor the Mahayana family*

DA NI DAG GI CHI NE KYANG/
 RIG DANG THÜN PE LE TSAM TE/
 KYÖN ME TSÜN PE RIG DI LA/
 NYOG PAR MI GYUR DE TAR JA/

3. *Causing others to generate joy*

DAG GI DE RING KYOB PA THAM CHE KYI/
 CHEN NGAR DRO WA DE SHEG NYI DANG NI/
 BAR DU DE LA DRÖN DU BÖ ZIN GYI/
 LHA DANG LHA MIN LA SOG GA WAR GYI/

Dedication

JANG CHUB SEM CHOG RIN PO CHE/
 MA KYE PA NAM KYE GYUR CHIG/
 KYE PA NYAM PA ME PAR YANG/
 GONG NE GONG DU PHEL WAR SHOG/

Likewise I take refuge in the Dharma and
 in the assembly of the bodhisattvas.
 As the previous buddhas cultivated the enlightened
 mind and progressed in the bodhisattva's trainings,
 I, too, for the benefit of all sentient beings,
 give birth to bodhicitta and
 gradually train in just the same way.

recite many times while prostrating

Dissolution

Thus after repeating this ritual of cultivating bodhicitta as much as possible, the fields of accumulation dissolve into oneself. Remain in equanimity.

Conclusion

1. *Generating joy about oneself*

Now my life has borne fruit.
 Human existence is well obtained.
 Today, I am born into the buddha's family,
 and now I have become the buddha's offspring.

2. *Promise not to dishonor the Mahayana family*

Now, no matter what happens,
 I will act according to the Mahayana family
 and I will behave in such a way,
 that this stainless family will not be polluted.

3. *Causing others to generate joy*

Today in front of all the protectors,
 I promise to establish sentient beings in the Sugata state.
 In the meantime I invite them as my guests
 to make them happy: gods, demigods, and the rest, enjoy!

Dedication

Bodhicitta, the excellent and precious mind:
 where it is unborn, may it arise;
 where it is born, may it not decline
 but ever increase higher and higher.

Sadhana Commentary

For practitioners of the Mahayana family in order to cultivate bodhicitta in their mind stream, these methods are necessary: first, the perception arises that the guru from whom you are taking the bodhisattva's vow is the buddha; second, gathering the vast accumulation; third, practicing the four immeasurables; and fourth, taking the special refuge.

The *Jewel Ornament of Liberation* beautifully describes the characteristics of the Mahayana family, as well as describing love, compassion, and Mahayana refuge. A *Complete Guide to the Buddhist Path* also describes these subjects in detail. Before undertaking bodhicitta practice, please read these books thoroughly and penetrate the meaning of these teachings so that your practice will be productive.

The Mahayana path has been laid out carefully and completely; nothing is missing and no element is superfluous. As part of this path, four contributory causes are required in order for a Mahayana practitioner to cultivate bodhicitta successfully. The first cause is seeing *the guru from whom you take the bodhisattva's vow is the buddha*. During the vow ceremony or meditation practice, it is important to visualize the preceptor as the Buddha. If we take the vow from an ordinary person, bodhicitta will not take root. Even if you see him as a great bodhisattva, success is doubtful. But if you see your preceptor as the Buddha himself and then take the bodhisattva's vow with full confidence and indivisible devotion, you will receive the vow without question.

The second contributory cause of the Mahayana path is the *vast accumulation* of merit and wisdom, such as we do in the mandala practice. The more we gather the two accumulations, the greater our chance is to realize bodhicitta. These two accumulations are like a dependable truck with a powerful engine that can carry a huge load. Similarly, when the great accumulations are well-gathered, the mind can bear the great weight of bodhicitta. A fragile and weak mind that is unsupported by the accumulations cannot.

The third contributory cause is the practice of the *four immeasurable* thoughts of love, compassion, joy, and equanimity. They form an essential foundation for cultivation of bodhicitta, and are briefly described below.

The fourth contributory cause is *taking refuge* in the Mahayana way. There are three differences between the Hinayana and Mahayana ways of taking refuge. In the Hinayana, one takes refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha until the end of the present life, motivated by desire for one's own liberation from samsara. In the Mahayana, the Buddha is seen more broadly, as the embodiment of the four kayas. In the Mahayana, the Dharma encompasses both the Mahayana and Hinayana sutras, and the Sangha includes the great bodhisattvas. In addition, one takes refuge until enlightenment is reached with the motivation to benefit all sentient beings.

Next, we recite the following practices of loving-kindness, compassion, joy, equanimity and bodhicitta.

Loving-kindness

*Sentient beings, boundless as the sky,
have been our mothers from beginningless kalpas until now.
Nourishing them with joy and abandoning all hatred
it is necessary to nurture the kind mothers with loving-kindness.*

The practice of loving-kindness will start to soften our attitude. In it, we look more closely at our situation and begin to understand that at some point during our wanderings through limitless space since beginningless time, every sentient being has served as our mother. From the day we are born, and even before birth, a mother nurtures and provides for her child. She takes care of us day after day, undergoing hardships, protecting us, teaching us about the world, and so forth. We grow up completely dependence upon her kindness and care. It is the same in the animal realm; birds hatch their eggs and the doe protects her fawn. This kindness has been given to us by a mother in lifetime after lifetime. Some people may have difficulty using their mother as the object of this meditation. In this case, they can substitute the recollection of an infinite stream of kindness behind another person who is close to them.

Because of their kindness to us, it is natural that we wish the best for this person. As we want happiness, so does she and so do all sentient beings. No matter how they are temporarily labeled - as our enemy, competitor, stranger, pet, friend, or relative - they still want to be happy. For the benefit of our own mind, we must

purify any resentment and boundaries, and then wish happiness for all sentient beings without hesitation or reservation. We can learn to do this by picturing every being we can and generating the same feeling toward them that we hold for the person who is closest to us. Whenever we experience happiness or peace within our mind, we can share it with others through this practice instead of just keeping the experience for our own selfish enjoyment. Reflecting on all sentient beings with love and caring is a skillful method by which we achieve the ultimate benefit of resting our mind within the enlightened state. From this state, we can think, “May my happiness permeate all sentient beings. May my peace pervade the ten directions so that all sentient beings can also enjoy peace.” This is a proficient way of bringing peace into the mind that requires little effort. It cuts through all philosophical differences and purifies the rigidity of our mind.

Compassion

*Even though these mothers desire happiness,
by the force of nonvirtuous actions they are
tortured in the three lower realms.
Suffering unendurable agonies
they become object of my unbearable compassion.*

The practice of compassion will also help break down barriers between ourselves and others. Again, we recall the motherly sentient beings and notice that they are suffering endlessly by the force of their nonvirtuous karma. The verse mentions the *three lower realms* because the suffering there is more poignant, but in actuality all beings in all the realms suffer constantly. Due to our practice of loving kindness, described above, we have a feeling of closeness with sentient beings, and cannot bear to witness their dreadful suffering. An urgent feeling that something must be done to alleviate their suffering arises within us. These sentiments are compassion and we can cultivate it by regarding all sentient beings with this same feeling.

Some people believe that contemplating suffering is negative and pessimistic. In fact, it presents us with a lot of opportunity. First of all, when we suffer, our arrogance abates. In contrast, when things are going well, we can develop a heightened ego and think, “I’m so successful. I’m very good at what I do and don’t need

anyone’s help.” But when we encounter problems, we will look around for someone to give us advice and the ego is reduced. Suffering helps us understand karma, avoid creating the causes of more suffering in the future, and develop empathy for the suffering of others. Think, “May this small suffering of mine serve to purify the suffering of all sentient beings. May it purify the negative karma I have created and, through this act, may peace and harmony prevail.” In this way, we use suffering as a special method to avoid hating our own suffering and that of others. This, in turn, allows the mind to relax.

We cultivate this great compassion not only toward those who are suffering, but also for those who are creating the causes of future suffering. This can be demonstrated with a story about the great master Asanga. One time, he came upon an injured dog lying at the side of a road. The dog was full of worms and maggots, but was still barking and threatening Asanga. Not only was the dog suffering, he was also creating the cause for future suffering. Upon seeing this dangerous combination, powerful compassion arose in Asanga. It overcame any fear, doubt, or hesitation in his mind and allowed him to cut a piece of flesh from his own body to attract the maggots and free the dog from his suffering. This is what is called “unbearable compassion.” Suffering gives bodhisattvas a great opportunity to purify negative karma and it facilitates advanced bodhicitta practice. Therefore, suffering is not necessarily negative. It can be a wonderful opportunity. We need to develop the discernment to be able to capture and utilize this opportunity.

Great bodhisattvas have no fear or doubt to cause them to hesitate to undergo hardship for another’s benefit. They will go into hell for 1,000 eons if it would benefit even one sentient being. That is the kind of inconceivable compassion that we have an opportunity to develop with this practice.

People occasionally confuse compassion with bodhicitta. They are not the same thing. Anyone can develop compassion. In fact, some ordinary people have greater compassion than bodhisattvas. There are some with no religion at all who have great compassion. Compassion is helping to free others from suffering, but not everyone who practices it is looking to attain complete enlightenment. On the other hand, it is indispensable for the cultivation of bodhicitta.

There are three types of compassion: one that takes sentient beings as its object, one that takes phenomena as its object, and one that has no object, called “non-objectified” compassion. The first one is the development of compassion based on the suffering of the lower realms, aging, sickness, death, and so forth. This type of compassion is easiest to cultivate and develop.

The second type arises toward those sentient beings who are confused about the nature of reality because they do not understand cause and result. These beings, especially those who are ruthless, have no concern for others, constantly destroy others’ peace and happiness, experience grasping and aversion that are very real to them, and undergo immense suffering. Great bodhisattvas who have developed their meditation practice more highly can perceive that suffering, and powerful compassion arises in them.

The third category, the great nonobjectified compassion, occurs with the realization of emptiness, the experiential knowledge that nothing is inherently existent. Samsaric beings, on the other hand, are deluded by illusion and do not realize this true nature of reality. They thirst for genuine peace and happiness, but pursue mirage-happiness within duality and, therefore, only suffer. They chase rainbows and, in spite of all their efforts, have no satisfaction.

Bodhisattvas who have the practice of ultimate bodhicitta, the realization of emptiness, see that nothing exists inherently. Samsaric sentient beings are dominated by ignorance and confused about the nature of reality, so they constantly chase after external objects in order to find peace and happiness. But their attachment and aversion only result in unending suffering. Their condition causes the great bodhisattvas to give rise to nonobjectified compassion. Bodhisattvas who have fully experienced emptiness develop the indomitable courage to benefit sentient beings tirelessly and fearlessly. Through the experience of emptiness, these bodhisattvas realize everything to be a mere manifestation and reflection. This gives them the ability and strength to lead sentient beings to enlightenment continuously life after life until the end of samsara. With this unmistakable mind, bodhisattvas can bring all mother sentient beings to happiness while they enjoy their own total peace and happiness.

Joy and Equanimity

*May they have happiness and be free from suffering.
I aspire may they rest in equanimity
without separating from the happiness that is free from suffering.*

The practice of joy reduces jealousy. We should avoid any sense of jealousy when anyone experiences happiness and joy, the absence of suffering. Instead, we are to react just as a mother does when her child is happy; her mind is fully suffused with unreserved joy at her child’s happiness. As Dharma practitioners, we learn how to rejoice without boundary at the happiness and joy of every sentient being. All negative emotions are transcended when we pray for their peace and happiness to last a long time and, especially, when we pray for their achievement of enlightenment.

This causes us to practice equanimity, the thought that is free from any attachment or aversion. Impartially feeling love and compassion for all sentient beings is a very powerful practice and a source of harmony. When we first create harmony within our own mind, it naturally manifests outward to our family and society. Equanimity is not a feeling of indifference. An indifferent mind is dry, with no special feeling for anyone, and is actually a type of ignorance. Here, we are aspiring to a close feeling of loving-kindness and compassion for every sentient being equally.

Bodhicitta

*Now I lack the ability to lead sentient beings to happiness.
Therefore, I engage my mind diligently
to accomplish the supreme, ultimate state,
and lead these mother beings to complete happiness.
I make effort to practice ultimate Bodhicitta,
the unity of emptiness and compassion,
the Dharma beyond conceptual thoughts.*

This preparatory recitation concerns bodhicitta itself. Although our compassion drives us to benefit others, we really don’t know how to do so. We lack the ability to bring happiness to the sentient beings who are migrating helplessly life after life, from realm to realm throughout samsara. However, if we were to attain complete, unsurpassable enlightenment, we would then have the ability to bring them to complete happiness. When the mind is free

from obscurity, everything becomes obvious, nothing remains hidden. We will have all the infinite qualities needed to benefit infinite sentient beings when compassion and the wisdom realizing emptiness become united in our mind. Therefore, we need to cultivate our mind toward achieving enlightenment and develop those qualities. This is called applying relative bodhicitta, and with this prayer we declare our firm intention to accomplish it.

Based on the four immeasurable contemplations and practices, we start searching for the wisdom that can provide a solution to suffering, we develop a desire to achieve complete buddhahood, and cultivate the mind of bodhicitta. It is very important for us to pinpoint the meaning of bodhicitta - it is more than compassion and not only wisdom. But on the basis of both of these two factors, we give rise in our mind stream to the desire to achieve complete buddhahood. This is aspiration bodhicitta.

Once aspiration bodhicitta has been cultivated, we are to train the mind as described in *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*: not forsaking sentient beings from one's heart; recollecting the beneficial effects of that mind; gathering the two accumulations; practicing the enlightened mind repeatedly; and accepting the four wholesome deeds while rejecting the four unwholesome deeds. Then, to develop aspiration bodhicitta fully, we take the bodhisattva's vow. After thus opening the door to complete enlightenment, we must follow the path step-by-step; this is called engaged or action bodhicitta. To accomplish this, there are six special methods, called the six paramitas or perfections: generosity; moral ethics; patience; joyous effort; meditative concentration; and wisdom awareness.

When the mind has been trained with this skillful method, it will be well-equipped to relax effortlessly, calmly, clearly, and without elaboration. That is the foundation for the manifestation of the vast and infinite qualities of the Buddha, or ultimate bodhicitta. Through these excellent and unfabricated qualities, one gains an infinite ability to benefit every sentient being effortlessly in the same way that the sun dispels darkness or water quenches the thirst of all beings.

Actual Bodhicitta Practice

First, we establish a visualization of Buddha Shakyamuni

and his surrounding retinue. Visualization is a skillful and unique method to perceive and understand enlightened beings' supreme qualities. It makes use of our habitual ways of relating to our environment through sight, sound, and other sensory input. Through visualization we transform the familiar into the enlightened state. Consistency and continuity are important in this practice, because if we forget the visualization or our mind strays from it often, our meditation will be unstable and unclear.

In the space in front of me is a lion throne on which are a lotus, sun, and moon disks. On top sits my root lama, the Bhagawan Shakyamuni. He is golden in color, with all the perfect major and minor marks, sitting in the vajra posture.

In the space above and in front of you there is a jeweled throne supported by lions. The jeweled throne represents the perfect qualities of all the buddhas. The *lion* symbolizes fearlessness; when you have firm bodhicitta, there is no fear. The *lotus* support symbolizes the purity of wisdom, the *sun* seat symbolizes the clarity nature of wisdom, and the *moon* seat symbolizes great compassion.

Your own *root lama* sits on this precious seat and appears in the form of Buddha Shakyamuni. A root lama is someone with whom you have a special connection and someone whose teachings really penetrate your heart. The Buddha is the absolute state of perfection of bodhicitta meditation practice, both relative and absolute. The visualized Buddha is alive, vivid, and clear, and not like a statue or painting, yet he is insubstantial in form. He is not imaginary, and should be perceived as actually being present. He displays all of the 112 physical marks that distinguish a buddha. By visualizing Buddha Shakyamuni as your root lama, you have the full opportunity to cultivate bodhicitta in his presence and receive all his blessings. If you see your root lama as a bodhisattva, it is doubtful whether you can cultivate bodhicitta.

He is sitting in the cross-legged lotus or *vajra posture*. This is also called the nonabiding posture because the Buddha neither abides in samsara nor rests in nirvana. It also represents the inseparable nature of the relative and absolute truths. Because he is free from all obscurations, the inconceivable compassion and wisdom of the Buddha permeate all sentient beings at all times.

His right hand touches the ground and his left hand is in the meditation position.

The gesture shown by his *right hand* is called the “earth-touching mudra.” At the time of his enlightenment, the Buddha was challenged by Mara, who demanded to know who would attest to his claim that he was going to achieve enlightenment. In response, the Buddha touched the ground to call upon the earth as his witness and to verify that he would, in fact, become a buddha. This gesture also symbolizes that the Buddha’s compassion is always touching sentient beings.

The gesture of his *left hand* is in the meditation posture. This indicates that the Buddha’s mind does not waver and is unconfused in the equipoise state. He remains in the dharmakaya while limitlessly benefiting beings. The Buddha’s qualities are amazing. We are so fortunate to have an opportunity to make a connection to him, feel devotion, and be inspired that one day we, too, can become buddhas.

He wears the three Dharma robes and radiates with light.

He wears the three *Dharma robes*, consisting of two upper and one lower robe. Wearing these outer robes symbolizes the “inner robes” of perfection of the three trainings of discipline, meditative concentration, and wisdom. They also imply the three “secret robes,” the dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, and nirmanakaya.

The three trainings interdependently support each other. The first, discipline is moral conducts, free from all thoughts and acts of nonvirtue, is very important to our practice. The mind must be free of nonvirtuous thoughts in order to relax and experience peace. When based on discipline, our meditation can be balanced, clear, and precise. The more discipline we have, the greater chance we have to purify our delusions and gain realization because well-established discipline creates an environment in which the mind can settle one-pointedly in the right place.

Once discipline is established, then meditative equipoise can gradually develop because the gross mental factors no longer have any place to play. They can only dissolve into the mind’s peace, joy, and bliss. With greater progress in absorption and equipoise, even subtle conceptual thoughts dissolve into equanimity. This state of mind is an indispensable support for the manifestation of special insight. It uproots all our misconceptions so that the

mind can abide in the enlightened state free from all delusion. Therefore, these three trainings of moral ethics, meditative equipoise, and special insight comprise the consummate path toward enlightenment in all Buddhist traditions.

The root lama, as the Buddha, embodies the inseparable nature of wisdom and compassion, which shines forth from his body. The Buddha’s form is not like our ordinary body of flesh and bone. After practicing for three limitless eons, the Buddha came to embody enlightenment, the state of great non-objectified compassion and perfect wisdom. This allows him to manifest his blessings limitlessly and impartially, just as the sun shines equally on all. In order for the blessings to reach us, we sentient beings must have correspondingly limitless devotion. The shining sun can be reflected in an infinite number of pools simultaneously, but if there are no pools in the first place, there will not be any reflections. We should have a strong pool of devotion as a condition to reflect the sun of blessings.

He is surrounded by many assemblies of lamas, yidams, buddhas, bodhisattvas, dakinis, and Dharma guardians.

Buddha Shakyamuni is *surrounded by* the lineage of great *lamas* who taught bodhicitta, signifying that these teachings were transmitted through that lineage for more than 2,600 years, all the way from the time of the historical buddha until now. The other buddhas of the past, present, and future, the thousand buddhas of this fortunate eon, encircle him as well. *Bodhisattvas* such as Chenrezig, Manjushri, Vajrapani, Tara, and Maitreya are also there. Visualize whatever *yidams* you are familiar with, such as Kalachakra, Chakrasamvara, or Vajrayogini, for instance. *Dakinis and Dharma guardians* join the others by filling the entirety of space like great clouds. These are called the “samaya beings.” If you are unfamiliar with these figures, just visualize Buddha Shakyamuni in front of you, and consider him to be the embodiment of all those enlightened beings.

From their three places, light radiates in all directions inviting the wisdom beings, who inseparably dissolve into the visualized beings.

They are the embodiment of loving-kindness, compassion and bodhicitta - all of the excellent qualities.

Light radiates from their *three special places*, which are the forehead, representing the physical body, the throat, representing wisdom speech, and the heart, representing wisdom mind. The OM at the forehead level is white, the AH at the throat level is red, and the HUNG at the heart level is blue. The light beams out in all ten directions in the color of the syllable associated with each level. The beings that we visualized are called the “samaya beings.” With the light rays, invite the presence of the wisdom beings, that is, the actual buddhas and bodhisattvas, who come and inseparably dissolve into the visualized samaya beings. Meditate that they are not just a visualization, but are the actual embodiment of all the excellent qualities of loving-kindness, compassion, and bodhicitta.

BAZRA SAMADZA.

This refers to the inseparable nature of the samaya and wisdom beings.

Offerings

**OM SARVA TATHAGATA SAPARIVARA ...
ARGHAM / PADYAM / PUSHPAM / DHUPAM / ALOKAM /
GHANDE / NEVIDYE / SHAPTA ... PRATITSHA YE SVAHA**

Next we make these offerings to the assembled enlightened beings in order to gather the great accumulations of merit and wisdom: water to cleanse the mouth or face; water for bathing the feet; flowers offered to the crown of the head; incense offered to the nose; light for the eyes; water scented with saffron or other perfumes; delicious food to the mind; and celestial sound of music offered to the ears. The significance of these offerings was explained in Chapter 3.

We offer these things with devotion in order to gather the two accumulations. In order that we can cultivate bodhicitta with more success, we also offer all of the good things that exist in the world including our own body, speech, and mind.

Don't be content with small offerings. Fill the entirety of space with offerings - an ocean of water, a mountain of flowers, clouds of incense, and so forth. This method purifies clinging to ourselves and our belongings. There is no need to be rich in order to make such offerings. Some great masters had no physical possessions

to offer; they would just wash their simple cup, fill it with water, and offer that. There are so many things we can do like that. When you go to the grocery store, mentally gather all the food and offer it to the enlightened beings. When you take a drive and find a lovely field of flowers, mountains, lakes, or beautiful trees, make that beautiful scene into an offering to the buddhas. This is a skillful method to gather the accumulations without much effort - we only need mindfulness to do it. Be happy and joyful that you have the wisdom and method to do this practice.

Praise

*Through skillful means and compassion you were born
into the family of Shakyas, you conquered
the hordes of maras, which others could not.
Your body is as splendid as a golden Mt. Meru.
I prostrate and praise the King of the Shakyas*

Then we praise the Buddha, the most skillful and compassionate one, by recollecting his perfect qualities. The Buddha never misses an opportunity to use his skills to benefit sentient beings. This can be demonstrated by the following example of how he once helped an ignorant Brahmin boy become an arhat:

Among the four castes of traditional Indian society, the Brahmins were a high, spiritual group. Their role was to memorize and recite prayers and conduct rituals. A boy was born into this caste who was unable to remember even the shortest prayer, so his family sent him away and left him to wander the streets alone. One day the Buddha happened to see this confused, suffering boy and out of great compassion asked, “Would you like to follow me?” The neglected child was surprised that anyone would notice him, and quickly agreed.

The Buddha took him along, and assigned him the task of cleaning the temple. He even provided the boy with the leftovers of his own noon meal. The boy was very happy that the Buddha had accepted him, and his devotion grew. He cleaned and cleaned the whole day through. After some time, his mind was at ease and he caught a glimpse of clarity. At that point, the Buddha asked him whether he

could memorize a short phrase: Clean the dust. Clean the dirt. The boy said that he could, so the Buddha instructed him to repeat it over and over like a mantra as he swept. Out of gratitude and devotion for having been accepted by the Buddha and for the food he was receiving, the boy did this for several months.

One day, as he was sweeping the temple, he realized that the point of his labors was not to clean just the external dirt and dust, but to clean his mental dirt and dust. He realized that the external dirt and dust were manifestations of his mental dirt and dust. He saw that by cleaning his mental obscurations, all dirt and dust would be cleansed. With this experience, he achieved the arhat state and composed a four-line stanza to express his realization of this teaching.

Shortly afterward, a community asked the Buddha to send them a teacher, and he sent the Brahmin boy. They thought that the Buddha was showing them disrespect by sending a foolish, uneducated person to teach them. But since it was the Buddha who sent him they agreed to accept him even though they were upset. The Brahmin boy gave teachings on his verse for three months, and they were astonished. They realized how much skill the Buddha had to possess if he was able to train such a stupid person to become an arhat. Their devotion for the Buddha was strengthened. When they finally understood that anyone had the opportunity to achieve the high spiritual state of an arhat, they became inspired and worked all the harder in study and practice. That Brahmin boy is still revered today as one of the Sixteen Arhats.

The Buddha's family was the royal *Shakya* clan that ruled in Northern India at that time. The Buddha was uniquely able to subjugate and dispel both the outer and the inner *maras*, or demons. The outer *maras* encompass all the different types of evil spirits, enemies, and temptations. The inner demons include our afflicting emotions and delusions, and are much more difficult to handle. They follow us life after life like a shadow. These *maras* don't age, get sick, or die until we exert enough effort to overcome them. When our mind is disturbed by negative thoughts, our life becomes difficult. If we are enslaved by them in this life, then they will throw us into the lower realms in the next. No outer

enemy has that power. Only Dharma practice can help us out of this predicament; there is no other alternative. Because of this, we develop unshakable devotion for the Buddha who taught us how to cultivate wisdom and compassion. Thus, we take refuge in the Buddha and work to cultivate bodhicitta.

The Buddha's body manifests out of an inconceivable gathering of the two accumulations and, so, is more *splendid* than any ordinary body. Inspired by seeing such qualities, we increase our confidence and devotion, and engage in the recitation section of the practice.

Recitation

One should recite the following bodhicitta prayer as many times as possible while prostrating:

*Until I attain the heart of enlightenment,
I take refuge in the buddhas.
Likewise I take refuge in the Dharma and in the
assembly of the bodhisattvas.
As the previous buddhas cultivated the enlightened mind and
progressed in the bodhisattva's trainings,
I, too, for the benefit of all sentient beings,
give birth to bodhicitta and gradually train in just the same way.*

Recite this prayer as many times as possible during a session while doing full or half prostrations. In the opening part of the prayer we first take refuge in all *the buddhas* of the past, present, and future. Then we take *refuge in the Dharma*, the complete teachings including the Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana, both the literature that we study and the realization of their meaning. Then we take refuge in the Sangha comprised of *the assembly of the bodhisattvas* who practiced this path successfully, and as before includes *vidams, dakinis, and Dharma guardians*.

The second part of the prayer is the cultivation of bodhicitta, the mind of enlightenment. The buddhas and great bodhisattvas were once ordinary beings. They *cultivated the enlightened mind* by bringing bodhicitta into their hearts, and determined to attain buddhahood for the benefit for all sentient beings. This is aspiration bodhicitta practice.

The third section of the prayer describes action bodhicitta. After aspiring to attain bodhicitta, the bodhisattvas *progressed*

in the bodhisattva's trainings, meaning that they used their determination to put bodhicitta into action through the three trainings: pure moral conduct; meditative absorption; and special insight. There are five stages or paths that bodhisattvas traverse: the path of accumulation; the path of preparation; the path of insight; the path of meditation; and the path of perfection. By actively engaging in these five paths, they were able to perfect aspiration bodhicitta. After perfecting both relative and absolute bodhicitta, they enjoy undefiled peace, joy, and fearlessness. From there, they limitlessly benefit sentient beings.

We take these great beings as our examples of those who followed the path and benefitted countless sentient beings. Today, in front of those buddhas and bodhisattvas, we *give birth to bodhicitta* and apply ourselves in the trainings. We pledge to perfect our own aspiration in the same way they did, so that we too will be able to *benefit all sentient beings*. Think, "I personally will cultivate bodhicitta, bring that mind into my heart, and cherish it. For the benefit of sentient beings who are bewildered in samsara by confusion, I apply myself to the Five Paths and to the practice of the six paramitas: generosity; moral ethics; patience; joyous effort; meditative concentration; and wisdom awareness." We can have total confidence in this path.

With a mind firmly established in this way, prostrate to the buddhas and bodhisattvas while reciting this prayer. Through this practice, we have every opportunity to purify our gross and subtle obscurations, and accumulate merit and wisdom.

Since we combine this recitation with full prostrations, it is useful to memorize this prayer. It can be done in Tibetan or English. Visualize that as you are prostrating, all other beings are also cultivating bodhicitta and prostrating along with you. Prostrations are quite vigorous exercise, so it's good to start out gradually with twenty-one prostrations, and then build up your stamina slowly. This dual practice of prostrations and recitation will purify your body and your mind at the same time, as well as enhance the experience of bodhicitta in your heart.

It is always important to repeatedly reflect on the impermanence of all composite phenomena, including the precious human life. At the time of death, nothing can help you except the experience of relative and absolute bodhicitta. Reflect on the sentient beings in samsara, whose suffering is intolerable and endless. Without

special insight and compassion, they have no means to escape the causes of their suffering. Use these thoughts to inspire yourself to practice bodhicitta for yourself and for all others. Appreciate this opportunity and rejoice in the good fortune that brought you to this practice.

Dissolution

Thus after repeating this ritual of cultivating bodhicitta as much as possible, the fields of accumulation dissolve into oneself. Remain in equanimity.

At the end of the session, sit down with strong devotion in front of the buddhas and bodhisattvas. Repeat the prayer three more times, with a feeling of joy at having had this opportunity to practice the extraordinary teachings of the Buddha.

Then dissolve the visualization in this way: all the Dharma guardians, dakinis, yidams, bodhisattvas, buddhas, and lineage lamas dissolve into Buddha Shakyamuni at the center. Recall that Buddha Shakyamuni embodies all the excellent qualities of bodhicitta, wisdom, and compassion. With complete confidence and devotion, meditate that he dissolves into light and unites with you. The light of blessings enters through your head and permeates your whole body and mind. All obscurations and ordinary appearances are purified with this light, and we become of the nature Buddha Shakyamuni, who is inseparable appearance and emptiness. Our body also melts into light, the light gradually becoming smaller and smaller, until it finally disappears. Sustain your meditation in this nonconceptual state for as long as you can. This state of meditation free from the three spheres of self, other, and action, is ultimate bodhicitta. Thus, in a single session, we have the opportunity to practice aspiration, engagement, and ultimate bodhicitta - mahamudra.

There is no space for negative thoughts in the nonconceptual state. If we do these practices regularly, we will gradually purify our many layers of obscuration. We have become habituated to these obscurations over countless lifetimes, so it will take time and patience to purify them. While we are meditating, our mind is like a flattened roll of paper. As soon as we release our meditation, the mind returns to its former state, just as paper automatically rolls up again when we let go. In order to keep the mind open, we

have to retrain it over and over again.

With this practice, our habitual attachments and hatred lose their hold on us. We change our accustomed, samsaric patterns and they gradually become powerless. When we dissolve into emptiness and meditate in the unfabricated state, just observe. This is the very nature of the mind. Whether we realize it or not, whether we sustain that awareness or not, mind is always that way. We just have to discipline ourselves to recognize its simple, unfabricated state. If suffering or afflicting emotions arise while you are in this emptiness state, you can meditate that their nature is also empty. There is no need to chase them away. Just allow them to subside into the natural state, like waves receding into the ocean. That which is called a wave is really just water, identical to the ocean. When a wave relaxes back into the ocean, they are indistinguishable, inseparable from the ocean water.

Conclusion

1. *Generating joy about oneself
Now my life has borne fruit.
Human existence is well obtained.
Today, I am born into the buddha's family,
and now I have become the buddha's offspring.*

Bodhicitta is the principal method of freeing ourselves from suffering and achieving the perfect qualities of a buddha, so we are to rejoice for ourselves. We don't do this rejoicing out of arrogance or ignorance, but out of great wisdom and true confidence. We have good reason to rejoice - we have been born in a precious human life that allows us to cultivate bodhicitta. With bodhicitta, we can become buddhas which isn't an easy thing to accomplish. With bodhicitta, we can go on to achieve all of the Buddha's great qualities. We have a precious human life and are to use it to the maximum in order to achieve buddhahood, the final result. There is no greater achievement than this.

We respect buddhas and bodhisattvas and seek their blessings because of their bodhicitta. With that as inspiration, we can begin to exercise these same qualities within our own mind. Practicing with a feeling of appreciation and with a comprehension of how fortunate we are will allow deep meaning to penetrate our mind. This is something very precious. Even our kind parents did not

teach bodhicitta to us, nor did we learn it by ourselves even though we take such good care of ourselves. Like a blind person finding a jewel in a heap of dust, we have happened upon the most valuable thought in the universe. This is indeed a cause for rejoicing!

Think how good it feels when you can make just one person happy, even someone you don't know. That other person doesn't have to give you anything and still you feel great that you could help them. You have created a cause, bodhicitta, to achieve buddhahood, which is the basis for being able to benefit all beings. What joy that will bring! That is the feeling being invoked with this verse.

2. *Promise not to dishonor the Mahayana family
Now, no matter what happens,
I will act according to the Mahayana family
and I will behave in such a way,
that this stainless family will not be polluted.*

In this verse, we make a commitment to ourselves, or remind ourselves, not to dishonor the Mahayana family by giving up the bodhisattva's path. It is important to reflect on the beneficial effects of bodhicitta repeatedly, which will inspire us to keep up the momentum of bodhicitta practice. Sometimes we encounter challenges along the way and we have to decide whether to go on or give up. We must develop strength of mind in order to face these inevitable circumstances successfully. We can do this by bringing to mind how we have wasted a limitless number of lifetimes. Now we have an almost impossibly rare opportunity to receive teachings, practice them, and use their fruition to benefit ourselves and others. Seeing this, why would anyone not make a commitment to experience all the good qualities of buddhahood and also bring them to others?

Great masters of the past did this and look how they are a source of peace, happiness, and harmony for us today! We may have to undertake a small amount of suffering to attain the greater goal, like having to buy a ticket in order to win a lottery. Some commitments can make you feel miserable and put you in a narrow box, but the bodhisattva's commitment is not like that. This vow opens the heart, makes the mind vast, and leads us to complete enlightenment. Even if it's difficult, we have to continue

even at the risk of our life. Even if we are cut into many pieces, burned in a fire, or decapitated, we should never bow down to the afflicting emotions, which are the only force that can make us give up.

There is an account in Tibetan history of a king who refused to give up the Dharma, and sacrificed his life for it:

Around the Tenth century, Buddhism was experiencing a recovery after a major decline. There were many practitioners, but also much controversy, especially concerning whether the ordained could practice Vajrayana. King Yeshe Öd (947 - 1024) felt that an exceptionally good teacher, such as Atisha, was needed to dispel the growing confusion. At the time, inviting a teacher to come from India was a major undertaking. Much gold was needed as an offering; the travel was treacherous, expensive, and very long. Undeterred, he set out to obtain a large quantity of gold. Unfortunately, he happened into a non-Buddhist kingdom and was taken captive.

Yeshe Öd tried to explain his virtuous mission, but the authorities there demanded that he either give up his mission or pay a ransom in gold equal to the size of his body.

His nephew Jangchub Öd heard of this, and thought he would try to save his uncle. Jangchub Öd estimated his uncle's size, collected the required gold, and carried it to the remote kingdom. Alas, it was not enough; gold equaling the size of Yeshe Öd's head was lacking. Before he left to get more, Jangchub Öd asked to speak with his uncle to give him some comfort and reassure him that they were going to pay the ransom. Yeshe Öd said, "I am very inspired by what you have done, collecting such a large quantity of gold. But even if you rescued me from this prison, I will not live much longer because I am old. Instead of ransoming me, take the gold to India. Tell the great teacher, Atisha, how much I sacrificed for the Dharma." Jangchub Öd reluctantly went home and left his uncle to die in that foreign prison.

Jangchub Öd located a translator who had recently returned to Tibet from India named Nagtso Lotsawa. He hesitated to ask the translator to go again so soon, but he was desperate. He

recounted the story of his uncle. Nagtso Lotsawa was moved by Yeshe Öd's story, and agreed to go in spite of the hardship and risk to his life. He then traveled to Nalanda University, where Atisha was the top teacher. The monks there didn't want Atisha to leave, so they made it difficult for the translator to see him. Eventually Nagtso Lotawa did see Atisha, and told him the story of Yeshe Öd's great sacrifice for the Dharma. Atisha said, "That king was a true bodhisattva. I cannot refuse his request." To be sure it was the right thing to do, Atisha asked the deity Tara whether it would be useful for him to go to Tibet. She replied that his life span would be cut short if he went, but that it would benefit a great many sentient beings. So, he went and is still regarded as a great man in Tibet to this day. There are many other inspiring accounts like this one.

Some people ask what they should do if they break their vow. It can be repaired with this practice. As soon as you realize that bodhicitta has been lost, visualize in the manner described above, say these prayers with yearning in the mind to renew your bodhicitta practice, and do prostrations. Recall what a precious jewel you have in your hand, and determine never to lose it again. If you are able to do this within four hours, it is said that the bodhisattva vow has not been broken. If more than four hours have passed, you should retake the vow and start again. In this way, we continue our training and gradually purify our mind of aggression, resentment, and delusion.

Bodhicitta is pure, so when we practice it, we can become pure. Because bodhicitta is holy, we can become holy and enlightenment is in our hand. We can keep the commitment we've made by practicing, keeping bodhicitta in mind, developing courage, and purifying our mind. Some people think, "If I take this vow, then I'll be trapped! I won't be able to move; I'd rather have my freedom." Adopting this discipline is the way to gain real freedom that is the nature of joy and the source of happiness and peace. It is freedom from samsara and freedom from physical and mental suffering. Understanding that, never give up the bodhicitta in your heart.

3. Causing others to generate joy

Today in front of all the protectors,
I promise to establish sentient beings in the Sugata state.
In the meantime I invite them as my guests to make them happy:
gods, demigods, and the rest, enjoy!

This verse demonstrates how marvelous this bodhisattva vow is. Not only does it make us happy, but it also brings happiness to all other beings. We have promised in front of all our *protectors*, the buddhas and bodhisattvas, to help all beings attain the *Sugata* state. *Sugata*, one of the epithets of the Buddha, is a Sanskrit word meaning well-gone one. It signifies that the Buddha has gone well and joyfully, gone beautifully, gone perfectly. It means that he purified all obscurations, brought all excellent qualities to fruition, and achieved buddhahood.

Although we have sincerely cultivated aspiration and action bodhicitta, we may not have perfected those states yet. In the meantime, we ask all beings to be our *guests*. What do you do with guests? You do everything you can to make them comfortable and happy. We even extend this to the *gods and demigods* who already enjoy great luxury. This practice recognizes that sentient beings, whether good or bad, are the practical support for our practice. Unpleasant people, for instance, help us build patience. In order for us to practice generosity, there must be beings on whom to bestow wealth, protection, and Dharma teachings. Likewise, we invite all sentient beings as guests in order to practice moral conduct, forbearance, joyous effort, meditative equipoise, and wisdom, especially insight awareness. With the support of these sentient beings, with the blessings of the buddhas and bodhisattvas, and with our own joyous effort, we can perfect the practice of bodhicitta.

As you recite these lines, meditate on their meaning. Sometimes, people are overwhelmed by the thought of benefiting all sentient beings. They think, "How can I possibly do this?" We should understand that this is gradual mental training. We have to have the wisdom and skill to relate to others without losing our bodhicitta. There are many degrees of practice from the ordinary level, all the way to those with the highest accomplishment. Just as an infant cannot digest adult food, we also must act according to our ability. It will help if we make a distinction between our

motivation and action. Our action may be limited for now, but we should keep our motivation limitless. Let yourself grow skillfully. Wisely protect the seedling of your bodhicitta so that it can mature into a huge tree that can benefit many.

Our efforts bring great joy to the buddhas. There is no greater offering we could make than bodhicitta. Buddhas' activities consist solely of benefiting sentient beings. If you do any small thing for a sentient being's benefit, the buddhas are pleased. There is no greater teaching than bodhicitta and no greater benefit for beings than its practice. Seeing our commitment to and practice of bodhicitta, they rejoice all the more.

Bodhicitta practice is like a rush of water clearing out everything in its path. Bodhicitta has great transformative power to help us address our obscurations effectively. This kind of meditation is very helpful, especially for those of us who don't have much experience with mahamudra or emptiness meditation. Our mind is fragile, unstable as a flame blowing in the wind, so learning how to utilize whatever happens in our life is very beneficial. When practiced on a regular basis, every part of our life, whether positive or negative, becomes a part of our meditation. Here are some suggestions on how to practice this way:

1. If you become ill, then think, "May my sickness substitute for the illnesses of all sentient beings. May this illness purify all the negative karma that I have collected since beginningless time."
2. If someone slanders or blames you, consider them as a teacher. Let that experience be a method to purify the pain of all beings who have this problem. Think, "May this blame purify all the negative karma of my having blamed others." Then rejoice in this opportunity to practice.
3. When anger arises in the mind, instead of slavishly following it, look at the anger from a distance. Take a deep breath, and think, "May the anger in my mind be enough to purify all the anger of all sentient beings. May everyone be free from anger and breathe peace."
4. When strong attachment arises, think at that moment, "May my attachment have enough power to purify all the attachment of sentient beings. May they achieve freedom."

5. At the time of death, meditate, “May my experience of death purify the fears of all sentient beings when they experience death. May my death be the death of ignorance and obscurations.” Then meditate on bodhicitta and mahamudra.

6. As you fall asleep, bring this thought into your heart, “May every sentient being have happiness, be free from suffering, and actualize enlightenment.”

7. If you feel lazy or disinterested in Dharma practice, take advantage of that feeling and use it as a method of practicing Dharma by thinking, “This feeling is an obscuration. May it purify all others who are experiencing this and may they all follow the Dharma path, especially the practice of bodhicitta. May they become free from all types of laziness, enjoy bodhicitta, and achieve buddhahood.”

8. Always appreciate this opportunity by thinking, “I am so fortunate to have this practice.”

9. Smile at others in a genuine way. This will help make the world a better place. We can enjoy the Dharma every minute through our recollection of it and mindfulness of our actions. This fulfills the purpose of our life.

CHAPTER 7 Concluding Mantras and Dedication Prayers



Mahayana dedication
is like a well-guarded treasure.
It bears fruit each day until enlightenment is won.
It accomplishes the benefit of oneself and others.
This is my heart's advice.

by Drigung Dharmaradza
The Jewel Treasury of Advice

Introduction

Dedication is a very skillful means to connect with enlightenment. In all our lives, from the limitless past up until now, we certainly must have created some virtue. We must also have had opportunities to do many good things. However, we have still not achieved buddhahood, because we didn't know how to dedicate in a complete and perfect way. Once we reap the results of our past wholesome deeds that we dedicated for our own fame, wealth, and so forth, that merit is dissipated. As soon as we experienced the results, they were exhausted. We didn't have the incisive wisdom to dedicate those deeds for the optimal goal, enlightenment.

When we recite dedication prayers, whatever virtue or merit we have created becomes a cause for the attainment of enlightenment. This is like throwing a drop of water into the ocean. That drop of water will remain until the ocean completely dries up because it and the ocean water have merged inseparably. Likewise, dedication adds our drop of virtue to the ocean of enlightened virtues. This virtue will never be wasted between now and when we achieve enlightenment. When we dedicate our virtue with bodhicitta in our hearts, it becomes as vast as the number of sentient beings and as the number of buddhas. When we seal our virtue in the nondual mandala of the mahamudra state, that virtue is called "undefiled." The enlightened state is limitless, so transforming our small virtue into limitless qualities is a very skillful method of dedication practice.

The following dedications are formulated so that we can say the prayers in a contemplative way with pure motivation. Even though it may feel artificial in the beginning, we should repeatedly practice in this way. At first, we just recite the words so that our mind can become accustomed to the thoughts they contain. Prayers are a special method to focus our mind in the right direction, but without practice, merely reciting prayers will not accomplish our goal. We must convince ourselves of their meaning as much as possible. One day, strong feelings of devotion and confidence will arise in us with these prayers, as if of their own accord.

These prayers can be said at any time, not just at the end of a practice session. If you memorize them, you can say them

whenever you feel depressed or upset. Take a deep breath and exhale, then stop all your negativities and relax. Calm your mind and say these prayers. Rejoice in the precious opportunity you have in your hand.

Whenever we study, practice meditation, recite mantras, or say prayers, we first go for refuge to all the buddhas and bodhisattvas from the marrow of our bones. Once the mind is well-established, then we pursue study or practice to perfect our mind. Afterward, whatever virtue was created through such activities, dedicate it to achieve complete enlightenment, buddhahood, and to the benefit of all sentient beings. This dedication is a complete method of meditation practice. So, before doing any meditation, reading a Dharma book, or listening to teachings, take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha and cultivate bodhicitta. With that attitude, continue the session with mindfulness, clarity, and a pure mind. Then dedicate whatever activities you performed as described below.

Mantras and Prayers**Auspicious Mantras***Sanskrit vowels and consonants*

OM A Ā / I Ī / U Ū / RI RĪ / LI LĪ / E AI / O AU / ANG ĀH /
 KA KHA GA GHA NGA / CA CHA JA JHA NYA /
 TRA THRA DRA DHRA NA / TA THA DA DHA NA /
 PA PHA BA BHA MA / YA RA LA WA /
 SHA SHHA SA HA KSHYA SVAHA //

*repeat three times**The Mantra of Dependent Origination*

OM YE DHARMA HETU PRABHAVA HETUN TESHAN
 TATHAGATO HYAVADATA TESHANTSA YO NIRODHA
 EVAM VADI MAHA SHRAMANA YE SVAHA//

*repeat three times**The 100 Syllable Mantra*

OM BAZRA SATVA SAMAYAM/ ANU PALAYA/
 BAZRA SATVA TVENOPA/ TISHTA DRIDO ME BHAVA/
 SUTO SHYO ME BHAVA/ SUPO SHYO ME BHAVA/
 ANU RAKTO ME BHAVA/ SARVA SIDDHIM ME
 PRAYATSHA/ SARVA KARMA SU TSA ME/
 TSITTAM SHREYA KURU HUNG/ HAHA HAHA HO/
 BHAGAVAN SARVA TATHAGATA BAZRA MAME
 MUN TSA/ BAZRI BHAVA/ MAHA SAMAYA SATVA A//

*repeat three times**Concluding Increasing Mantras*

TADYATA PANTSHA DRIYA AVABODHANAYE SVAHA
 OM DHA RE DHA RE BHAN DHA RE SVAHA
 OM RU RU DHA RU MU KHE MU KHE SVAHA
 OM HA NU BHA SHA BHA RA HRI DA YA SVAHA
 OM DU RU DU RU DZA YA MU KHE SVAHA

*repeat each one seven times***OM A HUNG//***repeat one mala round***Mantras and Prayers****Auspicious Mantras***Sanskrit vowels and consonants*

OM A Ā / I Ī / U Ū / RI RĪ / LI LĪ / E AI / O AU / ANG ĀH /
 KA KHA GA GHA NGA / CA CHA JA JHA NYA /
 TRA THRA DRA DHRA NA / TA THA DA DHA NA /
 PA PHA BA BHA MA / YA RA LA WA /
 SHA SHHA SA HA KSHYA SVAHA //

*repeat three times**The Mantra of Dependent Origination*

OM YE DHARMA HETU PRABHAVA HETUN TESHAN
 TATHAGATO HYAVADATA TESHANTSA YO NIRODHA
 EVAM VADI MAHA SHRAMANA YE SVAHA//

*repeat three times**The 100 Syllable Mantra*

OM BAZRA SATVA SAMAYAM/ ANU PALAYA/
 BAZRA SATVA TVENOPA/ TISHTA DRIDO ME BHAVA/
 SUTO SHYO ME BHAVA/ SUPO SHYO ME BHAVA/
 ANU RAKTO ME BHAVA/ SARVA SIDDHIM ME
 PRAYATSHA/ SARVA KARMA SU TSA ME/
 TSITTAM SHREYA KURU HUNG/ HAHA HAHA HO/
 BHAGAVAN SARVA TATHAGATA BAZRA MAME
 MUN TSA/ BAZRI BHAVA/ MAHA SAMAYA SATVA A//

*repeat three times**Concluding Increasing Mantras*

TADYATA PANTSHA DRIYA AVABODHANAYE SVAHA
 OM DHA RE DHA RE BHAN DHA RE SVAHA
 OM RU RU DHA RU MU KHE MU KHE SVAHA
 OM HA NU BHA SHA BHA RA HRI DA YA SVAHA
 OM DU RU DU RU DZA YA MU KHE SVAHA

*repeat each one seven times***OM A HUNG//***repeat one mala round*

Dedication Prayers

DOR JE CHANG CHEN TI LI NA RO DANG/
 MAR PA MI LA CHÖ JE GAM PO PA/
 PHAG MO DRU PA GYEL WA DRI GUNG PA/
 KA GYÜ LA MA NAM KYI TRA SHI SHOG/

SÖ NAM DI YI THAM CHE ZIG PA NYI/
 THOB NE NYE PE DRA NAM PHAM JE TE/
 KYE GA NA CHI'I BA LONG THRUG PA YI/
 SI PE TSO LE DRO WA DRÖL WAR SHOG/

JANG CHUB SEM CHOG RIN PO CHE/
 MA KYE PA NAM KYE GYUR CHIG/
 KYE PA NYAM PA ME PAR YANG/
 GONG NE GONG DU PHEL WAR SHOG/

LA MA KU KHAM ZANG WAR SÖL WA DEB/
 CHOG TU KU TSE RING WAR SÖL WA DEB/
 THRIN LE DAR ZHING GYE PAR SÖL WA DEB/
 LA MA DANG DREL WA ME PAR JIN GYI LOB/

JAM PEL PA WÖ JI TAR KHYEN PA DANG/
 KÜN TU ZANG PO DE YANG DE ZHIN TE/
 DE DAG KÜN GYI JE SU DAG LOB CHING/
 GE WA DI DAG THAM CHE RAB TU NGO/

SANG GYE KU SUM NYE PE JIN LAB DANG/
 CHÖ NYI MI GYUR DEN PE JIN LAB DANG/
 GEN DÜN MI CHE DÜ PE JIN LAB KYI/
 JI TAR NGÖ ZHIN MÖN LAM DRUB PAR SHOG/

KÖN CHOG SUM GYI DEN PA DANG/
 SANG GYE DANG JANG CHUB SEM PA THAM CHE KYI
 JIN GYI LAB DANG/
 TSOG NYI YONG SU DZOG PE NGA THANG CHEN PO
 DANG/
 CHÖ KYI YING NAM PAR DAG CHING SAM GYI MI
 KHYAB PE TOB KYI/
 DE DE ZHIN DU DRUB PAR GYUR CHIG/

Dedication Prayers

Great Vajradhara, Tilopa, Naropa,
 Marpa, Milarepa, Dharma Lord Gampopa,
 Phagmo Drupa and Victorious Drigungpa,
 may the auspicious goodness of all the Kagyu lamas be present.

By this merit, may I obtain all-knowingness.
 Then having defeated the enemies - wrong-doings,
 may I liberate sentient beings from the ocean of samsara,
 with its stormy waves of birth, old age, sickness, and death.

Bodhicitta, the excellent and precious mind:
 where it is unborn, may it arise;
 where it is born, may it not decline
 but ever increase higher and higher.

I pray that the lama may have good health.
 I pray that you have a long life.
 I pray that your Dharma activities spread far and wide.
 I pray that I may never be separated from you.

As the hero Manjushri knows how to dedicate,
 and as does Samantabhadra,
 I will train in their example,
 and fully dedicate all these virtues.

By the blessing of the buddhas who attained the three kayas,
 by the blessing of the truth of the unchanging Dharma-as-such,
 by the blessing of the indivisible faith of the sangha,
 may the aspirations be accomplished according to
 my dedication.

By the truth of the three jewels,
 the blessings of all buddhas and bodhisattvas,
 the great might of the perfectly completed two accumulations
 and the inconceivable completely pure dharmadhatu,
 by these powers, may our wishes be accordingly fulfilled.

DAG DANG KHOR DE THAM CHE KYI/
 DÜ SUM DU SAG PA DANG/
 YÖ PE GE WE TSA WA DI/
 DAG DANG SEM CHEN THAM CHE NYUR DU LA NA ME
 PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PE JANG CHUB RIN PO CHE
 THOB PAR GYUR CHIG/

SHE JA KÜN ZIG KÜN KHYEN CHÖ KYI JE/
 TEN DREL NE LA WANG THOB DRI GUNG PA/
 RIN CHEN PEL GYI TEN PA SI THE BAR/
 SHE DRUB THÖ SAM GOM PE DZIN GYUR CHIG/

Dedication Composed by Kyobpa Jigten Sumgön

DAM PA JE TSÜN RIN PO CHE TSA WA DANG GYÜ
 PAR CHE PE PEL DEN LA MA DAM PA NAM DANG/
 YI DAM GYI LHA TSOG/
 CHOG CHU NA ZHUG PE SANG
 GYE DANG JANG CHUB SEM PA/
 PA WO DANG PA MO/
 NEL JOR MA DANG KHA DRÖ TSOG
 THAM CHE DAG LA GONG SU SÖL/

DAG DANG KHOR DE THAM CHE KYI
 DÜ SUM DU SAG PA DANG YÖ PE TSA WA DI/
 JIG TEN GYI CHÖ GYE KHOR WE GYU ZHI DANG DRE
 BU NYEN THÖ DANG RANG SANG GYE KYI SAR MIN
 PAR MI GYUR WAR/

DAG DANG DAG CHAG THAM CHE
 LA DANG WAR JE PE DRA/
 NÖ PAR JE PE GEG/
 BAR DU CHÖ PE KYEN/
 LOG DREN DÜ DANG/
 DÜ KYI KYIL KHOR GYI TSO JE PE/
 MA NAM KHA DANG NYAM PE SEM CHEN THAM CHE/
 DE WA DANG DEN/
 DUG NGEL DANG DREL/
 NYUR DU LA NE ME PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PE JANG
 CHUB RIN PO CHE THOB PAR GYUR CHIG/

By the virtues collected in the three times
 by myself and all beings in samsara and nirvana,
 and by the innate root of virtue,
 may I and all sentient beings quickly attain
 unsurpassed, completely perfected,
 precious enlightenment.

May the teachings of Drigungpa Ratna Shri,
 all knowing Dharma lord who sees all phenomena,
 master of dependent origination, be upheld until
 the end of samsara by instructions and practices
 through study, contemplation and meditation.

Dedication Composed by Kyobpa Jigten Sumgön

Glorious, holy, venerable, precious, kind root
 and lineage lamas,
 divine assembly of yidams and assemblies of buddhas,
 bodhisattvas, viras and virinis, yoginis,
 and dakinis dwelling
 in the ten directions:
 please hear my prayer!

May all the virtues collected in the three times
 by myself and all in samsara and nirvana
 and the innate root of virtue
 not result in the eight worldly concerns,
 the four causes of samsara,
 or ripen as the state of a shravaka or pratyekabuddha.

May all mother sentient beings,
 especially those enemies who hate me and mine,
 obstructors who harm,
 maras who mislead,
 and the hordes of demons,
 experience happiness, be separated from suffering,
 and swiftly attain unsurpassed,
 completely perfected,
 precious buddhahood.

DAG CHAG GI GE WE TSA WA GYA
 CHEN PO DI'I THU LA TEN NE/
 LÜ NGAG YI SUM GYI SEM CHEN THAM CHE
 LA PHEN THOG PAR GYUR CHIG/

DAG GI GYÜ LA NYÖN MONG PA DÖ CHAG/
 ZHE DANG/
 TI MUG/
 NGA GYAL/
 THRAG DOG GI SEM PA MI JUNG WAR GYUR CHIG/

DRAG PA DANG/
 NYEN PA/
 NYE PA DANG/
 KUR TI TSE DI'I SEM PA KE CHIG TSAM YANG
 MI JUNG WAR GYUR CHIG/

JAM PA DANG NYING JE JANG CHUB KYI SEM KYI DAG
 GI GYÜ LEN TE YONG SU DZIN PE GE WE SHE NYEN
 NAM KHA DANG NYAM PA ZHIG TU GYUR NE TSE DI
 NYI LA CHAG GYA CHEN PO CHOG GI NGÖ DRUB
 THOB PAR GYUR CHIG/
 DAG NAM CHI WE DÜ KYI TSE NA YANG NE CHÖ KYI
 DUG NGEL MI JUNG WAR GYUR CHIG/
 SHIN NGEN DU CHI WAR MA GYUR CHIG/
 TA WA LOG PAR CHI WAR MA GYUR CHIG/
 DÜ MA YIN PAR CHI WAR MA GYUR CHIG/
 CHI WA LA GA WA DANG CHE/
 TRO WA DANG CHE/
 SEM NYI SHIN TU SEL WA DANG CHE/
 CHÖ NYI SHIN TU DANG PA DANG CHE/
 CHI KHA DANG BAR DOR CHI KYANG CHÖ CHAG GYA
 CHEN PO CHOG GI NGÖ DRUB THOB PAR GYUR CHIG/

By the power of this vast root of virtue,
 may I benefit all beings through my body, speech, and mind.
 May the afflictions of desire, hatred, ignorance, arrogance,
 and jealousy not arise in my mind.
 May concern about fame, reputation, wealth, and honor
 in this life not arise for even a moment.

May my mind stream be moistened by loving-kindness,
 compassion, and bodhicitta and,
 through that, may I become a spiritual master with
 good qualities equal to the infinity of space.
 May I gain the supreme attainment of Mahamudra
 in this very life.

At the time of death, may the suffering of
 severing the life channel not arise.
 May I not die with negative thoughts.
 May I not die confused by wrong view.
 May I not experience an untimely death.
 May I die joyfully and happily in the great luminosity of
 mind-as-such and the pervading clarity of dharmata.
 May I, in any case, gain the supreme attainment of
 mahamudra at the time of death or in the bardo.

Commentary on the Dedication Prayers

*Great Vajradhara, Tilopa, Naropa,
Marpa, Milarepa, Dharma Lord Gampopa,
Phagmo Drupa and Victorious Drigungpa,
may the auspicious goodness of all the Kagyu lamas be present.*

Since these teachings have been transmitted through the lineage for many centuries from the Buddha's time up to our own, we should remind ourselves of this kindness and wisdom. We invoke the great teachers of the precious Dharma, and ask them to give us their blessing so that our mind will follow the Dharma and become inseparable from the teachings. We ask them to help us overcome all obstacles in order to achieve enlightenment.

The list in this prayer consists of the foremost Kagyu masters of the past. Vajradhara is Dorje Chang in Tibetan, the dharmakaya buddha from whom the great Tilopa received all the teachings. Naropa was Tilopa's disciple, and both were from India. Naropa was a great Buddhist scholar and chancellor of Nalanda University. Marpa, known as a great translator, visited India three times and Nepal four times and brought what he learned back to Tibet. In his songs, he relates that he studied under 108 teachers, thirteen of whom were his main ones. He translated all the teachings, including mahamudra and the Six Dharmas of Naropa, and introduced them in his homeland. Milarepa was the foremost disciple of Marpa; he attained buddhahood in one lifetime despite having committed many evil deeds. His disciple, Dharma Lord Gampopa, was one of the greatest teachers. He combined sutra and tantra together without contradiction, and thereby established the complete form of Buddhism in Tibet. Gampopa had many disciples, including the first Karmapa Dusum Khyenpa and Barom Darma Wangchuk, among others. Because of this, his disciples spread throughout many different places. Phagmo Drupa was his heir, and his teachings spread to many Kagyu lineages, such as the Drukpa and Taklung Kagyu, and so forth. The great Drigungpa, Lord Jigten Sumgön, was Phagmo Drupa's principal disciple, an incarnation of Nagarjuna, and founder of the Drigung Kagyu.

These few names are mentioned here because they were the founders of the lineage. They are able to manifest the enlightened activities that benefit all beings due to their practice of Dharma

with bodhicitta over many lifetimes. They benefited many sentient beings during their lifetimes, and are still benefiting us today. If we study and practice their teachings, it is guaranteed that one day we will be free of samsara. For example, Milarepa's life story mentions that he said, "If a person merely hears my name and develops devotion, he will not experience rebirth in the lower realms for seven lifetimes." Therefore, if we study and practice the Dharma teachings wholeheartedly, we will definitely become free from samsara and achieve enlightenment.

*By this merit, may I obtain all-knowingness.
Then having defeated the enemies - wrong-doings,
may I liberate sentient beings from the ocean of samsara,
with its stormy waves of birth, old age, sickness, and death.*

This prayer makes use of the virtues accumulated by all sentient beings, buddhas, and bodhisattvas to help us cross the sea of samsara. The waves of this sea of samsara are endless; some may be big, others are small, but they all continue to create suffering without end. We suffer from birth, which we ordinary and confused beings don't even remember, as well as aging, sickness, and death, which are vivid and clear. These are unbearable, but we are bound to them nonetheless. We may find occasional, temporary solutions, but no absolute solution can be found in the material world. Only Dharma study and practice, relative and absolute, can give us real relief; there is no other permanent solution. To protect our own best interest and to be able to share this wisdom with others, we have no choice but to follow the path. However, the causes of our suffering - our negative thoughts of hatred, anger, pride, and attachment - never die. If we aren't careful, they become even stronger as we age. So, while we are physically able, we should do prostrations and sit in meditation. This will help us endure sickness, age gracefully, and die peacefully.

As soon as we actualize the teachings, we naturally experience the nature of suffering as unborn, non-aging, non-sickness, and non-death since these are merely interdependent displays of phenomena. When one gains the realization of mahamudra, the concept of suffering is a mere illusion, free from all dualities. This actualization is the purpose of our practice. The purpose of our study of all these Dharma teachings is to put them into practice

successfully and, thereby, achieve liberation from suffering, enlightenment. So dedicate all the virtues to achieve this result.

*Bodhicitta, the excellent and precious mind:
where it is unborn, may it arise;
where it is born, may it not decline
but ever increase higher and higher.*

We say this short prayer to cultivate *bodhicitta*, the mind of enlightenment, the condition that helps a person achieve the quality of equanimity and become a guardian of all sentient beings. This precious mind is the real jewel, the most precious jewel, to keep in the heart and protect.

This prayer summarizes the teachings of Shantideva's text, *Engaging in the Conduct of Bodhisattvas*. It has very profound and vast meaning. Calling *bodhicitta* *the excellent and precious mind* reminds us to reflect on the excellent qualities we achieve when we cultivate that mind. Every buddha first cultivated this mind, then purified all obscurations, and perfected the enlightened mind - all through the practice of *bodhicitta*. As the source of peace and joy, they benefit countless sentient beings with this mind. When we see the ability and benefit of this mind, we become inspired to give rise to *bodhicitta* if it is as yet unborn in us. Once we give rise to this mind, we continue to follow the path with vigilance and the many supports gained by practicing the six paramitas. May it ever increase *higher and higher* until we become buddhas!

Every day, thoughts ceaselessly come into our mind. Among them, the thought "I want to attain buddhahood" is the most precious, supreme thought. This thought is the real root of freedom from suffering. If this thought remains undeveloped, we pray for it to arise in everyone's mind because everyone desires happiness and it is the ultimate method to become free from suffering. All the buddhas in the past practiced this way, all the buddhas of the present are practicing this way, and all the buddhas of the future will do so as well. There is no other way. *Bodhicitta* is the universal mind. Where it has arisen, it is essential that it be encouraged and nurtured until all beings attain complete enlightenment. Thus, we dedicate to perfect the practice of *bodhicitta*.

*I pray that the lama may have good health.
I pray that you have a long life.
I pray that your Dharma activities spread far and wide.
I pray that I may never be separated from you.*

This is a prayer for the longevity of the lama. There are two lamas, the outer and inner, and it is important that we pray for both. Although we are in samsara and completely preoccupied by confusion, with no understanding of samsara and nirvana, our good karma has led us to a spiritual teacher. He gives us Dharma teachings, instructs us on how to study and practice, explains what virtue and nonvirtue are, and teaches methods to cultivate *bodhicitta*. At first, we don't know anything. The outer lama has allowed us to understand a little about samsara and nirvana, and to start to develop wisdom and other good qualities of the mind.

Once we have received the instructions, the wisdom that develops from practicing those instructions becomes your inner lama. The relationship is something like a little girl who first is dependent on her mother, and later grows up to be a mother herself. The inner lama is more important to protect because it stays with you 24 hours a day until you attain enlightenment. You only see the outer lama once in a while and only for a few hours at a time. When the inner lama has good health, your awareness is strong, your Dharma practice is solid, and your negative thoughts reduce. If the inner lama doesn't make much effort, loses interest, or forgets about Dharma, then the health of that lama is weakening. No matter how powerful the outer lama may be, his teachings will not have much result without the development of the inner lama. This point is very important.

Both lamas perform Dharma activities. It is very clear to us that the outer lama helps many people. But for us to be helpful to others, we must first clear our own confusion. Otherwise, instead of helping, we cause more problems when we interfere. So we pray not to be separated from either lama. If your inner lama is lost, that is a great obstacle. But if we can maintain our awareness of suffering, impermanence, and so forth, then our lives become worthwhile. Our inner lama is in good health and his activities are spreading if our meditation practices are solid and we are working to reduce the mental afflictions. Therefore, we dedicate all our virtues to the good health and successful activities of both lamas.

*As the hero Manjushri knows how to dedicate,
and as does Samantabhadra,
I will train in their example,
and fully dedicate all these virtues.*

In this prayer, we take Manjushri and Samantabhadra as examples. There are three ways to cultivate bodhicitta: like a king, a boatman, or a shepherd.

1. A king first becomes enthroned as the leader of a country, and then performs the activities of ruling and helping his citizens. Likewise, some bodhisattvas become buddhas first, and then perform the activities of benefiting all sentient beings.
2. A boatman and his passengers all cross a body of water and reach the far shore together. Likewise, some bodhisattvas cultivate bodhicitta, practice that mind, and benefit sentient beings in such a way that they all attain buddhahood together.
3. A shepherd protects the herd from all predators. In the evening he brings them back to the farm and puts them safely into their pens. Only then does he go home and take his rest. Likewise, some bodhisattvas don't rest in buddhahood until all sentient beings have been established into buddhahood. They continue their activities until the end of samsara.

Manjushri and Samantabhadra are like the shepherd. They are called *hero* because they defeat the causes of suffering and conquer the excellent qualities of the ultimate state. These two are great bodhisattvas whose activities are limitless.

In samsara, we don't possess the special insight to discern the ultimate good. In particular, we do not know how to dedicate the virtues we have accumulated. We are to make the determination that we will go in the same direction as these great bodhisattvas, and follow the path that they followed, that is, the practice of the six paramitas. In this way, we can have confidence that we are going in the right direction. By sharing the merit of our limited activity with all beings, we make it limitless. Thus, we dedicate in the same way that Manjushri and Samantabhadra did.

*By the blessing of the buddhas who attained the three kayas,
by the blessing of the truth of the unchanging Dharma-as-such,
by the blessing of the indivisible faith of the sangha,
may the aspirations be accomplished according to my dedication.*

In this dedication prayer, we invoke the blessings of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha:

1. The *three kayas*, forms or bodies, of a buddha are the nirmanakaya (emanation body), sambhogakaya (complete enjoyment body or perfect qualities), and dharmakaya (wisdom body). The achievement of these three has infinite ability and blessings; so their incomparable power pervades the entire universe.
2. The *unchanging Dharma-as-such* refers to the all-pervading nature of emptiness. Whether we realize it or not, this is the way that all phenomena abide. Everything is interdependent and the nature of interdependence is emptiness. Not one single thing can operate without support; all phenomena depend on causes. This nature cannot change in any way, whether the Buddha had ever explained it or not. However, the Buddha did explain reality through his own realization of the nature of all phenomena and this insight brings great blessings. It destroys the confusion that causes all our suffering and can free us from samsara. All of the Buddha's followers have the full opportunity to empirically understand this by following his path.
3. The great practitioners of the *sangha* have such conviction that, no matter what happens, their devotion, confidence in the renunciation of samsara, and faith in the path toward enlightenment cannot deteriorate or be divided. No matter what difficulties they encounter, they will never separate from the goal to be free from samsara and benefit sentient beings. That powerfully determined mind brings great, magnificent blessings. By the power of all these great blessings, we pray for our merit to bear the fruit of complete enlightenment.

*By the truth of the three jewels,
the blessings of all buddhas and bodhisattvas,
the great might of the perfectly completed two accumulations
and the inconceivable completely pure dharmadhatu,
by these powers, may our wishes be accordingly fulfilled.*

*By the virtues collected in the three times
by myself and all beings in samsara and nirvana,
and by the innate root of virtue,
may I and all sentient beings quickly attain
unsurpassed, completely perfected, precious enlightenment.*

This dedication prayer is especially powerful since we are dedicating not only our own virtues, but also those of all sentient beings in the six realms of samsara and of all the enlightened beings as well. Furthermore, we are dedicating not only from this one lifetime, but from all existences in the three times: the past, present, and future. We also invoke the *innate root of virtue*, the buddha nature that holds every quality of a buddha and pervades every being, even the smallest bug. We bring all these virtues together and then dedicate them to the attainment of complete enlightenment by every sentient being. Our own drop of merit becomes infinite through the support of dedication and prayer, and will never be exhausted.

*May the teachings of Drigungpa Ratna Shri,
all knowing Dharma lord who sees all phenomena,
master of dependent origination, be upheld until the end of samsara
by instructions and practices through study,
contemplation and meditation.*

This prayer expresses our wish and dedication that the Dharma teachings remain in this world until the end of samsara. Lord Jigten Sumgön, also called Ratnashri, was enlightened. He attained buddhahood millions of eons ago and has manifested repeatedly to help sentient beings. In these times, he came, studied, practiced, and mastered the Dharma. He taught a complete form of Buddhism by which any individual can attain enlightenment. There was no teaching that he did not give. He was able to perceive all the causes of past, present, and future manifestations in samsara and nirvana, and was able to clearly recognize each

individual cause and all their inter-relationships without any mistake. He was so well-versed in this subject, that he is called a *master of dependent origination*. From this state he taught the Buddha's teachings, not from a dogmatic point of view, but as a real remedy for confusion, the cause of suffering. He taught us a way to heal the mind in its own nature and how to use it as a means to return to our origins, the nature of mind.

Understanding that the Buddha and Lord Jigten Sumgön are such great beings, we dedicate that their precious teachings continue and increase until all sentient beings are able to dispel their confusion, actualize the ultimate meaning, and end their samsaric suffering. In order for that to happen, we have the responsibility to thoroughly study these precious teachings. Once we understand them, we must carefully contemplate their meaning based on empirical reasoning, not just belief. Once the meaning has been scrutinized, we must implement and experience what we have understood, and realize the total meaning. Finally, we use the Dharma for the welfare of all sentient beings. This determination is what is really meant by "continuing and increasing the teachings." Therefore, dedicate for these precious Dharma teachings to endure until all sentient beings are free from samsara. This is the most auspicious result.

Dedication Composed by Kyobpa Jigten Sumgön

*Glorious, holy, venerable, precious, kind root and lineage lamas,
divine assembly of yidams and assemblies of buddhas, bodhisattvas,
viras and virinis, yoginis, and dakinis dwelling in the ten directions:
please hear my prayer!*

*May all the virtues collected in the three times
by myself and all in samsara and nirvana and the innate root of
virtue not result in the eight worldly concerns,
the four causes of samsara,
or ripen as the state of a shravaka or pratyekabuddha.*

*May all mother sentient beings, especially those enemies who hate
me and mine, obstructors who harm, maras who mislead,
and the hordes of demons, experience happiness, be separated from
suffering, and swiftly attain unsurpassed, completely perfected,
precious buddhahood.*

*By the power of this vast root of virtue,
may I benefit all beings through my body, speech, and mind.
May the afflictions of desire, hatred, ignorance, arrogance,
and jealousy not arise in my mind.
May concern about fame, reputation, wealth, and
honor in this life not arise for even a moment.*

*May my mind stream be moistened by loving-kindness,
compassion, and bodhicitta
and, through that, may I become a spiritual master with
good qualities equal to the infinity of space.
May I gain the supreme attainment of Mahamudra in this very life.*

*At the time of death, may the suffering of severing the
life channel not arise.
May I not die with negative thoughts.
May I not die confused by wrong view.
May I not experience an untimely death.
May I die joyfully and happily in the great luminosity of
mind-as-such and the pervading clarity of dharmata.
May I, in any case, gain the supreme attainment of mahamudra
at the time of death or in the bardo.*

This prayer is concise, yet very profound as it contains the essence of the Buddha's teachings in the form of a dedication practice. We should memorize it and recite it often, at any time, as a reminder of our bodhicitta practice.

First, we assemble witnesses to hear our prayer by visualizing them in the space just in front of and above ourselves, as in the refuge visualization. We invoke the *root and lineage lamas*, those who kept the teachings alive by receiving the holy instructions and passing them on to us along with their own experience. *Yidams* are special manifestations of the pure enlightenment state, the dharmakaya free from confusion, attachments, and delusions. *Buddhas* are historical beings in the past, present, and future of the world who are our examples of enlightenment. *Bodhisattvas* are beings on the way to enlightenment. *Viras, virinis, yoginis, and dakinis* are those beings who are successful in their practice, who dispelled all their confusion, and who have crossed the ocean of samsara. We establish them all as witnesses for our dedication prayer.

Then bring all conceivable virtue into the mandala of your mind. The *virtues of samsara* are those created by sentient beings, whatever virtue they have from the past, present, or future. The *virtues of nirvana* consist of the merits collected in the three times by buddhas, bodhisattvas, arhats, pratyekabuddhas, and shravakas. The *innate root of virtue* means the uncontrived, effulgent nature of the mind that pervades sentient beings primordially. This whole ocean of virtues and the collected virtues are like the waves of the ocean. We bring them all together and use them to achieve the optimal goal: buddhahood. We pray for these virtues not to be misapplied toward worldly aims, such as the *eight worldly concerns* and the *four causes of samsara*, or even lesser spiritual goals. The eight worldly concerns are: loss; blame or criticism; pain; and disgrace, the negative causes of aversion, and gain; praise; pleasure; and fame, the positive causes of attachment. The four causes of samsara are: failing to gather the accumulations of merit and wisdom; gathering the nonvirtues; creating obstacles to others' creation of virtue; and not dedicating virtue. Instead, we pray for every sentient being, including our *enemies, obstructors, maras who mislead*, and *demons*, to have all peace and happiness, to be free from suffering and its causes, and, especially, to achieve complete buddhahood.

Dedicating these virtues with love, compassion, and bodhicitta, and without concern for our own well-being, causes the flourishing of our activities that benefit sentient beings. Dedicating these virtues while visualizing yourself in the state of the yidam deity causes freedom from all obstacles and unfavorable conditions while benefiting beings. Dedicating these virtues with strong devotion for and confidence in the root and lineage masters enhances the experience of meditation while benefiting sentient beings. Dedicating these virtues in the mahamudra state free of the three spheres supports the increase of the experience of luminosity and emptiness.

This vast root of virtue refers to all the virtue that we have accumulated in the past, are accumulating in the present, and will accumulate in the future. Again, it is not just our own merits we are dedicating, but also those of all the buddhas, bodhisattvas, and yidams, as well as those of all sentient beings. We also add to this the buddha nature that all sentient beings, ourselves included, have within our own mind. This powerful collection

of virtue is what is needed to uproot delusion and purify obscuration. We commit ourselves to use this merit in order to be of service to others. The four elements of earth, air, water, and fire spontaneously and impartially benefit all sentient beings, no matter who they are or what they've done. Likewise, we must make our body, speech, and mind as useful as these elements, and become an impartial source of peace and happiness for all sentient beings without expecting a reward.

Desire, hatred, ignorance, arrogance, and jealousy are the causes of suffering. As long as they are present in the mind and we don't know it, we are ensnared by them and suffer lifetime after lifetime. Negative thoughts alone can throw us into the hell realms. Therefore, the very purpose of our Dharma practice is to reduce them as much as we can, and finally uproot them totally. This will then create a space that they cannot occupy. How can we expect to experience peace and happiness while there are afflictions in our heart? Our focus should be the purification of all mental afflictions through the practice of meditation. Our attachments to worldly concerns will only bring us suffering, so we dedicate all these virtues to purify the afflicting emotions and attain complete enlightenment.

When we pray for *concern about fame, reputation, wealth, and honor in this life* not to arise, this means attachment to these thoughts. It does not mean that we should not become famous or wealthy, or that we should never be honored. But attachment to these things doesn't bring any lasting benefit. If we live our lives fully involved in worldly concerns like these, what will we have in the end? Nothing! They are mere mirages that trick us into thinking that they are worthwhile when, in fact, they are nothing more than lures that trap us in the depths of confusion and suffering. One day someone can become rich and the next day he can become poor. One day someone can be famous and the next day he can be infamous. One day we are excited and the next day we can be heartbroken. It is obvious that we are suffering helplessly through our entanglement in these illusions even though we know from our study of impermanence that they are transitory. So look at this illusory display and practice nonattachment, appreciate your own life in the Dharma.

After eliminating the negative influences, we next pray and dedicate for the true causes of peace and happiness to *moisten*

our *mind stream* with love, compassion, and bodhicitta. Everyone, even a completely ruthless person, desires peace and happiness free from suffering. But these are quite difficult to achieve because we are dominated by delusions and disturbing emotions, which are the root cause of suffering; thus, we lack the cause of peace and happiness. We should make every effort to cultivate love, compassion, and bodhicitta in order to obtain the limitless fruits of peace and happiness both for ourselves and others. It isn't enough to just think about being compassionate. We have to become an example for society, become good citizens, and decent people. Others will admire this kind of great practitioner and can be more affected by their kind actions than by a hundred Dharma lectures. A human being who is a source of peace, wisdom, happiness, and other limitless good qualities for others is very rare. It will take time and energy for us to reach that state.

Once we have established a solid foundation by dispelling all our confusion and gathering infinite good qualities, we pray and dedicate for the *supreme attainment*, that of *mahamudra*. This is the realization of the unfabricated nature of mind, the absolute state of peace and joy of buddhahood.

For ordinary people, the time of death is extremely painful. It is the final departure from friends, family, belongings, and accomplishments. Even the precious body must be left behind. It is an overwhelming agony that all beings must endure without choice. Here, in prayer form, is a skillful way to prepare for these conditions by facing them with a positive and enlightened attitude. To purify our fixation and grasping we are to practice seeing everything as a manifestation and illusion. In this way, when death comes, we can die peacefully and without regret.

Negative thoughts like anger or jealousy make us uncomfortable under the best of circumstances. Not only will they intensify our suffering at death; negative thoughts at the moment of death will make a strong connection for us to be reborn in the lower realms. We must watch our mind every moment to ensure that negative thoughts are not arising. If they do, it is important to apply the correct antidote right away. If we could apply these precious Dharma teachings while we are alive, when death approaches our mind will remain free of negative thoughts.

Wrong views are beliefs that disavow karma cause and result, deny the existence of enlightenment, or disparage the Three

Jewels. These thoughts, especially if they arise at the time of death, also make a strong connection for a being to be reborn in the lower realms. On the other hand, if our minds are endowed with the practices of meditative equipoise and special insight, we can die with pure view.

At this time, we have a precious human life and access to the holy Dharma teachings. Animals, for example, might possibly create a small amount of positive karma toward future lives, but we human beings have every opportunity to create large amounts of good karma by utilizing our own human resources. If these resources are misused, they can cause much suffering, in this life and in future ones. The choice is ours alone. We will die anyway, so it is important to make our life useful for as long as we can.

If we practice well and accomplish the practices described here, we can die *joyfully and happily*. It would be like returning home where there is no fear, no confusion, and we are totally relaxed. Realizing the *luminosity of the mind-as-such* is realizing mahamudra. To understand *dharmata* is to understand the constitution of all phenomena in pervading emptiness, their true mode of abiding. If you read the life stories of great masters who have these realizations, you will see that they are joyful when they are sick and they feel happy when they die. Such results arise through these contemplations and meditation practices. This is the purpose of our study and practice of the precious Dharma - to gain the ultimate refuge, free from confusion and suffering. In reality, it would be in everyone's best interest to follow this path. Those who do approach it and connect to it should take full advantage and rejoice in the opportunity.

Finally, we dedicate all virtues to *attain mahamudra*, if not in this life, then at least at the time of death or in the bardo, which is the intermediate state between this life's death and the next life's birth.

Glossary of Enumerations

Two

accumulations: merit and wisdom

attainments: ordinary and extraordinary

benefits: self and other

classes of Buddhist teachings: sutra and tantra

deity yoga meditation practices: arising or generation and completion

form bodies: sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya

principal disciples of Jigten Sumgön: Chenga Sherab Jungne and
Chenga Drakpa Jungne

truths: relative and ultimate

wisdoms: knowing reality as it is, and understanding each and every
object of knowledge

Three

baskets (pitaka) of Dharma:

1. Vinaya
2. Sutra
3. Abhidharma

higher realms:

1. human
2. demi-god
3. god

Jewels:

1. Buddha
2. Dharma
3. Sangha

kayas or forms (of a buddha):

1. nirmanakaya, the emanation body
2. sambhogakaya, the complete enjoyment body
3. dharmakaya, the perfect wisdom body

kindnesses:

1. giving empowerment
2. giving transmission
3. giving practice instructions

liberations:

1. emptiness as the ground (meaning cause or foundation)
2. signlessness as the path
3. absence of expectations for the result (i.e., liberation)

lower realms:

1. animal realm
2. hungry ghost realm
3. hell realms

most holy places in Tibet:

1. Mt. Kailash
2. Lapchi
3. Tsari

objects of refuge: see Three Jewels

special places:

1. forehead
2. throat
3. heart

spheres:

1. actor
2. action
3. object of the action

syllables:

1. OM
2. AH
3. HUNG

times:

1. past
2. present
3. future

trainings:

1. moral ethics, or shila
2. meditative concentration, or samadhi
3. incisive wisdom, or prajña

types of suffering:

1. suffering of suffering
2. suffering of change
3. all-pervasive suffering

vows:

1. pratimoksha vows
2. bodhisattva vow
3. tantric vows

worlds or realms:

1. desire
2. form
3. formless

yanas:

1. Hinayana
2. Mahayana
3. Vajrayana

Four*activities of a buddha:*

1. pacifying
2. increasing
3. subduing
4. magnetizing

causes of samsara:

1. not gathering the accumulations of merit and wisdom
2. gathering the nonvirtues
3. creating obstacles to others' creation of virtue
4. not dedicating virtue

demons:

1. the mara of death
2. the mara of the afflicting emotions
3. the mara of the five aggregates
4. the mara who is the son of the gods

empowerments:

1. vase
2. secret
3. wisdom
4. precious word, or fourth empowerment

elements:

1. earth
2. fire
3. water
4. wind

immeasurable thoughts:

1. loving-kindness
2. compassion
3. joy
4. equanimity

joys:

1. joy
2. supreme joy
3. joy of cessation
4. co-emergent joy

kayas or forms (of a buddha):

1. nirmanakaya (emanation form), the physical form that a buddha manifests whenever needed in any of the six realms;
2. sambhogakaya (pure enjoyment form), a subtle form that a buddha manifests for highly accomplished bodhisattvas;
3. dharmakaya (truth or wisdom form), the complete buddhahood that can be comprehended by a buddha alone; and
4. svabhavikakaya (nature form) is not a physical form, but rather is the unified and inseparable nature of all buddhas' forms.

Noble Truths:

1. truth of suffering
2. truth of the cause of suffering
3. truth of the cessation of suffering
4. truth of path (see entry for eightfold path below)

obscurations:

1. physical
2. verbal
3. mental
4. subtle

ordinary foundations:

1. precious human life, the basis of working toward buddhahood
2. the impermanence of all phenomena
3. the sufferings of samsara
4. the cause and result of karma

powers:

1. remorse
2. antidote
3. resolution
4. refuge or reliance

skillful means of gathering (disciples):

1. using pleasant words to develop their interest
2. giving necessities to disciples
3. speaking according to Dharma, based on virtue and nonvirtue
4. personally acting in accordance with the Dharma

thoughts that turn the mind (toward Dharma): see ordinary foundations

uncommon foundations:

1. refuge practice
2. Vajrasattva practice
3. mandala offering practice
4. Guru Yoga practice

unwholesome deeds:

1. Deceiving the lama and those worthy of worship
2. Causing remorse in others when remorse is not appropriate
3. Saying improper words about a bodhisattva who has cultivated bodhicitta
4. Behaving deceitfully toward sentient beings

wholesome deeds:

1. Desist from consciously telling lies, even at the risk of your life
2. Establish all sentient beings in virtue
3. View bodhisattvas who have cultivated bodhicitta as buddhas and make efforts to proclaim their virtues in the ten directions
4. Maintain the altruistic attitude toward all sentient beings and wish to benefit others without considering your own profit

wisdoms:

1. mirror-like wisdom
2. equanimity wisdom
3. discriminating wisdom
4. all-accomplishing activity wisdom

Five*afflicting emotions:*

1. ignorance
2. attachment
3. hatred
4. pride or arrogance
5. jealousy

buddhas:

1. Buddha Akshobhya
2. Buddha Vairochana
3. Buddha Ratnasambhava
4. Buddha Amitabha
5. Buddha Amoghasiddhi

close, or nearly heinous, karmas:

1. sexually violating a male or female arhat
2. knowingly killing a bodhisattva certain to attain enlightenment
3. killing a member of the sangha who has entered the path of training
4. misappropriation of the sangha's property
5. destroying a stupa

fivefold path of mahamudra:

1. bodhicitta
2. yidam deity practice
3. guru yoga
4. mahamudra
5. dedication

heinous acts or karmas:

1. killing one's father
2. killing one's mother
3. killing an arhat
4. dividing the sangha
5. injuring a buddha

paths:

1. path of accumulation
2. path of preparation
3. path of insight
4. path of meditation
5. path of perfection

poisons: See afflicting emotions

precepts (for laypersons):

1. not to kill
2. not to steal
3. not to lie
4. not to engage in sexual misconduct
5. not to take intoxicants

wisdoms:

1. dharmadhatu or wisdom of the all-pervading elements of Dharma
2. mirror-like wisdom
3. equanimity wisdom
4. discriminating wisdom
5. all-accomplishing activity wisdom

Six*Dharmas of Naropa:* the practices of

1. tummo
2. illusory body
3. dream yoga
4. clear light
5. phowa
6. bardo

perfections or paramitas:

1. generosity
2. moral ethics
3. patience
4. joyous effort
5. meditative concentration
6. wisdom awareness

realms:

1. hell realms
2. hungry spirit realm
3. animal realm
4. human realm
5. demi-god realm
6. god realms

Seven*characteristics of dharmakaya:*

1. pervades all phenomena
2. is the unification of supreme all-pervading emptiness and nonobjectified great compassion
3. is great unafflicted bliss, completely free from all suffering
4. is inherently nonexistent and free from elaboration in its mode of abiding
5. is the great embodiment of full compassion, unchanging from coemergent wisdom
6. never varies from all the qualities described above and is free from coming, going, increasing, or decreasing
7. is unceasing and not “just nothing”

limb prayer:

1. prostration and praise
2. offering
3. confession
4. rejoicing
5. beseeching
6. praying
7. dedication

Eight*bodhisattvas:*

1. Mañjuśrī
2. Vajrapāṇi
3. Avalokiteśvara
4. Kṣitigarbha
5. Sarvanivāraṇaviṣkambhin
6. Ākaśagarbha
7. Maitreya
8. Samantabhadra

Eightfold Path:

1. perfect view
2. perfect conception
3. perfect speech
4. perfect action
5. perfect livelihood
6. perfect effort
7. perfect mindfulness
8. perfect absorption

general offerings:

1. water offerings to the face and mouth
2. water offering to the feet
3. flower offering to the head
4. incense offering to the nose
5. light offering to the eyes
6. fragrance offering to the mind
7. food offering to the body
8. music offering to the ears

leisure's: freedom from these eight unfavorable conditions:

1. being born in a hell realm
2. being born a hungry ghost
3. being born an animal
4. being born a barbarian
5. being born a long-lived god
6. holding wrong views
7. absence of a buddha
8. muteness

qualities of good water:

1. cool
2. refreshing
3. tasty
4. smooth
5. clear
6. without bad smell
7. soothing to the throat
8. harmless to the stomach

worldly concerns:

1. gain
2. loss
3. praise
4. blame
5. pleasure
6. pain
7. fame
8. disgrace

Ten*bhumis:*

1. Great Joy
2. Stainless
3. Radiant level
4. Luminous
5. Very Difficult to Train
6. Obviously Transcendent
7. Gone Afar
8. Immovable
9. Good Discriminating Wisdom
10. Cloud of Dharma

endowments:

having these five personal conditions:

1. being human
2. being born in a central country
3. possessing all the senses
4. having committed none of the heinous actions
5. having devotion for the Dharma

and having these five external conditions:

6. a buddha has appeared
7. a buddha has taught
8. the Dharma that was taught remains
9. there are practitioners of the Dharma
10. there is love and kind support for practice

non-virtues:

1. killing
2. stealing
3. sexual misconduct
4. lying, especially about spiritual achievements
5. divisive speech
6. harsh words
7. idle talk
8. covetousness
9. malice
10. holding wrong view, especially about causality

virtues:

1. refraining from killing, and preserving life
2. refraining from stealing, and practicing generosity
3. refraining from sexual misconduct and practicing moral ethics
4. refraining from lying, and speaking truthfully
5. refraining from divisive speech, and speaking harmoniously
6. refraining from harsh words, and speaking peacefully and politely
7. refraining from idle talk, and speaking meaningfully
8. refraining from covetousness, and practicing contentment
9. refrain from malice, and practicing loving-kindness and compassion
10. refraining from holding wrong views, and practicing the perfect meaning

Thirteen*sambhogakaya ornaments:*

Five related to silk garments:

1. a ribbon knotting the hair
2. a scarf
3. an upper garment
4. a belt
5. a lower garment

Eight related to ornaments:

6. five-pointed crown
7. earrings
8. short necklace
9. long necklaces
10. arm bracelets
11. wrist bracelets
12. ankle bracelets
13. finger rings

Thirty-two*major marks of a buddha:*

1. The palms of his hands and soles of his feet bear signs of a wheel
2. His feet are well set upon the ground like a tortoise
3. His fingers and toes are webbed.
4. The palms of his hands and soles of his feet are smooth and tender
5. His body has seven prominent features: broad heels, broad hands, broad shoulder blades and broad neck
6. His fingers are long
7. His heels are soft
8. He is tall and straight

9. His ankle-bones do not protrude
10. The hairs on his body point upward
11. His ankles are like an antelope's
12. His hands are long and beautiful
13. His male organ is withdrawn
14. His body is the color of gold
15. His skin is thin and smooth
16. Each hair curls to the right
17. His face is adorned by a coiled hair between his eyebrows
18. The upper part of his body is like that of a lion
19. His head and shoulders are perfectly round
20. His shoulders are broad
21. He has an excellent sense of taste, even of the worst tastes
22. His body has the proportions of a banyan tree
23. He has a protrusion on the crown of his head
24. His tongue is long and thin
25. His voice is mellifluous
26. His cheeks are like those of a lion
27. His teeth are white
28. There are no gaps between his teeth
29. His teeth are evenly set
30. He has a total of forty teeth
31. His eyes are the color of sapphire
32. His eyelashes are like those of a magnificent heifer

Thirty-seven

branches of enlightenment:

Four Types of Essential Mindfulness

1. sustaining mindfulness of the body
2. sustaining mindfulness of feelings
3. sustaining mindfulness of the mind
4. sustaining mindfulness of phenomena

Four Types of Perfect Abandonment or Correct Trainings

5. abandoning nonvirtues which have been created
6. not allowing new nonvirtues to be produced
7. producing the antidotes, virtues which have not arisen
8. allowing those virtues which have arisen to increase

Four Supports for Miraculous Ability

9. the absorption of strong aspiration
10. the absorption of joyous effort
11. the absorption of the mind
12. the absorption of investigation

Five Powers or Faculties

13. the power of faith
14. the power of joyous effort
15. the power of mindfulness
16. the power of absorption
17. the power of wisdom awareness

Five Strengths

18. the strength of faith
19. the strength of joyous effort
20. the strength of mindfulness
21. the strength of absorption
22. the strength of wisdom awareness

Seven Branches of Enlightenment

23. the perfect mindfulness branch
24. the perfect discrimination branch
25. the perfect joyous effort branch
26. the perfect joy branch
27. the perfect relaxation branch
28. the perfect absorption branch
29. the perfect equanimity branch

Eightfold Path

30. perfect view
31. perfect conception
32. perfect speech
33. perfect action
34. perfect livelihood
35. perfect effort
36. perfect mindfulness
37. perfect absorption

Sixty

aspects of melodious speech:

1. kindly
2. gentle
3. beautiful
4. appealing
5. pure
6. stainless
7. luminous
8. attractive
9. worth hearing
10. unassailable

11. melodious
12. disciplined
13. without harshness
14. without severity
15. well-disciplined
16. pleasant to the ear
17. physically satisfying
18. mentally satisfying
19. gladdening to the heart
20. creative of joy and bliss
21. not disturbing
22. eminently understandable
23. to be realized
24. transparent
25. lovable
26. delightful
27. authoritative
28. informative
29. reasonable
30. appropriate
31. without redundancy
32. energetic as a lion's roar
33. sounding like an elephant's trumpeting
34. sounding like a crash of thunder
35. like the voice of the dragon king
36. like the kinnaras' song
37. like the kalavinka's song
38. like Brahma's cry
39. like the pheasant's call
40. sweet as the voice of the king of the gods
41. like the sound of the drum
42. not haughty
43. not lowly
44. immersed in language
45. grammatically impeccable
46. never fragmented
47. undaunted
48. irrepressible
49. joyful
50. comprehensive
51. holistic
52. continuous
53. playful
54. fulfilling all words
55. satisfying to the faculties of all beings

56. irreproachable
57. unchangeable
58. unwavering
59. resounds through all audiences
60. endowed with the best of all forms

Eighty*minor marks of a buddha:*

1. His nails are copper-colored.
2. His nails are moderately shiny.
3. His nails are raised.
4. His nails are round.
5. His nails are broad.
6. His nails are tapered.
7. His veins do not protrude.
8. His veins are free of knots.
9. His ankles do not protrude.
10. His feet are not uneven.
11. He walks with a lion's gait.
12. He walks with an elephant's gait.
13. He walks with a goose's gait.
14. He walks with a bull's gait.
15. His gait tends to the right.
16. His gait is elegant.
17. His gait is steady.
18. His body is well covered.
19. His body looks as if it were polished.
20. His body is well proportioned.
21. His body is clean and pure.
22. His body is smooth.
23. His body is perfect.
24. His sex organs are fully developed.
25. His physical bearing is excellent and dignified.
26. His steps are even.
27. His eyes are perfect.
28. He is youthful.
29. His body is not sunken.
30. His body is broad.
31. His body is not loose.
32. His limbs are well proportioned.
33. His vision is clear and unblurred.
34. His belly is round.
35. His belly is perfectly moderate.
36. His belly is not long.
37. His belly does not bulge.

38. His navel is deep.
39. His navel winds to the right.
40. He is perfectly handsome.
41. His habits are clean.
42. His body is free of moles and discoloration.
43. His hands are soft as cotton wool.
44. The lines of his palms are clear.
45. The lines of his palms are deep.
46. The lines of his palms are long.
47. His face is not too long.
48. His lips are red like copper.
49. His tongue is pliant.
50. His tongue is thin.
51. His tongue is red.
52. His voice is like thunder.
53. His voice is sweet and gentle.
54. His teeth are round.
55. His teeth are sharp.
56. His teeth are white.
57. His teeth are even.
58. His teeth are tapered.
59. His nose is prominent.
60. His nose is clean.
61. His eyes are clear.
62. His eyelashes are thick.
63. The black and white parts of his eyes are well defined and
are like lotus petals.
64. His eyebrows are long.
65. His eyebrows are smooth.
66. His eyebrows are soft.
67. His eyebrows are evenly haired.
68. His hands are long and extended.
69. His ears are of equal size.
70. He has perfect hearing.
71. His forehead is well formed and well defined.
72. His forehead is broad.
73. His head is very large.
74. His hair is black as a bumble bee.
75. His hair is thick.
76. His hair is soft.
77. His hair is untangled.
78. His hair is not unruly.
79. His hair is fragrant.
80. His hands and feet are marked with auspicious emblems such as
the srivasta and swastika.

One hundred twelve

physical marks of a buddha: the thirty-two major marks and eighty minor marks (listed above) together total 112.

Glossary of Names and Terms

Abhidharma: Literally, “higher teachings”. A category of Buddhist scriptures that presents a systematic, abstract description of all worldly phenomena.

Acharya Aryadeva (third century C.E.): One of Nagarjuna’s disciples. He is best known as the author of the *Four Hundred Verses*. Acharya is a title literally meaning “master” that is generally construed as an academic title.

Acharya Vasubhandu (fourth century C.E.): An Indian master who, along with his brother Asanga, was a founder of the Yogācāra school.

Achi Chökyi Drolma (eleventh century C.E.): Grandmother of Jigten Sumgön and chief protectress of the Drigung Kagyu lineage.

Arhat: Literally, a “foe destroyer.” The culmination of the Hinayana path, it refers to one who has overcome the outward manifestation of the afflicting emotions but who has not completely uprooted their psychic imprint. Although free of samsara, an arhat is not fully enlightened.

Arya Katayana: One of Buddha Shakyamuni’s principal disciples. He was best known as a master of discussion and explanation of the Dharma.

Asanga (fourth century C.E.): An Indian master who is most remembered for having received five celebrated texts from Arya Maitreya (*Abhisamayalankara*, *Uttaratantra*, *Mahayanasutralankara*, *Madhyantavibhaga*, and *Dharmadarmatavibhaga*) and for founding the Vast Action lineage. One of the Six Ornaments of this world.

Atisha (Tib. *Jowo Je*) (982–1055 C.E.): An Indian master invited by the king of Tibet to revive Buddhism there. He was the founder of the Kadampa lineage in which Dharma Lord Gampopa trained for many years before meeting Milarepa. Atisha is the author of the *Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*, on which the *Jewel Ornament of Liberation* was based.

Bhumi: Literally, “ground” or “foundation.” Refers to the progressive levels of a bodhisattva’s training, each one of which successively provides the foundation for the next.

Bodhicitta: Literally, “mind of enlightenment.” The intention to accomplish perfect, complete enlightenment for the benefit of all beings. Buddhahood is the perfection of the practice of bodhicitta.

Bodhisattva: Literally, “enlightenment being.” One who has generated bodhicitta and who works tirelessly for the benefit of all beings.

Brahmin: In traditional Indian society, the term refers to the priest caste, whose members performed the religious ceremonies.

Buddha: One who has attained unsurpassable, completely perfected enlightenment; i.e., one who has fully awakened all wisdom and fully purified all obscurations.

Buddha-nature: The pure essence potential to attain enlightenment that is inherent in every sentient being. It is obscured to varying degrees by afflicting emotions and subtle obscurations, but it can be actualized through the practices of moral ethics, meditation, and wisdom.

Buddha fields: Existences created by buddhas wherein conditions are perfect for the attainment of enlightenment by its inhabitants. Many practitioners aspire to rebirth in this state because reversion to lower states is impossible. Also called pure lands.

Chakrasamvara: One of the principal yidams.

Chenrezig: The great bodhisattva who is associated most with the quality of compassion. He is frequently depicted with two arms, four arms, or a thousand arms, holding a mala, jewel, and lotus. His is the most famous of all mantras: OM MANI PADME HUNG.

Channel (Skt. *avadhuti*): Subtle energy channel within the body, particularly the central channel.

Deity yoga: The characteristic type of Vajrayana meditation practice, in which mundane phenomena are identified with those of a yidam. The term encompasses both the generation or arising stage and the generation stage of meditation.

Dharma: The holy teachings of Lord Buddha, categorized in two parts: the Dharma that is studied and the Dharma that has been realized.

Dharmakaya: One of the three bodies of a buddha. It denotes the ultimate nature of a buddha's wisdom form, which is nonconceptual and undefinable.

Drigung Dharmakirti (1595–1659): The first of the Drigung Kyabgön Chungtsang Rinpoche's.

Drigung Kagyu: The branch of the Kagyu tradition founded by Lord Jigten Sumgön. Drigung Ratna, Rinchen Phuntsog.

Dzogchen: Literally, "Great Completion." An absolute view, like Mahamudra, and an advanced meditation practice. The primordial or natural state of the mind, and a body of teachings and meditation practices aimed at realizing that state.

Empowerment: The tantric ritual by which one is empowered to perform a specific meditation practice.

Gampopa (1074–1153): Renowned as one of Tibet's greatest teachers, he is one of the foremost figures in the Kagyu lineage. His writings include *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* and *The Precious Garland of the Excellent Path*.

Hinayana: Of the two major branches of Buddhist philosophy and practice, the Buddhist school which emphasizes individual liberation and practice of the Four Noble Truths.

Jigten Sumgön (1143–1217): Founder of the Drigung Kagyu tradition. He was the heart-son of Phagmo Drupa, and widely recognized as an incarnation of Nagarjuna. His most famous writings include *One Thought* (Tib.: *Gong Chig*) and *Heart Essence of the Mahayana Teachings* (Tib.: *Ten Nying*).

Kagyu: Literally, "oral transmission" lineage. One of the four principal traditions within Tibetan Buddhism, it originated with Buddha Vajradhara and was primarily transmitted by Tilopa and Naropa in India, and Marpa, Milarepa, and Gampopa in Tibet. It holds Mahamudra and the Six Dharmas of Naropa as its central teachings.

Kalpa: Generically, an eon or other nearly limitless length of time. In Buddhist cosmology, it has the specific meaning of a complete cycle of a universe consisting of four stages: emptiness, formation, maintenance, and destruction.

Karma: Literally, "action." Physical, verbal or mental acts which imprint habitual tendencies in the mind. Upon meeting with suitable conditions, these habits ripen and become manifest in future events.

Khunu Lama Rinpoche (1894–1977): A renowned ascetic and scholar, known as a teacher of his Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Lama: An authentic teacher authorized to transmit Buddhist teachings to suitable students. Depending on tradition, a lama may or may not be a monk.

Mahakashyapa: One of Buddha Shakyamuni's principal disciples. He was particularly skilled in asceticism and moral discipline, and became the leader of the sangha upon the Buddha's parinirvana.

Mahamudra: Literally, the "Great Seal." The highest, most conclusive view that unites bliss and emptiness into one, the primordial effulgent nature of mind, and is the ultimate realization of all phenomena of samsara and nirvana as they actually are. Its practice reveals the practitioner's basic, pure nature and leads to the experience of highest enlightenment.

Mahayana: Literally, the "Great Vehicle." The Buddhist school that holds the bodhisattva ideal as the highest practice and teaches the aspiration to attainment of enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Maitreya: One of the eight great bodhisattva disciples of Buddha Shakyamuni. He will be the next (i.e., fifth) buddha in this fortunate kalpa in which one thousand buddhas will appear, and currently manifests in the Tushita heaven.

Mandala: Literally "wheel," "circle," or "essence." The connotation in Tibetan is of a container and its contents. In deity yoga, it often refers to the "palace" of a deity, arranged as a circular diagram or three-dimensional structure with symbolic components surrounding a central figure.

Manjushri: The great bodhisattva who is associated most with the quality of wisdom. He is usually represented holding a sword in one hand and a lotus flower on which rests a Prajnaparamita text in the other.

Mantra: Literally “mind-protection.” Sacred speech which, in the context of Vajrayana practices, serves to purify one’s ordinary speech and identify it with a yidam deity’s wisdom speech in order to attain enlightenment.

Marpa (1012–1097): A Tibetan layman who is especially renowned for bringing many teachings to Tibet from India and translating them. These include Mahamudra texts and the Six Dharmas of Naropa. As Naropa’s disciple and Milarepa’s primary teacher, he is a major figure in the Kagyu lineage.

Maudgalyayana: One of Buddha Shakyamuni’s two closest disciples, he is generally depicted as standing to the Buddha’s left. He was particularly distinguished by his miracle powers.

Milarepa (1052–1135): One of the great masters of the Kagyu lineage, he is often referred to as an example of someone who attained enlightenment in a single lifetime. His vajra songs possess great healing qualities. He was Dharma Lord Gampopa’s primary teacher.

Mount Meru: In Buddhist cosmology, a mountain which constitutes the center of the universe. It is surrounded by oceans and four principle continents.

Nagarjuna (second century C.E.): An Indian master of such critical importance to the propagation of the Mahayana and Vajrayana that he is often called the “second Buddha.” He founded the Madhyamaka philosophical school which systematized the Prajnaparamita (Perfection of Wisdom) teachings and composed many texts which remain authoritative to the present day. One of the Six Ornaments of this world.

Naropa (1016–1100): One of the founding masters of the Kagyu tradition. He was a leading scholar at Nalanda University in India, which he renounced to become a yogi-practitioner under Tilopa. He is most remembered for being Marpa’s teacher and for being the propagator of the teachings known as the Six Yogas of Naropa.

Nirmanakaya: Literally, “emanation body.” The physical form of a buddha or other great being, purposefully manifested for the benefit of common sentient beings. This is not necessarily a human form; buddhas can appear as whatever is necessary.

Nirvana: The unconfused state without suffering; the transcendence of samsara.

Perfections: see Paramita.

Paramita: Literally, “gone beyond”. The training which, if perfected, will take the practitioner beyond samsara to enlightenment. They are usually enumerated as either six or ten.

Phagmo Drupa (1110–1170): Principal disciple of Gampopa, teacher of Jigten Sumgön, and founder of eight lineages: the Drigung, Taklung, Drukpa, Trophu, Yabsang, Shuksep, Yelpa, and Martsang.

Pratyekabuddhas: Self-liberated buddhas, whose attainment is less than the ultimate buddhahood. While they may receive Dharma teachings during the time of a buddha or now, they do not attain realization until after the Buddha’s teachings have disappeared. Being without bodhicitta, they do not teach how to reach enlightenment, but they do display miracle powers to inspire devotion.

Rechungpa Dorje Drakpa (1083–1161): One of Milarepa’s two foremost students. Rechungpa traveled to India three times and obtained teachings and transmissions that Marpa had not received during his time in India.

Sadhana: Literally, “means of accomplishment.” In the Vajrayana, it is a spiritual discipline undertaken with the initiation and instruction of a lama. It can also refer to the text in which the discipline is laid out for practice.

Samaya: A sacred pledge between a disciple and teacher or the teachings regarding Vajrayana practice.

Sambhogakaya: Literally, “enjoyment body.” A nonsubstantial yet visible body of a buddha or other great being, manifested to directly benefit bodhisattvas at high stages of realization and to serve as an object of devotion for practitioners.

Samsara: The beginningless and endless cycle of rebirths throughout the six realms; the confused state of suffering from which Buddhists seek liberation.

Sangha: Generally, the entire community of practitioners. In different contexts, it can refer specifically to the monastic community or to the assembly of highly realized beings (arhats and bodhisattvas at the first bhumi and above).

Sentient beings: All conscious creatures who are reborn within the six realms.

Shariputra: One of Buddha Shakyamuni’s two closest disciples, he is generally depicted as standing to the Buddha’s right. He was particularly distinguished by his wisdom.

Shravaka: A Hinayana disciple who hears the words of the Buddha's teachings, shares them with others, and aspires to become an arhat for his/her own benefit.

Sutra: Literally, a rope or thread that holds things together. Figuratively, it refers to the canonical scriptures that are records of the teachings of Buddha Shakyamuni.

Svabhavikakaya: The underlying indivisible essence of all enlightened forms.

Tilopa (988–1069): A renowned Indian mahasiddha and the first human teacher of Mahamudra. Naropa received the complete teachings from him.

Vajrayana: The diamond path or “vehicle” of Buddhist tantra.

Vinaya: The code of discipline for Buddhist practitioners, especially for monks and nuns.

Winds (Skt. prana): The subtle energy of the body.

Yidam deity: A deity whose form and attributes embody a particular aspect of enlightenment and with whom a practitioner identifies in meditation.

Yojana: A measure of distance, said in the sutras to be a medium distance for one day's journey. This system of measurement is built up from the size of the smallest dust particles, which are accumulated to yield an armspan. 500 armspans are one gyantak, or the distance at which a loud noise can only barely be heard. A “monastery” (Tib. *gompa*) is defined as a place one gyantak from a town. Eight gyantaks comprise one yojana.

Annotated Bibliography of Works Mentioned

A Complete Guide to the Buddhist Path

Khenchen Rinpoche's insightful and readable commentary on *The Jewel Treasury of Advice*. It contains a complete introduction to the teachings of Buddhism, from the very basic up to the very profound.

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A sutra from the Prajñāparamita literature, containing a dialogue between the Buddha and the monk Subhuti about the illusory nature of reality.

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Engaging in the Conduct of Bodhisattvas

A beautiful presentation of the bodhisattva's training in verse form by the Indian master Shantideva. It is one of the most widely read and quoted of all Mahayana texts.

Batchelor, Stephen. *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*. Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1979.

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 Padmakara Translation Group. *The Way of the Bodhisattva*. Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1997.
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 Wallace, Vesna and B. Allan. *A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1997.

Gongchig

A concise presentation of the oral instructions of the Drigung Kagyu lineage that explains the unified, enlightened intention that is a common thread in all the teachings of the Buddha. Usually divided into seven chapters, it consists of vajra statements that were spoken by Jigten Sumgön and recorded by his disciple Che-nga Sherab Jungne.

Viehbeck, Markus. *Gongchig, The Single Intent, the Sacred Dharma*. Munich: Otter Verlag, 2009.

Heart Sutra (Prajnaparamita Hridaya)

A very popular condensation of the wisdom teachings of the Buddha.

Hanh, Thich Nhat. *The Heart of Understanding*. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1988.
 Lopez, Donald S. *Elaborations on Emptiness*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.
 Lopez, Donald S. *The Heart Sutra Explained*. Albany: SUNY Press, 1987.

Hundred Thousand Songs

The famous collection of songs of realization from the renowned Tibetan yogi, Milarepa.

Chang, Garma C.C. (translator). *Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa*. Boston: Shambhala, 1977.
 Cutillo, Brian (translator). *Drinking the Mountain Stream: Songs of Tibet's Beloved Saint, Milarepa*. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2001.

Madhyamakavatara

A commentary on Nagarjuna's teachings on wisdom (i.e., emptiness) by Chandrakirti.

Hopkins, Jeffrey. *Compassion in Tibetan Buddhism*. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1980. (Partial translation)
 Fenner, Peter. *The Ontology of the Middle Way*. Dordrecht, Boston: Khewar Academic Publishers, 1990.
 Padmakara Translation Group. *Introduction to the Middle Way: Chandrakirti's Madhyamakavatara with Commentary by Jamgön Mipham*. Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2005.

The Jewel Ornament of Liberation

Translation of Lord Gampopa's essential philosophy text, which is said to act as Gampopa's regent in these times. This book contains a complete form of Buddhism - right from the starting point, the ground where you enter into the path, until you achieve Buddhahood and manifest activities for the benefit of infinite sentient beings.

Guenther, H. V. *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*. Boston: Shambhala Publications: 1971.
 Gyaltzen, Khenpo Konchog. *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1998.
 Holmes, Ken and Katia. *Gems of Dharma, Jewels of Freedom*. Forres, Scotland: Altea Publishing, 1995.

Transformation of Suffering

Contains all the foundational teachings of Buddhism. The book was designed for study by individuals or groups without ready access to a lama.

Gyaltzen, Khenchen Konchog. *Transformation of Suffering*. Gainesville, FL: Vajra Publications, 1997, 2006.

Unsurpassed Tantra

Better known as the *Uttaratantra*, this is one of the five treatises transmitted to Asanga by future buddha Maitreya. It concerns the nature and qualities of buddhahood and buddha nature.

Fuchs, Rosemarie and Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso. *Buddha Nature: The Mahayana Uttaratantra Shastra with Commentary*. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 2000.
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Vast as the Heavens, Deep as the Sea

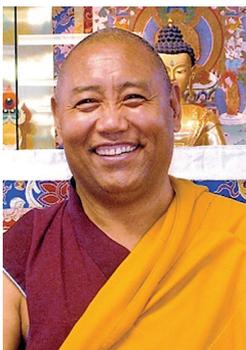
Translation of a set of 365 verses, revered for their inspirational treatment of bodhicitta written by Khunu Rinpoche in the 20th century.

Sparham, Gareth. *Vast as the Heavens, Deep as the Sea*. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 1999.

Words of My Perfect Teacher

A comprehensive guide to the fundamental teachings of Tibetan Buddhism, written by Patrul Rinpoche in the nineteenth century.

Padmakara Translation Group (translators). *The Words of My Perfect Teacher: A Complete Translation of a Classic Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1994.



Brief Biography of Venerable Khenchen Konchog Gyaltsen Rinpoche

The village of Tsari and the surrounding areas are among the most sacred places in Tibet. It was there that Khenchen Gyaltsen Rinpoche was born in the spring of 1946, and it was there that he spent his early years. In 1960, because of the political situation in Tibet, Khenchen Rinpoche fled to India with his family. The family then settled in Darjeeling, where he began his education. Even at a young age, he was an excellent and dedicated student, and was able to complete his middle school studies in less than the average time.

At about this same time that he completed middle school, a new university, the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, opened in Varanasi, India. Determined to be among its first students, Khenchen Rinpoche travelled to Varanasi in October 1967 to seek admission. He then began a nine-year course of study that included Madhyamaka, Abhidharma, Vinaya, the *Abhisamayalankara*, and the *Uttaratantra*, as well as history, logic, and Tibetan grammar. In early 1968, he had the good fortune to take full monastic ordination from the great Kalu Rinpoche, and, shortly after graduating from the Institute, he received teachings from the Sixteenth Gyalwa Karmapa on *The Eight Treasures of Mahamudra Songs* by the Indian mahasiddhas.

Even after completing this long and arduous course of study, Khenchen Rinpoche wanted only to deepen his knowledge and practice of the Dharma. With the same intensity that he brought to his earlier studies, Rinpoche sought out and received teachings

and instructions from great Buddhist masters. One was the Venerable Khunu Lama Rinpoche, with whom Khenchen Rinpoche studied two works of Gampopa: *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* and *The Precious Garland of the Excellent Path*. His studies with the Venerable Khunu Lama also included mahamudra and many of the songs of Milarepa.

Maintaining a balance between theoretical understanding and the practice of meditation, Khenchen Rinpoche began the traditional three-year retreat in 1978 under the guidance of the enlightened master Khyunga Rinpoche. During this time, he was able to deepen and enhance his understanding of *The Fivefold Path of Mahamudra* and the profound *One Thought (Gong Chig)* of Lord Jigten Sumgon. He also received many other transmissions.

In 1985, Khenchen Rinpoche travelled to the main seat of the Drikung Kagyu lineage, Drikung Thil, in Tibet. There he was able to receive personal blessings, as well as instructions and transmissions of mahamudra and the Six Yogas of Naropa, from the enlightened master, the Venerable Pachung Rinpoche. In 1982, the force of karma and the requests of many practitioners combined to bring Khenchen Rinpoche to the United States. By late 1983, the Tibetan Meditation Center was well established in Washington, DC. Their original location was the site of innumerable teachings, practices, retreats and ceremonies. In September 1984, and again in 1987, the young Center was blessed with personal visits and teachings by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Through Khenchen Rinpoche's and the Center's efforts, Drikung Kyabgon Chetsang Rinpoche visited in 1987, 1994, and 1999 and people in several states were able to receive benefit from his teachings and presence.

With the Tibetan Meditation Center as his base, Khenchen Rinpoche went on to establish practice centers in many other places. At present, the Chicago Ratna Shri Sangha is affiliated with Tana Monastery in Tibet; their resident teacher Drupon Rinchen Dorjee is from that monastery. The Drikung Meditation Center in Boston, MA is now affiliated with Katsel Monastery in Tibet, and Lama Konchog Sonam from that monastery is the resident teacher. Another Katsel center operates in Tampa, FL under Lama Konchog Sonam's direction. The Drikung Namgyal Center in Tucson, AZ is affiliated with Drong-ngur Monastery in Tibet, and Khenpo Sherab Oser from that monastery is the resident teacher. In 1999,

Ratna Shri Sangha in Clearwater, FL was affiliated with Palma Monastery in Tibet, with resident teacher Trinlay Dorje being from that monastery. In 2004, the center was unfortunately disbanded and the lama found secular employment. The group, again called Ratna Shri Sangha, was re-established in the new place headed by Richard Weissman. In Gainesville, FL the Tibetan Meditation Center-Gainesville operates under the patronage of Millard and Angela Pate, and is led by Khenmo Trinlay Chodron. In Colorado, the Ratna Shri Sangha is managed by Mark Steiner. The Bay Area Ratna Shri Sangha in San Francisco, CA has been sustained by Cindy Chang and a group of people. Marty Morganrath sustains a group in Big Sur, CA. A center was started in Los Angeles, CA but it dissipated in early 2000. Some good practitioners there are still connected and Rinpoche occasionally visits there to give teachings. Three Rivers Dharma Center in Pittsburgh, PA is managed by John Bogaard; Khenpo Choephel is residing there and giving teaching. The Norway Dharma Group in Norway, ME has Ed Gabrielsen as its resident teacher. Terry Berrett leads a small group of meditators in Burlington, VT. The Madison Drikung Kagyu Dharma Circle has been managed by Linda Wuestenberg for many years. In Virginia Beach, VA the Ratna Shri Sangha Circle is hosted by Christine Fallwell. A Dharma group in Charlottesville, VA is led by Wes Hubbard and Kirby Moore. In Santiago and Concepcion, Chile, the Tibetan Meditation Center's resident teacher is Khenpo Phuntsok Tenzin. Finally, the Ratna Shri Meditation Center in Stockholm, Sweden is managed by Zabrina Leung and Lars Lundquist.

The Tibetan Meditation Center in Frederick, MD, also named Ratna Shri Dharma Chakra, was officially recognized as being under the Drikung Thil monastery in Tibet. The center's resident teacher is Khenpo Tsultrim.

Wanting the teachings of Dharma to reach as many people as possible, Khenchen Rinpoche has quickly adapted himself to Western forms of communication. He has made appearances on television, been a guest on many radio programs, lectured extensively at colleges and universities, and spoken to the public through countless newspaper articles. Between 1983 and 1990, Khenchen Rinpoche single-handedly translated critical Drikung Kagyu meditation practices, prayers and histories into English. Among the practice texts he translated were: Achi Chokyi Drolma,

Amitabha, Amitayus, Bodhicitta, Long Chakrasamvara, shorter Chakrasamvara, Chenrezig, Chod, Dharma Protectors, Four-session Guru Yoga, Green Tara, Guru Yoga, Lama Chopa, Mandala Offering, Manjushri, Medicine Buddha, Ngondro practices, Nyung Ne, Peaceful Guru Rinpoche, Phowa, Refuge, Torma Offering, Tsog, Vajrapani, Vajrasattva, Vajrayogini and White Tara. Before Tibetan fonts were available for computers, he wrote all these texts out by hand. Later, when automation became available, the translations were polished and republished. This priceless work formed the essential base from which the holy Dharma could be taught and practiced.

Khenchen Rinpoche and the Tibetan Meditation Center moved to Frederick, Maryland in November 1991. Nestled inside a state park, the Center is now situated on four wooded acres. A small temple has been built there, and was consecrated by Drikung Kyabgon Chetsang Rinpoche in 1994. With this larger facility and in surroundings more conducive to contemplation, Khenchen Rinpoche was able to benefit even more people with his teachings. Now that Western students are becoming interested in long term retreat practice, plans are being made to establish a residential retreat center nearby.

Recently, Khenchen Rinpoche has been spending more of this time teaching in India and Tibet, he has established centre throughout the United State and in Chile, and he frequently visit in Europe, especially Germany and Austria, as well as Southeast Asia. He teaches *One Thought* to the monks and nuns at the Drikung Kagyu Institute in Dehra Dun, India as well as monastery in Tibet as condition allow. With the financial assistance of the Tibetan Meditation Center's Text Project, he arrange for 1200 copies of the text to be printed, and then distributed them to monks, nuns, and monasteries in India, Nepal, and Tibet.

In 2009, construction of the Rinchen Ling Monastery in Nepal was completed. During the inauguration ceremonies, the head lama and staff of the monastery strongly requested Khenchen Rinpoche to be their first Khenpo, or abbot. Because of their sincere request and also as an auspicious start for the monastery, he accepted the position for one year. In early October 2011, Rinpoche taught the very extensive *One Thought* commentary for more than two months to show appreciation for this request and to help sustain the monastery and all its monks.

At the beginning of 2011, Rinpoche went to South India for more than a month for rest and Ayurvedic medical treatment. In March, he went to the Drikung Kagyu Institute in Dehra Dun, India for the Tibetan New Year. While there, he participated in the *One Thought* seminar for five days, which he had sponsored with money he received in donations and offerings. Then he returned to Drikung Rinchen Ling monastery in Nepal to teach *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* for about one month. Many monks benefitted from these activities. On many occasions, he contributed food to that monastery. Then, toward the end of April, Rinpoche made a pilgrimage with friends from Malaysia and some other monks to Lapchi Snow Mountain, where Milarepa meditated for many years and became enlightened. Khenchen Rinpoche had wanted to go there for a long time, but due to his health and other conditions it didn't happen. So, that pilgrimage was especially inspiring. Because of many requests, in mid-May he visited Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine, Sweden, Germany and Switzerland. He gave complete teaching of the Buddha for the people who were interested. In mid-August he travelled to the US, and taught in Boston, Maine, Vermont, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Wisconsin, Illinois, New Mexico, Ohio, and Florida.

In February 2014 Rinpoche made a pilgrimage to the Jambi Monastery, Indonesia, a newly discovered archaeological site in Buddhist history. March saw Rinpoche conducting a teaching retreat in Genting Highlands, a Dharma talk in Kedah (northern Malaysia) and another in Singapore. In April, Rinpoche gave a Dharma talk in Dongguk University Seoul, Korea. He then returned to the Hubli Monastery, India for a month. Rinpoche was invited to visit Beijing and followed up with a pilgrimage to Wutai Shan, China and subsequently spent about 2 months at the Kunming Monastery.

Khenchen Rinpoche consistently strives to make important texts available to the public and to provide his students with thorough and systematic training in the Dharma. A skilled and dedicated author and translator, he has published twelve books prior to this one:

1. *Prayer Flags* is a small book that contains brief life stories of Dharma Lord Gampopa, Phagmo Drupa, and Lord Jigten Sumgon, as well as some Dharma-realization songs by lineage

masters. There are some short teachings on the stages of Mahamudra practice, and condensed instructions on how to carry the experiences of sickness and death into one's practice.

2. *The Garland of Mahamudra Practices* is very helpful for those who already have a little understanding of Dharma. It contains a description of several practices: the four foundation thoughts (precious human life, awareness of impermanence, karma, and the suffering of samsara); the four extraordinary preliminary practices (refuge, Vajrasattva, mandala offering, and Guru Yoga); the special Ngöndro practices of love, compassion, and bodhicitta; yidam deity practice; special four-kaya guru yoga; a mahamudra session; and dedication.
3. *In Search of the Stainless Ambrosia* was written by Khenchen Rinpoche as an introduction for beginners and a reminder for more advanced practitioners. First, it summarizes the fundamental teaching of refuge, love and compassion, and the six paramitas. Then, there are short sections on mahamudra and yidam practices, the experiences of dying, and explanation of Chöd practice, and some Phowa teachings.
4. *The Great Kagyu Masters* is a translation of a thirteenth century text that puts the life stories of the great masters together in one volume: Tilopa, Naropa, Atisha, Marpa, Milarepa, Gampopa, Phagmo Drupa, and Jigten Sumgön. It is very helpful for practitioners to have these accounts available for inspiration and guidance.
5. *The Jewel Treasury of Advices* is a translation of a profound teaching, written in verse by Drikung Dharmaradza. The text describes the complete path of the Buddha's teachings. Its commentary, *A Complete Guide to the Buddhist Path*, makes these teachings more accessible, and easier for modern practitioners to understand these profound teachings.
6. *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* is a translation of Lord Gampopa's essential philosophy text, which is said to act as Gampopa's regent in these times. This book contains a complete form of the sutra system called *lam rim*, or stages of the path-

right from the starting point, the ground where you enter into the path, until you achieve Buddhahood and manifest activities for the benefit of infinite sentient beings.

7. *Calling to the Lama from Afar* is a collection of accounts of Lord Jigten Sumgön, the founder of Drigung Kagyu, some in verse and prose. The prayers and praises translated in this text express the depth of genuine devotion in a manner that is characteristic of this genre of Tibetan Literature.
8. Khenchen Rinpoche wrote *Transformation of suffering: A Handbook for Practitioners* for study by individuals or group without ready access to a qualified spiritual master. The book contains all the foundations of Buddhism in very accessible terms. This book is in very accessible language, but it contains information essential for beginners and advance practitioners alike.
9. *Pearl Rosary* is work that Khenchen Rinpoche himself wrote. It contains detailed commentary on ten common deity yoga practices, such as Chenrezig, Tara, and Manjushri, as well as the translated sadhanas or practice texts. It includes the meaning and importance of each practice, the significance of the symbolism and attributes of each deity, especially valuable for those who do not have the good fortune to see a qualified lama often, and for serious practitioners to use as a reminder.
10. *A Complete Guide to the Buddhist Path* is Khenchen Rinpoche's commentary on *The Jewel Treasury of Advice*. This book goes right to the point by providing clear instruction on the practical meaning of Dharma and on meditation practice. The root text is organized into two parts. The first part contains general advice for daily life and the second part is directed more specifically to practitioners. Realistically, if we want to attain enlightenment without facing any obstacles, we have to know what to do and how to do it. This book outlines what to expect and gives us very valuable counsel from the author's own experience of the reality of samsara and nirvana.

11. *Wheel of Wisdom* three teaching Poems and a Guru Yoga Practice, "I have written these words, relying on the Conqueror's teachings... 'Samsara-nirvana equal-ness'. Samsara is mind with its conceptions; Nirvana, nonconceptual freedom from action and actor - So samsara and nirvana are two sides of the same hand, Mind-as-it-is: self-arisen, unchanging, and spontaneous..." Khenchen Konchog Gyaltshen Rinpoche - Vajra Publication, Gainesville, 2012
12. *Opening The Treasure of The Profound* is a book of commentary on some of the vajra songs of Milarepa and Jigten Sumgön. Those vajra songs contain vast and profound meaning, which Khenchen Rinpoche has simplified and clarified so that practitioners can understand their *meaning* directly.

These translations and commentaries were done to benefit all sentient beings, especially sincere Dharma practitioners. It is not easy to translate and write commentaries; these books took a long time and many painful measures to produce. But Rinpoche underwent this hardship without much support with a sincere wish to bring enlightened wisdom into the world. So many people are desperate to become free from suffering while at the same time they indulge in the cause of suffering. Rinpoche prays for those individuals to be exposed to these teachings, find the path, and follow it with incisive wisdom so that they can breathe in peace and happiness for them to really solve life's problems, not just with material consumption but by consciousness. He request that anyone who has a chance to see these books to please read them carefully, digest their meaning, and apply their teaching. There can be no doubt that the result will arise.

Remembering the struggles of his early years, Khenchen Rinpoche inspires and supports monks, nuns and the laypeople in their practice of the Dharma and is always ready to assist them in whatever way he can. To all, he gives of himself freely. With his heart and mind turned firmly towards the Dharma, he compassionately and with patience shows the way.

Chapter 1 Opening Prayers and Mantras

Altruistic Motivation (Aspiration Bodhicitta)

༄༅། །དང་པོ་སྐྱབས་སེམས། བདག་ལ་སྣང་བར་བྱེད་པའི་དགྲ། གཞོན་
 པར་བྱེད་པའི་བགོགས། ཐར་པ་དང་ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པའི་བར་དུ་གཙོན་པར་
 བྱེད་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱིས་གཙོ་བྱས་པའི། མ་ནམ་མཁའ་དང་མཉམ་པའི་སེམས་
 ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་བདེ་བ་དང་ལྷན། སྤྱག་བསྐྱེད་དང་བྲལ། སྦྱར་དུ་སྒྲོན་མེད་པ་
 ཡང་དག་པར་རྫོགས་པའི་བྱང་ཆུབ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ཐོབ་པར་བྱ། ཞེས་ལན་གསུམ་དང་།

Engagement in Virtue (Action Bodhicitta)

དེའི་ཆེད་དུ་སངས་མ་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་བར་དུ་ལུས་ངག་ཡིད་གསུམ་དགོ་བ་ལ་བཀོལ།
 མ་ཤིའི་བར་དུ་ལུས་ངག་ཡིད་གསུམ་དགོ་བ་ལ་བཀོལ། དུས་དེ་རིང་ནས་བརྩུང་
 སྟེ་ཉི་མ་སང་ད་ཅེས་ཀྱི་བར་དུ་ལུས་ངག་ཡིད་གསུམ་དགོ་བ་ལ་བཀོལ།

Sixfold Refuge

༄༅། རིན་ཅན་རྩ་བ་དང་བརྒྱུད་པར་བཅས་པའི་དཔལ་ལྷན་སྐྱེས་པ་དམ་པ་རྣམས་ལ་
 སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆིའོ། །ཡི་དམ་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་ལྷ་ཚོགས་རྣམས་ལ་སྐྱབས་སུ་
 མཆིའོ། །སངས་རྒྱས་བཙུག་པོ་ལྷན་འདས་རྣམས་ལ་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆིའོ། །དམ་
 པའི་ཚོས་རྣམས་ལ་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆིའོ། །འཕགས་པའི་དགོ་འདུན་རྣམས་ལ་
 སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆིའོ། །དཔལ་པོ་མཁའ་འགྲོ་ཚོས་སྦྱོང་སྦྱང་མའི་ཚོགས་ཡི་ཤེས་ཀྱི་
 སྤྱན་དང་ལྷན་པ་རྣམས་ལ་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆིའོ། །ཞེས་ལན་གསུམ།

Cultivation of Bodhicitta (Bodhisattva Vow)

༄༅། བྱང་ཆུབ་སྣོད་པོར་མཆིས་ཀྱི་བར། །སངས་རྒྱས་རྣམས་ལ་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆི།།
 ཚོས་དང་བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔལ་ཡི། །ཚོགས་ལའང་དེ་བཞིན་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆི།།
 ཇི་ལྟར་སྟོན་གྱི་བདེ་གཤེགས་ཀྱིས། །བྱང་ཆུབ་བྱགས་ནི་བསྐྱེད་པ་དང་། །བྱང་
 ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔལ་འབྲས་པ་ལ། །དེ་དག་རིམ་བཞིན་གནས་པ་ལྟར། །དེ་
 བཞིན་འགྲོ་ལ་ཕན་དོན་དུ། །བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་ནི་བསྐྱེད་བགྱི་ཞིང་། །དེ་བཞིན་
 དུ་ནི་བསྐྱབ་པ་ལ། །རིམ་པ་བཞིན་དུ་བསྐྱབ་པར་བགྱི། །ཞེས་ལན་གསུམ།

Short Refuge Prayer

༄༅། སངས་རྒྱས་ཚོས་དང་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་མཚོག་རྣམས་ལ། །བྱང་ཆུབ་བར་དུ་བདག་ནི་
 སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆི། །བདག་གིས་སྤྱིན་སོགས་བགྱིས་པའི་བསོད་ནམས་ཀྱིས།།
 འགྲོ་ལ་ཕན་སྤྱིར་སངས་རྒྱས་འགྲུབ་པར་ཤོག ཅེས་ལན་གསུམ།

Four Immeasurables

༄༅། མ་ནམ་མཁའ་དང་མཉམ་པའི་སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་བདེ་བ་དང་བདེ་བའི་རྒྱ་དང་
 ལྷན་པར་གྱུར་ཅིག སྤྱག་བསྐྱེད་དང་སྤྱག་བསྐྱེད་ཀྱི་རྒྱ་དང་བྲལ་བར་གྱུར་ཅིག
 སྤྱག་བསྐྱེད་མེད་པའི་བདེ་བ་དང་མི་འབྲལ་བར་གྱུར་ཅིག ཉེ་རིང་ཆགས་སྣང་
 གཉིས་དང་བྲལ་བའི་བཏང་སྟོམས་ལ་གནས་པར་གྱུར་ཅིག ཅེས་ལན་གསུམ།

Homage to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha

ཕྱི་བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་དག་བཅོམ་པ་ཡང་དག་པར་རྫོགས་པའི་
 སངས་རྒྱལ་རིག་པ་དང་ཞབས་སུ་ལྷན་པ། བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པ། འཛིག་
 རྟེན་མཁུན་པ། སྐྱེས་བུ་འདུལ་བ། ཁ་ལོ་བསྐྱར་བ། ལྷན་མེད་པ། ལྷ་
 དང་མི་རྣམས་ཀྱི་སྟོན་པ་མཉམ་མེད་ལྷན་པའི་ཞབས་ཀྱི་རྩལ་ཏེ་མ་མེད་པ་ལ་
 མགོ་བོས་རབ་རྩ་གཏུགས་ཏེ་གྲུས་པས་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།།

ཕྱི་གང་ཚེ་རྐང་གཉིས་གཙོ་བོ་བྱོན་བལྟམས་ཚེ། །ས་ཚེན་འདི་ལ་གོམ་པ་བདུན་
 བོར་ནས། །ངན་འཛིག་རྟེན་འདི་ན་མཚོག་ཅེས་གསུངས། །དེ་ཚེ་མཁས་པ་
 བྱོན་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།།

རྣམ་དག་སྐྱེ་མངའ་མཚོག་རྩ་གཟུགས་བཟང་བ། །ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱ་མཚོ་གསེར་གྱི་
 ལྷན་པོ་འདྲ། །བྲགས་པ་འཛིག་རྟེན་གསུམ་ན་ལྷང་ཇེ་བ། །མགོན་པོ་མཚོག་
 བརྟེས་བྱོན་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།།

མཚན་མཚོག་ལྷན་པའི་མེད་ལྷན་པའི་ཞབས། །གསེར་མདོག་འདྲ་བ་བྱོན་ལ་ཕྱག་
 འཚལ་ལོ། །རྩལ་བྲལ་བྱོན་འདྲ་སྲིད་པ་གསུམ་ན་མཛེས། །མཉམ་མེད་
 མཁུན་ཅན་བྱོན་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།།

མི་མཚོག་འདུལ་བ་ཁ་ལོ་སྐྱེར་མཛད་ཅིང་། །ཀུན་སྐྱོར་འཛིང་བ་གཙོན་མཛད་དེ་
 བཞིན་གཤེགས། །དབང་པོ་ཞི་ཞིང་ཉེ་ཞི་ཞི་ལ་མཁས། །མཉམ་ཡོད་
 བཞུགས་པ་དེ་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།།

མགོན་པོ་བྲགས་རྗེ་ཚེ་ལྷན་པ། །ཐམས་ཅད་མཁུན་པ་སྟོན་པ་པོ། །བསོད་
 རམས་ཡོན་ཏན་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་གཞི། །དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།།
 དག་པའི་འདོད་ཆགས་བྲལ་བའི་རྒྱ། །དགོ་བས་ངན་སོང་ལས་གྲོལ་ཞིང་།།
 གཅིག་རྩ་དོན་དམ་མཚོག་གྲུར་པ། །ཞི་གྲུར་ཚོས་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།།
 གྲོལ་ནས་གྲོལ་བའི་ལམ་ཡང་སྟོན། །བསྐྱབ་པ་དག་ལ་རབ་རྩ་གྲུས། །ཞིང་
 གི་དམ་པ་ཡོན་ཏན་མཚོག། །དགོ་འདུན་ལ་ཡང་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།།

Offering of the Seven Limbs according to the Sutra System

མདོ་ལས་ལྷུང་བའི་ཡན་ལག་བདུན་པའི་མཚོན་པ་འབུལ་བ་ནི། །ཇི་སྟེན་སུ་དག་ཕྱོགས་
 བཅུའི་འཛིག་རྟེན་ན། །དུས་གསུམ་གཤེགས་པ་མི་ཡི་སང་གི་ཀུན། །བདག་
 གིས་མ་ལུས་དེ་དག་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ། །ལུས་དང་ངག་ཡིད་དང་བས་ཕྱག་བགྱིའོ།།
 བཟང་པོ་སྟོན་པའི་སྟོན་ལམ་སྟོབས་དག་གིས། །རྒྱལ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡིད་གྱིས་
 མདོན་སུམ་དུ། །ཞིང་གི་རྩལ་སྟེན་ལུས་རབ་བརྟེན་པ་ཡིས། །རྒྱལ་བ་ཀུན་ལ་
 རབ་རྩ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།།

རྩལ་གཅིག་སྟེང་ན་རྩལ་སྟེན་སངས་རྒྱལ་རྣམས། །སངས་རྒྱལ་སྐུ་ཀྱི་དབུས་ན་
 བཞུགས་པ་དག། །དེ་ལྟར་ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་རྣམས་མ་ལུས་པ། །ཐམས་ཅད་
 རྒྱལ་བ་དག་གིས་གང་བར་མོས།།

དེ་དག་བསྐྱབས་པ་མི་ཟད་རྒྱ་མཚོ་རྣམས། །དབྱངས་ཀྱི་ཡན་ལག་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་སྐྱེ་
 ཀུན་གྱིས། །རྒྱལ་བ་ཀུན་གྱི་ཡོན་ཏན་རབ་བརྫོད་ཅིང་། །བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་
 པ་ཐམས་ཅད་བདག་གིས་བསྟོད།།

Chapter 2 Refuge Meditation Practice

༄༅། །སྐྱབས་འགོའི་ཉམས་ལེན་བཞུགས་སོ། །འཁོར་བ་མཐའ་དག་ལ་ཡིད་འབྱུང་སྟེ།
དགོན་མཚོག་གསུམ་ལ་སློབ་ཅེ་གཅིག་ཏུ་གཏད་དེ་སྐྱབས་འགོ་ལ་འཇུག་པར་བྱ།

Visualization

གནས་ཁང་འོག་མིན་ཞིང་དང་དབྱེར་མེད་པའི། །རང་བདུན་སང་ཆེན་པདྨ་ཉི་ལྷའི་
སྟེང་། །དབུས་སུ་དྲིན་ཆེན་ཅུ་བའི་གླ་མ་ནི། །ཡན་ལག་བདུན་ལྡན་དོ་རྗེ་
འཆང་གི་ཚུལ། །སྲོ་བསང་ཕྱག་གཉིས་དོར་དེའི་ཐུགས་ཀར་བསྟོལ། །ཞབས་
གཉིས་དོ་རྗེ་སྐྱིལ་ཀྱང་འགྲིང་ཚུལ་བཞུགས། །དར་དང་རིན་ཆེན་སྣ་ཚོགས་རྒྱན་
གྲིས་མཛོས། །བརྒྱད་པའི་བཤེས་གཉེན་རྣམས་དང་ཐབས་ཅིག་བཞུགས།།
མདུན་དུ་ཡི་དམ་འཁོར་ལོ་བདེ་བའི་མཚོག། །ཡབ་ཡུམ་སྲུང་སྟོང་བྱང་འཇུག་
སྟོམས་ཞུགས་ཚུལ། །གཡས་སུ་དུས་གསུམ་སངས་རྒྱས་མཚན་དཔེར་ལྡན།།
བསྐྱལ་བཟང་སངས་རྒྱས་སྟོང་དང་ལྡན་ཅིག་བཞུགས། །རྒྱབ་ཏུ་ཤེས་རབ་མ་
རོལ་ཕྱིན་པའི་ཡུམ། །དྲང་ངེས་ཐེག་གསུམ་ཚོས་ཀྱིང་རོ་སྟོབ། །གཡོན་དུ་
བཙེ་ལྡན་བྱང་རྒྱབ་སེམས་དཔའི་ཚོགས། །ཐེག་གསུམ་དགོ་འདུན་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་
ཡོངས་སུ་བསྟོར། །ཁྲི་ཡི་མཚམས་སུ་དམ་པ་ཚོས་སྟོང་བའི། །སྲུང་མ་རྒྱ་
མཚོ་སྤྱིན་འབྲིགས་ལྟ་བུར་བྱུང། །ཡིད་ལ་ལྷང་ངེས་བསྟོམ་པར་བྱ།

Prayers

སངས་རྒྱས་ཚོས་ཚོགས་ཡི་དམ་ཚོས་སྟོང་བཅས། །སྐྱབས་མཚོག་རྣམས་ལ་
བདག་སོགས་འགོ་བ་ཀུན། །སྤིད་པའི་འཇིགས་ཚོགས་ཉམ་ང་ལས་སྟོབ་ཕྱིར།།
བྱང་རྒྱབ་མ་ཐོབ་བར་དུ་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆི། །ལན་གསུམ།

འགོ་ཀུན་བདེ་ལྡན་སྲུག་བསུལ་བུལ་བ་དང་། །སྲུང་དུ་གྲུ་མིད་ཐོབ་པར་བདག་
དགའ་བས། །དེ་སྤྱིར་དེང་ནས་བྱང་རྒྱབ་མ་ཐོབ་བར། །ངེས་པའི་དོན་མཚོག་
ལམ་ལ་འཇུག་པར་བྱ། །ལན་གསུམ།

Refuge Prayer with Prostrations

སྐྱབས་འགོ་གྲངས་གསོག་ནི། །དྲིན་ཅན་ཅུ་བ་དང་བརྒྱད་པར་བཅས་པའི་དཔལ་ལྡན་
གླ་མ་དམ་པ་རྣམས་ལ་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆིའོ། །ཡི་དམ་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་ལྷ་ཚོགས་
རྣམས་ལ་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆིའོ། །སངས་རྒྱས་བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས་རྣམས་ལ་སྐྱབས་སུ་
མཆིའོ། །དམ་པའི་ཚོས་རྣམས་ལ་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆིའོ། །འཕགས་པའི་དགོ་
འདུན་རྣམས་ལ་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆིའོ། །དཔའ་བོ་མཁའ་འགོ་ཚོས་སྟོང་སྲུང་མའི་
ཚོགས་ཡི་ཤེས་ཀྱི་སྤྱན་དང་ལྡན་པ་རྣམས་ལ་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆིའོ། །སྐབས་འདིར་
སྐྱབས་འགོ་གང་མང་བསགས་ལ།

Dissolution

མཐར་སྐྱབས་ཡུལ་རྣམས་རང་ལ་བསྐྱེམས་ཏེ་དམིགས་མིད་ངང་ངལ་གསོའོ། །།

Chapter 3 Purifying Negative Actions and Downfalls
Meditation and Recitation of Vajrasattva

༄༅། །སྲིག་ལྷུང་དག་བྱེད་དོན་མེད་པའི་བསྐོམ་བརྒྱུ་བཞུགས་སོ།།

Visualization

སྲི་བོར་པད་དཀར་རྒྱ་སྤྱིང་རྩྱུ་ཡིག་ལས། །དོན་ལྷུང་བར་རྩྱུ་མཚན་འོད་འཕྲོས་
པས། །འགོ་དྲུག་སྲིབ་སྲུངས་རྒྱལ་མཚོད་རྩྱུར་འདུས་པ། །ས་བོན་ལ་ཐིམ་
ཡོངས་སུ་གྲུར་པ་ལས། །རྩ་བའི་གྲུ་མ་དོན་མེད་པའུ་དཀར། །དོན་དེའི་
བཅས་རྒྱུང་བསྐྱུ་མ་འགྲིང་བའི་རྩྱུ་ལ། །རིན་ཆེན་རྒྱན་འཆང་ཆ་ལུགས་ཡོངས་སུ་
རྩོགས། །ཐུགས་ཀའི་འོད་འཕྲོས་ཡི་ཤེས་སེམས་དཔའ་དང་། །དབང་ལྷ་
རིགས་ལྷ་བཅས་པ་སྤྱན་དྲངས་ཏེ། །རྩེ་རྩྱུ་བའི་རྩེ་གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པར་གྲུར།

Empowerment

དབང་གི་ལྷུང་ཨོ་སར་ཏ་ལྷ་ག་ཏ་ཨ་ལྷི་ཏི་ཏི་ཏུ་མེ། །ཞེས་གསོལ་བ་བཏབ་པས་
དབང་གི་ལྷ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས། །ཨོ་སར་ཏ་ལྷ་ག་ཏ་ཨ་ལྷི་ཏི་ཏི་ཏུ་ས་མ་ཡ་ལྷིེ་ཡེ་རྩྱུ།
དབང་བསྐྱུར་སྐྱུ་གང་རྩྱུ་ཡི་ལྷ་ག་མ་ལས། །རིགས་ལྷས་དབུ་བརྒྱན་དབང་ལྷའང་
དོར་སེམས་ཐིམ།

Offering

མཚོད་པའི། །ཨོ་བརྟོ་སདུ་ས་པ་རི་ལྷུང་འཕྲུལ། །སྤྱི། །ལྷུང། །རྩྱུ་པེ།
ལྷ་ལོ་ག། །ལྷུང། །རྩྱུ་པེ། །ལྷུང་ལྷུང་ལྷུང་ལྷུང་།

Praise

བསྐྱོད་པའི། །དོན་མེད་སེམས་དཔའ་སེམས་དཔའ་ཆེ། །དོན་དེ་བཞིན་བཞེགས་པ་
ཀུན། །དོན་དང་པོ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་། །ཕྱག་འཚལ་ཕྱག་ན་དོན་ལོ།།

Visualization during Mantra Recitation

བརྒྱབས་ལྷུང་ལྷུང་། །དོར་སེམས་ཐུགས་ཀར་རྒྱ་སྤྱིང་དོན་ལི། །ལྷུང་བར་རྩྱུ་མཐར་
ཡིག་བརྒྱུ་བསྐྱོར་བ་ལས། །འོད་འཕྲོས་འགོ་བའི་སྲིབ་པ་ཀུན་སྲུངས་ནས།།
དོན་འཛིན་པའི་ས་ལ་མཐ་བཞེད་ཅིང་། །འོད་ཟེར་དེ་དག་རྩྱུར་བསྐྱུ་སྐྱུགས་
འཕྲེང་དང་། །ས་བོན་ལ་ཐིམ་དེ་ལས་བདུད་རྩི་རྩྱུ། །ཞབས་ཀྱི་ཐེ་བོང་
ལས་ཐོན་བདག་ཉིད་ཀྱི། །ཚངས་བུག་ནས་ཞུགས་སྲིབ་སྲིབ་ཉེས་ལྷུང་ཚོགས།།
འོག་སྐོར་དུད་ལྷུང་བབས་བདུད་རྩི་རྩྱུ། །མས་བཏན་རང་ལུས་ཤེས་ལྷུང་
དག་པར་གྲུར།

The 100 Syllable Mantra

ཡིག་བརྒྱའི། །ཨོ་བརྟོ་སདུ་ས་མ་ཡ། །མ་རུ་སྤུ་ལ་ཡ། །བརྟོ་སདུ་ཏི་ཨོ་པ།
ཏི་ལྷུང་ལྷུང་ལྷུང་། །སུ་ཏི་ལྷུང་ལྷུང་། །སུ་ལོ་ལྷུང་ལྷུང་། །ཨ་རུ་རྟོ་ལྷུང་
ལྷུང་། །སུ་ལྷུང་ལྷུང་ལྷུང་། །སུ་ལྷུང་ལྷུང་ལྷུང་། །ལྷུང་ལྷུང་ལྷུང་།
ཏ་ཏ་ཏ་ཏ་ཏེ། །ལྷུང་ལྷུང་ལྷུང་ཏ་ལྷུང་། །བརྟོ་སྤུ་ལྷུང་། །བརྟོ་སྤུ་ལྷུང་།
མ་རུ་ས་མ་ཡ་སདུ་ལྷུང་། །གངས་མང་བསགས་པར་གྲ།

Dissolution Stage

ཐེམ་རིམ་དམིགས་པ་ནི། བདག་སོགས་རྫོངས་པས་དམ་ལས་འགལ་གྱུར་པས།།

མགོན་པོས་སྐྱོབས་ཤིག་གཙོ་བོ་དྲི་འཛིན། །འགྲོ་བའི་གཙོ་བོས་བདག་གི་

སྐབས་མཛོད་ཅིག། །དེ་སྐད་གསོལ་བས་དྲོར་སེམས་དགུས་ཚུལ་གྱིས། །ཁྱོད་

ཀྱི་སྒྲིག་སྒྲིབ་དག་གོ་ཞེས་གསུངས་ཏེ། །བདག་ལ་ཐིམ་པས་སྒྲིབ་པ་བྱང་བར་

གྱུར།

I then become Vajrasattva, appearance and emptiness inseparable. Rest in the mind, as it is.

ཅེས་སེམས་ཉིད་ལ་གསོ་བ།

Dedication

དགོ་བ་འདི་ཡིས་སྐྱུར་དུ་བདག་ །དྲི་ཚེ་སེམས་དཔའ་འགྲུབ་གྱུར་ནས། །འགྲོ་

བ་གཅིག་ཀྱང་མ་ལུས་པ། །དེ་ཡི་ས་ལ་འགོད་པར་ཤོག། གཞན་ཡང་བསྔོ་སྔོན་

བུལ། །སྐྱེ་མཚན་ལོ། །།

Chapter 4 Offering the Mandala:
The Special Method of Perfecting the Two Accumulations

Visualization of the Fields of Accumulation

༄༅། །ཚོགས་གཉིས་རྫོགས་པའི་ཐབས་ཁྱད་པར་དུ་འཕགས་པ་མཚུལ་འབུལ་བ་ནི།

ཚོགས་ཞིང་གསལ་འདེབས་ནི། གནས་ཁང་འོག་མིན་ཞིང་དང་དབྱེར་མེད་པའི།།

རང་བདུན་སང་ཆེན་པདྨ་ཉི་ཟེའི་སྒྲིང་། །དབུས་སུ་དྲིན་ཆེན་ཅུ་བའི་སྐྱེ་མ་ནི།།

ཡན་ལག་བདུན་ལྡན་དྲོ་ཚེ་འཆང་གི་ཚུལ། །སྡོ་བསང་ཕྱག་གཉིས་དྲོར་དེལ་

ཐུགས་ཀར་བསྐྱོལ། །ཞབས་གཉིས་དྲོ་ཚེ་སྐྱིལ་གྱང་འགྲིང་ཚུལ་བཞུགས།།

དར་དང་རིན་ཆེན་སྒྲ་ཚོགས་རྒྱན་གྱིས་མཛོལ། །བརྒྱུད་པའི་བཤེས་གཉིན་རྣམས་

དང་ཐབས་ཅིག་བཞུགས། །མདུན་དུ་ཡི་དམ་འཁོར་ལོ་བདེ་བའི་མཚོག།

ཡབ་ཡུམ་སྣང་སྟོང་ཟུང་འཇུག་སྟོམས་ཞུགས་ཚུལ། །གཡས་སུ་དུས་གསུམ་

སངས་རྒྱལ་མཚན་དཔེར་ལྡན། །བསྐྱེད་པའི་སངས་རྒྱལ་སྟོང་དང་ལྡན་ཅིག་

བཞུགས། །རྒྱབ་ཏུ་ཤེས་རབ་པ་ལོ་ལྟོན་པའི་ཡུམ། །དང་ངེས་ཐེག་གསུམ་

ཚོས་ཀྱིང་རོ་སྟོག། །གཡོན་དུ་བཅེ་ལྡན་བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས་དཔའི་ཚོགས།།

ཐེག་གསུམ་དགོ་འདུན་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་ཡོངས་སུ་བསྐྱོར། །ཁྱི་ཡི་མཚམས་སུ་དམ་པ་

ཚོས་སྐྱོང་བའི། །སྐྱུང་མ་རྒྱ་མཚོ་སྤྱིན་འཁྲིགས་ལྟ་བུར་གྱུར།

Extended Thirty Seven Point Mandala

མཚལ་རྒྱལ་པ་སོ་བདུན་མ་ནི། ཨོྲོ་བརྟུ་ལྷོ་མི་ཡུལ་རྩྱུ། གཞི་རྣམ་པར་དག་པ་དབང་
 ཚེན་གསེར་གྱི་ས་གཞི། ཨོྲོ་བརྟུ་རེ་ཁེ་ཡུལ་རྩྱུ། སྤེ་ལྷོ་གསེར་རི་སྤུ་བྱུད་གྱིས་
 ཡོངས་སུ་བསྐྱོར་བའི་དབུས་སུ། རྩྱུ། རིའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་རི་རབ། ཤར་ལུས་འཕགས་
 པོ། ལྷོ་འཛམ་བུ་གླིང་། ལུབ་བ་ཡང་སྟོད། བྱང་སྐྱེ་མི་སྟོན། ཤར་དུ་
 ལུས་དང་ལུས་འཕགས། ལྷོར་རྩ་ཡབ་དང་རྩ་ཡབ་གཞན། ལུབ་ལུ་གཡོ་ལྷན་
 དང་ལམ་མཚོག་འགོ། བྱང་དུ་སྐྱེ་མི་སྟོན་དང་སྐྱེ་མི་སྟོན་གྱི་ཟླ། རིན་པོ་ཚེ་རི་
 རོ་བོ། དཔག་བསམ་གྱི་ཤིང་། འདོད་འཛེ་ཡི་བ། མ་ཚོས་པའི་ཡོ་རྟོག
 འཁོར་ལོ་རིན་པོ་ཚེ། རོར་བུ་རིན་པོ་ཚེ། བཅུན་མོ་རིན་པོ་ཚེ། རྫོན་པོ་རིན་
 པོ་ཚེ། སྐང་པོ་རིན་པོ་ཚེ། ཏུ་མཚོག་རིན་པོ་ཚེ། དམག་དཔོན་རིན་པོ་ཚེ།
 གཏེར་ཚེན་པོའི་བུམ་པ། སྐྱེག་པ་མ། སྤོང་བ་མ། སྐྱུ་མ། གར་མ།
 མེ་རྟོག་མ། བདུག་སྟོས་མ། སྤང་གསལ་མ། རྩི་ཚབ་མ། ཉི་མ།
 ཟླ་བ། རིན་པོ་ཚེ་རི་གདུགས། སྤོགས་ལས་རྣམ་པར་རྒྱལ་བའི་རྒྱལ་མཚན།
 དབུས་སུ་སྐྱེ་དང་མའི་དཔལ་འབྱོར་སྤུན་སྤུམ་ཚོགས་པ་མ་ཚང་བ་མེད་པ། ཞིང་
 ཁམས་རྣམ་པར་དག་པ་འདི་ཉིད་རྩིན་ཅན་རྩི་བ་དང་བརྒྱུད་པར་བཅས་པའི་དཔལ་ལྷན་
 སྐྱེ་མ་དམ་པ་རྣམས་དང་། ཡི་དམ་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་ལྷ་ཚོགས། དཀོན་མཚོག་
 རིན་པོ་ཚེ་རྣམ་པ་གསུམ། དཔལ་པོ་མཁའ་འགྲོ་ཚོས་སྐྱོང་སྤྱང་མ་དང་བཅས་པ་
 རྣམས་ལ་འབུལ་བར་བསྐྱོའོ། །ཐུགས་རྗེས་འགྲོ་བའི་དོན་དུ་བཞེས་སུ་གསོལ།
 བཞེས་ནས་བྱིན་གྱིས་བརྒྱབ་ཏུ་གསོལ།

Seven Point Mandala

མཚལ་བདུན་མ་ནི། ས་གཞི་སྟོས་རྒྱལ་བུགས་ཤིང་མེ་རྟོག་བཀྲམ། །རི་རབ་གླིང་
 བཞི་ཉི་ཟླས་བརྒྱན་པ་འདི། །སངས་རྒྱས་ཞིང་ལ་དམིགས་ཏེ་སྤུལ་བ་ཡིས། །
 འགྲོ་ཀུན་རྣམ་དག་ཞིང་དུ་སྐྱེ་བར་ཤོག།
 སྐྱེ་གསུམ་ཡོངས་རྫོགས་སྐྱེ་མའི་ཚོགས་རྣམས་ལ། །སྤྱི་ནང་གསང་གསུམ་དེ་
 བཞིན་ཉིད་གྱིས་མཚོད། །བདག་ལུས་ཡོངས་སྟོན་སྤྱང་སྤྱང་ཡོངས་བཞེས་ལ། །
 སྐྱེ་མེད་མཚོག་གི་དངོས་བྱུབ་སྤུལ་དུ་གསོལ།
 མཉེས་སྤྱིར་མཚལ་བཟང་པོ་འདི་སྤུལ་བས། །བྱང་རྒྱུབ་ལམ་ལ་བར་ཆད་མི་འབྱུང་
 ཞིང་། །དུས་གསུམ་རྒྱལ་བའི་དགོངས་པ་རྟོགས་པ་དང་། །སྤྱིད་པར་མི་
 འབྱུལ་ཞི་བར་མི་གནས་ཤིང་། །ནམ་མཁའ་དང་མཉམ་པའི་འགྲོ་རྣམས་སྐྱོལ་
 བར་ཤོག།
 སྤུག་འཛམ་བ་དང་མཚོད་ཅིང་བཤགས་པ་དང་། །རྗེས་སུ་ཡི་རང་བསྐྱུལ་ཞིང་
 གསོལ་བ་ཡི། །དགོ་བ་རྩུང་ཟད་བདག་གིས་ཅི་བསགས་པ། །ཐམས་ཅད་
 རྫོགས་པའི་བྱང་རྒྱུབ་སྤྱིར་བསྐྱོའོ། །ཨོྲོ་བུ་རུ་དེ་མ་དུ་ཀྱི་རྩྱུ་མཚལ་བ་དུ་རྩྱུ་སྐྱེ་
 ཏུ། བྱངས་གསོག་གང་མང་བུ།
 Request
 འདོད་གསོལ་ནི། བདག་ལུས་ཡོངས་སྟོན་དགོ་བའི་རྩ་བར་བཅས། །རྒྱལ་བ་
 འཁོར་དང་བཅས་ལ་དེང་འབུལ་བསྐྱོ། །བཞེས་ནས་དམ་པ་རྣམས་གྱིས་གང་
 རྟོགས་པའི། །ངེས་པའི་དོན་མཚོག་བདག་གིས་རྟོགས་པར་ཤོག།
 Dissolution
 མཐར་ཚོགས་ཞིང་རྣམས་རང་ལ་བསྐྱེམས་སྟེ་དམིགས་མེད་ངང་ལ་ངལ་གསོལ། །།

Chapter 5 The Marvellous Guru Yoga pouring Blessings into one's Mindstream

༄༅། །རྒྱུད་ལ་བྱིན་རྒྱུ་ལས་འབྱུང་བྱེད་མཛད་བྱུང་གླ་མའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་བཞུགས་སོ། །ཕྱག་རྒྱ་
ཆེན་པོའི་གནས་ལུགས་རྟོགས་པའི་ཐབས་གཅིག་ཕྱེས་མ་ལ་སངས་རྒྱུས་དངོས་ཀྱི་འདུ་ཤིས་བཞག་ཉེ་
སྒྲིང་ཁོང་རུས་པའི་གཏིང་ནས་གསོལ་འདེབས་ལ་བརྩོན་པར་བྱ།

Visualization

རང་ཉིད་ཡི་དམ་ལྷར་གསལ་མདུན་གྱི་མཁར། །སང་ཁྱིམ་པ་ལྷ་ཉི་ཟེའི་གདན་སྟེང་
དུ། །དོ་བོ་བྱིན་ཅན་ཅུ་བའི་གླ་མ་ནི། །རྣམ་པ་བཅོམ་ལྡན་དོན་འཆང་གི་སྐྱེ།
སྟོབས་ངས་སྐྱེག་བཅས་མཚན་དང་དཔེ་བྱུད་བརྒྱན། །དོན་ཅེས་ལྷ་ལྷགས་ཀར་
བསྐྱེལ་སྐྱབས་འཛིན། །དོན་ཅེསྐྱེལ་ཀྱང་གིས་བཞུགས་གཟི་འོད་འབར། །རིན་
ཆེན་སྐྱོ་ཚོགས་རུས་རྒྱན་དར་དཔུང་འཕྲུང་། །སྐྱེལ་ཞིང་ཁམས་ཀུན་རྟོགས་རྒྱ་རྒྱ་
ལྷར། །སྐྱེལ་ལ་རང་བཞིན་མ་གྲུབ་འོད་སྐྱེང་བཞུགས། །དེ་ལ་བརྒྱུད་པའི་གླ་
མ་ཡི་དམ་དང་། །མཁའ་འགོ་ཚེས་སྟོང་གིས་བསྐྱོར་གནས་གསུམ་དུ། །ཡི་
གོ་གསུམ་ལྡན་དེ་ལས་འོད་འཕྲོས་པས། །སྟོགས་བཅུའི་གླ་མ་ཡི་དམ་ཚོས་སྐྱེང་
བཅས། །སྐྱེན་དངས་ཅུ་བའི་གླ་མའི་སྐྱེལ་བསྐྱེམ། །སངས་རྒྱུས་ཀུན་འདུས་
རང་བཞིན་གླ་མ་གྲུབ།

Golden Lineage Prayer

ཕྱི་མོ་གུ་རུ། །རིགས་ཀུན་གཅོད་བོ་དུག་པ་དོན་འཆང་། །དུས་གསུམ་རྒྱལ་
བའི་རིགས་བསྐྱེན་ཉི་ཟེའི་ཞབས། །སྐྱེ་གསུམ་མངོན་གྱུར་མཁའ་མཚོ་གརྱ་འོ་
པར། །གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྒྱོབས།།

སྐྱ་སྐད་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་མཐར་སོན་མར་པ་དང་། །རྟོགས་པ་མངོན་གྱུར་ཅེ་བཅུན་མི་
ལའི་ཞབས། །གངས་ཅན་བསྐྱེན་པའི་སྟོག་ཤིང་སྐམ་པོ་པར། །གསོལ་བ་
འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྒྱོབས།།
རྣལ་འབྱོར་མ་ཡིས་ཅེས་བརྒྱུད་དོན་རྒྱལ། །སྐྱེས་བཞུགས་པ་འཇིག་རྟེན་གསུམ་
མགོན་ཞབས། །བསྐྱེན་པའི་གསལ་བྱེད་མཁའ་ཆེན་རྒྱལ་དོར་ལ། །གསོལ་
བ་འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྒྱོབས།།
གཉིས་མེད་རྟོགས་པ་མངོན་གྱུར་སངས་རྒྱུས་དཔོན། །བརྒྱུད་འཇིན་དམ་པའི་
མཚོ་གྲུར་སྐྱེན་སྐྱེའི་ཞབས། །ཉི་ཟེའི་རྣམ་འཕུལ་དོན་ཅེ་གསུམ་པ་ལ།།
གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྒྱོབས།།
ཐུགས་ཅེ་ཆེན་པོའི་རྣམ་འཕུལ་ཐོག་ཁ་བ། །གཉིས་འཇིན་འཁྲུལ་གྲོལ་གསུམ་པ་
བསོད་ནམས་ཞབས། །ས་ར་ཉ་ཡིས་ཅེས་བརྒྱུད་དོར་རིན་ལ། །གསོལ་བ་
འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྒྱོབས།།
པརྒྱའི་རྣམ་འཕུལ་དོན་རྒྱལ་པོ་དང་། །ཐུབ་བསྐྱེན་རྒྱུས་མཛད་ཚོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོའི་
ཞབས། །ཐུབ་པའི་གཅུག་རྒྱུན་དོན་གྲུབ་རྒྱལ་པོ་ལ། །གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་སོ་
བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྒྱོབས།།
སྟོགས་ལས་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་བདག་པོ་ཕྱང་གི་མཚན། །མི་ཡི་དབང་པོ་ཚོས་རྒྱལ་རྒྱའི་
ཞབས། །ཕྱག་དོར་སྐྱེལ་སྐྱེ་རྒྱ་རྒྱ་རྒྱ་ལ། །གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་
བྱིན་གྱིས་རྒྱོབས།།
འཇམ་དབྱངས་རྣམ་འཕུལ་རིན་ཆེན་ཚོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ། །རྒྱལ་དབང་གཉིས་པ་

མཚུངས་མེད་ཀུན་དགའི་ཞབས། །བསྟན་གཉིས་སྲོལ་འཛིན་ཇི་བཅུན་རུ་ལ།།
 གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས།།
 མན་ངག་མཛོད་འཛིན་དཔལ་གྱི་རྒྱ་མཚོ་དང་། །བཀའ་བྱིན་འཁོར་མེད་རྣམ་ར་
 རིའི་ཞབས། །རྒྱལ་བའི་གདུང་འཛིན་གྲགས་པའི་མཚན་ཅན་ལ། །གསོལ་བ་
 འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས།།
 འདྲན་པ་རྒྱ་མེད་དུགས་པོ་བཀའ་བརྒྱུད་ཀྱི། །བསྟན་པའི་སྤིང་པོ་སྲོལ་གསུམ་
 གནད་གཅིག་དོན། །མངོན་པར་གསལ་མཛད་དཀོན་མཆོག་རུ་ལ།།
 གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས།།
 གནས་ལུགས་རང་གྲོལ་སྤྱི་མེད་ཚོས་སྐྱུ་ལས། །མ་གཡོས་འཛིན་བྲལ་ལོངས་
 སྤྱོད་རྗེ་གསུམ་པའི་སྐྱུ། །གང་འདུལ་དེར་སྟོན་ཚོས་ཀྱི་གྲགས་པའི་ཞབས།།
 གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས།།
 སྤྱི་ལྟར་འདུལ་མངོན་བྱུང་བསྟན་རྒྱལ་མཚན་འཛིན། །ནང་ལྟར་བྱང་སེམས་འགྲོ་
 ལ་བུ་བཞིན་བརྟེ། །རིམ་གཉིས་བྱང་འཇུག་འཕྱིན་ལས་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་ལ། །གསོལ་
 བ་འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས།།
 རྒྱལ་བའི་གསུང་རབ་མདོ་སྐྱབས་མ་ལུས་པ། །མ་ཞོར་བྱུགས་རྒྱུད་གཞན་ལ་སྟོན་
 པར་མཛད། །རྒྱབས་གནས་ཀུན་འདུས་འཕྱིན་ལས་བཟང་པོའི་ཞབས།།
 གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས།།
 གང་གིས་ཟབ་གསང་སྤྱིན་གྲོལ་ཚོས་ཀྱི་སྟོས། །འགྲོ་ཀུན་རྣམ་མེད་བྱང་རྒྱུ་འགྲོད་
 མཛད་པ། །བཀའ་བྱིན་གསུམ་ལྟན་དོན་གྲུབ་ཚོས་རྒྱལ་ལ། །གསོལ་བ་

འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས།།
 རྒྱལ་ཀུན་ངོ་བོ་སྐྱབས་པད་དཀར་འཆང་། །འཕྱིན་ལས་བཞི་ཡིས་མཁའ་ཁྲབ་
 བྱང་གྲོལ་ལ། །འགྲོད་མཛད་དཀོན་མཆོག་བསྟན་འཛིན་འགྲོ་འདུལ་ཞབས།།
 གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས།།
 ཟབ་གསང་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཚེན་པོའི་གནས་ལུགས་དོན། །རྒྱུན་བཟང་ཉམས་མེད་ཏུག་
 པར་འབབས་མཛད་པ། །རང་རིག་མངོན་གྲུབ་ཚོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་མཚན་ལ།།
 གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས།།
 དེས་དོན་ཟབ་མོ་ཚོས་ཀྱི་མཁའ་དབྱིངས་ལས། །དམ་པའི་ཆར་གྱིས་ལུས་ཅན་སྐྱེ་
 མེད་པར། །བཀྱི་བར་མཛད་མཁའ་ཚོས་ཀྱི་ཉི་མའི་ཞབས། །གསོལ་བ་
 འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས།།
 རང་རིག་སྤྱི་མེད་ཚོས་སྐྱུ་ནམ་མཁའ་ལ། །འགག་མེད་རང་རྩལ་ལོངས་སྐྱུ་མེ་
 ཤེལ་ཁམས། །གཉིས་མེད་འོད་ཟེར་སྐྱུ་སྐྱུ་པརྒྱའི་མཚན། །གསོལ་བ་
 འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས།།
 རྒྱབ་བརྒྱུད་རིན་ཚེན་འཇུང་ལྟན་ཁྱོན་ཡངས་སུ། །དེས་དོན་ཟབ་གསང་ནོར་བུས་
 འགྲོ་ཀུན་ལ། །འདོད་དགུ་སྲོལ་མཛད་རྣམ་རྒྱ་རྒྱའི་ཞབས། །གསོལ་བ་
 འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས།།
 སྤྱི་མེད་འོད་གསལ་ཚེན་པོའི་གྲོང་ཡངས་ལས། །མ་འགགས་དོ་རྗེ་འཛིན་པའི་ངོ་
 བོ་ཉིད། །དཀོན་མཆོག་བསྟན་འཛིན་ཚོས་དབང་སྟོ་གྲོས་ལ། །གསོལ་བ་
 འདེབས་སོ་བདག་རྒྱུད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས།།

དཔལ་ལྷན་སྐྱེ་བའི་དབང་ཕྱུག་ལ། །བདག་ལུས་ངག་ཡིད་སྤྱི་ནང་གཞན་
 གསུམ་གྱི། །དངོས་པོར་གྲུབ་དགུ་མཚོད་པའི་རྗེས་སུ་འབྱུང་། །མཚོད་གྲུ་
 མཚོད་བྱེད་མཚོད་པའི་རང་བཞིན་གཅིག །མཐའ་བྲལ་པོ་མཉམ་ཆེན་པོར་འབྱུང་།
 ལགས་ན། །བྱ་ཚོལ་བྲལ་བའི་དངོས་གྲུབ་སྐྱེལ་དུ་གསོལ།

Abbreviated Praise

༄ བསྟོད་པ་ནི། །རྗེ་སངས་རྒྱལ་ཐམས་ཅད་འདུས་པའི་སྐྱེ། །དོན་འཛིན་པའི་རོ་
 བོ་ཉིད། །དཀོན་མཚོ་གསུམ་གྱི་ཚ་བ་སྟེ། །སྐྱེ་བའི་སྐྱེལ་ཕྱུག་འཚལ་
 བསྟོད།

Detailed Praise

༄ སྐྱེ་བའི་སྐྱེའི་དོན་འཛིན་སྐྱེ། །མཛེས་ཤིང་བལྟ་བུ་བསམ་ཚོགས་མི་ཤེས། །བསམ་གྱི་
 མི་ཁྱབ་ཡོན་ཏན་ལྷན། །སྐྱེ་བའི་སྐྱེལ་ཕྱུག་འཚལ་བསྟོད།
 ༄ སྐྱེ་བའི་གསུང་ནི་ཚངས་པའི་དབྱངས། །འགགས་མེད་སེང་གའི་སྐྱེ་དང་ལྷན།།
 ལུ་སྟོགས་ལོག་ལྟ་འཛོམས་མཛད་པ། །སྐྱེ་བའི་གསུང་ལ་ཕྱུག་འཚལ་བསྟོད།
 ༄ སྐྱེ་བའི་ཐུགས་ནི་ནམ་མཁའ་འདྲ། །བདེ་གསལ་མི་རྟོག་སྟོང་པའི་ཉམས།།
 རྣམ་ཐར་གསུམ་ལ་ལེགས་གནས་པའི། །སྐྱེ་བའི་ཐུགས་ལ་ཕྱུག་འཚལ་བསྟོད།
 ༄ སྐྱེ་བའི་སངས་རྒྱལ་སྐྱེ་བའི་མཚོ། །དེ་བཞིན་སྐྱེ་བའི་དབྱེད་ཏེ། །ཀུན་གྱི་
 བྱེད་པོ་སྐྱེ་བའི། །སྐྱེ་བའི་སྐྱེལ་ཕྱུག་འཚལ་བསྟོད།

Recitation

༄ བྱངས་གསོག་ནི། །དཔལ་ལྷན་སྐྱེ་བའི་སྐྱེལ་ཕྱུག་ །དུགས་པོ་

བཀའ་བརྒྱུད། །ཡོངས་གྱི་གཙུག་རྒྱུ། །འགྲོ་བའི་དེད་དཔོན། །དམ་པའི་
 ལམ་སྟོན། །ཐུགས་རྗེའི་མངའ་བདག །རྒྱལ་བའི་རྒྱལ་ཚབ། །བཀའ་དྲིན་རྒྱ་
 བྲལ། །སྟོན་པ་རྒྱ་མེད། །དོན་འཚང་དབང། །མགོན་པོ་འབྲི་གུང་པ་ཆེན་པོ་
 མཁུན་ཅོ། །གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་སོ། །ཐུགས་རྗེས་གཟིགས་ཤིག །བྱིན་
 བྱིས་སྟོབས་ཤིག །དངོས་གྲུབ་རྣམ་གཉིས། །ད་ལྟ་སྟོལ་ཅིག །དོན་གཉིས་
 ལྷན་གྲུབ། །འབྲས་བུ་སྟོལ་ཅིག

Short Lineage Prayer

རིགས་ཀུན་མ་བསྐྱུས་པ་ནི། །དོན་འཚང་དབང་ཉི་མཱི་རྒྱ་རོ་དང་། །མར་མི་དུགས་པོ་
 པག་གྲུ་འཛིག་རྟོན་མགོན། །བཀའ་དྲིན་གསུམ་ལྷན་ཚ་བའི་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཞབས།།
 ཚ་བརྒྱུད་སྐྱེ་བའི་དམ་ཚོས་སྟོང་ལ། །གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་སོ་བདག་བརྒྱུད་བྱིན་
 བྱིས་སྟོབས།

Conclusion

Brief Form of Taking the Four Empowerments

ཐུན་མཐར་དབང་བཞི་རྒྱུད་བཞི། །སྐྱེ་བའི་དཔལ་མགྲིན་ཐུགས་ཀ་ལྟེ་བ་ལས།།
 དཀར་དམར་མཐིང་སེང་འོད་འཕྲོས་བདག་ཉིད་གྱི། །གནས་བཞིར་ཐིམ་པས་
 དབང་བཞི་རྫོགས་པར་ཐོབ། །ལུས་ངག་ཡིད་གསུམ་ཤེས་བྱའི་སྐྱིབ་པ་སྦྱངས།།
 བསྐྱེད་རྫོགས་ཕྱུག་ཆེན་བདེན་གཉིས་སྟོམ་ལ་དབང་། །སྐྱེ་བའི་གྲུབ་གྲུས་འཁོར་
 ཚོགས་གཙོ་བོར་བསྐྱུས། །གཙོ་བོ་འོད་ལྷ་བདག་གི་སྐྱིན་མཚམས་ཐིམ།།
 བདག་དང་སྐྱེ་བའི་པོ་དབྱེར་མེད་གྱུར།

Longer Form of Taking the Four Empowerments

དབང་བཞི་རྒྱུ་པར་ལེན་ཚུལ་ནི། དཔལ་ལྷན་གྱི་མ་མཚན་རྣམས་ཀུན་རང་བཞིན།
 བདག་གི་སྤྱི་པོར་ལུས་ཀྱི་ཐིག་ལེ་ལ། །ཉི་བར་ལྷགས་ནས་བུམ་དབང་དགའ་བའི་
 ཚུས། །སད་པའི་བག་ཆགས་དག་པར་མཛད་དུ་གསོལ། །ཞེས་གསོལ་བ་
 བཏབ་པས་སྐྱ་མ་དམ་པའི་དཔལ་བ་ནས་འོད་ཟེར་དཀར་པོ་འཕྲོས། རང་གི་
 དཔལ་བར་ཐིམ། སད་པའི་གནས་སྐབས་ཀྱི་སྤྱི་བ་པ་སྦྱངས། བུམ་པའི་དབང་
 ཐོབ། རྒྱ་དྲེ་རྒྱལ་སྐྱེ་མཛོན་དུ་བྱས།
 །ལོངས་སྤོད་རྩོགས་སྐྱེ་སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་གྱི་སྐད། །བདག་གི་མགྱིན་པར་ངག་
 གི་ཐིག་ལེ་ལ། །ཉི་བར་ལྷགས་ནས་གསང་དབང་མཚོག་དགའི་མེས། །མི་
 ལམ་བུད་ཤིང་བསྐྱེད་པར་མཛད་དུ་གསོལ། །ཞེས་གསོལ་བ་བཏབ་པས་སྐྱ་མ་
 དམ་པའི་མགྱིན་པ་ནས་འོད་ཟེར་དཀར་པོ་འཕྲོས། རང་གི་མགྱིན་པར་ཐིམ།
 །མི་ལམ་གྱི་སྤྱི་བ་པ་སྦྱངས། །གསང་བའི་དབང་ཐོབ་གསུང་དྲེ་རྩོགས་སྐྱེ་མཛོན་
 དུ་བྱས།
 །རྩེ་བཅུན་གྱི་མ་མཚན་ལོ་ལོ་ལོ་ལོ་ལོ་སྤྱི། །བདག་གི་སྤྱི་བ་གར་ཡིད་ཀྱི་ཐིག་ལེ་ལ།
 །ཉི་བར་ལྷགས་ནས་ཤེས་རབ་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱིས། །གཉིད་མཐུག་ལུན་པ་སངས་པར་
 མཛད་དུ་གསོལ། །ཞེས་གསོལ་བ་བཏབ་པས་སྐྱ་མ་དམ་པའི་ཐུགས་ཀ་ནས་འོད་
 ཟེར་མཐིང་ག་འཕྲོས། རང་གི་སྤྱི་བ་གར་ཐིམ། །གཉིད་མཐུག་གི་སྤྱི་བ་པ་
 སྦྱངས། །ཤེས་རབ་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱི་དབང་ཐོབ། །ཐུགས་རྩོགས་སྐྱེ་མཛོན་དུ་བྱས།
 །ལྷོ་བའི་མགོན་པོ་ལྷན་ཅིག་སྤྱེས་པའི་སྤྱི། །བདག་གི་སྤྱི་བ་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཐིག་ལེ་
 ལ། །ཉི་བར་ལྷགས་ནས་ཤེས་རབ་ཆེན་པོའི་དབང་། །བསྐྱར་བས་འཕྲོ་མེད་

དགའ་བ་ཐོབ་པར་མཛོད། །ཅེས་གསོལ་བ་བཏབ་པས་སྐྱ་མ་དམ་པའི་སྤྱི་བ་ནས་
 འོད་ཟེར་སེར་པོ་འཕྲོས། རང་གི་སྤྱི་བ་གར་ཐིམ། །ལྷོ་བའི་གནས་སྐབས་ཀྱི་
 སྤྱི་བ་པ་སྦྱངས། །དབང་བཞི་པ་ཐོབ། །ཡེ་ཤེས་རྩོགས་རྩོགས་སྤྱི་བ་ལོ་ལོ་ལོ་
 །ལྷན་ཅིག་ཀྱི་དབང་མཚོག་མཉམ་སེམས་ཅན་གྱི། །གདོད་མའི་ལུས་ངག་ཡིད་
 དང་ཡེ་ཤེས་རྣམས། །ཁྱེད་ཀྱི་རྩོགས་ལེན་དང་མཉམ་སྦྱོར་བས། །མཚོག་བདེ་
 མཛོན་དུ་འགྱུར་བར་མཛད་དུ་གསོལ། །ཞེས་གསོལ་བ་བཏབ་པས་སྐྱ་མ་དམ་པ་
 འོད་ཟེར་གྱི་གོང་བུར་ལྷན་སེམས་ལ་ཐིམ་པས། །སྐྱ་མའི་སྤྱི་བ་ཐུགས་དང་རང་
 གི་ལུས་ངག་ཡིད་གསུམ་དབྱེར་མེད་དུ་གྱུར་པར་བསམ་ལ་མཉམ་པར་གཞག་གོ།
 །ཅེས་དམིགས་མེད་རང་དུ་སེམས་ཉིད་ངལ་གསོ་བ།

Dedication

དགོ་བ་འདི་ཡིས་སྐྱུར་དུ་བདག་ །དཔལ་ལྷན་གྱི་མ་མཚན་ལྟར་ནས། །འགྲོ་བ་
 གཅིག་གྱུང་མ་ལུས་པ། །དེ་ཡི་ས་ལ་འགོད་པར་ཤོག། །།

The second cause: To accumulate great merit recite the abbreviated or detailed seven limb prayer. For the accumulation of wisdom rest the mind in the non-conceptual state afterwards.

The third cause: Chant and meditate the four immeasurables.

The fourth cause: Recite the special mahayana refuge prayer.

Recitation

ཕྱག་དང་བཅས་འདི་ལྟར་གྲངས་གསོག་གྱ། བྱང་རྒྱལ་སྤིང་པོར་མཆིས་གྱི་བར།།
 སངས་རྒྱལ་རྣམས་ལ་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆི། །ཚོས་དང་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་པ་ཡི།།
 ཚོགས་ལའང་དེ་བཞིན་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཆི། །ཇི་ལྟར་སྤོན་གྱི་བདེ་གཤེགས་གྱིས།།
 བྱང་རྒྱལ་ཐུགས་ནི་བསྐྱེད་པ་དང་། །བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་དཔའི་བསྐྱབ་པ་ལ། །དེ་
 དག་རིམ་བཞིན་གནས་པ་ལྟར། །དེ་བཞིན་འགྲོ་ལ་ཕན་དོན་དུ། །བྱང་རྒྱལ་
 སེམས་ནི་བསྐྱེད་བགྱིའིང་། །དེ་བཞིན་དུ་ནི་བསྐྱབ་པ་ལ། །རིམ་པ་བཞིན་དུ་
 བསྐྱབ་པར་བགྱི།

Dissolution

ࠠདི་ལྟར་སེམས་བསྐྱེད་གྱི་ཚོགས་གང་མང་བཟོད་མཐར། ཚོགས་ཞིང་རྣམས་རང་ལ་བསྐྱེམས་ཏེ་
 མཉམ་པར་བཞག།

Conclusion

་ དེ་རྗེས་དང་པོ་རང་དགའ་བ་བསྐྱོམ་པ་ནི། དེང་དུས་བདག་ཚོ་འབྲས་བུ་ཡོད།།
 མི་ཡི་སྲིད་པ་ལེགས་པར་ཐོབ། །དེ་རིང་སངས་རྒྱལ་རིགས་སུ་སྐྱེས།།
 སངས་རྒྱལ་སྲས་སུ་ད་གྱུར་ཏོ།།
 ་ གཉིས་པ་རིགས་སུ་ན་མི་འབྱིན་པར་དམ་འཆར་བ་ནི། ད་ནི་བདག་གིས་ཅི་ནས་ཀྱང་།།

རིགས་དང་མཐུན་པའི་ལས་བརྩམས་ཏེ། །སྤོན་མེད་བཙུན་པའི་རིགས་འདི་ལ།།
 ་ རྣོག་པར་མི་འགྱུར་དེ་ལྟར་གྱ།
 ་ གསུམ་པ་གཞན་དགའ་བ་བསྐྱོམ་དུ་འཇུག་པ་ནི། བདག་གིས་དེ་རིང་སྤོབ་པ་ཐམས་
 ཅད་གྱི། །སྤྱན་སྒྲར་འགྲོ་བ་བདེ་གཤེགས་ཉིད་དང་ནི། །བར་དུ་བདེ་ལ་མགོན་
 དུ་བོས་ཟིན་གྱིས། །ལྷ་དང་ལྷ་མིན་ལ་སོགས་དགའ་བར་གྱིས།

Dedication

བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་མཚོག་རིན་པོ་ཆེ། །མ་སྐྱེས་པ་རྣམས་སྤྱི་གྱུར་ཅིག །སྐྱེས་པ་
 ཉམས་པ་མེད་པར་ཡང་། །གོང་ནས་གོང་དུ་འཕེལ་བར་ཤོག། །།

ལྷར་བསྐྱེས་བཞིན་སྒྲོན་ལམ་འགྲུབ་པར་ཤོག།
 དགོན་མཚོག་གསུམ་གྱི་བདེན་པ་དང་། །སངས་རྒྱས་དང་བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའ་
 ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྣམས་དང་། །ཚོགས་གཉིས་ཡོངས་སུ་རྫོགས་པའི་
 མངའ་ཐང་ཆེན་པོ་དང་། །ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་རྣམ་པར་དག་ཅིང་བསམ་གྱིས་མི་བྱུབ་
 པའི་སྟོབས་གྱིས། །དེ་དེ་བཞིན་དུ་འགྲུབ་པར་གྱུར་ཅིག།
 བདག་དང་འཁོར་འདས་ཐམས་ཅད་གྱིས། །དུས་གསུམ་དུ་བསགས་པ་དང་།
 ཡོད་པའི་དགོ་བའི་རྩ་བ་འདིས་བདག་དང་སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་སྐྱུར་དུ་སྐྱོན་མེད་པ་
 ཡང་དག་པར་རྫོགས་པའི་བྱང་ཆུབ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ཐོབ་པར་གྱུར་ཅིག།
 ཤེས་བྱ་ཀུན་གཟིགས་ཀུན་མཁྱེན་ཚོས་གྱི་རྗེ། །རྟེན་འབྲེལ་གནས་ལ་དབང་ཐོབ་
 འབྲི་གུང་པ། །རིན་ཆེན་དཔལ་གྱི་བསྟན་པ་སྲིད་མཐའི་བར། །འབྱུང་སྐྱུབ་
 ཐོས་བསམ་སྒྲོམ་པས་འཛིན་གྱུར་ཅིག།

Dedication Composed by Kyobpa Jigten Sumgön
 ༄ སྟོབ་པ་རིན་པོ་ཆེས་མཇེད་པའི་བསྟོབ་ནི། །དམ་པ་རྗེ་བཙུན་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་རྩ་བ་དང་བརྒྱུད་
 པར་བཅས་པའི་དཔལ་ལྡན་སྐྱེས་པ་དམ་པ་རྣམས་དང་། །ཡི་དམ་གྱི་ལྟ་ཚོགས།
 ཕྱོགས་བཙུན་བཞུགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་དང་བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའ། །དཔའ་བོ་
 དང་དཔའ་མོ། །རྣལ་འབྱོར་མ་དང་མཁའ་འགྲོའི་ཚོགས་ཐམས་ཅད་བདག་ལ་
 དགོངས་སུ་གསོལ།
 བདག་དང་འཁོར་འདས་ཐམས་ཅད་གྱིས་དུས་གསུམ་དུ་བསགས་པ་དང་ཡོད་པའི་
 དགོ་བའི་རྩ་བ་འདི། །འཇིག་རྟེན་གྱི་ཚོས་བརྒྱུད་འཁོར་བའི་རྒྱ་བཞི་དང་།

འབྲས་བུ་ཉན་ཐོས་དང་རང་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་སངས་སྤྲིན་པར་མི་འབྱུང་བར། །བདག་
 དང་བདག་ཅག་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་སྐྱེད་བར་བྱེད་པའི་དག། །གཞོན་པར་བྱེད་པའི་
 འགོགས། །བར་དུ་གཅོད་པའི་རྒྱུ། །ལོག་འདྲིན་བདུད་དང་། །བདུད་གྱི་
 དགྱིལ་འཁོར་གྱིས་གཅོོ་བྱས་པའི། །མ་ནམ་མཁའ་དང་མཉམ་པའི་སེམས་ཅན་
 ཐམས་ཅད། །བདེ་བ་དང་ལྷན། །སྐྱུག་བསྐྱེད་དང་བྲལ་སྐྱུར་དུ་སྐྱོན་མེད་པ་
 ཡང་དག་པར་རྫོགས་པའི་བྱང་ཆུབ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ཐོབ་པར་གྱུར་ཅིག།
 བདག་ཅག་གི་དགོ་བའི་རྩ་བ་རྒྱ་ཆེན་པོ་འདིའི་མཐུ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས། །ལུས་ངག་
 ཡིད་གསུམ་གྱིས་སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་པན་ཐོག་པར་གྱུར་ཅིག། བདག་གི་རྒྱུད་
 ལ་ཉོན་མོངས་པ་འདོད་ཆགས། །ཞེ་སྤང་། །གཏི་མུག་ །ང་རྒྱལ། །ཐུག་
 དོག་གི་བསམ་པ་མི་འབྱུང་བར་གྱུར་ཅིག། །གསུམ་པ་དང་། །སྐྱེན་པ། །ཉིད་
 པ་དང་། །བཀུར་སྟོན་ཚོ་འདིའི་བསམ་པ་སྐྱད་ཅིག་ཅམ་ཡང་མི་འབྱུང་བར་གྱུར་ཅིག།
 བྱམས་པ་དང་སྤྲིང་རྗེ་བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་སེམས་གྱིས་བདག་གི་རྒྱུད་བརྒྱན་ཏེ་ཡོངས་སུ་
 འཛིན་པའི་དགོ་བའི་བཤེས་གཉེན་ནམ་མཁའ་དང་མཉམ་པ་ཞིག་ཏུ་གྱུར་ནས་ཚོ་འདི་
 ཉིད་ལ་སྐྱུག་རྒྱ་ཆེན་པོ་མཚོག་གི་དངོས་བྱུབ་ཐོབ་པར་གྱུར་ཅིག།
 བདག་ནམ་འཆི་བའི་དུས་ཀྱི་ཚོ་ན་ཡང་གནད་གཅོད་ཀྱི་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱེད་མི་འབྱུང་བར་
 གྱུར་ཅིག། །གཤིན་ངན་དུ་འཆི་བར་མ་གྱུར་ཅིག། །ལྷ་བ་ལོག་པར་འཆི་བར་མ་
 གྱུར་ཅིག། །དུས་མ་ཡིན་པར་འཆི་བར་མ་གྱུར་ཅིག། །འཆི་བ་ལ་དགའ་བ་དང་
 བཅས། །སྟོབ་དང་བཅས། །སེམས་ཉིད་ཤིན་ཏུ་གསལ་བ་དང་བཅས།
 ཚོས་ཉིད་ཤིན་ཏུ་དྲངས་པ་དང་བཅས། །འཆི་ཁ་དང་བར་དོར་ཅིས་གྲང་ཚོས་སྐྱུག་
 རྒྱ་ཆེན་པོ་མཚོག་གི་དངོས་བྱུབ་ཐོབ་པར་གྱུར་ཅིག། །།