

The Everflowing Nectar of Bodhichitta

*The Practice of 1000-Arm Chenrezig and the
Eight Verses of Thought Transformation*



Tibetan root text by Langri Tangpa Dorje Senghe

*Text translated and practice composed by
Lama Zopa Rinpoche*



1000-Arm Avalokiteshvara
Drawing by Robert Beer

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*The Mahayana Thought Training Annihilating the
Demon of the Self-Cherishing Mind*



Introduction

What follows is an eight-verse teaching that contains the entire technique for transforming the mind into relative and absolute bodhichitta. It was composed by Langri Tangpa Dorje Senghe, a disciple of the virtuous friend, perfect in all knowledge, Kadampa Potowa Rinchen Sal, who in turn was a disciple of the holy lamp of the teachings, Atisha. Of his guru Potowa's eight heart-sons, Langri Tangpa was the only one to receive the special instructions on exchanging oneself with others.

The practice of these teachings has three divisions: the preparation, the actual practice, and the completion.

The Preparation

Seated comfortably, generate a particularly virtuous motivation. Then, do a glance meditation on the lam-rim teachings, from the beginning (devotion to the guru) to the end, or with heartfelt feeling contemplate as follows:

From beginningless lifetimes in samsara until now, I have experienced the general sufferings of samsara numberless times, especially the sufferings



of the three lower realms. There is no suffering that I have never experienced. When I think deeply about all this, I am gripped with terror and weep uncontrollably. Therefore, I must no longer allow myself to fall under the control of the disturbing, unsubdued minds, which are the causes (the all-arising truth) that oblige me to experience the result, true suffering. As long as I happily continue to follow these evil disturbing, unsubdued minds with neither fear nor doubt, there is no difference between me and a mindless, crazy person. If I continue to follow the wrong conceptions, I merely ensure that I will keep suffering for countless lives to come. And when I think about this from the depths of my heart, beyond mere words, I am unable to eat by day or sleep by night, and it makes me vomit uncontrollably. Thinking of my foolishness breaks my heart.

However, now I have received the inner condition—the precious human body endowed with eight freedoms and ten endowments that gives me the ability to achieve all happiness and perfection—and have also met the outer condition—the holy Mahayana virtuous friend, who is extremely difficult to find, but can in a single second grant the highest state, omniscient mind. And as well as the inner and outer conditions, I have met the teaching of the Buddha, the supreme medicine that dispels without exception all sufferings of migratory beings.

Given my incredible good fortune, if I continue to seek mere temporal happiness or my own personal liberation from the bondage of the disturbing, unsubdued minds and karma, what difference is there between me and a foolish, dumb animal? Such an attitude would be extremely upsetting from several viewpoints. From my own side, how shameless! And from the side of others, how very ungenerous! How selfish and cruel! How dare I cherish myself and renounce others! Aren't other sentient beings the precious ones from whom I have received all happiness and perfection? I must understand that it is inadequate merely to ensure that I shall not be reborn in the suffering lower realms, nor is it enough to seek simply my own release from samsara.

All sentient beings have been my mother; there is not a single one who has not. Moreover, each has been my mother numberless times, and each time has been just as kind to me as my present mother. At this very moment, not only are these kind mother sentient beings experiencing great suffering, but they are also running constantly to create the cause for more. There is not even a second during which they can experience a moment's happiness. If a mother's suffering is not alleviated by her own child, who else will do it?



Even though it is up to me alone to bear the burden of eradicating the suffering of all mother sentient beings, at the moment I am incapable of relieving the suffering of even one sentient being. Yet, if I receive the enlightened holy body, just one ray of its light could ripen the minds of countless sentient beings, leading them to the state of greatest peace.

Therefore, to release all mother sentient beings from suffering and lead them to the sublime happiness of enlightenment, I must attain the exalted state of buddhahood. The attainment of buddhahood is not without cause or conditions: its principal cause is the two bodhichittas.

Therefore, I am going to practice the profound oral teaching on transforming the mind into bodhichitta.

Visualize at the level of your forehead at a distance of a body's length in front of you your root guru manifesting as and inseparable from 1000-arm Avalokiteshvara, standing on a moon disc that rests upon a lotus.

Now perform the seven-limb practice:

Reverently, I prostrate to Guru Avalokiteshvara with my body, speech,
and mind;
I present clouds of every type of offering, actual and imagined;
I declare all my negative actions accumulated since beginningless time
And rejoice in the merit of all holy and ordinary beings.
Please, remain until the end of cyclic existence
And turn the wheel of Dharma for living beings.
Because of the merits of myself and others, may the two bodhichittas
ripen, and may I receive the great enlightenment for the sake of all
sentient beings.

Now make either a long or a short mandala offering, including the following prayers:

This ground, anointed with perfume, strewn with flowers,
Adorned with Mount Meru, four continents, the sun and the moon:
I imagine this as a buddha-field and offer it.
May all living beings enjoy this pure land!

May the guru's life be long;
May all beings equaling space receive happiness and comfort;
May I and all others, without exception, accumulate merit, purify
obscurations,
And quickly receive enlightenment.



Then make the following heartfelt request:

Precious guru, please grant me all realizations of the path, from guru devotion to the completion of training, the unified vajra state. Please grant me blessings that my mind will become Dharma, that Dharma will become the path, that hindrances in the path may not occur, that I may cease all wrong conceptions, and receive immediately the two precious bodhichittas.

IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM NIRYATAYAMI

Guru Avalokiteshvara is extremely pleased by your request, and together with the moon disc and the lotus, descends to the crown of your head.

The Actual Practice (together with the Root Text)

With each verse, visualize from the seed syllable HRIH at Avalokiteshvara's heart much blissful white nectar streaming down through the crown of your head. It fills your whole body, purifying all obscurations and bringing all realizations of the entire path to enlightenment, from guru devotion through buddhahood, and purifying and granting the specific obscurations and realizations relating to the particular verse you are contemplating.



1. Determined to obtain the greatest possible benefit from all sentient beings, who are more precious than a wish-fulfilling jewel, I shall hold them most dear at all times.

Visualization:

The blissful white nectar purifies all obscurations, especially those that prevent you from holding others most dear, and brings all realizations, especially the loving, compassionate bodhichitta, which holds others most dear.

2. When in the company of others, I shall always consider myself the lowest of all, and from the depths of my heart hold others dear and supreme.

The blissful white nectar purifies all obscurations, especially those that prevent you from considering yourself the lowest of all and from holding others dear and supreme, and brings all realizations, especially the loving, compassionate bodhichitta, by which you consider yourself the lowest of all and hold others dear and supreme.

3. Vigilant, the moment a delusion appears in my mind, endangering myself and others, I shall confront and avert it without delay.

The blissful white nectar purifies all obscurations, especially those that prevent you from



confronting and averting delusions the moment they appear, and brings all realizations, especially the loving, compassionate bodhichitta and the wisdom of emptiness, which automatically extinguishes all delusions.

4. Whenever I see beings who are wicked in nature and overwhelmed by violent negative actions and suffering, I shall hold such rare ones dear, as if I had found a precious treasure.

The blissful white nectar purifies all obscurations, especially those that prevent you from holding wicked sentient beings dear, and brings all realizations, especially the loving, compassionate bodhichitta, which holds wicked sentient beings as dear as a precious treasure.

5. When, out of envy, others mistreat me with abuse, insults, or the like, I shall accept defeat and offer the victory to others.

The blissful white nectar purifies all obscurations, especially those that prevent you from accepting defeat and offering the victory to others, and brings all realizations, especially the loving, compassionate bodhichitta, which accepts defeat and offers the victory to others.

6. When someone whom I have benefited and in whom I have great hopes gives me terrible harm, I shall regard that person as my holy guru.

The blissful white nectar purifies all obscurations, especially those that prevent you from seeing beings who harm you as your holy guru, and brings all realizations, especially the loving, compassionate bodhichitta, which enables you to see harmful beings as your holy guru.

7. In short, both directly and indirectly, do I offer every happiness and benefit to all my mothers. I shall secretly take upon myself all their harmful actions and suffering.

The blissful white nectar purifies all obscurations, especially those that prevent you from offering every happiness and benefit to all mother sentient beings and secretly taking upon yourself all their harmful actions and suffering, and brings all realizations, especially the loving, compassionate bodhichitta, which offers every happiness and benefit to others and accepts all their harmful actions and suffering.

8. Undeiled by the stains of the superstitions of the eight worldly concerns, may I, by perceiving all phenomena as illusory, be released from the bondage of attachment.

The blissful white nectar purifies all obscurations, especially those that prevent you from perceiving all phenomena as illusory, and brings all realizations, especially the wisdom of shunyata, which perceives all phenomena as illusory and by which you are released from the bondage delusion and karma.



The Completion

Make the following request:

Most compassionate one, please extend your holy hand and lead me and all other sentient beings into your blissful pure realm after this life. Be our virtuous friend forever and quickly lead us to buddhahood.

Think that Guru Avalokiteshvara accepts your request and sends innumerable nectar rays into your body. All obscurations, negative karma, diseases, and harm from spirits are instantly purified. Your body becomes as clear as crystal. Then Guru Avalokiteshvara melts into light and absorbs into you. Your body, speech, and mind become inseparably one with Guru Avalokiteshvara's holy body, speech, and mind.

Mantra Recitation

Recite the six-syllable mantra OM MANI PÄDME HUM throughout the following visualization:

I appear in the form of Guru Avalokiteshvara. Beams of light radiate from my body, each one bearing a Guru Avalokiteshvara at its tip. Guru Avalokiteshvara comes to sit above the crown of each and every sentient being. Nectar rays flow from each Guru Avalokiteshvara's heart, purifying all the obscurations and negative karma of each sentient being. When all sentient beings are completely purified, Guru Avalokiteshvara dissolves into each one through their crown. Each sentient being becomes Avalokiteshvara.

Concentrate on this visualization as you recite the mantra as many times as you can.

OM MANI PÄDME HUM

Dedication

Then dedicate the merits.

May all the suffering and causes of suffering of all sentient beings ripen upon me right now, and may all sentient beings receive all my happiness and virtue.



May the precious bodhichitta that has not yet arisen grow, and may that which has been generated never degenerate but increase forever more.

May I never be discouraged, even for a moment, from practicing the deeds of the bodhisattvas for the sake of others, by completely renouncing anything done for my own sake and by engaging in the holy actions of the kind founder, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

Through these merits, may I quickly attain the state of the Great Compassionate One and, without exception, lead all mother sentient beings, who are most high and noble, to that enlightened state.

It is essential always to pray like this, to create merit constantly, and to meet the holy Mahayana virtuous friend in this and all future lives.



Author's Colophon:

This thought transformation text has been translated from the Tibetan and provided with a nectar-ray purification and commentary by Thubten Zopa, a non-Dharmic beggar who is intoxicated by the demon of the self-cherishing mind and possessed of the great pride of being a Mahayanist. I have done it mainly to subdue my own mind, but also with the idea that it might help the intelligent spiritual seeker of today.

There are many such people whose lives are full of problems for which they can find no solution, whose minds are confused, and who experience one suffering after another. What they want is peace, but what they are doing is throwing themselves over the precipice into the intense agony of the three lower realms.

I thought, therefore, that it would be fortunate if such people could at least see a small text such as this, which explains the profound method of thought training – how to transform all the undesired suffering into happiness and the path to enlightenment. Thus, I have put this text together, and added a visualization of the merit field and a motivation according to the teachings of highly accomplished, learned yogis. Precious bodhichitta teachings such as this are priceless: the benefits they bring could never be bought by even countless galaxies full of wish-fulfilling jewels.

Because of this merit, may all disease, famine, war, and all degenerations of sentient beings become completely non-existent, and may the sprout of bodhichitta – benefiting others – quickly grow in the field of sentient being' minds, and quickly reach fruition: the enlightenment of the Great Compassionate One.



Colophon for this edition:

This teaching was originally dictated by Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche to Nicholas Ribush. Lama Zopa augmented the original at Kopan Monastery, Nepal. It was first published in 1980 by Ven. Jampa Chökyi. Several revised editions have been published since that time.

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Care of Dharma Books

Dharma books contain the teachings of the Buddha; they have the power to protect against lower rebirth and to point the way to liberation. Therefore, they should be treated with respect – kept off the floor and places where people sit or walk – and not stepped over. They should be covered or protected for transporting and kept in a high, clean place separate from more mundane materials. Other objects should not be placed on top of Dharma books and materials. Licking the fingers to turn pages is considered bad form as well as negative karma. If it is necessary to dispose of written Dharma materials, they should be burned rather than thrown in the trash. When burning Dharma texts, it is taught to first recite a prayer or mantra, such as OM, AH, HUM. Then, you can visualize the letters of the texts (to be burned) absorbing into the AH and the AH absorbing into you, transmitting their wisdom to your mindstream. After that, as you continue to recite OM, AH, HUM, you can burn the texts.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche has recommended that photos or images of holy beings, deities, or other holy objects not be burned. Instead, they should be placed with respect in a stupa, tree, or other high, clean place. It has been suggested to put them into a small structure like a bird house and then seal the house. In this way, the holy images do not end up on the ground.

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One of our principal objectives is to serve as a repository for a wide variety of practice texts primarily within the Gelug tradition, especially those authored or translated by Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Lama Thubten Yeshe. We work in close collaboration with the Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive, Boston, Massachusetts, which serves as a repository for the commentaries and transcripts of teachings by Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Lama Yeshe.

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