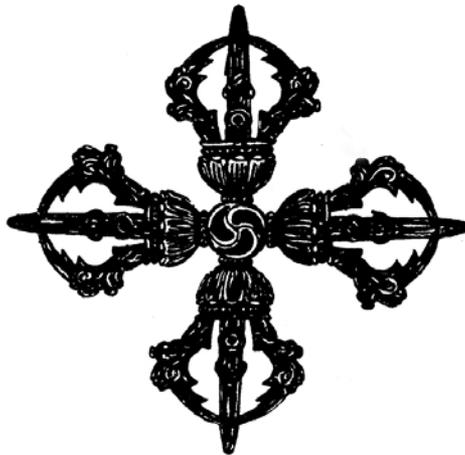


DIRECTING IN THE SHORT CUT PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT



by Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche
edited by Nick Ribush

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Set in Goudy Old Style 12/14.5, BibleScrT, and Microsoft Himalaya

Printed in the USA.

Contents

Mystic Praise	15
Preface, First Edition	16
Preface, 2016 Edition	17
Pronunciation Guide	19
Basic Vowels	20
Vowels	21
Consonants	22
Semi Vowels	24
The Mind Is Beginningless	25
But How Is It Possible to Receive Enlightenment?	28
The Lineage of These Mahayana Teachings	29
Guru <i>Tzong.K'a.Pa</i>	35
Morning Prayers	37
Refuge to the Holy Guru	37
Generating Bodhicitta	40
Purifying The Place	40
Invocation	40
Ecstatic Prostrating Meditation to One Thousand Eyes	
Hands <i>Chenrezig</i>	42
The Visualization of Guru Shakyamuni	47
Guru Shakyamuni Prayer	50

Guru Shakyamuni Mantra	51
The Seven Branches (<i>Yan.Lag Dun.Pa</i>)	52
Mandala offering	55
The Legend of the Beginning of The Universe,	
Mount Meru	55
Size and Particulars of the Mandala	60
Description of offerings	61
Base Plate	61
First Level	62
Second Level	63
Top Level	65
Outer Mandala	66
Inner Mandala	71
The Teachings of The Direct Meditations	73
Refuge	73
Prayer for Success in Dharma Practice and in Following	
the Guru Buddha	73
Prayer of The Being of Lower Intelligence	73
Prayer of The Being of Medium Intelligence	74
Prayer of The Being of Higher Intelligence	74
Meditation	75
1. We Should Check Within Before Checking Externally	75
2. The Posture During Meditation	75
3. The Mind During Meditation	77
4. Since We Always Desire to Profit And Never Desire to	
Lose We Should Understand the Extreme Importance	
of Being Motivated by the Right Impulse.	78
5. Checking Meditation	80
Meditation One: Part 1: The Perfect Human Rebirth	83
What Is the Perfect Human Rebirth?	83
The Eight Freedoms (Tib., <i>D'äl.Wa.Gyä</i>)	83
The Ten Receptacles (Endowments)	
Tib., <i>Jor.Pa.Chu</i>):	84

How Is This Perfect Human Rebirth Useful?	85
The Eight Worldly Dharmas	87
Is It Easy to Receive the Perfect Human Rebirth?	88
1. The Cause of the Perfect Human Rebirth	88
2. The Rarity of The Perfect Human Rebirth	90
3. Analogies Illustrating the Difficulty of Receiving the Perfect Human Rebirth	90
How Should We Make Our Perfect Human Rebirth Highly Meaningful?	90
Meditation One: Part II: Impermanence And Death	92
How Long is the Life Span?	92
Is Death Definite?	94
Is The Time of My Death Definite?	94
Why Should I Be Afraid of Death?	94
Do People or Material Possessions Help to Ease or Prevent Death?	95
How Do My Attachments Cause Great Suffering at Death?	95
The Enlightened One's Understanding of The Evolution of the Original Human Beings	97
A Brief Explanation of Death as Shown by a Fully Understanding Mind	98
The Intermediate State (Bardo Body)	103
Prayer to be Said After Meditation One	106
Meditation Two	108
Meditation Two: Part 1: The Three Lower Realms of Suffering	110
The Hells	110
1. The Hot Narak (<i>Tsa.Nyäl</i>)	110
2. The Neighbouring Naraks	113
3. The Cold Narak (<i>Dr'lang.Nyäl</i>)	113
4. The Occasional Narak	114

The Realm of the Pretas	114
The Animal Realm	115
Meditation Two: Part II: Refuge (<i>Zyab.Dro</i>) (Asking For Guidance)	119
I. The Knowledge of Buddha (<i>Sang.Gyä Kyi Yön.Tän</i>)	121
A. The Totally Omniscient Buddha's Knowledge	121
1. Svabhavakaya (<i>Ngo.Wo Nyid.Ku</i>)	121
2. Dharmakaya (<i>Ye.She.Ch'ö.Ku</i>)	121
3. Sambhogakaya (<i>Long.Ku</i>)	121
4. Nirmanakaya (<i>Trul.Ku</i>)	121
B. The Knowledge of The Perfected One's Holy Body, Speech And Mind	122
1. Buddha's Holy Body	122
2. Buddha's Holy Speech	122
3. Buddha's Holy Mind	122
II. The Knowledge of Dharma (<i>Ch'ö.Kyi Yön.Tän</i>)	124
III. The Knowledge of Sangha (<i>Ge.Dün Gyi Yön.Tän</i>)	126
Instructions in the Practice of Refuge	126
The Benefits of Taking Refuge	127
Meditation Two: Part III: Karma (<i>La</i>)	128
The Ten Immoralities of Body, Speech And Mind	131
1. Killing	132
2. Stealing	132
3. Sexual Misconduct	132
4. Telling Lies	132
5. Slander	133
6. Harsh Speech	133
7. Gossip Mongering	133
8. Covetousness	133
9. Malice	134
10. Heresy	134

Karma Is Definite	135
Karma Is Expandable	135
It Is Impossible to Experience the Result Without Creating the Karma	136
The Result of the Karma Created Is Never Lost	136
Confession	137
Prayer to Be Said After Meditation Two	139
Meditation Three	141
The General Sufferings of Samsara	141
What Is Nirvana?	143
The Teaching of the Fully Enlightened One	144
The Four Noble Truths	145
1. True Suffering	145
2. True Cause of Suffering	146
3. True Cessation of Suffering	146
4. True Path of Cessation	147
The Three Upper Realms of Suffering	148
1. Human	148
2. Asura (<i>Lha.Ma.Yin</i>)	148
3. Sura (<i>Lha</i>)	148
The First Noble Truth: True Suffering	150
I. The Eight Sufferings.	150
The Suffering of Rebirth	150
The Suffering of Old Age	152
The Suffering of Sickness	153
The Suffering of Death	153
The Suffering of Release From Beautiful Objects and Attachments	153
The Suffering of Encounters With Ugly (Disagreeable) Objects	153

The Suffering of Not Obtaining Desirable Objects	153
The Suffering of This Body Created By Delusion and Karma	154
II. The Six Sufferings	156
III. The Three Sufferings	157
The Second Noble Truth: The True Cause of Suffering:	158
The Delusions	158
I. The Six Principal Delusions (Root Defilements) (<i>Tza.Nyön Dr'ug</i>)	158
II. The Twenty Secondary (Closer) Delusions (<i>Nye.Nyön.Nyi.Shu</i>)	160
III. Four Changeable Mental Actions (<i>Zhän.Gyur.Zhi</i>)	162
How Delusion And Karma Bind Us To Samsara, The Wheel of Life (Skt., Samsaracakra; Tib., <i>Sib.Pe.K'or.Lo</i>)	165
Prayer to be Said After Meditation Three	173
Meditation Four	175
The Mahayana Equilibrium Meditation (<i>T'eg.Pa.Ch'en. Pö.Lo.Jong.Tsül</i>)	175
Prayer to be Said After Meditation Four	181
Meditation Five	183
The Seven Techniques of Mahayanic Cause and Effect (Part 1)	183
I. How Are All Sentient Beings My Mother?	183
II. Remembering The Kindness of All Mother Sentient Beings	184
III. Repaying All Mother Sentient Beings for Their Kindness	186
Prayer to Be Said After the Third Technique (During Meditation Five)	186
IV. Equalising Oneself with Others	188

Prayer to Be Said After Meditation Five	190
Meditation Six	192
The Seven Techniques of Mahayanic Cause and Effect (Part II)	192
V. Shortcomings of the Self Cherishing Conception	192
Prayer to be Said After the Fifth Technique (During Meditation Six)	194
VI. The Benefits of Cherishing Others More Than Oneself	195
Prayer to Be Said After Meditation Six	197
Meditation Seven	199
The Seven Techniques of Mahayanic Cause and Effect (Part III)	199
VII. <i>Tong.Len</i> —Giving Away and Taking Over	199
Dedication of My Own Body	211
Dedication of My Own Possessed Enjoyments	213
Dedication of Merits	214
Bodhicitta	
The Practical, Skilfull Mahayana Method of Making Meaningless Daily Life Meaningful, in Order to Release Others From Suffering	219
The Thought Training	221
The Bodhicitta	224
The Benefits of Bodhicitta	225
Prayer to Be Said After Meditation Seven	227
The Bodhisattva's Actions	229
A Summary of the Salient Points	229
The Bodhisattva's Actions	234
I. Taking the Bodhicitta Vows, with Prayers, in the Presence of a Holy Object	234
II. How to Follow the Holy Bodhisattva's Deeds	

After Receiving Bodhicitta	234
The Practice of the Six Paramitas (II.1.A.)	235
1. Charity	235
The Meaning of Charity	235
The Method of Following Charity	236
A. Practising Charity With The Six Paramitas	237
A. The Wisdom of Charity	237
B. Making the Practice with the Six Holy Things	238
The Divisions of Charity	240
A. The Charity of Dharma	240
B. The Charity of Fearlessness	240
C. Material Charity	240
What Should Be Done in the Practice of Charity?	241
A. What Thoughts Are Evil and Should Be Abandoned When Charity is Made?	241
B. With What Actions Should Charity not be Made?	242
C. With What Actions Should Charity be Made?	242
D. Actions That Help Others Make Charity	243
E. With Which Materials Should We Make Charity and With Which Should We Not?	243
F. What Should We Do if Unable to Make Charity Because of Miserliness, Although Not Wanting of Possessions?	244
G. How We Should Practise the Remedies that Destroy Interruptions to Making Charity	245
Conclusion	246
2. Morality	246
The Meaning of Morality	246
The Method of Following Morality	246
The Divisions of Morality	248
A. The Morality of Abstaining from Vices	248
B. The Morality of the Totality of All Virtue	248
C. The Morality of Working for All Other Sentient	

Beings, i.e., All Virtuous Actions of Body, Speech and Mind, Created with the Thought of Benefiting Others	248
What Should Be Done in the Practice of Morality	249
A. Morality with the Six Paramitas	249
Conclusion	249
3. Patience	250
The Meaning of Patience	250
The Method of Following Patience	250
The Divisions of Patience	252
A. The Patience of Having Compassion for the Enemy	252
B. The Patience of Voluntarily Bearing Suffering	254
C. The Patience of Definitely Thinking About the Dharma	256
What Should Be Done in the Practice	256
Conclusion	256
4. Energy	256
The Meaning of Energy	256
The Method of Following Energy	257
The Divisions of Energy	257
A. Dauntless, Armour Like Energy	257
B. The Energy of the Totality of Virtue	258
C. The Energy of Working for Other Sentient Beings	258
What Should Be Done in the Practice of Energy	258
A. The Laziness of Putting off the Practice by Thinking That There Will Still Be Time.	258
B. The Laziness Arising from Attachment to Performing Lower, Worldly Work and Being Under Its Control.	259
C. The Laziness of Discouragement	259
I. Pride of Action	263
II. Pride of Capability	263
III. Pride of Delusion	264

How Should We Arouse Dissatisfaction in The Work of the Practice?	264
How to Put Energy into Our Practice.	265
How Should the Object of Remembrance Be Discriminated by Wisdom?	266
Conclusion	268
Meditation Eight	269
The Fifth Paramita: The Paramita of Concentration:	
Samadhi Meditation	269
The Training in Supreme Collectedness (<i>Adhisamadhi Siksa</i>)	269
Nine States of Mind	272
Six Powers	273
Four Mental Activities	274
The Successive Attainment of Collectedness	274
Diagrammatic Summary of Progress Through the Nine States	277
Samatha (Quietude) Meditation (<i>Zhi.Na</i>)	281
Prayer to Be Said After Meditation Eight	284
Dedication of Merits	285
Notepad	286

Table of Figures

Figure 1	Atisha	30
Figure 2	Guru Tzong K'a Pa	36
Figure 3	Guru Shakyamuni	46
Figure 4	Mandala	54
Figure 5	Dharmachakra	118
Figure 6	Wheel of Life	164
Figure 7	Progress on the Path of Samatha Meditation	280

Mystic Praise

To you, oh venerable Holy Guru,
Sole saviour of all time,
The one field where all happiness and perfection arise,
The one Creator of each and all three sublimes,
To your selfless great compassion I devotedly prostrate.
May the delusion which flames
In the mental fields of us sentient beings
Be extinguished by your great blessing rain.

Preface, First Edition

This book has not been written because there is some new Dharma that was not shown by Guru Shakyamuni. And because of my limited-experience realizations, in no way have I deserved to write such a book, and there is scant hope that it can benefit others.

But in view of the remarkable fact that in this time, already beyond the period of the five degenerations and an age in which there is the great danger of atomic explosion, an increasing number of Westerners are finding the Buddhadharma as they seek like blind men opening their eye, and as it is extremely important to make meaningful this once received Wisdom Eye, which analyses all dharmas, clearly discriminating between what to avoid and what to practise, my depthlessly kind venerable Guru, Thubten Yeshe, has given the Vajra instruction that it is necessary to write a book such as this in English. So it is with happiness, devotion and respectfulness that I do so, writing a condensed meditation book which shows the form of daily practice, thinking that if it becomes an offering to the Gurus it is the best cause to make the mind one with the Dharma.

Should there be any benefits from this authorship may they bring the success of the Guru's sublime consideration, cause the Golden Sun of Guru Shakyamuni's Mahayana Teachings to shine permanently and result in the instantaneous Enlightenment of all sentient beings. The most kind, compassionate Guru Shakyamuni made charity of his body to sentient beings more numerous than atoms of the universe for the sole purpose of their Enlightenment, and so may this little work quickly bring the same result.

If there are any mistakes in this book, may they be confessed in the eyes of the Holy Beings.

Preface, 2016 Edition

Students at the second Kopan meditation course (March 1972) compiled their notes of Lama Zopa Rinpoche's teachings into a textbook for the third course (October 1972). It was entitled *The Wish-Fulfilling Golden Sun of the Mahayana Thought Training: Directing in the Short Cut Path to Enlightenment*. During the third course (my first), Rinpoche would read a sentence or two from the *Golden Sun* and then comment upon it, briefly or at length. This is pretty much how Rinpoche taught those first few courses.

After that course I mentioned to Rinpoche that it was an amazing book but could perhaps do with a bit of an edit. Rinpoche said that's what he'd been thinking, so for about six weeks before the fourth course (March 1973), Yeshe Khadro and I met with him daily for several hours while he revised the whole thing from beginning to end. We would write down what Rinpoche said, YK would type it up in the evenings and I would edit that.

The original went in some detail up to the end of the path of the middle capable being and concluded with an equilibrium meditation, some techniques for developing bodhicitta, including an extensive tong-len meditation, and a very short meditation on emptiness. For the first revised edition all this was expanded and refined, and a section on developing concentration taken from His Holiness the Dalai Lama's *Opening of the Wisdom Eye* (a new translation is entitled *Opening the Eye of New Awareness*) was added. Over the next couple of years Rinpoche and I did a bit more editorial tweaking before subsequent courses, the main change being the addition of a substantial section on bodhicitta and the first four perfections. The last time we worked on the book was in May 1975 at Chenrezig Institute. It still lacked a section on emptiness. But Rinpoche did not use the *Golden Sun* as the basis of the eighth (November 1975) or any future course, so the last time he did use it was at the seventh (November 1974).

In 1982, after the first Enlightened Experience Celebration, just before Lama Yeshe left Tushita Meditation Centre to visit Tibet, he said to Rinpoche in my presence, “While I’m gone I want you and Dr. Nick to finish work on the *Golden Sun*.” The first time I met with Rinpoche to begin this task he said he wanted to scrap the old version and do a new one based on the twelve deeds of the Buddha, so we started from the beginning on that.

After a couple of months’ slow progress Rinpoche finished the retreat he was doing and decided to go to Kopan. I went with him to continue our work, but when we tried to pick up where we had left off Rinpoche said he’d decided against that approach and instead wanted the new version to follow the outline of the *Essential Nectar*, a lam-rim text. So we started over once more and by the time of the fifteenth course (November 1982) we had gotten some way through the guru devotion section. But then I had to go back to New Delhi to help organize Tushita Mahayana Meditation Centre’s second Dharma Celebration with His Holiness, so I handed the *Golden Sun* job over to another student. Rinpoche did a couple of months’ more work with him but then he had to leave too. And as far as I know no more work on the *Golden Sun* has been done. However, Rinpoche’s commentary on guru devotion from the *Essential Nectar* did make it into *The Heart of the Path*, his extensive teachings on how to follow the guru.

So, the book in your hands, dear reader, is the very inexpertly edited edition from 1975, created with the extremely limited understanding of publishing and its conventions we had back then. But still, it has changed the lives of hundreds of previous students and because of the many blessings it contains it may continue to do so.

Nicholas Ribush
Boston, 2016.

Pronunciation Guide

The following pages are Appendix III of *Oral Teachings of the Path, a Lam.rim Graded Course to Enlightenment*, given by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, prepared by the Translation Bureau of the Library of Tibetan Works of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and published as the third volume of the Wisdom of Tibet Series by George Allen and Unwin, London.

It is a brief description of how to use this system when going from Tibetan into English transliteration. The letters in the first two columns and the last column are pronounced as indicated below whether or not they have prefixes.

		without prefixes				with prefixes			
ཀ	k	ཁ	k'	ག	g'	འག	g	ང	ng
ཀྱ	ky	ཀྲ	ky'	གྱ	gy'	འགྱ	gy		
ཅ	ch	ཅཎ	ch'	ཇ	j'	འཇ	j	ཉ	ny
ཏ	t	ཏཎ	t'	ད	d'	འད	d	ན	n
ཏྱ	tr	ཏྲ	tr'	དྱ	dr'	འདྱ	dr		
ཏླ				དླ					
པ	p	པཎ	p'	པ	b'	འཔ	b	མ	m
ཅཎ	tz	ཅཎཎ	ts	ཅཎཎ	dz'	འཅཎཎ	dz		

ཤ	sh	ས	s						
ཞ	zh	ཟ	z	ཡ	y				
ར	r	ལ	l						
semi-vowels									
ཞ	w								
ཧ	h								
ཨ	ah								

Basic Vowels

ཨ a ཨི i ཨུ u ཨེ e ཨོ o

Note: the vowels a, u and o become ä, ü, and ö if they are followed by the suffix letters: ད (d) or ས (s) or ན (n) or ལ (l) or by the possessive case ending འི (i).

The tables reader to approximate the reading pronunciation of the Central Tibetan dialect. and pronunciation guide given next are designed to allow the Explanations of how to generate both the reading pronunciation as well as the accurate spoken pronunciation of Tibetan orthography for the Central Tibetan dialect are available from the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh, India, in Tibetan Language: Three Study Tools by Ngawang Thondup.

Vowels

basic	a	i	u	e	o
modified ¹¹	ä		ü		ö
diphthongs	äi	ii	ui	ei	öi
	ao	to	uo	eo	oo
	au	iu	uu	eu	ou

a as in “father,” but not elongated.

i as in “machine.”

u as in “flute.”

e as in “hey,” but not elongated.

o as in “mode,” but not elongated.

ä as the “ea” in “head,” or as in the German “Ärger.”

ü as the “u” in “use” when pronounced with lips pursed, or as in the German “für”

ö as the “a” in “sad” when pronounced with lips pursed or as in the German “öffnen.”

When the second letter of a diphthong is “i,” the pronunciation of the initial vowel is elongated and the “i” is only slightly pronounced.

When the second letter of a diphthong is “o” or “u” both vowels are pronounced distinctly.

Depending on the suffix letter, the vowel may be either clipped, regular or elongated, but this distinction is not made in this system.

Although the vowel of the second syllable of a two-syllable word may alter the pronunciation of the vowel of the first syllable and a prefix letter of the second syllable may generate a suffix in the first, such transformations are not indicated in this system.

Consonants

	high tone unvoiced unaspirated	high tone unvoiced aspirate	low tone unvoiced aspirate	low tone voiced unaspirated	nasal nasal
guttural	k	k'	g'	g	ng
	ky	ky'	gy'	gy	
palatal	ch	ch'	j'	j	ny
dental	t	t'	d'	d	n
	tr	tr'	dr'	dr	l
labial	p	p'	b'	b	m
palatal- sibilant	tz	ts	dz'	dz	
high tone sibilant	sh	s			
low tone sibilant	zh	z			
aspiration			h		

k as in “skill”

k' as in “kill”

g' as in “kill” but in a low tone

g as in “gill”

ng as in “sing”

ky as in “skew”

ky' as in “cue”

gy' as in “cue,” but in a low tone

gy as in “argue

ch as in “luncheon,”

but with no aspiration

ch' as in “chill”

j' as in “chill,” but in a low tone

j as in “Jill”

dr as in “drip,” but with a less distinct “r” sound and lips unpursed

p as in “spill”

p' as in "pill"
b' as in "pill," but in a low tone
b as in "bill"
m as in "mill"
tz as in "ritz," but with no aspiration
ny as in "Daniel"
t as in "still"
t' as in "till"
d' as in "till," but in a low tone
d as in "dill"
n as in "nil"
tr as in "strip," but with a less distinct "r" sound
tr' as in "trip," but with a less distinct "r" sound
dr' as in "trip," but in a low tone, with a less distinct "r" sound and lips unpursed
ts as in "writs"
dz' as in "writs," but in a low tone
dz as in "rids"
sh as in "shell"
s as in "sell"
zh as in "shell," but in a low tone
z as in "sell" but in a low tone
h as in "hill"

When the letters "g," "b," "ng," "n" and "m" appear as a suffix, they are not heavily pronounced or stressed.

Although there are both high and low tone pronunciations of the nasals "ng," "ny," "n" and "m," as well as of the aspiration "h," this distinction is not made in this system.

Although there are both low and stressed deep tone pronunciations of the voiced unaspirated consonants "g," "gy," "j," "d," "dr," "b" and "dz," this distinction is not made in this system either.

Semi-vowels

unaspirated	y	r	l	w
aspirate	hy	hr	lh	hw

y as in “yell”

r as in “real”

l as in “lull”

W as in “will”

hy as in “hue”

hr as in “hurray,” but with the “u” unpronounced

lh as in “hello,” but with the “e” unpronounced

hw as in “what”

When the letters “r” and “l” appear as a suffix, they are not heavily pronounced or stressed.

Although there are both high and low tone pronunciations of the unaspirated semi vowels “y,” “r,” “l” and “w,” this distinction is not made in this system.

In order to indicate syntactical units more clearly, the following are joined by hyphens:

- syllables of multisyllabic words,
- nouns and their postpositions and following conjunctions,
- the syllables of compound verbs.

Only the first word of a person or a place name and the title of a person or a book has its initial letter capitalised.

The Mind is Beginningless

If the mind had its beginning with the birth of the being then there would be no purpose to life nor any reason for the mind to exist. If then there were no reason for birth or rebirth and death, then there would be no continuity of lives nor existence of different beings, and there would certainly be no reason for seeking the Truth (inner method), nor for eagerly running after external possessions.

If there were no continuity of mind there would be no logical reason for the suffering of life to exist in spite of all human attempts to find happiness in, for example, material comfort and scientific progress. However, the present world is becoming more unsatisfactory, aggressive and unsubdued.

No worldly educated physicians have been able to preserve life indefinitely for themselves or others, nor have they been able to overcome undesirable physical decay; this situation proves that external conditions are not the principal cause of suffering and happiness. Neither do the same external material enjoyments always give the same pleasure to all living beings. As this shows, the principal cause of suffering is to be found nowhere but within the person's mind.

In the same way, the sperm and the egg of the parents are not the principal cause of the mind but only the cooperative cause. The principal cause of a baby's mind exists before the relationship of its parents; therefore, the principal cause of most present suffering and happiness was created in the continuity of past lives.

As is explained by the fully Enlightened Ones, the nature of the mind is clear light and formless, and the mind has the ability to perceive objects. If the fertilized egg were the principal cause of the mind then this also should have a formless nature. Something whose nature is formless, e.g., space, cannot become a principal cause of something whose nature is form, e.g., earth. Thus the sperm and the

egg are the seeds of the brain and the other parts of the body but not of the mind. No logic or experience can prove or find that the mind began to exist at the same time that the sperm and the egg conjoined.

Another wrong conception is to think that nothing of the physical part is mind but that the baby's mind comes from its parents' minds, in which case all of that generation of children should have the same understanding and experience as all the previous parents back to and including the original. Thus, if one boy's father was suffering and strongly angry and his mother happy and strongly patient then he would have to be suffering and happy, angry and patient with the same object at the same time. But anyway, two ignorant minds cannot become oneness while they remain uncontrolled.

In reality the mind is beginningless. Ten children of the same family, who are all brought up in the same way and educated in the same manner, never have exactly the same interests or level of Wisdom. These children's minds are all affected by different pasts.

Another example demonstrating mental continuity is that of children born with imperfect bodies from parents whose bodies are perfect. Some may think that this is due to external and environmental factors such as drugs, irradiation and so forth; but while this may explain how the situation arises, it doesn't explain why it should occur to the particular beings involved. Furthermore, no matter how much parents want their baby to have a beautiful shape, without choice it is born resembling one or the other parent or looking completely different from either. What causes this whole evolution of external conditions and results? Despite the eagerness of parents to implant their levels of knowledge in the minds of their children, they are not free to do so and find it difficult. All this shows that a baby's mind comes from no other source than its own previous mind, and not from the mind of any other being.

A split second of mind causes the next split second; today's mind causes the future life's mind. That is why the mind is impermanent and continual. The mind is created by impulse and depends on many conditions; because the mind is dependent it is not self-existent. Hence, the ignorant mind is beginningless. If beings' minds began with their birth, then what created the original being's mind?

In addition, there are many factual stories of children from both East and West who do remember their previous lives; therefore, it is greatly worthwhile to believe and try to realize such a logical evolution of the mind. If we can believe in the scientific explanation of the evolution of mind merely because it has been written by scientists in scientific books, not even doubting that the scientific mind is fully understanding and without error, then we are extremely ignorant to discredit such a realistic evolution of the mind that truly exists, and to have complete trust instead in the non existence of our past and future lives. We dare not say that the true nature of our mind and the experiences of other living beings do not exist just because they are not perceived by our limited wisdom.

We people, whose minds are full of wrong conceptions negating the logical objects of the logical pure mind, and who believe in the non-existent wrong objects of wrong conceptions, only close the door to infinite Dharma Wisdom and to realizations such as perception of our own and other beings' past and future lives. All Wisdom and realizations of outer and inner subjects are blocked by ignorance. The thousands of deluded ignorant minds can all be cleaned away by the achievement of different levels of Wisdom through methods based on the understanding of the evolution of reincarnation. The perfected Being is never overwhelmed by ignorance; he has not even the slightest mental problem once his mind has been completely cleaned. Such ignorance is the source of all the various sufferings that we uncontrollably experience. Since we do not desire such physical and mental sufferings, but wish to achieve the supreme happiness of these perfected Beings, it is extremely necessary that we utterly extinguish ignorance and subtle wrong conceptions. Thereby we extinguish the resulting sufferings and completely achieve fully purified Enlightenment, the Omniscient Mind of the Buddha, completing our purpose of leading all other sentient beings into the most supreme happiness of Enlightenment, and away from sufferings. But trying to achieve Enlightenment without feeling the necessity of utterly extinguishing ignorance and subtle wrong conceptions is just dreaming.

But How is it Possible to Receive Enlightenment

There exists a state of mind completely free of gross ignorance (the delusions) and subtle ignorance (the impressions of delusion). This is the Svabhavakaya (Tib., *Ngo.wo nyid.ku*)—the pure, clearlight nature of the Omniscient Mind. To experience this is Enlightenment, and the Enlightened Being is also called a Buddha.

Why have we not experienced Enlightenment yet? Because in us the pure nature of mind has always been obscured by the pollution of ignorance.

The potentially pure mind obscured by ignorance is like a mirror covered with slime. The mirror can be made clear because it is not inextricably mixed with the slime, and, similarly, the mind can be purified of ignorance because the two are not inseparable. And just as there are many ways to clear the mirror, yet all involve removal of the slime, so too are there many ways to reach Enlightenment, but all require destruction of ignorance.

Not only the minds of humans, but those of all sentient beings contain this potential purity that is not one with the ignorance that obscures it. However, it is only when this impermanent obscuration has been completely removed, and not before, that the being can be said to be Enlightened.

Ignorance can be permanently eradicated by following the perfect path of Method and Wisdom, experienced by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and taught in his Tripitaka (Tib., *De.nö sum*)—the “Three Baskets” of Teachings on Conduct, Concentration and Wisdom.

It was because of his infinitely Great Compassion for all sentient beings that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha showed this perfect Teaching, and if we aspire to his Enlightened State we must train our minds to become One with the Dharma, as he himself did.

The Lineage of These Mahayana Teachings

The Lineage of the Graduated Path began with Guru Shakyamuni, the Founder of this period of Buddhadharma (Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana). The whole subject matter of the Teachings is included in two divisions—Profound Wisdom and Extensive Method.

The Method of the Graduated Path was handed down by Maitreya to Asanga (*P'ag.pa.tog.me*) in about 400 A.D. He was the main Teacher of the Yogacara Philosophy, or Vijnyanavada. From Asanga the Teachings were gradually handed down through the great Indian Pandits. The first of these was *Jik.nyen*, one of the most learned beings in the world at that time; then came *P'ag.pa Nam.dr'ol.de*, the finder of the middle way; *Tzun.pa Nam.dr'ol.de*, the faithful; *Ch'o.kyi.de*, the subdued in Wisdom; *Dr'ol.wa.de*; *Na.nam.tze*; *Seng.ge Zang.po*, who developed the Paramita path; *Ku.sa.li*, the holder of all the techniques of Buddha; *Ge.wa.chan*; Dharmakirti (*Serling.pa*) who had great achievement of Bodhicitta; then the Teachings passed to the great Atisha.

The Wisdom lineage was passed down by Manjushri, and came to the great philosopher Nagarjuna (*Lu.drub*), the writer of the Madhyamaka Philosophy, in about 150 A.D. His successor, Chandrakirti (about 600 A.D.) made clear the pure views of Nagarjuna and transmitted the Teachings to the second *Rig.pa.k'u.j'ug*; he passed them on to the great holder of the Teachings, Atisha, who handed them down to *Ton.pa Rin.po.ch'e*.



Figure 1 – Atisha

Dipankara Shrijnyana (Atisha)

Atisha was born in Bengal in 982 A.D. as a prince into a noble family. During his life, he achieved all perfect Knowledge, and having thus equipped his Holy Mind, he did great work for the Buddhadharma.

He gained full understanding of the profound meaning of the Tripitaka Teachings, and on the basis of this achievement—Knowledge of the Trainings in higher Conduct, higher Concentration and higher Wisdom—he completely realized the Three Vehicles: Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana.

Atisha adhered strictly to the moralities and ordinations of all three of these Vehicles. He guarded these and his Bodhicitta precepts as his life, just as a yak, with his beautiful tail caught in a bush, will protect it from harm, although hunters threaten his life.

Atisha worked for the Buddhadharma in both India and Tibet.

In India, at Mogada, Odantapuri, and Vikramashila he completely destroyed by logical debate the pagans' evil speech, discussions, complaints and wrong realizations. After these victories, he became the leader of all, established the Sangha, and gave Teachings. Amongst his Indian disciples were *Pi.to.b'a*, Dharmakaramati, and *U.ma.song.ge.sä.nying.po*.

Atisha was invited to Tibet by *Ta.lä.la.mä.ku.kye* who sent the great translators, *Gya.txän.seng* and *Nag.tse tsül.tr'im*, to India. They were successful in their mission, despite many hard and dangerous travels, and Atisha arrived in Tibet in 1042 A.D.

He spent three years in *Ü* (central Tibet) and *Tzang*. He established the Teachings of the Buddha in places where they had become non-existent, and revived and developed them where the practice of the Teachings had degenerated.

He completely purified heretically wrong realizations and views of Buddhadharma, and wrote the most precious Text *J'ang.ch'ub lam.drün* - the "Light of the Enlightenment Path." This contains all the meanings of the Sutras and Tantras, in a form to be understood by even very limited-minded people: those who cannot realize the profound views of Buddhadharma, who do not see the practice and have beliefs opposite to those of the Buddha. He founded the school known as the *Ka.dam.pa*.

There are said to be prerequisites that one needs to be qualified to write Holy Works on Buddhadharma. One must have one of these three:

1. Expertise in the five divisions of Knowledge:
 - a. Inner Knowledge (Knowledge of Dharma).
 - b. Knowledge of handicrafts including paintings and especially intricate mandalas.
 - c. Knowledge of medicine and hygiene.
 - d. Logic.
 - e. Knowledge of sound, e.g., language, poetry, animal sounds, that of water, etc.
2. Teachings received in a continuous line, from Guru Shakyamuni, through only Holy, realized Beings, without interruption, and dealing with the practice of the subjects contained in the *Lam.drün*.
3. Permission from a Deity or Guru, who gives it to great Pandits before they can write books on initiations, and so on.

Atisha was qualified with all prerequisites and was, therefore, nothing like the modern, inexperienced scholar who writes books on Buddhadharma.

There are four great Knowledges from the *J'ang.ch'ub lam.drün* text:

1. The Knowledge which brings the realization that none of the different aspects of the Buddhadharma are opposed to each other. To see no difference between the purpose of the Hinayana, Mahayana and the Vajrayana is most important to understand at the very beginning of our practice. However, we should have the right Guru, who will give right instructions, according to the disciple's level of mind.

Some who have not tasted the essence of Buddhadharma, think with the egocentric mind, "I am a Mahayanist and need not practise Hinayana," or "I am a Vajrayanist and Mahayana is not for me."

With such conceptions we shall never achieve the practice of Buddhadharma, and shall only pass further from Enlightenment. Therefore, all followers must take care on this point.

Enlightenment is the complete purification of every single defect, and perfection in all realizations. This can be reached by the Mahayanist, but these purifications and perfections include realizations from the other paths.

There is no Buddhadharma that does not clean every single defect, or does not bring every single realization; so there is nothing that the follower of the Mahayana path cannot attain.

For the Mahayanist, receiving Enlightenment depends on accomplishing the general practice, i.e. keeping the precepts from the Hinayana division of the Teachings. Thus, there is no way that the true Mahayanist avoids Hinayana practice.

Similarly, the Vajrayanist must progress by living in Bodhicitta and the practice of the six Paramitas, as is much emphasized in Tantric Teachings; and so, he also follows the Mahayana path.

2. The Knowledge by which we see all the aspects of Buddhadharma in the essential techniques.

Through the study of the *Lam.drün* Teachings, we can clearly understand the vast concourse of commentaries on the pure views of the Enlightened One, in essential techniques, and the firm belief arises that this concourse contains the best techniques.

3. The Knowledge by which we fully realize the profound pure views of the Enlightened Ones.

Beings of lower intelligence take much time and have to surmount great obstacles to accomplish understanding of the profound vast treatises. But, through the practice of the *Lam.drün* we can easily understand the important points of the profound works of the Buddha.

4. The Knowledge that automatically stops all the great vices.

Some beings create incredibly bad karma by avoiding or denigrating Dharmas—e.g., pointing at some Teachings as bad, others as Holy; some of worth, others as worthless - not understanding that all Buddhadharmas are either direct or indirect methods of reaching Enlightenment.

The negative karma of avoiding Dharma is amongst the worst; it is worse than tearing down all the Holy Stupas in the universe, or than killing as many Arhants as there are atoms in all the grains of sand of the Ganges. This was said by Guru Shakyamuni.

Thus, the understanding and practice of the *Lam.drün* guides one from these negative creations, and decreases the power of those negativities created before.

Atisha had the following Tibetan disciples:

Rin.ch'en.zang.po nag.tso lo.tsa.wa (the great translator) from *Nga.nyi*, upper Tibet.

Lha la.ma j'ang.ch'ub.ö, from *Tzang*.

Gar.ge.wa gö.k'ug.pa lhä.wa.tzä from *Lho.dr'ag*.

Ch'ag.pa tr'i.ma.ch'og, from *K'am*.

Näl.gor.chen.po, *Gön.pa.wa*, *She.rab dor.je*, and *Ch'ag.d'ar tön.pa*.

Also from Central Tibet were *K'u.Ngog*, and *Drom.sum*.

But the closest of all was *Drom.tön.pa*.

I and all sentient beings prostrate to and take refuge in the Guru *Lo.zang t'ub.wang dor.je ch'ang*, who is the basic door through which comes all knowledge, happiness and perfection.

Guru Tzong.k'a.pa

The Teachings were handed down from the great Indian Pandits to the great Guru *Tzong.k'a.pa* (about 1380 A.D.) through about twenty famous meditators in the-lineage of the *Ka.dam.pa* tradition. From Guru *Tzong.k'a.pa* the Teachings were passed on through seventeen or eighteen of his disciples.

This great Guru wrote a commentary on Atisha's *Lam.drün* Teaching, called the *J'ang.ch'ub lam.rim* - the "Graded Path to Enlightenment." This was for extremely ignorant followers.

It is well known that many fortunate beings, through the practice of the *Lam.rim* clearly saw all the pure views of the Buddha that were expounded in the commentaries, as vast and as deep as a limitless ocean. Through the essential techniques, they received complete understanding of all the Buddha's Knowledge, and thereby attained Enlightenment

Guru *Tzong.k'a.pa* handed these Teachings on to many of his fellow meditators, and they have come down to the Tutors of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. From these most honourable external guides, these Gurus, have I received them.



Figure 2 – Tzong.k'a.pa

Morning Prayers

To receive the Graduated Path through the practice of meditation we have to depend on the accumulation of merit and the purification of obscurations. Therefore, those who have wisdom will realize that it is extremely important to follow these preparatory practices. It is unskillful to make ourselves ignorant by rejecting making visualizations and saying prayers, thinking “this is not my desire.”

Refuge to the Holy Guru. the Total Embodiment of the Infinite Buddhas

LA.MA <i>Guru is</i>	SANG.GYÄ <i>Buddha Guru</i>	LA.MA.CH'Ö <i>is Dharma</i>
DE.ZHIN <i>just as this</i>	LA.MA <i>Guru is</i>	GE.DÜN.TE <i>Sangha also</i>
KUN.GY'I <i>all</i>	J'E.PO <i>creators is</i>	LA.MA.TE <i>Guru also</i>
LA.MA <i>Guru</i>	NAM.LA <i>all</i>	KYAB.SU.CH'I (CH'Ö.PA.BÜL) <i>I go for Refuge (I make offerings)</i>

(Guru is Buddha, Guru is Dharma, Guru is Sangha also, Guru is all creators, to all Gurus I go for Refuge (I make offerings).)

GURU:	the principal leader showing Teachings of practice and avoidance for attaining Enlightenment.
LAMA:	heavy; heavy in inner Dharma Knowledge.
SANG:	clean, purified of all obscurations.
GYÄ:	perfect in Knowledge, having all realizations.

How quickly we receive Enlightenment depends on Guru Yoga practice. The essential practice is to see all Buddhas in the essence of Gurus, and all Gurus in the essence of Buddhas.

As there are infinite sentient beings, so are there infinite Buddhas. And from our side, all Buddhas definitely help and guide, according to my level of fortune.

The Buddhas received Enlightenment for the sole purpose of continuously working for each and every sentient being's happiness. With their Enlightened Knowledge they guide by countless different actions, but the limited mind finds incomprehensible the limitless range of the Buddhas' help. However, the main way of helping is by appearing in ordinary form as the Guru. Even to one being the Buddhas can appear in countless forms—human or suffering animal, enemy or friend—and their method of assistance is not restricted to oral Teachings. They teach at many different levels.

It is important to know how to seek the Guru, because he is the guide, the saviour of this and any future lives until Enlightenment is reached. The most important things in this life are both seeking and checking the Guru—checking, because the wrong Guru, with wrong realizations, can ruin so many lives for his followers by leading them incorrectly. But it must be emphasized that one does not seek the Guru as a dog seeks and eats meat.

We are too ignorant to be able to see Buddha in his most perfect aspect, and so he can appear to us on the material level, as statues and *t'ang.k'a's*. These material formations symbolise the Buddha so that we, the followers, can create merits with understanding faith, by remembering his Knowledge and kindness, and by making sincere offerings. But the limited mind views the statue itself as Buddha, or regards Guru Shakyamuni as some ancient personality of merely historical interest, thus limiting understanding, belief and contact.

Buddha's Holy Body is adorned with many physical signs—perfect qualities and physical perfections. We can see these only by tearing away our veils of ignorance until our inner nature is completely purified, and reaches a level of Knowledge equal to that of the Buddha in the form of the Guru. In this way we can become one with Buddha, and it depends on becoming one with the Guru.

A Tantric Teaching says:

Even the name "Buddha" does not exist before the existence of the Guru.

The whole process to Enlightenment depends on Guru Yoga practice, more important and useful than life itself, because every mental progression, happiness and Enlightenment must all depend on the Guru.

In Tantric Teachings, Buddha said:

The Vajra Guru and his deeds should always be looked upon as Knowledge and free of fault. No realizations can be achieved if they are looked upon as faulty; realizations can be achieved if they are looked upon as Knowledge.

It is logical, and proven by practical experience, that through purification we can see the Guru in the actual Buddha; thus the Guru himself is not Enlightened from his side alone.

Good karma (virtuous work) is not created intuitively but depends on example and Teachings, shown in different ways by the Guru Buddha. This is the Holy action of the Guru's Knowledge. True happiness arises from good karma. The Dharma and Sangha, created by the Buddha, are responsible for good karma. Therefore, true happiness comes from the kindness of the Buddha, who in turn comes from the Guru.

Thus the Guru, as well as being the creator of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, is the creator of all happiness.

The ordinary being, with limited, ignorant view, sees the Three Jewels as unconnected with the Guru. In reality the Guru is one with the Three Jewels.

Generating Bodhicitta

DAG.D'ANG ZHÄN.D'ÖN DRUB.LÄ.D'U
 I and others success attain for

DAG.G'I J'ANG.CH'UBSEM.KYE.D'O
 I Enlightenment thought generate

(I will generate the Enlightenment thought in order to attain success for myself and all other living beings.)

Purifying the Place

T'AM.CHÄ D'U.NI SA.ZHI.D'AG
 all in ground purified

SEG.MA LA.SOG ME.PA.D'ANG
 Thorns etc. not existing and

LAG.T'IL TAR.NYAM B'E.DUR.YÄI
 palm equal as lapis lazuli

RANG.ZHIN JAM.POR NA.GYUR.CHIG
 nature smooth place become any

(May all the realms where sentient beings are be purified and devoid of thorns and impure objects, and may they be transformed into the smooth, flexible nature of lapis lazuli, as plain as the hand's palm.)

Invocation

MA.LÜ SEM.CHÄN KÜN.GY'I GÖN.GY'UR.CHING
 all living beings of all saviour become

DÜ.TE PUNG.CHÄ MI.ZÄ JOM.DZÄ.LHA
 evil committees grounds endless destroyer Buddha

NGÖ.NAM MA.LÜ YANG.D'AG KY'EN.GYUR.PÄI
 every existence every and all fully realizing

CHOM.DÄN K'OR.CHÄ NÄ.DIR SHAG.SU.SÖL
 control having all here descend please

(Holy Buddha, you have the complete control and all realizations, are the saviour of every sentient being, the destroyer of evil committees and groups with only your everlasting great love, fully seeing each and every existence: you and your surrounding attendants, please be at this place.)

Ecstatic Prostrating Meditation to One Thousand Eyes Hands Chenrezig

Chenrezig is the manifestation of all the Buddhas' infinite compassion. His one thousand eyes symbolise the Knowledge of one thousand Buddhas. The one thousand hands symbolise the power of the kings of one thousand worlds. This suggests the great power of *Chenrezig*.

Prostrating to this form of the Buddha creates limitless merits making us receive Enlightenment sooner.

1. Benefits of the mantra

Prostrating and saying the mantra creates great fortune for listening to, contemplating, and meditating on the three divisions of the Teachings (Tripitaka: "Three Baskets"), which contain all the Teachings on the three higher trainings: Conduct, Concentration and Wisdom.

- a. **Vinaya Pitaka** – The treatise of moral discipline, it is the remedy for delusions that lead us into extreme conduct, and also teaches Concentration.
- b. **Sutra Pitaka** – General religious discourses; concentration on: the twelve dependents, the four Noble Truths, the five skandhas, the different elements, the Paramitas and the six different objects of the six sense bases. There is also the explanation of Madhyamak Pratipad ("The Middle Path")—the explanation of Absolute Truth, and the remedy for wrong conceptions that lead us into the two extreme views of non-existence and self-existence. The

Sutras teach Conduct, Concentration and Wisdom.

- c. **Abhidharma Pitaka** – Metaphysical instructions, explaining the right nature of changeable phenomena, e.g., impermanence, suffering, and non-self.

The Abhidharma teaches the Wisdom that is the remedy for the wrong conception of ourselves as self entities.

There are great benefits from merely saying the mantra.

2. Benefits of the prostrations

The action of the three doors:

The benefits are numberless, as *Chenrezig* symbolises numberless Buddhas, and appears in numberless bodies.

- a. Body – The action of the physical body prostrating is mainly to purify the physical negative karmas.
- b. Speech – The action of reciting the mantra is exalting the Buddhas by speaking of their supreme power and Knowledge. It purifies negative karmas of speech.
- c. Mind – The action of remembering the supreme power and Knowledge of the Buddhas arouses faith. It purifies the mental negative karmas.

3. Ecstatic prostrating meditation

Being one with one thousand eyes hands *Chenrezig*:

- a. We prepare ourselves with a short Shunyata purification meditation, beginning with the thought: “There is no self existent I,” annihilating ordinary conceptions of the self I, the impure mind and its object, the ordinary body, which depends on the five skandhas.
- b. When the conception of the self existent I has disappeared and the body becomes void, we clearly visualise *Chenrezig* and become one with him, thinking, “I am the real manifestation of *Chenrezig*.”
- c. We concentrate on the manifestations of *Chenrezig* as being equal to the number of atoms in the universe, and on our-

selves as appearing in the presence of each of these Chenrezigs in the pure realms, making prostrations to them. Here the ground is soft and divinely beautiful, very transparent and mirror like, and one with Chenrezig's Holy Mind.

- d. Offering – From the letter HRI in our divine heart many light rays emanate, bearing numberless Chenrezigs carrying offerings of flowers, incense, music, silks, delicate foods, and the heavenly light of Wisdom, to the six senses of each of the Chenrezigs previously visualised. The offerings give much happiness to all the Chenrezigs, who, in return, grant us their Holy Body, Speech and Mind.
- e. Mantra for prostration

OM NA.MO MAN.JU SHRI.YE
 NA.MO SU SHRI.YE
 NA.MO UT.TA.MA SHRI.YE SO.HA

While prostrating, we visualise much rainbow light streaming into us, purifying all negativities of body, speech and mind.

- f. Prayer and request at the end of the prostrations

PLEASE PURIFY MY BODY, SPEECH AND MIND OF
 ALL NEGATIVITIES SO THAT I MAY FULLY RECEIVE
 ALL KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR HOLY BODY, SPEECH
 AND MIND.

With this is visualised much divine rainbow light beaming into us, purifying all negativities and completely removing all delusions and illusions of body, speech and mind. Our body is filled with this great light, the complete Knowledge of Chenrezig's Holy Body, Speech and Mind, and with the feeling of supreme bliss.

- g. Now we are purified and each Chenrezig is absorbed into our many bodies, which all absorb into just one. We are

completely Chenrezig with no differentiation. Now from Chenrezig streams much light, reaching all sentient beings, purifying their negativities and wrong conceptions. Then all sentient beings are completely purified and transformed into Chenrezig, and their realms into Chenrezig pure land. All these countless Chenrezigs are absorbed into us, and without differentiation, we all become one in the form of Chenrezig.

h. Dedication

GE.WA DI.YI NYUR.D'U.DAG
Virtue by this soon I

CHÄN.RÄ.ZIG DRUB.GY'UR.NÄ
Chenrezig attain and

DRO.WA CHIG.KYANG MA.LÜ.PA
living beings even single and every

KY'E.KYI SA.LA GÖ.PAR.SHOG
your of to realm lead may

(May I quickly become Chenrezig and lead each and every sentient being into his enlightened realm, because of these merits.)



། འཕགས་ཅན་གྱི་སྐྱེ་བ་མཉམ་མེད་ལྔ་པ་གཙོ་བོ་
སྤུལ་ལྷན་པོ།

Figure 3 – Guru Shakyamuni

The Visualisation of Guru Shakyamuni

Merely to remember the Buddha, let alone making visualisation, is of great benefit—we become closer to him, create merits and protect ourselves from evil creations and the temporal life's dangers.

Visualising the Buddha, seeing him in the imagination, lessens our negativities and arouses the desire to become like the Enlightened One; our faith in him increases, and the desire to seek his supreme Knowledge grows stronger, making our mind calm and peaceful and preventing the arising of negativities.

As we develop a taste for the Dharma this can be experienced. Therefore, it is unskilful to make ourselves ignorant by rejecting visualisation and the saying of prayers, saying that it is not our desire to do so. The person doing this has not understood the meaning of prayer or its purpose. It is a ridiculous mind that thinks visualisation and prayer is distracting and meaningless—such a person has no understanding. The visualisation of Guru Shakyamuni is done in order to receive blessings and realizations from him.

The whole visualisation is seen as made of pure light, having nothing to do with physical matter. The object is at the height of the forehead, at a distance of one body length, as large as possible and facing ourselves. We visualise Guru Shakyamuni's throne, a square platform fully and perfectly adorned with all precious jewels, and supported by eight white snow lions (two at each corner). The snow lions are transformations of great Bodhisattvas and are visualised alive and made of light.

On the throne there is a white lotus, and on the lotus are the sun and moon discs, cushions of light for Guru Shakyamuni who is seated upon them.

His Holy Body is transparent, made of pure golden light, and light rays emanate from every pore, streaming outward in all directions. Although these rays extend into infinite space, we visualise them as an aura of light surrounding him to a distance of an armspan.

He is clad in Bhiksu (monk's) robes, which do not touch his Body, but remain about one inch from it, showing the power of his realizations. His aspect is very peaceful. Every atom of his Holy Body has the power to give realizations.

The right hand over his knee touching the moon disc (the "earth touching mudra") symbolises his control of evil (Mara) by his infinite great love. His left hand holds the bowl containing the four nectars (amrita). These nectars control or destroy the four Maras: the elixir of long life, preventing death; the universal medicine, preventing illness and the suffering of the physical body; the nectar purifying the impure skandhas; and the nectar of undeluded transcendental Wisdom, destroying the Mara of delusion.

Surrounding Guru Shakyamuni are Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings.

We pray for realizations and, in the form of light, the infinite Knowledge of his Holy Body, Speech and Mind comes from his Holy Body and fills us with great happiness, dispelling all wrong and impure conceptions, completely purifying our three doors. This is how we visualise while saying Guru Shakyamuni's prayer and mantra.

Having visualised in this way, the throne dissolves into pure light and is absorbed into the lotus, which is then absorbed into the sun, the moon, and finally into Guru Shakyamuni. He comes to the top of our head and, becoming light, sinks into us so that we become one with him.

At this point we can make the breathing meditation.

Now the meditation on the Graduated Path is made.

At the end of the meditation comes the prayer from the Tantic Text, Guru Puja, with the visualisation described with the prayer.

After the prayer, we visualise that the throne becomes light, and absorbs into the lotus, sun and moon, which are absorbed into Guru Shakyamuni, who descends to the top of our head and, becoming light, is absorbed into us. We are now one with no differentiation, in the form of all encompassing space: we concentrate on this for as long as possible.

Then Guru Shakyamuni's Holy Mind appears again in the form of the throne, lotus, sun, and moon, and ourselves in the form of Guru Shakyamuni's Holy Body.

(At all times we should try to see ourselves as described in this visualisation. As our mind is Guru Shakyamuni's Holy Mind, so should we see every other being in that way, and the outer world as his pure land.)

The whole of Guru Shakyamuni's Teachings are included in his mantra and through achieving the Knowledge represented by these words the Buddhas of the past, present and future attained Enlightenment. As a whole, it signifies laying the foundation for the blessings to take root.

Guru Shakyamuni Prayer

LA.MA. DRÖN.PA CHOM.DÄN.DÄ
 Guru founder destroyer (having all realizations)
 passed (to the other shore)
 (cessation of all ignorance, suffering)

D'E.ZHIN SHEG.PA DRA.CHOM.PA
 suchness realized every delusion and gross illusion
 Tathagata destroyed (also Tibetan term for Arhant)

YANG.D'AG.PAR DZOG.PÄ SANG.GYÄ
 fully completed Buddha

PÄL.GYÄL.WA SHAK.YA T'UB.PA.LA
 magnificent king Buddha control to

CH'AG.TSÄL.CHINGKYAB.SU.CH'I.WO
 prostrate and go for refuge

CH'Ö.DO J'IN.GY'I LAB.TU.SÖL
 making offering blessing please bestow

(Guru founder Lord Buddha, the fully realized destroyer of all defilements; fully completed Buddha, having fully realized the Absolute Truth as it is in objects. Magnificent King Buddha, to you I prostrate and go for refuge, to you I make offerings; please, bestow your blessings.)

Guru Shakyamuni Mantra

TA YA THA OM MUNÉ MUNÉ MAHA MUNIÉ SOHA

TA YA THA: It is like this.

OM: The All Knowledge of the Trikaya and of the infinite Buddhas' Holy Body, Speech and Mind. The Knowledge of the two paths to Enlightenment (Method and Wisdom), and of the two Truths (Absolute and relative) that contain all existence within them.

MUNÉ: Control over the suffering of the three lower realms and over the wrong conception of the self-existent I.

MUNÉ: Control over the suffering of all samsara and over self-cherishing thoughts.

MAHA MUNIÉ: Great control over the suffering of subtle illusions and over the dualistic mind. (The Hinayana Arhant has not overcome this problem.)

SOHA: May my mind receive, absorb and keep the blessings of the mantra, and may they take root.

The Seven Branches

(Yan.lag dun.pa)

GO.SUM <i>door three</i>	G'Ü.PÄI <i>respect from</i>	GO.NÄ CH'AG.TSÄL.LO <i>prostrate</i>	
NGÖ.SHAM <i>real perform</i>	YI.TRÜL <i>mind transformed</i>	CH'Ö.TRIN <i>offering cloud</i>	MA.LÜ.BÜL <i>every and all offer</i>
T'O.ME <i>originally beginning</i>	NÄ.SAG <i>from collected</i>	DIG.TUNG <i>sin fall</i>	
T'AM.CHÄ.SHAG <i>all confess</i>			
KYE.P'AG <i>ordinary noble</i>	GE.WA <i>virtue all</i>	NAM.LA <i>rejoice</i>	JE.YI.RANG
K'OR WA <i>to cycle</i>	MA.DONG <i>negative void</i>	B'AR.D'U <i>until</i>	LEG.ZHUG.NÄ <i>well exists and</i>
DRO.LA <i>sentient beings</i>	CH'Ö.GY'I K'OR.LO KOR.WA.D'ANG <i>Dharma to cycle (wheel) turning and</i>		
DAG.ZHÄN <i>I other</i>	GE.NAM <i>virtue all</i>	J'ANG.CH'UB CH'EN.POR.NGO <i>Enlightenment great dedicate</i>	

(I prostrate with body, speech and mind in faith: each and every offering (I make) including those really performed and those mentally transformed; every sin collected from the beginninglessness of samsaric life is confessed (offered); I rejoice in all ordinary beings' and Noble Beings' actions; please Buddha, by living as our guide until samsara ends (the void of samsara); reveal the Teachings to sentient beings; I dedicate my own virtues and those of others to the great Enlightenment.)

The seven actions of this very profound prayer come in every puja:

1. Prostration counteracts pride.
2. Offering counteracts greed.
3. Confession is the antidote for the three poisons of greed, ignorance and hatred.
4. Rejoicing in the virtues of others counteracts jealousy and envy. It creates much good karma. We should rejoice even at someone offering only one stick of incense. This keeps the mind always happy.
5. Asking Buddha to exist until samsara ends causes us to live longer (for gaining realizations) and purifies negative karmas created with Gurus, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.
6. Asking Buddha to reveal the Teachings purifies the negative karmas created by avoiding Dharma, by carelessness such as stepping over books or leaving them on the floor or in a dirty place, or by underestimating the value of Dharma.
7. Dedication destroys the selfish negative mind, and preserves the merits created by virtuous deeds so that they are not destroyed by the worst poisonous minds, anger and heresy. Thus, the merits we have created for ourselves and others are never lost.

Dedication helps to purify delusions and illusions (gross and subtle superstitions), the two minds which prevent our attaining Enlightenment.

To make any positive action pure and perfect, we should:

have right impulse,
perform it correctly, and
dedicate the merits.

The perfect, powerful puja has these three aspects.

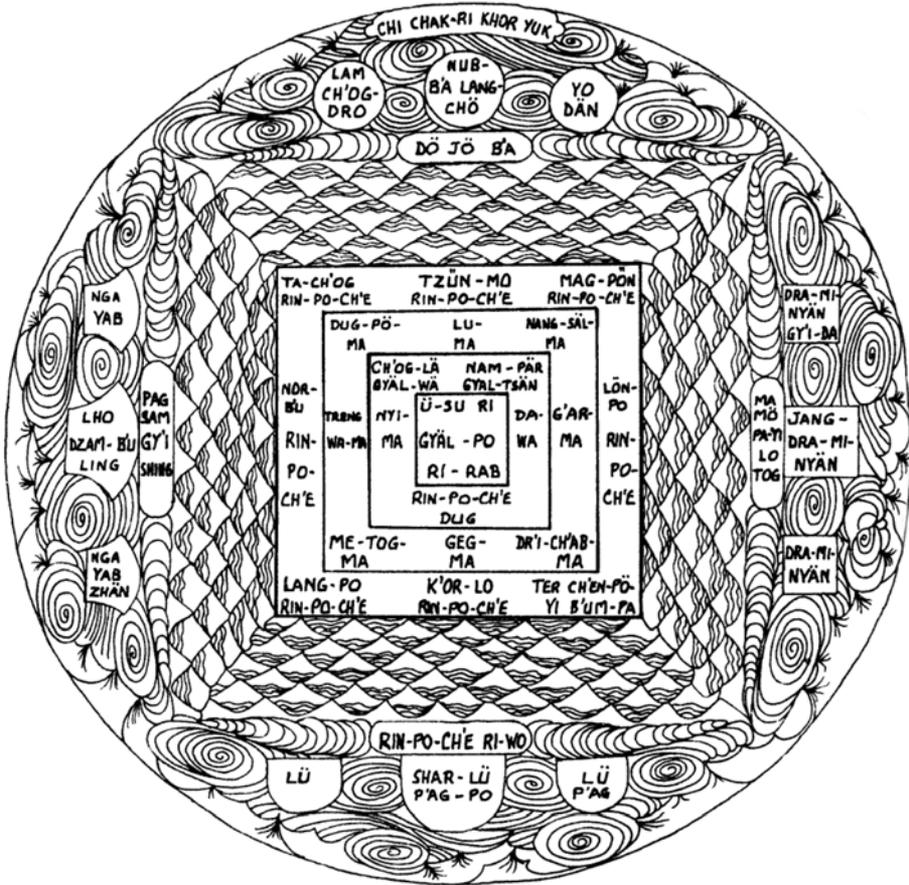


Figure 4 – The Mandala

Mandala Offering

A void, dark emptiness was before all time. From within this nothingness came a wind, gentle and quiet. From east and south, west and north, it filled the void, growing in power with the passing years. After many, many years, the wind became thick and heavy, forming *Dor.je gya.dram*, a great double Vajra in the form of a cross.

From the Vajra came clouds, one upon the other, growing thick and heavy, as did the Vajra wind. Then, from the clouds came the great rain. Each drop as big across as a wagon wheel, each drop enough to cause a flood. For countless years the great rain fell, and when it had stopped falling it had created *Gya.tso*, the primeval ocean.

When *Gya.tso* was still, its surface smooth and quiet, there came once again a wind, gentle and smooth, like *Gya.tso*, moving the face of the waters softly back and forth. As the churning of milk brings forth cream to the surface, so the moving of the waters caused a light foam, *Wang.ch'en ser.gy'i sa.zhi*, which covered them becoming heavier as the wind grew in strength, until the foam was heavy and yellow, like the milk given by a mother cow when her child is born. And, as cream becomes butter, so from the ocean was earth created.

The earth arose like a mountain, around the top of which blew the tireless winds, covering the peaks with clouds. When the rain fell once more, the water it dropped was salty—and so, ocean upon ocean, our universe was made.

In the centre was the great mountain, *Ri.rab lhün.po*, a four-sided column of precious stones, the abode of gods. Around it lay a lake, and around the lake, a circle of golden mountains. Beyond the golden mountains was another lake, encircled again in turn. In all, there were lakes and seven rings of golden mountains, the innermost being the mightiest. Seven times earth, seven times water. Beyond the outer

mountains lay the outer ocean, *Ch'i Gya.tso*. It is in *Ch'i Gya.tso* that the four worlds are found, like islands, each with its own shape and different nature. The world of the south is pointed downward, like a cone; the western world is circular; the wealthy land of the north is square in shape; and the eastern world is a crescent. On each side of each world is a smaller island, of similar shape: four worlds and eight islands. This was the universe, and it was dark.

To *Ri.rab lhün.po* came the gods and demigods. They divided the mountains between them, into different levels, the highest being the most blessed. The centre of the universe was like our world, with hills and valleys, rivers and streams, with trees and flowers, and beautiful things; but everything was more beautiful than we can imagine, being most beautiful at the top. There lived the *Lha*, the embodied gods, but even they, like us, must suffer and die.

Far above the universe of the worlds of desire and form of *Ri.rab lhün.po* exist other heavenly worlds, the formless universe of *Zug.me k'am*. In the mountain itself, in its lower regions, are the six worlds of *Dö.k'am*, the universe of desires. Above this lie the seventeen formed worlds of *Zug.k'am*, peopled with gods embodied, on whom we can call when in need.

Of *Ri.rab lhün.po* there is more knowledge. This mountain has a tree, rising up through its very centre, bursting into flower and fruit at the top. The mountain is populated by gods and demigods, living at four different levels of the mountainside. Those at the top are the most powerful. You can pray to these gods, to be born amongst them on *Ri.rab lhün.po*. But each level is more powerful than the level below, and constant fighting is the suffering of these gods, for the demigods of the lowest level say that the tree does not grow only on the top of *Ri.rab lhün.po*, but that it has its roots way down at their level and is nourished from the base of the mountain; so that they are entitled to a share of its wonderful fruits. Therefore, with the gods of the other two lower levels they all fight, to force their way to the top of the mountain to claim their share of the fruit, and even to *Ri.rab* there is suffering.

Ri.rab lhün.po is the centre of our universe, and each of its four sides looks out across the seven lakes and the seven rings of golden

mountains, the four worlds. The gods on the side of *Ri.rab lhün.po* facing south are guards; those facing northward look after the northern world; and the worlds of east and west are the same. It is said that the chief of the northern gods, and the guardian of the northern quarter is *Nam.t'ö.sä*; the guardians of the east and the west are *Yül.k'or.kyong* and *Chän.mi.zang*. The guardian of the southern gate, facing our world of *Dzam.b'u ling* is *P'ag.kye.po*.

After *Dzam.b'u ling* was created, a *prak.cha* tree grew up in the middle of a river. When its fruit was ripe it would fall into the water, making a noise that sounded like “*dzambu*.” Many *lu* (water creatures) lived in that river, and they ate the fruit of the *prak.cha* tree. Their excrement turned to gold, so wonderful was the fruit. The best gold in our world comes from the water of the *prak.cha* tree, and our world takes its name from the sound of the falling fruit. Now we do not know where the river with the tree is, but it is here somewhere.

The original human beings, because of their power and greatness, did not need to work. Food was there for the taking; there was no famine, no hunger even. There was no sickness, and the gods lived a long time, far longer than any of us can live. Their power was received from *sam.tän.sa*, and deep meditation, in which creation issues from the mind. Their power was such that there was no need for light; each god's body was his own light, and by his own power his body glowed like a heavenly body.

After many years of content in *Dzam.b'u ling*, one of the gods noticed a kind of fat, like cream, called *sa.ch'a*. This fat came from the earth itself. Touching and tasting it, the god found it good and told others to try it. The gods from *Ri.rab lhün.po* began to eat the *sa.ch'a* rather than other foods. The more they ate, the more their powers diminished, and the light they created became more feeble. Finally, when all the *sa.ch'a* was gone, they had lost their long life, and they had lost their light, for they had lost the power of *sam.tän.sa*. They lived in darkness. Then, due to karma, the sun, stars and moon came into existence, and the human beings depended on the sun and the moon and the stars for light.

They ate a corn like plant called *nyu.g'u*, which bore large fruits. Each day, each person took one fruit, and the next day there was

another ready for him. Thus, there was no hunger or famine; it was still a world of plenty. Each person had his own *nyu.g'u* plant. One day, a greedy person, finding that his *nyu.g'u* had provided two fruits, plucked and ate them both. The following day there was no fruit at all and he became hungry—so hungry that he took someone else's fruit. The latter, having no food, became hungry in turn, so he took the fruit from yet another person's *nyu.g'u* plant. Soon everyone was forced to take what was not his, and in this way theft came into our world. So also came work, for everyone had to start planting so that he would have enough food even if some were stolen from him.

All this time, these people, who had been gods, were in the shape of men. But once they started stealing, and the planting, they began to feel and think strange things. One man felt that his genitals were troubling him; he found them uncomfortable so he tore them from his body. In this way he became a woman. Having contact with men, she gave birth to children, and from them came more children; and soon the world was filled with men and women, all having more children.

With so many people, there was more and more difficulty in finding enough food, and in finding places to live. Instead of living together peacefully, each family began to look after its own needs, no longer bothering about the others—and they soon began fighting each other. After much fighting the people came together in a huge assembly and determined to end the fighting. They chose a leader, and called him *Mang.kur*, meaning “many people made him king.”

Once made king, *Mang.kur* taught the people. He taught them how to build houses, telling that each family should have its own house and its own fields, each family planting, growing and reaping its own food. In this way we became subject to the round of life and death, for while living we must work, fight, steal and get sick. Thus the world was created.

The sun, moon and stars, the sky and the clouds are not seen by the other worlds. Nor can we see those worlds or travel to them, unless we have supernatural powers. Some of us may have come from them. They have people living on them, but these are very different from us.

Lü.p'ag is the eastern world, shaped like a half moon. The people living there are giants, with moon like faces. They live for three hundred years. They are not like us because they do not fight. They are quiet and peaceful. But they have no real religion. The average size is eight cubits tall, double our size.

The western world is *B'a.lang chö*, shaped like the sun. The people there are like those on *Lü.p'ag*, though their faces are round and they are sixteen cubits tall, and live for five hundred years. *B'a.lang chö* is a land of cattle—many, many cattle, and the people eat mostly butter and cheese.

North of *Ri.rab lhün.po* and furthest away from our own world of *Dzam.b'u ling* is *Dra.mi.nyän*. Unlike *Lü.p'ag* and *B'a.lang chö* *Dra.mi.nyän* is square in shape. People there have square faces, like horses; they are thirty two cubits tall and live for a thousand years. There is no fighting and no work. *Dra.mi.nyän* is the land of plenty where food grows in abundance and needs no tending. When you are born on *Dra.mi.nyän* you are born with everything you need. Never in your lifetime need you look for clothes, shelter or food. When you die on *Dra.mi.nyän*, your wealth dies with you. It is a land of quiet, peace and bliss, for the whole thousand years; for all continents but our own, the life span is set. Only the last seven days are evil for these people, for *Dra.mi.nyän* is also the land of the unpleasant voice. Seven days before you die you receive a sign. The clothes that have always been kept fine and clean for you become dusty and torn. Decay sets in. You hear the chilling voice of death whispering in your ear, a sound that brings the first pain in a thousand years, telling you that now the time to die has come. The voice whispers to you and tells you how you are going to meet your death, where you will be sent afterwards, what hells and sufferings are in store for you. For nearly a thousand years the people who live on *Dra.mi.nyän* do not know suffering, want, pain or fear. For the last seven days of the thousand years they know more suffering than we know in a lifetime.

Size and Particulars of the Mandala

1. *Lü.p'ag* (east) – This world has a white sky because that face of *Ri.rab lhün.po* is composed of silver. The size is two thousand *pag.tsä* across, and its name—“body longer (double body)”—applies to its inhabitants, who are much taller than those in the southern world.
2. *Dzam.b'u ling* (south) – This is a blue continent because the colour of the jewel, lapis lazuli, of which that face of *Ri.rab lhün.po* is composed, is reflected in the sky. The size of this world is two thousand *pag.tsä* across.
3. *B'a.lang chö* (west) – This world has a red sky, reflecting the jewel ruby. Its size is two thousand *pag.tsä* wide, and the name means “cow enjoyments.”
4. *Dra.mi.nyän* (north) – The northern world has a golden sky because of the jewel sapphire on Mount Meru. The size is two thousand *pag.tsä*, and the name means “uninteresting sound.” The names of the mountains are:
 1. *Nyä.shing.dzin*
 2. *Shäl.da.dzin*
 3. *Seng.deng.chän*
 4. *Ta.na.dug*
 5. *Ta.na*
 6. *Nam.dü*
 7. *Mu.ky'ü.dzin*

The position of the worlds with Mount Meru at centre: the east always faces the chest of the person, i.e.,

	west	
south		north
	east	

Description of Offerings

All offerings made in a mandala are visualised around Mount Meru. Each thing offered is the best possible for that particular world, and gives the greatest happiness to the beings who live there.

Base plate

1. Precious mountain. East.

This is made of the seven most precious things: gold, silver, lapis lazuli, coral, gems, diamonds and pearls.

2. Wish-granting tree. South.

This is of infinite dimensions, and is also composed of the seven precious jewels: the roots are gold; the stem, silver; the branches, lapis lazuli; the leaves, coral; the buds, gems; the flowers, pearl; and the fruit, diamond.

3. Wish-fulfilling cow. West.

This is composed of precious jewels, and grants all wishes. The horns are of diamond, the hooves of sapphire, and the tail is like the great tree. The colour of the cow is red yellow and its beauty is magnificent. The cow gives all things, such as meat, milk, etc.

4. Crops that need no cultivation. North.

These crops are absolutely perfect. The fruit has no skin or covering, is clean, easy to pick, tasty, beautiful to the eye, and completely satisfies all desires.

5. Precious wheel. East.

This wheel is the perfect chariot. It is extremely bright, made of gold, and has one thousand spokes. It can roll for one hundred thousand pag.tsä and carries universal monarch to any part of the mandala.

First level

6. Precious jewel. South.

This is composed of lapis lazuli and has eight sides, each perfectly smooth. The jewel is as bright as a sun and emits five rays that can be seen from one thousand *pag.tsä*, and these rays have the power to make us cool when hot or warm when cold. It can bring all success and keeps beings from illness or an untimely death.

7. Precious queen. West.

She is extremely beautiful, has a camphor scented body and upala breath, and is dressed in perfect clothing. She can confer the power to achieve all success and guides beings from sadness and physical pain. She has no greed for or miserliness with men or other objects, and has the eight perfect qualities of a lady: harmonious mind, bearing only sons as children, high caste and noble birth, having no jealousy for other women, never gossiping or heretical (having ignorant beliefs), and not being affected by objects of the senses.

8. Precious minister. North.

He possesses the eye of a god and can see for one hundred *pag.tsä*. He desires to do only good for people, always acting with love and never with treachery, and he directs his will to accomplish Dharma projects to benefit all beings.

9. Precious elephant. Southeast.

It is as large as a mountain, and has the strength of one thousand ordinary elephants. Its trunk, tail, and testicles touch the earth. It has the ability to travel three times around the mandala in one day without shaking the rider's body. It reads the rider's mind, is completely obedient and conquers all opposing forces. Being peaceful, it cannot cause harm to other beings.

10. Precious horse. Southwest.

It is white in colour and of perfect shape. It already has all equipment; saddle and all ornaments are covered with the jewels of the

gods. It can travel around the whole mandala three times in one day. It never becomes tired and is completely free from all sickness.

11. Precious general. Northwest

He never harms others, having abandoned all irreligious actions, but he can never be defeated in battle. He has the power to know the exact wishes of the ruler, never tiring in his service. He can lead his armies on elephant, horse chariot or on foot.

12. Great treasure vase. Northeast

This is made of gold, having all sorts of jewels decorating it. The base is flat and the middle is very large, rising to a long neck which is decorated with a cloth from the realm of the gods. For a stopper it has an extremely beautiful tree, which retains much water inside the pot. The pot contains all manner of treasures, providing whatever we desire.

Second level

13. Beauty goddess. East

She is white in colour, and stands in an s shaped dancing position, with her hands on her hips and holding two vajras.

14. Garland goddess. South.

She is yellow in colour, extremely beautiful and at her breast holds a rosary made of precious vajras, with both hands. With this she gives initiation to all who come before her.

15. Music goddess. West.

She is pink and plays a violin as she sings. She offers this music to all beings.

16. Dancing goddess. North.

She is of many colours: her face and feet are white, her neck and upper chest are pink, her hands and hips are white blue, and her thighs are white yellow. She holds a vajra in each hand, the right on top of her head and the left on her hip.

17. Flower goddess. Southeast.

She is brilliant yellow and holds a vase with a vajra inside it in her left hand. It also contains all types of beautiful flowers and she casts these in the air with her right hand.

18. Incense goddess. Southwest.

She is white in colour and carries an incense pot in her right hand at shoulder level. This incense gives complete satisfaction to whomever it is offered. Her left hand is in a special mudra also at shoulder height: the two end fingers point up in the air, the palm faces forward, and the thumb holds the two middle fingers down.

19. Light goddess. Northwest.

She is pink and holds a beautiful lamp on her left shoulder with her right arm, which comes over the top of her head. Her left hand is at her heart.

20. Perfume goddess. Northeast.

She is like a rainbow, and with her left hand holds a conch shell containing a vajra at her heart. With her right hand, she sprinkles the water in all directions.

21. Sun. South

This sun is like a disc or cushion which is fifty *pag.tsä* wide and five and ten eighteenth high. It is like a magnifying glass which can dispel all darkness—the gross and subtle delusions of beings. On this sun is a golden fence going around the edge, with stairs leading to a palace at its centre, where all the sons and daughters of the gods are singing and dancing.

22. Moon. North

The moon is of the same size as the sun, but its cool light only has the power to dispel the gross delusions of beings. There is also a similar palace enclosed by a golden fence, where the children of the gods sing and dance.

23. Precious umbrella. East.

It is white in colour, with a jewel handle, spokes of gold, and a sapphire top with a border and fringe of pearls.

24. Victory banner of all directions. West.

This has three pieces of material hanging down on a handle made of jewels, and at the top is a half moon. From the banner hang many small bells which have a very pleasing sound. This banner makes us victorious in all lands.

All the offerings, with the exception of the sun, moon, victory banner, umbrella and all the offering goddesses are piled up to the base of the golden hills. Above the hills are the offering goddesses and above them are the four remaining offerings. Filling the rest of the space are all the merits we have accumulated from the three periods of time—past, present and future—in the form of infinite enjoyments for all beings living in the mandala. We repeat the last part of the mandala prayer while holding the mandala plate at heart level.

How the wheat is placed on the mandala plate:

First, we wipe out all evil from the plate by rubbing our arm three times clockwise. Then we rub the plate three times counter-clockwise to place all goodness into the plate. Then beginning the prayer, we place wheat at the centre and around the outer edge of the plate, which blesses the offering, then again at the centre of the place for Mount Meru, and, accordingly, as the places on the plate are called.

Outer Mandala

OM VAJRA BHUMI AH HUM
Blessing the foundation diamond ground Holy Body, Speech and Mind

WANG.CH'EN SER.GY'I SA.ZHI
great golden ground

OM VAJRA REKHE AH HUM
iron fence

CH'I.CHAG.RI.K'OR YUG.GY'I KOR.WÄ Ü.SU
outer iron fence circle of surrounding in centre

RI GYÄL.PO RIRAB,
Mount king Meru

SHAR LU.P'AG.PO, LHO DZAM.B'U.LING,
east body higher south this world

NUB B'A.LANG.CHÖ, J'ANG DRA.MI.NYÄN,
west cow enjoy north sound not sweet

LÜ.D'ANG LÜ.P'AG, NGA.YAB.D'ANG NHA.YAB.ZHÄN,
two small quarters of east two small quarters of south

YO.DÄN.D'ANG LAM.CH'OG.DRO DRA MI NYÄN.D'ANG
 DRA.MI. NYÄN GY'I.DA
two quarters of west two small unimaginable quarters of north

RIN.PO.CH'E RI.WO, PAG.SAM GY'I.SHING, DÖ.JÖ.B'A,
treasure mountain wish-granting tree wish-granting cow
 MA.MÖ.PA.YI LO.TOG, K'OR.LO RIN.PO.CH'E,
crops that need no cultivation wheel precious

NOR.B'U RIN.PO.CH'E, TZÜN.MO RIN.PO.CH'E, LÖN.PO RIN.
 PO.CH'E,
jewel precious queen precious minister precious

LANG.PO RIN.PO.CH'E, TA.CH'OG RIN.PO.CH'E, MAG.PÖN
 RIN.PO.CH'E,
elephant precious horse best precious general precious

TER CH'EN.PÖ.YI B'UM PA, GEG.MA, TR'ENG.WA.MA,
treasure pot beauty goddess garland goddess

LU.MA, G'AR.MA, ME.TOG.MA, DUG.PÖ.MA,
song goddess dance goddess flower goddess incense goddess

NANG.SÄL.MA, DR'I.CH'AB.MA, NYI.MA, DA.WA
light goddess perfume goddess sun moon

RIN.PO.CH'E DUG CH'OG.LÄ NAM.PAR GYÄL.WÄ GYÄL.
 TSÄN,
precious umbrella banner of victory in all directions

Ü.SU.LHA.D'ANG.MI PÄL.JOR P'ÜN.SUM TSOG.PA,
in centre gods and men possessions perfect gather

MA.TSANG.WA ME.PA, TZANG ZHING YID.D'U WONG.
 WA
not missing without complete beautiful

DI.D'AG DR'IN.CH'ENTZA.WA D'ANG GYÜ.
 PAR
there kind principal Guru and lineage

CHÄ.PÄ PÄL.DÄN LA.MA D'AM.PA N A M .
 D'ANG,
having magnificent Guru Holy all and

CH'EN.PO LHA.TSOG K'OR.D'ANG CHA.PÄ NAM.LA
great gods assembly surrounding and all to

ZHING.GAM ÜL.WAR.GYIO
offering

T'UG.JE DRO.WÄ D'ÖN.D'U ZHE.SU.SÖL,
compassionate one all beings for accept

ZHE.NÄ DAG.SOG DRO.WA MAR.GY'UR
after accepting me so on sentient beings become mother

NAM.K'Ä T'A.D'ANG NYAM.PÄ SEM.CHÄN T'AM.CHÄ.LA
sky edge and equal sentient beings all to

T'UG.TZE.WACH'EN.PÖ GO.NÄ J'IN.GY'I LAB.TU.SÖL.
Holy compassion great with please grant blessings

SA.ZHI PÖ.KYI J'UG.SHING ME.TOG.TRAM.
ground incense put over flowers also

RI.RAB LING.ZHI NYI.DÄ GYÄN.PA.DI.
Mount Meru worlds four sun moon adorn this

SANG.GYÄ ZHING.D'U MIG.TE ÜL.WAR GYI
Buddha realm to visualised offering

DRO.KÜN NAM.D'AG ZHING.LA CHO.PAR.SHOG.
all beings pure realm in enjoying

TÖN.PA LA.NAME.PÄ TÄN.PA.D'ANG.
Founder higher not teaching and

JÄL.WA DI.DRA LA.MÄ DR'IN.YIN.PÄ
meet this such Lama's kindness is by

GE.WA DI.YANG DRO.WA MA.LÜ.PA.
Virtue this even living beings each and every

SHE.NYEN D'AM.PÄ DZIN.PÄ GYU.RU.NGO
Guru holy hold cause for dedicate

OM IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM NIRYATAYAMI.

(Om Vajra bhumi ah hum

Here is the mighty and powerful base of gold.

Om Vajra rekhe ah hum

Here is the diamond hard fence.

The outer ring is encircled with this iron fence.

In the centre of which stands Mount Meru,
the king of all mountains.

In the east is the continent Purva Videha.

In the south is the continent Jambudvipa.

In the west is the continent Aparā Godaniya.

In the north is the continent Uttarakuru.

Around the east the sub continents Deha and Videha.

Around the south the sub continents Chamara and Aparā Chamara.

Around the west the sub continents Satha and Uttara Mantrina.

Around the north the sub continents Kurava and Kaurava.

In the east is the treasure mountain.

In the south is the wish-granting tree.

In the west is the wish-granting cow.

In the north is the unplowed harvest.

Here is the precious wheel.

Here is the precious jewel.

Here is the precious queen.

Here is the precious minister.

Here is the precious elephant.

Here is the precious and best of horses.

Here is the precious general.

Here is the precious vase.

Here is the goddess of beauty.

Here is the goddess of garlands

Here is the goddess of song.

Here is the goddess of dance.

Here is the goddess of flowers.

Here is the goddess of incense.

Here is the goddess of light.

Here is the goddess of perfume.

Here is the sun.

Here is the moon.

Here is the umbrella of all precious things.

Here is the banner of victory in all the directions.

In the centre are all the possessions precious to both gods and men.

This magnificent and glorious collection,

Lacking in nothing,

I offer to you, my most kind root Guru,

Together with you venerable and holy lineage Gurus.

And to you, Lama Je Tzong.k'a.pa,

To you, the Buddha, and to you Vajradhara,

Together with the entire assembly of gods.

Out of your great compassion

Please accept all these offerings

For the sake of the welfare of all sentient beings.

And after accepting them bestow on me please

And on numberless mothers as vast as all space

Your true inspiration with loving compassion.

By the virtue of offering to you assembly of Buddhas

Visualised before me, this mandala built on a base

Resplendent with flowers, saffron water and incense,

Adorned with Mount Meru and the four continents,

As well as the sun and the moon,
 May all sentient beings share in its good effects.
 It is solely from the kindness of the Gurus who have taught me
 That I have come to be acquainted with the peerless Buddha words,
 Thus I dedicate this merit so that every sentient being
 May be cared for in the future by most kind and holy Gurus.
 I send forth this jewelled mandala to you precious Gurus.)

Inner Mandala

DAG.G'I	CHAG.DANG	MONG.SUM	KYE.PÄ.YÜL
My	greed	hate	ignorance
		three	born of object
DRA.NYEN	BAR.SUM	LÜ.D'ANG	LONG.CHÖ.CHÄ
enemy	friend	stranger	three
		body and	possessions, etc.
P'ANG.PA	ME.PAR	B'ÜL.GY'I	LEG.ZHE.NÄ
miserly	attachment	without	offering
			take well and enjoy
D'UG.SUM	RANG.SAR	DR'ÖL.WAR	J'IN.GY'I.LOB
three	poisons	separately	to release
			please bless

(Please enjoy well, and bless me and all sentient beings to be released from the three poisonous minds, for I am offering without attachment my body; enemy, friend and stranger; and all possessions which are the object of my greed, ignorance and hatred.)

This inner mandala is offered mainly to control our greed, ignorance and hatred, which cause us to discriminate other beings as friend, stranger and enemy. In this prayer, our three negative minds and the objects they discriminate with attachment, indifference and aversion, and all our possessions are offered in the form of our body and transformed into the mandala (Shunyata). As all this belongs only to the Guru Buddha, there is no reason to feel either attachment or aversion to these things.

Transforming our body into the mandala:

Our skin is transformed into a golden fountain.

Our blood is transformed into an ocean of nectar.

Our flesh becomes beautiful garlands of flowers.

Our hands and feet are transformed into the four great worlds, and the upper and lower parts of our arms and legs become the eight small quarters.

Our stomach is transformed into Mount Meru.

Our head is a beautiful palace; our eyes, the sun and the moon.

Our heart is transformed into a beautiful jewel.

All our inner organs become beautiful possessions and enjoyments for humans, asuras and suras.

Material offerings must be made to please ordinary beings, but our mind, renouncing the three poisons, is the best offering to the Guru Buddha. He is pleased not for himself but for us, as our achievement is the only way to Liberation. The essential meaning of giving up is not to give up the material object, but the attachment to it. This is difficult when there is no understanding and the mind is not free. A renounced mind makes the best offering.

This is the Heart of the Mahayana Teaching: nothing is possessed by ourselves—we belong to every sentient being. By this practice attachment is made to lose its grip and makes no sense.

The Teachings of the Direct Meditations

*A prayer including the salient points
of the Graduated Path.*

Refuge

I take Refuge in the Holy Guru who is the essence of all Buddhas, the originator of the granting of all Holy Teachings (realizations and holy words, orders of the Buddha), and Lord of all Supreme Beings.

Prayer for success in Dharma practice and in following the Guru Buddha

Please, all you Guru Buddhas, bestow upon me the ability to transform my mind in the Dharma and to be successful in practising Dharma for receiving the Graduated Path. May no hindrance occur in receiving the Path.

Prayer of the being of lower intelligence

Please bless me to realize that I have received a perfect human rebirth which is highly meaningful, for many reasons difficult to obtain, but perishable, transient and fragile, decaying in the shortest second because of its changeable nature. Thus, my death is definite but its actual time is most indefinite, and after death I am far more likely to be reborn in the lower suffering realms, having created infinitely more negative than positive karma in this and all previous lifetimes. Please bless me to comprehend how incredibly unendurable is the suffering of the three lower realms, that I might take Refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha with all my heart, and to realize the evolution of karma in its profundity that I might perform only virtuous actions and abandon all negative creations.

Prayer of the being of medium intelligence

By practising in this way I may be reborn in the upper realms, but would still have to experience unlimited samsaric suffering because of uncontrolled delusion and karma.

Please bestow upon me the ability to realize fully the evolution of samsara, from uncontrolled rebirth to death to rebirth, and to be able to follow, night and day, the three higher practices of the Path: higher Conduct, higher Concentration and higher Wisdom, which are the main methods to release me from samsara.

Prayer of the being of higher intelligence

1. To achieve the Sutra Path (Paramitayana).

As each sentient being has been my mother, and as most of them are in extreme suffering, please grant me blessings to bring success to all by renouncing the perfect happiness of self (the Hinayana ideal), and by practising the Bodhisattvas' deeds of the six Paramitas with a Bodhisattva's mind (exchanging oneself with others) on the basis of the Equilibrium Meditation.

2. To achieve the Tantric Path (Vajrayana or Mantrayana).

Thus shall I have no sorrow in experiencing the samsaric sufferings of all other sentient beings for no matter how long, having trained my mind in the general path.

Please, grant me blessings to be able to follow the quick Vajrayana Teachings, by feeling sentient beings' suffering—very unimaginably unbearable for even the shortest second—as my own, and to be able to achieve the attainment of Guru Shakyamuni immediately, at this very moment, by keeping the ordinations and orders of the Guru with the best and highest care in life.

For all these reasons shall I meditate on the Graduated Path.

Meditation

1. We should check within before checking externally

People the world over believe that happiness depends on and is derived from external factors. The Dharma teaches that everything is created by mind and that to understand and solve problems we should check within our minds before checking externally. To do so correctly, we need the various experiences of the Graduated Path to Enlightenment.

We should look in a mirror to see if our face is clean or not. Then we should use an effective method, such as soap and water, to clean the dirty face, and not try to do it by breaking or enlarging the mirror. Since infinite time we have been trying to resolve problems through external instead of mental methods: it is impossible to find relief in this way.

2. The posture during meditation

There are seven physical disciplines to be observed while we meditate in the sitting position. By placing the body in this posture as taught by the great Guru *Marpa*, we leave a deep impression on the mind, and this prepares us for the achievement of Enlightenment in the essence of the Dhyana Buddha, Vairocana (*Nam. nang*)—the Buddha of the fully purified skandha of form.

- a. The best way to sit is in the full lotus position (*vajrasana*).

The buttocks are on a flat cushion and the legs crossed, with the dorsum of each foot lying on the opposite thigh. If this is impossible, then the half lotus position (*padmasana*)—left foot on the floor and right foot on left thigh—should be assumed, and if this cannot be done then Green

Tara's posture—both feet on the floor—is acceptable. In all cases the right leg is crossed in front of the left.

If we can manage none of these then we should just cross the legs as comfortably as possible, but our posture should always be respectful as we are in the presence of the Buddha. Leaning back against the wall, for instance, is disrespectful.

- b. The hands rest lightly in front of the body, the left lying palm upward on the lap and the back of the right on the upturned left palm. The hands are open and the fingers together; The thumb tips meet above the palm. The arms are relaxed and slightly rounded, and held a little way away from the body.
- c. The back must be kept straight—this is very important. Not only does it prevent back ache but also the mind becomes clearer and more alert; there are less distractions and it is easier to meditate. This is because the nadis are also kept straight.
- d. The eyes should be half closed, and the gaze should be directed down the line of the nose towards its tip. If the eyes are completely closed we may become sleepy and sluggish, but we can close them if it is disturbing not to do so.
- e. The jaw is relaxed and the teeth slightly apart. The lips are together.
- f. The tip of the tongue touches the back of the upper teeth. This becomes very useful later in our practice—as the mind is held in concentration the flow of saliva increases, so with the tongue in this position there is no need to swallow frequently.
- g. The neck is slightly bent forward. But, if bent too much, sinking and sluggishness will arise, and if kept straight, there may be scattering, agitation and distraction.

3. The mind during meditation

a. The agitated mind

Sometimes our mind is scattered, unable to hold the object of concentration and distracted by superstitions (delusions) in the form of disturbing thoughts and images. To cheat and relax this restless mind we can use one of two methods.

- i. Suppressing all other thoughts, we concentrate fully on our breath:

We breathe in through the right nostril and out through the left, three times.

We breathe in through the left nostril and out through the right, three times.

We breathe in and out through both nostrils together, three times.

Having quieted our mind in this way we commence the meditation.

- ii. We visualise that our mind is enclosed within a round seed, the size of a mustard seed (o), which is divided into two hemispheres, the upper white and lower red, and situated in the central nadi at the height of the navel. We concentrate on this until our mind is quiet, and can then commence the meditation.

This is a method used by Tibetan yogis.

b. The drowsy mind

When our mind is sluggish and we experience sinking, unclear or dark visualisation or lack of energy to concentrate, we can visualise that our mind is enclosed within a small bean in the central nadi at the height of the navel. This is then shot upwards through the central nadi, which is seen as a transparent glass tube, and, like an arrow, is ejected from the body through the crown of the head. The bean opens and our mind is released to become one with all encompassing space. We concentrate on this for some time and can then return to the meditation.

This is a special technique used by the great Tibetan yogi
P'a.d'am.ṭa sang.gyā.

4. **Since we always desire to profit and never desire to lose we should understand the extreme importance of being motivated by the right impulse**

Before trying to perform any virtuous action we should check our mind. Virtuous actions create Enlightenment and unvirtuous actions create samsara: such actions are created by the mind; therefore, Enlightenment and samsara are also mentally dependent.

What sort of mind is responsible for unvirtuous actions? It is the negative mind, that which is greedy, ignorant or angry, attached to the happiness of the temporal life. And so it is this mind that only ties us to continual samsaric suffering and causes us to fall into the suffering of the three lower realms.

But the mind that is not greedy, ignorant or angry is detached from temporal happiness, is pure and virtuous. This mind is the creator of supreme happiness, the utmost, right and perfect Enlightenment; any action it creates is virtuous and the fundamental Dharma practice.

Many of us have no idea of these vital points in the practice of Dharma, and the way we practise is by thinking, "I am a yogi, I am Holy, I am perfect." This is like being burnt in a fire and running around in it instead of escaping.

For our practice to become a Mahayana practice, it is not enough that the Teaching is a Mahayana Teaching and that our actions are virtuous ones. We practitioners must become Mahayanists, and this means our mind must be possessed by the Mahayana thought—cherishing others while giving up ourselves. If our basic impulse is involved with the self cherishing thought, even though it may be one of detachment from samsaric pleasure, it is still a lower, Hinayana thought.

The benefits of the Mahayana thought (Bodhicitta) are infinite. If this impulse motivates us to give just one bowl of food to a single

animal, the benefits are incomparably greater than those derived from offering worlds full of jewels to each and every sentient being with a mind devoid of such motivation.

Therefore, we should check within our mind. If we find we are attached to and concerned with the comfort of the temporal life, then we should think as follows:

“Since beginningless time this evil thought has been cheating me and causing me to suffer in the circle of samsara. But now, for once, I have been born human and have received the perfect human rebirth; I have met the Mahayana Teachings and a Guru showing them. If I follow this evil thought I shall waste this present precious chance, and it will continuously cheat me and cause me to suffer in future lifetimes. Therefore, I should destroy this evil thought completely, making it absolutely non-existent, and finish with spiteful, deluded, distracted minds forever. I must make the definite decision that never again shall I allow myself to be controlled by such evil thoughts.”

Then, breathing out through the right nostril, we visualise that these evil thoughts are expelled from our body in the form of black fog, passing beyond the farthest ocean and disappearing completely.

Breathing in through the left nostril, we visualise that the supreme Knowledge of the power, Wisdom and compassion and the blessings of the infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants and all the other Holy Beings—those who have transcended ordinary, worldly mentality—in the ten directions, enter our body in the form of pure, white light. Filled with their Knowledge and blessings, our mind and body experience infinite pleasure.

Concentrating on the breath, but breathing naturally, we do this three times. Then we repeat the exercise, inhaling through the right nostril and exhaling through the left three times. Finally, we repeat it three more times, breathing in and out through both nostrils together. While doing all this we should keep our mind as calm and as clear as possible.

5. Checking meditation

We, who lack the Wisdom of seeing the whole extensive concourse of the techniques of Dharma practice and who do not understand even what is meant by the practice of the Graduated Path, spend our time in ignorance, gossiping and wondering why we should need a Guru to explain the Teachings when there is a book that already does so.

But, to understand the Dharma correctly and to receive valid experiences, we must be shown the meditation techniques. A teacher is necessary for us to learn even basic handicrafts, so of course one is essential for us to train in the Path to Enlightenment. It is impossible to attain Buddhahood without a Guru.

The belief that any thought whatsoever is wrong, illusory and a disturbance to meditation and Enlightenment and should therefore be cut off is also a wrong conception. And another is the belief that checking meditation is required only while listening to discourses and not during meditation sessions.

If we spend our lives gossiping with such ideas in mind it is a terrible waste of time and the greatest hindrance to both our peace and our Enlightenment. If we are intelligent we can see that it is to our advantage to take care of our brain by not following these misconceptions.

The clever mind, wanting the easy, quick and perfect method of attaining Enlightenment, will follow Maitreya's instructions in the Teaching, *Do.da.gyen*:

At first, from listening correctly, understanding arises. Then, from becoming well habituated in right understanding, the Transcendental Wisdom enabling realization of right meaning arises.

Therefore, no matter what the subject or method, we should listen to those who have experience and right understanding. Then we should obtain full understanding of the subject heard by reference to pure quotations and through the use of logical analysis. When, having listened to and checked the subject, we have no doubt that

it is true, then we should make our mind habituated with it. This is called “meditation.”

Buddhist meditation can be divided into two types: checking meditation and one pointed meditation. It is skilful to train in both, but many people of inferior intelligence suffer from the greatly illusory misconception that all meditation is that of one pointedness. This belief is like that of the tourist who comes across a Tibetan whose name is “Lama,” who is married, drinks alcohol and makes business with statues and *t’ang.k’a’s*, and thinks that all Tibetan Lamas are like that.

The checking thought is extremely important in Dharma practice, whether Sutra or Tantra, just as it is necessary in temporal life—work and worldly politics. The three principal paths—fully renounced mind. Bodhicitta and right view (Shunyata)—are received through checking meditation. and without receiving them it is impossible to attain Enlightenment. This point has been shown clearly in all the Buddhist philosophical treatises from India and Tibet.

So, if we wish to receive the entire Graduated Path we must practice both types of meditation. Meditative Wisdom Arises from Thought Wisdom and Thought Wisdom arises from Listening Wisdom. Therefore it is important to first of all hear and then think about the correct subjects for the practice of meditation. As precious yogis have said: He who meditates without first listening is like an armless rock climber.

Listening to the Dharma is a greatly beneficial activity. We use a mirror to inspect our face for ugly marks and to observe its beauty once blemishes have been removed. The correct way to listen to the Teachings is analogous to this. We should use what we hear and read to see clearly our mental garbage of wrong conceptions and vices so that we may get rid of them, making our mind pure and free.

The practice of the whole Graduated Path has three divisions, according to our level of intelligence:

1. The path of the beings of higher intelligence. This includes the Sutra path—the practice of the six Paramitas and the development of Bodhicitta, and the practice of Samadhi and penetrative insight on the basis of Bodhicitta; and the Tantric path. This depends upon:
2. the path of the beings of medium intelligence. This includes the preparatory achievement of renunciation and the full understanding of samsaric suffering derived from meditating on the twelve dependent links. This depends upon:
3. the path of the beings of lower intelligence. This includes the preparatory achievement of understanding the perfect human rebirth, impermanence and death, the suffering of the three lower realms, Refuge and karma.

Meditation One: Part I

The Perfect Human Rebirth

From time without beginning until the present, in all my numberless previous lives, I have been dying and being reborn in the cycle of samsara, the six realms of suffering. Now I have received a perfect human rebirth which has eighteen attributes: the eight freedoms and the ten receptacles.

What is the Perfect Rebirth?

The eight freedoms (Tib., D'äl.wa.gyä)

These are conditions of existence out of the eight unfree states in which beings do not have the chance to practise Dharma.

Freedom from birth:

1. in the hells (Tib., *nyal.wa*; Skt., *narak*),
2. as a hungry spirit (Tib., *yi.d'ag*; Skt., *preta*),
3. as an animal (Tib., *d'ü.dro*),
4. as a long life god (Tib., *lha.tse.ring.po*) .

Although born human, freedom from being:

5. a barbarian (Tib., *la.lor*) in an irreligious country,
6. deaf (Tib., *wön.ba*),
7. a heretic (Tib., *log.ta.chän*), or
8. born during a time with no orders of Buddha, when Buddha has not descended (Tib., *yül.t'a.k'ob*).

If I am born in the three lower realms—*narak*, *preta* and animal—I have no freedom to practise Dharma because of the unimaginable suffering and deep ignorance that I continuously experience.

In the realm of the long life gods I have no freedom to practise Dharma because I am constantly distracted by objects of the senses and higher *samsaric* pleasures, or because of rebirth as a cognition-less god, unconscious from birth until death.

If a barbarian, I have no opportunity to meet the Dharma. If deaf, I cannot communicate with others properly, cannot hear the Teachings and cannot be ordained. If a heretic, I have no belief in the Dharma—the existence of past and future lives, of *karma*, of Absolute and relative truth—and no faith in the three Jewels: these wrong views give no freedom to practise Dharma.

If born in a period without the Buddha or his Teachings there is no freedom to practise Dharma because I cannot find it.

The ten receptacles (Endowments), (Tib., jor.pa.chu):

These are the chances I have received that give me the opportunity to practise the Dharma perfectly.

1. Birth as a human being.
2. Birth in the centre of a religious country.
3. Birth with perfect organs.
4. Avoidance of creating or having others create the five extreme negative actions: killing my mother, killing my father, killing an Arhant, wounding a Tathagata or causing disunity amongst the Sangha.
5. Belief in the practice of Dharma, the three divisions of the Teachings: The Vinaya, Sutra and Abhidharma.
6. Birth during a non-dark period.
7. Being shown the Teachings of the Buddha or his followers.
8. The existence of experienced Teachings—the still living realizations of the Buddha himself.

9. Following the path of the Buddha's Teachings.
10. Receiving the kindness and compassion of others, i.e., help for my Dharma practice: with temporal needs such as food or robes from a benefactor, and with Teachings from a compassionate Guru.

How is this Perfect Human Rebirth Useful?

This perfect human rebirth is extremely useful because it gives me the chance to achieve both ultimate and temporal goals, and allows me to create much merit, in a very short time. Thus:

1. This is the perfect chance definitely to end the continuous, beginningless suffering of bondage to the wheel of life, and to achieve Enlightenment. The perfect human rebirth makes Enlightenment possible by completing the collection of merits:
 - a. in three countless great aeons,
 - b. in eight great aeons,
 - c. in this lifetime, by increasing its length through the cooperative practice of Sutra and Tantra,
 - d. in this lifetime, even if short, through the practice of Tantra,
 - e. in twelve or even three years.
2. I can become a great Bodhisattva, having achieved infinite Knowledge.
3. I can become an Arhant, a supreme Being who has attained the complete cessation of suffering.
4. I can receive the Bodhicitta, the will to become Buddha for the sake of others.
5. I can achieve other realizations, such as true compassion, or fully renounced mind.
6. I could become the king of many universes through realizations.
7. As distinct from the above Dharma benefits, even worldly benefits can result, such as becoming the richest man in the world through having created good karma by being generous and giving lavishly to others.

This perfect human rebirth also gives many other possibilities, according to my interest. I could become a minister, scholar, doctor, judge, commercial artist, ski instructor, barman, hotel porter, secretary, etc. We could lead a free and happy life without one single possession, which is impossible for those people who believe that all pleasure is derived solely from material conditions and external phenomena. Actually, some of those deeply ignorant and confused beings really believe what they did in dreams or under the effect of drugs to be real.

Wasting this very precious human rebirth is many millions of times worse than losing universes full of precious jewels because:

1. It wastes the numberless lives spent trying to gain this precious rebirth, which has resulted from good karma, created by morality and charity. These virtues have been practised mainly in the human realms during several previous lives, each of which was the result of many others.
2. It wastes the present opportunity of gaining Enlightenment and achieving all other realizations.
3. It wastes the possibility of better future lives, in which I could have achieved realizations and attained Enlightenment, stopping all suffering.

Numberless jewels, as many as could fill numberless universes, could never have the value of this present perfect rebirth. If all the jewels I have possessed in all my past lives could fill an infinite space, what good would that do? If I really think deeply about it I can see that no real happiness would come from that because it is of no use in controlling this negative mind.

We must check up on our own past experiences or put ourselves in the position of a wealthy man to see how material possessions cannot help us put an end to suffering. It is important to deeply see and feel our own experience of such situations.

There are spirits called nagas, inhabiting the animal realm, who are very rich and possess many stores of jewels. (The naga spirits have bodies half human and half animal, or of other shapes; they can see

humans but most humans cannot see them.) We ourselves have had the experience of possessing such stores of jewels numberless times; we have possessed enough jewels to fill an endless space, yet no suffering has been cured. In the narak there are similar experienced beings, in great suffering.

The Eight Worldly Dharmas

1. Craving for pleasures of the six senses.
2. Craving to be free of the unpleasant.
3. Craving to hear sweet, ego pleasing words or sounds.
4. Craving to not hear ugly, displeasing words or sounds.
5. Craving to acquire material things.
6. Craving to avoid losing or not obtaining material things.
7. Craving for personal praise and admiration.
8. Craving to avoid personal slander, blame and criticism.

If I use this precious human rebirth only to gain the eight worldly dharmas or higher samsaric pleasures with self cherishing thought, I shall circle continuously in the six samsaric realms of unimaginable suffering, as I have circled since beginningless time in all my previous lives. The beginning of these lives is not even seen by the Buddha's Omniscient Mind let alone by the minds of ordinary beings, and if I continue to work for these things I shall continue to suffer in the circle of samsara.

Usually I am afraid of the slightest temporary physical sicknesses such as colds or headaches, of suffering from heat or cold, or of the pain of a too full or empty stomach; I find these things really unbearable and try to stop them by all kinds of temporal means.

On the other hand, I am not at all afraid of the greater sufferings I have experienced in past lives—those of rebirth and death and the many other unspeakable sufferings of the six samsaric realms that are caused by greed, ignorance and hatred. Neither to think or worry

about these sufferings, merely trying to stop those of the moment, only creates the cause for more future suffering. Such actions are extremely foolish and nonsensical—like those of a crazy person. I can have human thoughts and actions, yet I behave as a dumb animal.

Shantideva said:

The perfect human rebirth, the most difficult to find and a greatly beneficial foundation is, however, received by opportunity. If, while having the wisdom to know practice and avoidance, one again leads oneself to the narak, one is purposely making oneself ignorant.

If I care so much about any momentary sufferings and sicknesses why do I not care about the tremendous, continuous suffering of my future lives; why do I not worry about and try to eliminate the true cause of suffering?

Spending this perfect human rebirth desiring only the eight worldly dharmas and working for the enjoyment of samsaric pleasures is like trading universes full of jewels for ka ka. But even this very dirty thing is much more useful than attachment—it can be used by both people and animals.

The more I desire and enjoy the eight worldly dharmas and higher samsaric pleasures, the more I create confusion and remain ignorant.

Is it Easy to Receive the Perfect Human Rebirth?

1. The cause of the perfect human rebirth

This perfect human rebirth is extremely difficult to acquire because the cause that brings this result—the practise of morality and charity—is extremely difficult to create.

It is almost impossible to practise these virtuous actions if I am not human, and even then it is not easy. Firstly, I should be born in the southern rather than the other human worlds because the humans here are more sensitive and therefore see suffering more easily. They also have the advantage of being able to practise Tantra, being endowed with the six physical prerequisites for such practice: three of these come from the father—bone, marrow and sperm; and three from the mother—skin, flesh and blood.

There are many other factors involved in the creation of morality and charity. For instance, if I am a heretic and believe that there is no such thing as the law of karma, I make no effort to collect merits. If I am physically handicapped by, for example, a missing limb or am deaf mute, or am mentally retarded, I am unable to practise these two virtuous actions perfectly.

To effectively bring the result of the perfect human rebirth I should understand that it is causative and what the cause of it is: I must understand karma and its results. Many people talk about this but, not recognising the true nature of the mind, have gross misconceptions about the practice of morality and charity. Even those who have correct knowledge of karma find these practices difficult to follow properly.

So I must know how to practise them correctly. Many people think that sacrificing other sentient beings to the gods is the right way to relieve their own suffering and find self happiness by being reborn in heaven. In fact, the result of such actions is rebirth in the lowest narak stages in as short a time as possible.

It is essential that both morality and charity are created. Since rebirth in the upper realms mainly depends on moral conduct, practising charity alone cannot bring me this result.

The highly controlled Guru Shakyamuni said:

The being who has a missing leg cannot follow the road. Similarly, one cannot attain Liberation without practising morality.

Chandrakirti said:

One who breaks the leg of the precepts and is reborn as an animal never receives enjoyments once the result of charity has finished.

Likewise, it is insufficient to practise morality alone. The resultant poverty and difficulty in satisfying temporal needs can hinder my Dharma practice greatly. If I lack material enjoyments now it is because of my previously imperfect practice of charity. Although rich

and famous, if I am very avaricious and unable to create charity, I cannot receive a perfect human rebirth despite keeping pure morality. Also, a lower being can enjoy the results of charity but never practises charity because he is too ignorant.

2. **The rarity of the perfect human rebirth**

I can understand how the perfect human rebirth is difficult to receive by considering the way the sentient beings are distributed throughout the six samsaric realms.

The vast majority of sentient beings are in the narak. Thus the number of upper rebirths is smaller than the number of lower rebirths, and the number of perfect human rebirths is the smallest of all.

3. **Analogies illustrating the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth**

The chance of gaining the precious perfect human rebirth is that of a blind tortoise, swimming in a vast ocean and surfacing only once each one hundred years, putting its head through a small golden ring floating somewhere on the surface.

It is more difficult than throwing grain so that it sticks to a glass wall or lands on the point of a needle.

How Should We Make Our Perfect Human Rebirth Highly Meaningful?

We should use this rebirth to free ourselves from samsara by receiving Enlightenment or by becoming a noble Bodhisattva or Arhant. At least we should be fully confident of avoiding a lower rebirth.

However, these results cannot be achieved without surmounting much hardship of body and mind. To obtain all the realizations we must purify all negativity: this is not easy, yet it is extremely worthwhile.

Most of us spend our whole life in the pursuit of temporal comfort, working hard at great cost. Consider presidents, soldiers and mercenaries, those on expeditions and scientific missions, for exam-

ple, astronauts, many poor living people and so on. They all spend and risk their lives for nothing. All their actions result in great and continual suffering in future lives. Their whole life is empty and finishes so.

Especially if we check how much suffering and its cause we have experienced since beginningless time, we can see that we are capable of giving up attachment to the momentary comforts of the temporal life, and that it is necessary and of great value for the achievement of the very precious Dharma practice, which ceases all problems.

Meditation One: Part II

Impermanence and Death

How Long is the Life Span?

Life is so fragile, its nature is transitory. It is easy to see how it changes in only one year, a month, a week, a day, an hour, a minute, and second by second. There are sixty five of the shortest instants in the time it takes to snap my fingers, and even in those short split seconds life is changing.

“Why should I be surprised that life changes so much? That’s natural; let it happen!” To think in this way is very foolish and ignorant because as life is changing so quickly in those very short instants I am becoming older.

Some may say, “That’s natural, I become older; let it happen!” This is another wrong attitude, not caring about becoming old. Still others, for example many New York people, want to deny the impermanent nature of their lives; they do not want to see the true nature of it at all. They try to disguise their appearance in the eyes of others who also play the same game. This is an absolutely vain attempt and such actions are not of the potential knowledge level of the human mind, and their creation is certainly not the purpose of the human rebirth from the Dharma point of view. No artificial effort can change eighty years into sixteen years. Age can never decrease in the view of the truly Enlightened Mind, which fully realises the samsaric body’s suffering because of its impermanent nature.

These people’s minds have a double illusion: belief in artificial creation (scientific discoveries used to preserve matter and life from ruin and decay) and the wrong conception that a permanent subject object exists. The first wrong belief causes problems to arise continually. The second wrong idea causes one to become more ignorant, lazy and careless.

There are two levels of impermanence:

1. Gross—changes of matter happening in long periods of time.
2. Subtle—inner changes of mind and invisible changes of matter happening in the shortest part of a second.

Our mind can't perceive subtle changes of matter; it can see only the gross changes from day to day, hour to hour, such as ruin, death, etc.

This vessel like world which existed at an earlier moment does not do so at a later one. That it seems to continue in the same way is because something else similar arises, like the stream of a waterfall.

I should worry about the changes of becoming old. Why should I worry? Because as years, months, days, split seconds are passing and I get older, the perfect chance of attaining Enlightenment given by my human rebirth is becoming exhausted and I'm getting closer to death. I have the right equipment, a pilot, a spaceship and enough fuel to make a trip around the universe and visit all the planets. But here I sit, engine running, burning up the fuel while my mind is distracted by other things. The longer my mind remains distracted the more I miss the chance of seeing the planets; as the fuel burns, time gets shorter. However, even this analogy does not adequately show the tragedy of wasting this precious human rebirth.

Even if the duration of my life were 100,000 years death would approach like this. With each second passed, the minutes shorten; with each minute, the hours; with each hour, the days; with each day, the months; with each month, the years. Each passing year shortens the life and the time of death draws nigh. Although well taken care of, a life of even this great length must end, so why not mine? By comparison my life is extremely short, perhaps lasting forty to fifty, certainly not more than eighty to one hundred, years. With each second, minute, hour, day, month, year, it shortens, nearing death. This human life is really short; this body of mine has not much longer to live.

Is Death Definite?

My death is inevitable because no being has ever existed in the realms of samsara without continuously suffering death and rebirth.

Is the Time of Death Definite?

Death has many causes and so its time is uncertain.

1. When, according to past karma, life's end is due,
2. when factors sustaining life are unavailable, e.g., death by starvation, or
3. through ignorance, e.g., suicide, or carelessness.

At this moment, if I really check up within myself, I can find neither evidence nor guarantee that my life will continue for any definite period.

Why Should I Be Afraid of Death?

Kar.ma.pa d'ü.sum ky'en.pa (Karmapa: “realising past, present and future”) said:

Why should I be afraid of death? Because when the Lord of Death comes it is difficult for the mind to be happy.

I am greatly ignorant in being unafraid of death. This lack of fear results from not understanding the suffering of the death process itself or the suffering of my future lives. After death my ignorant mind will continuously suffer in the cycle of the twelve dependent links. In one month, one day, even in an hour, I create more negative than virtuous karma and have been doing so since beginningless time, in all my previous lives. Unless I break my chain of bondage to the cycle of the twelve dependent links, I shall eventually be reborn in one of the three lower realms.

For these reasons I should start practising Dharma as soon as possible, without being lazy.

Guru Shakyamuni said:

It is unsure whether tomorrow or the next life will come first.

Therefore, it is more worthwhile and wise to be prepared for the future life than for tomorrow, since tomorrow is very indefinite. This is very logical.

Shantideva, in *Bodhicaryavatara*, said:

It is not right to enjoy samsaric pleasures thinking, “I am not going to die today,” putting off the practice of Dharma and not confessing negative karmas.

Do People or Material Possessions Help to Ease or Prevent Death?

At the hour of death even universes containing numberless jewels which could bring all wishes cannot prevent death from occurring. Neither people—relatives, friends, or others—nor any amount of personal strength or fame can prevent death. Instead of helping, these things only contribute to greater suffering.

How Do My Attachments Cause Great Suffering at Death?

At the time of death I realize that I am separating from all my possessions and from my loved ones, and tremendously strong attachment and fear arise. My worry is far greater than usual worry, such as that arising from the separation of a couple or from parents. My physical body now creates much suffering and, although I have cared more for it than for any other being’s body, it now becomes my enemy.

At the hour of death, the king and the beggar are exactly equal in that no amount of relatives or possessions can affect or prevent death. But who is the richer at the time of death? If the beggar has created more merits, then although he looks materially poor he is really the rich man. From the Dharma point of view, the mind that has prepared itself for the journey into the next life has the real riches.

If material possessions and relatives and friends are so meaningless and ineffectual at the time of death and cause suffering, becoming

enemies, why do I attach so much importance to them and spend so much time caring for them?

For countless lives I have been attached to my physical body, providing it with all life's comforts, yet still this care has not ended, and my body continues to cause me problems. Has this care really any end? Wouldn't it be better to spend my life working for something which can be finished?

Padma Sambhava said:

The vision of this life is like last night's dream. All meaningless actions are like ripples on a lake.

By caring only for my physical body I am like the person who will die tomorrow anyway, but goes to the hospital today for much expensive treatment. Any temporal happiness is meaningless and only results in suffering, never helping to end the cycle of death and rebirth. At the time of death numberless relatives, every possession—even numberless universes full of numberless jewels—and my body, which I have cared for more than any other, must all be left. All are of as little use as a single hair, for at death neither can be taken with the mind: in effect, there is no difference between all the world's possessions and one tiny hair.

As I am not sure to exist even from second to second, why should I be attached to my body or any possession, even at this moment?

The Enlightened One's Understanding of the Evolution of the Original Human Beings

The original human beings appeared in this world through an intuitive rebirth (i.e., without using the bodies of parents). They had bodies of light, the same as Buddha's Holy Body, and they had a very long life, millions of years in duration. They did not depend on material food because their food was happiness (the result of good karma), and they had many karmic psychic powers.

But in spite of all this their minds were not free of the seeds of ignorance, greed and hatred. The negative mind was latent and slowly, slowly, the negative impressions ripened and began to grow, and consequently their good fortune began to decrease—the result of their good karma was diminishing.

Therefore, at that time ordinary material, impure plants began to grow. Their greedy minds made them eat this impure food, causing their bodies to become more and more gross. The impure food inside their bodies became ka ka through the development of a digestive process, and sex organs were created to eliminate the ka ka.

Because of greed imprints coming from previous karma and because the sex organs were there (the co-operative cause), they began to have sexual intercourse. Consequently, other beings, who had created the karma to be reborn on this earth at that time, began to be reborn in their wombs.

This evolution of the earth and beings is created mentally, through previous karma, by beginningless mind. The formation of the earth and the birth of beings on it is not a unique occasion—it is a repetitive event without beginning.

A Brief Explanation of Death as Shown by a Fully Understanding Mind

At the time of death, the elements are absorbed one after the other and the many changes appear gradually as feelings and visions. The final death comes when the subtle mind splits from the body, and this also is accompanied by physical signs.

At death, the person who has created much non-meritorious karma suffers from seeing evil omens that are the result of his past evil action. A very frightening physical situation occurs because of fearsome visions coming at that time. Dying with an indifferent mind, neither meritorious nor non-meritorious, one experiences neither pleasure nor suffering.

When the creator of evil dies the heat leaves the body starting from the head. When the creator of merit dies the heat first leaves from the feet. In each case the final loss of heat is from the heart. At the time of death the mind is separating from the body, and the evil creator has the vision of going from light into dark.

Here follows an explanation of the process of a natural death, i.e., a death which is not sudden or traumatic:

1.

- a. The skandha of form is absorbed.

External sign: the physical body becomes thinner and loses power.

- b. **The great mirror Wisdom is absorbed.** This Wisdom clearly sees many objects at the same time, as a mirror reflects many objects together.

c. **The earth element is absorbed.**

External sign: the physical body becomes very thin, the hands and legs are very loose, and we feel very uncontrolled and as if being buried under a great weight of earth.

d. **The eye organ is absorbed.**

External sign: it is impossible to control or move the eyes.

e. **The inner subtle form is absorbed.**

- i. External sign: the colour of the physical body fades and the body loses its strength completely.
- ii. The inner sign is a trembling silver blue mirage, like water in the heat.

2.

a. **The skandha of feeling is absorbed.**

External sign: the physical body doesn't experience pain, pleasure or indifference.

b. **The Wisdom of equality is absorbed.** This Wisdom sees all feelings of happiness, suffering and indifference together, as having the same nature.

External sign: we no longer remember these feelings, i.e., the feelings perceived with the sense of mind as distinct from those perceived by the physical body.

c. **The water element is absorbed.**

External sign: all liquids of the body—urine, blood, saliva, sperm, sweat, etc.—dry up.

d. **The ear organ is absorbed.**

External sign: hearing ceases.

e. **The inner sound is absorbed.**

- i. External sign: the buzzing in the ears ceases.
- ii. The inner sign is a vision of smoke.

3.

- a. The skandha of cognition (perception) is absorbed.

External sign: there is no longer any recognition of our relatives and friends.

- b. The Wisdom of discriminating awareness is absorbed.

This is the Wisdom which discriminates and remembers who our relatives and friends are.

External sign: not remembering their names.

- c. The fire element is absorbed.

External sign: the heat of the physical body disappears, and the capacity to digest food ceases.

- d. The nose organ is absorbed.

External sign: breathing in becomes difficult and weaker, and breathing out becomes stronger and longer.

- e. The inner sense of smell is absorbed.

i. External sign: the nose no longer detects smells.

ii. The inner sign is a vision of sparks of fire, trembling like starlight.

4.

- a. **The skandha of olitional formations (compounded phenomena) is absorbed.**

External sign: the physical body can no longer move.

- b. **The all accomplishing Wisdom is absorbed.** This is the Wisdom of attainment, remembering outer work and success and their necessity.

External sign: losing the idea of the necessity and purpose of outer work.

- c. The air element is absorbed.

External sign: breathing ceases.

d.

i. The taste organ is absorbed.

External sign: the tongue contracts and thickens and its root turns blue.

ii. The tactile organ is absorbed.

External sign: neither soft nor rough sensations can be perceived.

e. The inner taste sense is absorbed.

i. External sign: we can no longer detect the six different tastes.

ii. The inner sign is a vision of a dim red blue light, like the last flickering of a candle.

5.

Finally, the skandha of consciousness is absorbed.

This is the eighty gross superstitions and their foundations, motion (Skt., *prana*; Tib., *lung*). “Superstitions” means the gross illusive mind, the dualistic, wrong conception mind. At this point we have the following visions:

a. White vision

A vision of a very clear sky, like that in autumn, full of the brightness of the moon.

It is caused by the prana going up through the left and right nadis, opening up the head chakra, and coming down through the central nadi.

It occurs when, as the central nadi opens, the white sperm or seed, received from the father, comes down to the heart chakra, visualised in the form of the letter (Hung reversed).

This is called “vision and emptiness.”

b. Red vision

A vision of a copper red reflection in the sky.

It is caused by the prana going up the central nadi to the heart, opening up the navel and fifth chakras.

It occurs when the red blood—the nature of which is fire heat received from the mother, comes up to the heart chakra, visualised in the form of the letter (Ah reversed).

c. **Dark vision**

A vision of empty darkness, like a dark and empty space.

At this point the sperm and the blood are absorbed into a tiny seed: the bottom half is red, the top, white.

It occurs when these two come to the heart.

After this vision we fall unconscious—into complete darkness. Then the subtle mind arises and momentarily all gross superstitions absorb. Then appears the

d. **Clear light vision**

A vision of complete emptiness, very clear, like the sky of an autumn dawn. This is the clear light, the vision of the final death.

At this time, the time of the actual death, the gross mind, that which is holding the gross objects, ceases, but only momentarily. Due to karma, the seed of it is always there.

The subtle mind having this vision is enclosed within the seed formed by the united white and red hemispheres. The seed then opens and the subtle mind goes out, leaving the body to take the intermediate form.

Then, the white sperm goes down and comes out of the sex organ, while the blood leaves from the nostril.

This is the final sign—the consciousness, or spirit, (*Nam. she*), has left the body. Now the mind has completely separated from the body. It is possible that ordinary people stay in this stage for some time, but don't then recognise it. Highly realized yogis can stay in this stage, meditating in the void for months, and are able to recognise all the visions of the death evolution.

The Intermediate State (Bardo Body)

Until the cognition becomes unclear and powerless, the mind retains its habitual attachment to the “I.” Because of this attachment, as the cognition weakens the wrong conception arises that “I” am becoming non-existent, causing fear of losing the “I.” These thoughts create attachment to and craving for the body, which in turn leads to birth in the intermediate state.

After the clear light vision, before actually entering the Bardo, we experience the other three visions and the formation of the skandhas in the reverse order.

The evolution from death to the intermediate state is like passing from sleep to a dream. The eighty gross superstitions of the mind arise and the being takes the intermediate body. (During this time we can see the world, relatives and past dead body, but karmically do not remember any of it, so there is no desire to get back into it.)

The Bardo body is formed by previous karma and delusion. The principal cause of the intermediate state mind is the subtle mind and its cooperative cause is the prana, which comes with the subtle mind. The principal cause of the intermediate state body is the prana, and its cooperative cause is the subtle mind.

The form of the Bardo body is that of the next rebirth. Karmically it has no resistance to matter, is indestructible, and the being has many psychic powers, such as the ability to fly or do anything else it thinks of.

The length of existence in the Bardo body is seven days, after which time that intermediate being dies, taking rebirth in the same realm for a further seven days until death occurs or a physical body is found. The longest Bardo existence is forty nine days.

To be born in the formless world, we do not pass through the Bardo.

The consciousness leaves the physical body according to the being's karmically determined realm of rebirth:

Hell: from the anus.

Preta: from the mouth.

Animal: from the sex organ.

Human: from the eyes.

Gods of the senses: from the navel.

Evil spirits and demons: from the nose.

Spirits enjoying one particular sense: from the ears.

World of form: from the forehead chakra.

Formless world: from the highest head chakra.

Pure land: from the highest head chakra.

So many hospitals and chemical methods are provided to prevent death, yet patients and doctors still die without control. But, since the scientific idea is of lifelessness after death, is it not better to choose death, rather than this complicated life with its many difficulties, much work in trying to solve life's problems and its worries about death—a life without satisfaction or answers to these problems? According to this view, these problems do not exist after death, and such beliefs render the development of external methods meaningless.

Ideas limited by technical knowledge limit the power of the mind to understanding the factual, true nature of the mind's evolution. If scientific minds are really scientific—fully understanding and completely believable—then why are scientists unable to explain clearly and logically the reasons for the Earth's evolution? Why should there be living things on the Earth? What caused the degeneration of the mind?

With their great knowledge of physics, medicine and psychology, scientists look at all phenomena in terms of their outer material aspects rather than their inner nature. With this limited knowledge they can see no way for the development of inner perfect happiness without

being materialistic or greedy. Greed replaced knowledge, and this limited knowledge is the quality or function of ignorance.

Are there any scientists or psychologists who can prove their “scientific” ideas about death? Can they see the evolution of the mind or fully see every existence? Research these questions—meditational practices are the best research: the best, quickest and most logical method of gaining full knowledge of science on every level.

Without the experience to prove their scientific understanding of death and life’s beginnings, how can they prove that there are no future or past lives? This scientific knowledge is exactly like the small mind which sees only today, forgetting yesterday, and not perceiving tomorrow.

I can’t criticise without having knowledge of science, but anyway, this matter is true for the true mind and wrong for the wrong mind.

Prayer to be Said After Meditation One

From the Profound Tantric Text, *Guru Puja*

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants. Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge that the perfect human rebirth is difficult to achieve and decays easily, and of how to be able to make my life perfectly meaningful, without wasting it in the distractions of meaningless, temporal work.

LÄN.CHING. TZAM.ZHING NYE.PÄ D'ÄL JOR
once only acquired freedom perfect receptacle rebirth

DI NYE.KA NYUR.D'U JIG.PÄ TSÜL.TOG.NÄ
This acquire difficult soon decay nature realize and

D'ÖN.ME TSE.DI J'A.WA MI.YENG.WAR
meaningless life this work by not distracted

D'ÖN.DÄN NYING.PO LEN.PAR J'IN.GY'I.LOB
Having meaning essential to take please bless

(Please bless me and all sentient beings to realize that this perfect rebirth, found only once, is difficult to acquire and quickly dies, and to be able to make the life essentially meaningful, without being distracted by meaningless work.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

Meditation Two

The main reason for our having to meditate on impermanence and death and the infinite other sufferings of the six samsaric realm is, that to reach Nirvana—everlasting peace and happiness—we have to surmount many obstacles and bear the hardships of Dharma practice, the method that brings this result. In meditation, we visualise and try to feel all these different sufferings. This gives us the energy and strength we need to destroy laziness and control samsaric problems, the greatest hindrances to Dharma practice, and as we practise we gradually eradicate all illusive minds and receive the realizations leading to those of the true nature of mind and supreme Enlightenment.

Each of the infinite past, present and future Buddhas attained Enlightenment and preceding realizations through the deep experience of these meditations on suffering, and the graded realizations of Bodhisattvas and Arhants are also derived from such practice.

Meditation on the suffering of the six samsaric realms is necessary:

1. at the beginning of our practice, whereby our experiences make us enter the path of renunciation;
2. in the middle, so that we are pushed or carried forward to the various higher levels of the path, overcoming any difficulties encountered with harder practices; and
3. at the end, when our experiences bring Enlightenment, making us work as Buddha during every second, to lead each and every sentient being into Enlightenment.

The Buddha sees every relative existence and its Absolute nature. With great compassion and without error, he revealed many examples of suffering so that we might receive renunciation. The fully renounced mind is the sword that slays all samsaric problems and helps to cut us free from attachment, from greed, ignorance and

hatred, and from delusions. There is no way to receive perfect happiness without this mind.

The renounced mind generates the mental energy required to control our physical and verbal actions, but does not arise suddenly, like temporary clouds. It comes from the clear, deep recognition that the nature of samsara is great suffering, and we can only develop this through meditation, placing ourselves in this intense suffering. Hence, we come to realize our own suffering, especially that which we have experienced in the three lower realms, and, thereby, can dispel such negative minds as greed, ignorance, hatred, pride, jealousy, etc. By feeling and fearing the suffering of these realms, we come to understand how suffering is caused by bad karma and happiness by good karma. These realizations compel us to strive for rebirth in the three upper realms.

To create good karma and collect merits, it is very important that we have the fear that arises from the understanding of the true evolution of karma. We don't touch fire because we understand its nature and are afraid of being burnt. Similarly, by understanding the nature of bad karma and its suffering consequences, we should be afraid to create it. Only then shall we be conscious of the need to create good karma.

Meditation Two, Part I

The Three Lower Realms of Suffering

The Hells

The hell realm (narak) is the greatest experience of suffering. It is karmically created by the deluded mind and exists because of our karmic debt. There are also karmically created hell protectors with heads like animals, who prevent us from escaping until our karmic debt is paid.

The principal cause of the narak is craving.

There are eight hot naraks and eight cold, as well as occasional and neighbouring naraks, i.e., eighteen altogether. The following examples are almost nothing compared to the worst sufferings, which are beyond expression. These light examples were shown by the Enlightened Being as he perceived them.

1. The hot narak (*Tsa.nyäl*)

During this lifetime, whenever I am cold and crave for heat and grasp at its enjoyment, I am planting a seed and accumulating impressions on the consciousness for craving for heat at the time of death.

At the hour of death, when I feel cold, my great attachment to warmth causes me to crave for heat and I die with great attachment to the physical body.

After this I experience the intermediate state.

As if waking from a dream, I should visualise my rebirth in the hot sufferings, as infinite as space.

- a. The reviving narak. In this the stage of least suffering, I am reborn amongst many other beings, who brandish weapons, trying to kill each other. Also, many karmically created, sword like weapons rain down slashing and piercing my whole body causing excruciating pain. As soon as I tremble and die, a karmically created voice is heard saying, "Again will you be killed." I am spontaneously reborn onto the red hot iron ground, only to be killed once more, being reborn and killed many hundreds of times each day.

This continues until my karmically deserved suffering is worked off. Rebirth in this narak results from being spiteful and acting out of hatred.

- b. The black line narak. As carpenters mark wood with red hot wires, so the narak protectors make black lines on my body, which lies on red hot ground, and then proceed to carve me into pieces with red hot saws or chop me up with hot, sharp axes.
- c. The crushing narak. The narak protectors put me and many other beings into crevices between two huge iron mountains, the shape of which resembles the heads of people and animals I have killed. Coming together these mountains squash me, and I fall onto red hot ground with unbearable pain. The mountains separate, and my life is restored so that I can be killed like this, again and again, until this karma is expended.

Other tortures in this narak include being rolled flat by red-hot rollers, being smashed to pieces as villagers smash rice and being ground in a mill. Each drop of blood and each piece of my body is conscious, and as they fall onto the red hot ground I experience excruciating agony.

Rebirth in this narak results from committing the three immoralities of the physical body—killing, stealing and sexual misconduct—with greed.

- d. The howling narak. I am trapped inside a burning house full of other beings. Because of karmic obscuration the

house collapses and we all perish. This results from the strong desire to kill and cheat.

Finally, I escape from this house, only to find myself trapped inside another, from which there is no escape. This is caused by holding wrong views and having strong cravings.

- e. The loud howling narak. Born in a pot of boiling liquid, the size of a large country, I am cooked like a fish, sinking and rising repeatedly with extreme suffering. Narak protectors perforate my flesh with red hot spears, which causes incredible pain, and flames issue from these holes. Then they place me onto red hot ground where I am beaten, and carved into pieces. This is the result of harming others.
- f. The heating narak. I am forced to ingest blazing coals and molten metal, suffering greatly from burnt intestines. This results from criticising Holy Beings and telling lies.

For corrupting Dharma, I am reborn in an immense frying pan and roasted like pop corn. My tongue is seized, stretched flat to the size of a large city, staked out and ploughed up by an iron plough.

- g. The intense heating narak. Red hot tridents enter my body through the soles of the feet and the anus, the points coming out of my shoulders and head. This is caused by harming others such as celibates living in the precepts and parents.
- h. The Avici narak. This is the worst suffering stage. My body is one with fire, and can only be recognised as a living being because of the cries of pain. It is melted down by the intensely powerful flames which come from all directions causing unremitting suffering.

Rebirth in this narak is the result of killing religious people, denigrating the Dharma and breaking precepts.

I suffer for a long time in these eight stages. Fifty human years are just one day for the samsaric gods of the senses (*Gyäl.ch'en*) and five hundred years for these gods is just one day for the denizens of the mildest narak, who live for five hundred years made up of such days.

Five hundred years for these beings is just one day for those experiencing the next level, and so it goes on, in terms of time, down to the Avici narak. And as the duration of suffering increases, so does its intensity.

2. The neighbouring naraks

There are four of these situated at each side of the eight major naraks, so that there are sixteen surrounding each level.

- a. Here I get stuck in very hot quicksand, sinking deeper as I struggle to escape, and karmically created beings come to eat my head, which protrudes above the surface.
- b. Drowning in a filthy quagmire, insects cause me great suffering by penetrating and consuming my body.
- c. Escaping from this, I find myself on a ground of swords pointing upwards, where I cannot step without cutting my feet. There are also trees with sword like leaves, and savage dogs and birds with iron beaks that attack me.
- d. I am confined to a river by narak protectors, who force boiling water and red hot coals into my mouth.

3. The cold narak (Dr'ang.nyäl)

There are also eight main stages of cold sufferings where my agony is unimaginable and unlimited.

On the first two levels my whole body blisters from exposure to a freezing wind. The blisters burst and re blister.

On the next three levels my pain increases progressively, and as I weep from suffering the intense cold, my teeth freeze together.

On the last three levels my body cracks more and more. At first it is blue with a few cracks. These spread and increase in size, and my body turns red. Finally, split into more pieces, like a lotus, my body turns deep red and I experience the extreme cold suffering.

The whole realm is completely dark. I am trapped in narrow crevices or forced to dwell beneath ice mountains, almost one with the ice. Insects feast on my wounds, devouring flesh and pus.

Mind and body are full of suffering.

Yet these examples are mild compared to other experiences in this realm.

4. The occasional narak

These may exist on this earth in such places as deserts, and some people can perceive their existence.

The Realm of the Pretas

The principal cause of birth as a preta is miserliness.

Pretas may be found in many different places, but there are certain locations that most of them inhabit. Wherever they are such areas are desolate and fearful.

They are very ugly in appearance. Their stomachs are enormous—miles wide, like large mountains, but always empty. Their mouths are tiny, like the eye of a needle, and their necks extremely thin and knotted two or three times. Their legs and arms are also very thin; often they cannot support their body and are forced to roll everywhere. They are hairy, and their skin is very dry, stretched tight so that blood vessels stand out prominently. If their legs strike each other as they walk, sparks may be seen. Blood and pus issue from their body, and some eat their own flesh, peeling off their skin.

There are three main sorts of problem that pretas experience.

1. Hindrance of food

The pretas spend their whole life suffering hunger and thirst. No matter how hard or how long they seek, they cannot find food or water. On seeing a beautiful lake from afar the preta runs to it with great expectation, but on reaching it finds that it turns into a lake of blood, pus and ka ka, full of animal hairs.

2. Outer hindrances

After searching for such a long time the preta may find clean food and water, but as he approaches, is attacked and chased away by very fearsome karmically created protectors with heads like animals.

3. Inner hindrances

Even though the preta eventually finds clean water that is not guarded by a protector, there are problems with the body. Only a little goes through the tiny mouth, and that usually dries because of the poison in its mouth. Even if it doesn't dry, the neck is narrow and knotted, and it is difficult to swallow. Then, should any water reach the stomach, it bursts into flames, which come out of the preta's mouth, or it turns into sharp knives which cut its whole body. Even if that doesn't happen, the stomach is so large and the amount of food or water so small, that the preta can never feel satisfied. Either all that or the preta cannot eat the food it finds because of miserliness.

For these suffering, ignorant beings all things change into the opposite. In his Teaching, *Lob.ding*, Nagarjuna explained that if a preta tries to go to the tip of a rock protruding above the surface of the ocean, it is flooded over by waves which turn the whole place into a horrible eruption of fire, a strong wind blowing is spreading the fire. The preta wishes that rain would fall, but it is like iron balls dropping from the clouds; huge golden coloured rocks hail down and red light flashes through its body. To the preta the summer moonlight is hotter than fire and burns them with great flames. In winter ever the hottest sun is extremely cold.

One human month is a day for a preta. The longest life for a preta is 50,000 years.

Amongst the specific causes of rebirth as a preta are theft, sexual misconduct, covetousness, preventing others from making charity, and calling someone else a preta.

The Animal Realm

The cause of rebirth as an animal is ignorance and stupidity.

I can understand the great suffering of these beings by visualising myself in the form of different animals and trying to feel their experience. Apart from the specific problems peculiar to each one, there are four general sufferings common to most animals.

1. The suffering of being deeply ignorant and foolish.
2. The suffering of being exploited by others. Practically every animal is prey for another there and suffers from being killed for food and eaten. They are also killed for parts of their body such as fur, skin, bone, horns, etc. So easily controlled by others, they are compelled to perform gruelling work under intolerable conditions.
3. The suffering of hunger and thirst.
4. The suffering of heat and cold.

Domestic animals or wild, those who fly or those inhabiting the Earth's surface, those underground or those who live in the water—all experience these sorts of problem, and may remain in this realm for many eons.

Amongst the specific causes for rebirth as an animal are telling lies, gossip mongering, heresy, breaking precepts, calling others, especially those in the Dharma, by animal nick names, and sacrificing animals.

We should continue meditating on the suffering of the three lower realms until we receive the experience of this suffering. This experience generates effortless fear, a feeling arising from mere contemplation, and this energy stimulates us to maintain virtuous practice. Hence, we can reach Enlightenment sooner.

The following story gives us an idea of how we feel when we have received the realization of this meditation.

Guru Shakyamuni's disciple, *Kün.ga.wo*, had two nephews who became monks. After studying for only two days, they became lazy, and although *Kün.ga.wo* told them to renounce samsara and laziness they did not do so. So they were given to another disciple, *Mong. gäl. gyi.wu*.

One day, he took the two boys to a place where he performed a miracle showing the narak—they saw many beings suffering by being chopped, split and cut to pieces by others, and saw two large pots of boiling water. They heard the narak protectors asking, “Who is to

be cooked in these?”, and the answer, “*Kün.ga.wo*’s nephews will be reborn in these pots if they lazily waste their time after becoming monks.” This frightened them very much, and they suffered as if they would die right away. *Mong.gäl.gyi.wu* told them to apply their mental energy to the renunciation of laziness and its negative karmic results. So they became very energetic, and, if they recalled the narak suffering at meal times, could not eat and would vomit.

On another occasion they were taken to a place where they heard violin music. Investigating this, they saw beautiful palaces full of goddesses and asked themselves, “Why are there no sons?” They heard the reply, “*Kün.ga.wo*’s nephews will be reborn here as sons if they practise Dharma energetically.” They were very pleased at this, and *Mong.gäl.gyi.wu* explained that they should be even more energetic, because this and many other good results would arise from energetic Dharma practice.

The boys asked the noble *Mong.gäl.gyi.wu* if they could be reborn in the lower realms after receiving an upper rebirth, and he replied, “Just as the rope that is used to draw water from a well has to pass around the pulley, so must you cycle in samsara until the cessation of delusion.”

They received the renounced mind and requested Teachings to help prevent them from creating any more deluded actions. He gave much Teachings, and they attained Nirvana.

Whenever we think we are suffering, we should remember the suffering of the three lower realms. It is difficult to feel because the negative mind becomes like stone to prevent this experience. But, looking into our mind and checking the amount of suffering, we should think, “How am I suffering? Other beings suffer far more than this.” Comparing our suffering with that of others gives understanding experience. Recognition of our own suffering is a basic necessity for Dharma practice.

The experience of suffering is to tell us that we have created negative karma before, and that this is the result. This is the manifestation of our Holy Guru teaching us about suffering and karma.

Meditation on suffering has always been indispensable for the realization of limitless, everlasting happiness, even in Guru Shakyamuni’s

time. Understanding these experiences gives us the powerful energy we need to escape from the bondage of suffering quickly; it is the best medicine for our mental diseases. But the Dharma is not external; it is the safest, most priceless possession within—the work that has an end.

But many people—worldly, curious Westerners—pose as Dharma practitioners, and talk about higher, mystical realizations, expecting Enlightenment to come like a snowfall. They think that certain meditations, especially those on samsaric nature, and particularly that on the three lower realms, are ridiculous, funny or scary, and a complete waste of time. But by denying ourselves the experience of these meditations, we remain ignorant of the most important realizations of highly realized beings. Some of us “practise Dharma,” but with mere words and superior thinking, afraid of living in serious practice, which opposes attachment to the world.



Meditation Two: Part II

Refuge (Zyab.dro)

(Asking for Guidance)

Milarepa said:

Now be afraid of the eight restless stages, and remember impermanence and samsaric suffering. Rely completely on the saviours, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and be careful in the creation of karma.

According to his words we should try to avoid a samsaric rebirth, but the method is not yet within our grasp. Who has the perfect method to release us from samsara? Not earth, water, fire or air; neither sun, moon nor animal. Only Buddha, Dharma and Sangha have the perfect method to rescue us from samsara and the three lower realms of suffering. Therefore, they are perfect guides. Any being with perfect power can be a pure and perfect guide, whether he is called “Buddha” or not. Yet, even one who has the psychic power to fly through the air or to emit light cannot be worthy of our trust if he doesn’t have the power of a Buddha. To see clearly how the Buddha is the perfect guide, we must practise his Teachings and experience for ourselves the results of his perfect method. How is Buddha a perfect guide and why is his method perfect? Because:

1. he has released himself from all fears; those of
 - a. *Nyön.drib*: the gross negative mind—delusions and obscurations—greed, ignorance and hatred. This prevents our attaining Nirvana. And

- b. *She.drib*: the illusive mind that sees the dualistic vision and has the defect of the impression of ignorance (delusion), which is the conception of self existence. And
2. he has extensive skill in rescuing each and every sentient being from the fears of delusion and its impressions. He works impartially for all sentient beings, whether they believe in him or not, and is pleased by the offering of attainment (sincere practice) rather than by material offerings.

When children are afraid or in danger, they always ask the help of their parents, and so should we always rely on the Triple Gem, our everlasting parents. Everlasting, because they are our guide not only for this life but until we attain Enlightenment.

Buddha is the founder of Refuge.

Dharma is the real Refuge.

Sangha is the helper on the path.

It is not enough that the guides have the perfect method—I have to co operate with them. There are **two main reasons for my taking Refuge**, and the stronger my feeling of these, the stronger will my Refuge be.

1. Great fear of samsaric suffering, especially that of the three lower realms, and
2. the firm belief that the three Jewels have the sublime power to guide cause me to take Refuge.

Since beginningless time I have been suffering through lack of pure, strong Refuge in Buddha. The precious Dharma that he achieved and showed is also a worthy object of real Refuge, and so too is the precious Sangha, the followers of the path shown, because they help me to practise the Dharma.

I must receive Enlightenment to have the All Knowledge of the Buddha and the Dharma, and until such time I have not realized fully the Refuge. It is very important to understand how Dharma is the real Refuge.

I. The Knowledge of the Buddha (*Sang.gyä kyi yön.tän*)

A. The Totally Omniscient Buddha's Knowledge

1. Svabhavakaya (*Ngo.wo nyid.ku*)

The clear light nature of Buddha's Holy Mind.

The uttermost sphere of the two complete perfect purities, i.e., completely purified of both gross (*Nyön.drib*) and subtle (*She.drib*) obscurations.

2. Dharmakaya (*Ye.she.ch'ö.ku*)

The Omniscient Mind of the Buddha, fully seeing each and every Absolute and relative existence.

3. Sambhogakaya (*Long.ku*)

The most qualified Holy Body of form, which has five definite attributes:

- a. giving only Mahayana Teachings,
- b. existing until samsara ends,
- c. being surrounded only by Bodhisattvas,
- d. abiding in the definite realm of *Og.min*, and
- e. being adorned with thirty two perfect qualities (*Tsän.zang*) and eighty minor perfections (*Pe.j'ä*), the most sublime of Buddha's qualities

4. Nirmanakaya (*Trul.ku*)

The transformation of Buddha's Holy Body into infinite aspects, according to the different sentient beings' level of mind.

It is the form in which the Buddha appears to ordinary beings.

- a. Guru Shakyamuni was seen as a *bhiksu* (monk) or Sangha, because the karma of the beings who saw him was such as to allow it.
- b. Statues, *t'ang.k'a's*, etc., are all that can be seen in degenerate times such as the present. Guru Shakyamuni said that when people's negative minds were strongly developed, he would appear only in the form of letters.

- c. Visualizations. Buddha's Holy Body can be perceived in this form by using the powers of the senses.

B. The Knowledge of the Perfected One's Holy Body,
Speech and Mind

1. Buddha's Holy Body

His Body has every beauty, but does not have even one atom of matter nor the slightest resistance to matter. Buddha's whole Body, his hair and nails included, are his Mind. Even one single hair sees each and every existence.

He can transform his Body into countless different aspects according to the different levels of mind of countless beings. To some he appears in the form of animals, to others as a crazy foolish man, a king, a minister, or a beggar. He can appear in the form of letters, bridges where there are none, or as water for those who seek it. To guide fortunate beings who seek his assistance, at the right moment he can take the necessary form.

In every tiny ray of light of Buddha's Holy Body there are countless Buddhas—the seed of each of these different aspects of Buddha is within the mind of each sentient being.

Only supreme Bodhisattvas can see all the major and minor marks of the Sambhogakaya, such as thousand spoked wheels on his hands and feet, webbed fingers, copper coloured nails, the double protuberance on the top of his head, peaceful narrow eyes, a curl on his forehead, etc.

2. Buddha's Holy Speech

His Speech is extremely charming. Just to hear his voice brings great pleasure and peace to the mind, and release from greed, hatred, ignorance and suffering.

He only has to speak one word to be understood in any language and according to the hearer's level of mind, and one word can answer countless different questions at the same time.

3. Buddha's Holy Mind

His Mind has a twofold quality:

- a. The supreme quality of understanding, which incorporates the totality of both Absolute and relative existence. He fully perceives past, present and future simultaneously.

For example, if all the trees in the world were chopped into small pieces, mixed up and thrown into the ocean, he could recall the origin of each piece, so great is his discerning Mind.

- b. The supreme quality of compassion, by which the Buddha is bound, just as sentient beings are bound by delusion. His great compassion is impartial, so he takes the utmost care of each and every sentient being.

For example, if he were to sit between two people, one cutting him with knives, the other caressing him gently, his compassion towards both would be equal.

Because Buddha's Holy Body, Speech and Mind are one, the minutest portion of his Holy Body is also part of his Holy Speech and Mind, and can appear in numberless forms.

The Holy deeds of Buddha's Holy Body, Speech and Mind are intuitive, completely effortless and unremitting. They help each sentient being differently. His actions benefit greatly those whose minds have been properly prepared, just as more seed can be planted in a field that has been widened.

If the total Knowledge of Buddha is kept in mind, my faith can be much strengthened. That faith causes the Bodhicitta to grow continually. Even the suffering of death is diminished by remembering Buddha's qualities.

The Sutra, *Do.ting nge.dzin.gy'i gyäl.po* says:

The body, speech and mind of the faithful often admire the Buddha's Knowledge. As this strong faith continues, the guide of the universe can be seen day and night. Even when that person is suffering from illness nearing death he never loses sight of Buddha, and that suffering can never overcome his faith.

Therefore, if I have full faith in my heart through having frequently remembered Lord Buddha's Knowledge, the clear evidence of this Knowledge will give me faith in its products, the Dharma and the Sangha.

When I take Refuge in Buddha, I am not allowed to follow those who lead me along the wrong path.

II. The Knowledge of the Dharma (*Ch'ö.kyi yön.tän*)

The avoidance of any action that creates negative karma is Dharma, and all actions that create merit are Dharma actions.

Any methods free of negative mind are Dharma methods no matter how different they appear. But any method stained with greed for temporal life comfort, ignorance of the evolution of karma, or hatred is not a Dharma method, no matter how it looks.

The positivity or negativity of any action depends on its impulse and its effect, and not only on how it is performed. It is most important that I check up on the likely effect of any action I am about to perform. If it fights the negative minds of greed, ignorance and hatred, it is a Dharma action. If it only helps to gain temporal happiness, it is a negative action. Effect is something I can see in my mind before performing the action; it is a matter of having understanding and wisdom.

As there may be no difference in appearance between an action performed with deluded mind in a samsaric way and one performed with pure mind in a Dharma way, we cannot judge the actions of others from external appearances. It is what is in the mind, the creator, that is important.

Dharma contains every path leading to Enlightenment, the true cessation of suffering. It contains all Absolute and relative existence, and every result deriving from the path. To achieve perfect Knowledge of Dharma. I must realize each and every existence, I must become Buddha. Therefore, any being who does not have perfect knowledge of all existence cannot guide me to release from samsara.

Knowledge of the Dharma, the Teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni, the Enlightened Being, causes me to receive perfect happiness—the happy result of following the happy path. This Knowledge breaks the continuity of samsara, cleans all delusion from the mind, and never betrays those willing to receive Nirvana. It always makes actions virtuous.

The Knowledge of Dharma is infinite. The best way to see it is by living in the gradual realization. Some people hide their ignorance as they would a jewel, and blame the Teachings for their increasing negative mind. This shows that they are not practising the real, pure Dharma.

Through the serious observance of the prohibitive and permissive precepts shown by Buddha's Teachings, and by trying to fully understand the Dharma, I may

1. receive Enlightenment—the highest result,
2. become an Arhant—the intermediate result, or
3. achieve a better rebirth—the lowest result.

The real Dharma is the abandoning of all defects—the true cessation of suffering, and the path of fully realising Shunyata. Fully completing these realizations brings Enlightenment, the All Knowledge: this is the Knowledge of Dharma. Hence Buddha himself is also the Dharma jewel and the Sangha jewel.

When I take Refuge in Dharma, I cannot give harm to any sentient being.

III. The Knowledge of the Sangha (*Ge.dün gyi yön.tän*)

Whoever lives in the realization of the path, the four Noble Truths, is Sangha. All noble beings having true Dharma Knowledge, the perception of the Absolute Truth of all existence, having removed all delusion are Sangha. So the Sangha has exalted power, as does the Dharma. When I take Refuge in Sangha, I cannot follow heretics.

Instructions in the Practice of Refuge

1. A statue of the Buddha, made of any material, should not be stepped over, but kept in a high place and revered as if it were a real Buddha, remembering his Knowledge.
2. Any letters used to explain the Teaching should be respected as the real Dharma and not underestimated. Such books should not be placed on the floor or stepped over. The realized Tibetan ascetic, *Sha.ra.wa* said:

Disrespecting Dharma and the person explaining Dharma causes one to lose Wisdom. There is no need to create more ignorance than already exists.

4. Any monk or nun should be respected as the real Sangha. In *Lhag.sam.kul.wa* Guru Shakyamuni said:

One should not despise the lower Ge.long (full monk). If one shows contempt for any lower Ge.long, one will not reach Liberation for one aeon. The monk should be respected according to his degree of ordination.

As much as I respect Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, so shall I be respected by other sentient beings.

In *Do.ting.nge.dzin.gy'i.gyal.po* Guru Shakyamuni said:

Whatever action we create, the result will return to us.

The Benefits of Taking Refuge

If the good results of taking Refuge were to manifest themselves in form, there would not be enough room in the three worlds to contain them, so immense are the benefits. They are innumerable—more numerous than handfuls of water in all the oceans.

Yet, there are eight major benefits of taking Refuge.

1. Becoming Buddhist (an inner being; Tib., *Nang.pa*)
2. It is the basis of all ordinations.
3. All previous bad karma is diminished.
4. Extensive good karma accumulates.
5. I cannot be afflicted by either humans or non humans.
6. I shall not be reborn in the three lower realms.
7. It brings all success.
8. I shall receive Enlightenment sooner.

Taking Refuge is, therefore, extremely important, and it is the basis of all Teachings:

To attain Enlightenment or to gain Tantric practices, I must complete the practice of the six Paramitas: the transcendental perfections of Charity, Morality, Patience, Effort, Concentration and Wisdom. To do so, I need the three higher trainings of Conduct, Concentration and Wisdom. The basis of these three is taking Refuge.

Meditation Two: Part III

Karma (La)

If I take Refuge, how does God guide me? Guru Shakyamuni said:

I have shown you the path to the eradication of samsaric pains: the follower who has passed as I have shown is the guide. So should you do it yourself.

As numberless followers of Guru Shakyamuni received Enlightenment through the actual Refuge, Dharma, if I too follow the path of Dharma, the actual Refuge jewel, exactly as was shown by Buddha, it will release me from every illusion. This is how Buddha guides me.

To achieve fully the most supreme peace, which is freedom from all sufferings and the removal of every single obscuration, it is necessary to actualise completely the whole path, the Dharma jewel. This starts by correcting each tiny action: avoidance and practice, which is called “observing karma.” Therefore, understanding karma is not only the fundamental path to Enlightenment but is even the root of all other perfections and happiness.

Some foreigners have the idea that karma is just an Eastern custom, or that it exists only for those who believe in it and not for those who do not, such as animals and people. Some think that, in fact, karma has no existence at all, merely being some unverifiable theory fantasised by certain Eastern yogis or by Guru Shakyamuni.

Such thoughts are highly erroneous and cause loss of temporal and ultimate peace for oneself and others. Should this poisonous mind be living in the hearts of even the readers of this book, by understanding that it destroys the perfect happiness of many future lives, they should cast it out like used toilet paper.

It may be thought that only Eastern people who believe have past and future lives, and have karma, actions and result: from non-virtuous

actions arising suffering result—samsaric suffering—and from virtuous actions arising all happiness—perfect bliss, and freedom from the bondage of samsara. If this were so, then Guru Shakyamuni's followers, such as the ancient Indian and Tibetan Holy Beings who understood each and every existence, would have shown unnecessarily the Teachings of karma from which the undesirable suffering arises. Moreover, Guru Shakyamuni, who had fully knowing mind and was the founder of these Teachings on karma, this evolution of living beings, action and result, would have been the cause of the suffering of those beings who believe in karma. Also, if this were true for karma, then, by analogy it would be illogical to talk of going to hell for disbelieving the Ten Commandments, because only those who believed in and followed them would go to hell, whereas those who neither believed in God nor followed the Ten Commandments would not. Anyway, all such conceptions are completely wrong.

Living beings, human and non human, who do not have belief in karma have various sufferings—no matter how much they try to gain comfort there is no satisfaction, and the limited comfort gained always finishes quickly. Thus, for them, there is no definite peace, and no control over the sufferings of death and rebirth. All this shows clearly that those living beings are not free of karma and that karma exists in fact.

As a common Tibetan proverb says:

Nothing happens as it appears in the mind—all is up to karma.

All our experiences of happiness and suffering depend on karma. No matter how much we desire happiness, if we follow ignorance alone, without respecting karma, we shall have nothing but suffering to experience. We ourselves create each karma. For instance, it is well known that, irrespective of how much some strive for life's comforts, they continually suffer one problem after another, while others always experience comfort and happiness with hardly any effort.

Since we create the karma, and since to respect karma means to correct each tiny action, then how should it be observed? Avoiding non-virtuous actions and practising virtuous ones is observing karma, and to do so we must be able to distinguish between them.

As the great Guru, Nagarjuna said:

The action arising from hatred, greed or ignorance is non-virtuous; the action arising from non-hatred, non-greed or non-ignorance is virtuous.

Also, the great Bodhisattva, Shantideva said:

From virtuous actions all happiness arises; from non-virtuous actions all suffering arises.

So the action created by the poisonous impulse, harming ourselves and other living beings, is non-virtuous. The action created by the non poisonous impulse, benefiting ourselves and other living beings, is virtuous.

Non-virtuous actions only bring the result suffering, causing lower rebirth and suffering even in the upper realms. Virtuous actions only bring the result happiness, such as birth in the upper realms and all happiness.

The worst interruption to creating virtuous actions is attachment to solely the comfort of this life. We should always be conscious of our actions of body, speech and mind, checking up spontaneously, and avoiding the least sinfulness and trying to create even the tiniest virtuous actions.

We should avoid drawing false conclusions on the basis of incomplete understanding and faulty logic, saying for instance, “There are no such results as happiness and happy rebirth from virtuous actions, or suffering and lower rebirth from non-virtuous actions, because I have never heard of nor been taught such things.” We are foolish to negate these truths just because we do not have that knowledge—it is the experience of even a great many ordinary beings who clearly see past and future, let alone that of the Enlightened Being who fully sees the three times and showed the path to discover all this.

There are even common examples to show that the evolution of this karma is logical. There are many karmas created which bring the result in the lifetime.

One Tibetan yogi, *Sang.gyä ye.she*, was giving Teachings to his disciples when his Guru passed by. He pretended not to see him, and after he had finished teaching he went to see his Guru. As he was making prostrations the Guru asked, “Why did you not make prostrations before?” The yogi replied, “I didn’t see you before.” So telling this lie caused both his eyes to drop out, and despite his Guru’s blessings he could not completely recover from this.

The Tibetan yogi, *Log.pön ye.she zang.po*, had an eye disease, so went to the spring to clear it. But the spring became like boiling water. Then he went into retreat to make the Tibetan Guru Yoga, *Vajrabhairawa*, but even this didn’t help much. So he requested another Holy Being for aid, and the latter dreamt of Tara, who explained that it was the result of not following the Guru correctly.

The great yogi, *Milarepa*, completed his realizations in the lifetime by following correctly the orders of his Guru, *Marpa*, and by renouncing his life for him.

The great Tibetan yogi, *Drom.tö.pa*, also followed orders correctly and totally offered service. In his later life he not only became far famed but became the holder of the *Ka.dam.pa* Teachings and made infinitely great work for sentient beings.

There are so many similar examples of ordinary people whose good actions to higher beings brought good results in the lifetime and whose negative actions in the early life brought bad results later. Some get killed as a result of killing others earlier in the lifetime; and it is analogous with actions such as stealing, torturing and cheating.

The Ten Immoralities of Body, Speech and Mind

Each of these immoralities has three results:

1. the result of the fullness of the sin
2. the result similar to the cause, and
3. the result of the possessed cause,

and are as follows:

1. Killing

- a. Rebirth in the hells
- b. Although reborn human, there is often much disease and a short life.
- c. Rebirth in an inauspicious, unpeaceful, horrible country.
The worst forms of killing are matricide, patricide, and taking the life of an Arhant.

2. Stealing

- a. Rebirth in the preta realm.
- b. Although reborn human, there is misery due to lack of possessions and to having possessions stolen.
- c. Rebirth in a country with many hailstorms.

The worst forms of stealing are thefts from the Guru of the Three Gems.

3. Sexual misconduct

- a. Rebirth in the preta realm.
- b. Although reborn human, the family or spouse are always accusing or hostile.
- c. Rebirth in a very muddy place.
The worst forms of sexual misconduct are intercourse with a parent or Arhant.

4. Telling lies

- a. Rebirth in the animal realm.
- b. Although reborn human, being accused as a liar and never being believed, whether speaking the truth or not.

c. Rebirth in a filthy place.

The worst form of lying is pretence of Siddhi, such as having control over delusion (e.g., greed and anger) or having realizations (e.g., renunciation and freedom). It is worst to lie to Arhants or Gurus.

5. Slander

a. Rebirth in the hells.

b. Although reborn human, there is separation from relatives and friends.

c. Rebirth in a very low or very high place.

The worst form of slander results in separation of Guru and disciple, or disunity amongst a group of monks or nuns.

6. Harsh speech

a. Rebirth in the hells.

b. Although reborn human, distressing words are often heard.

c. Rebirth in a desert country.

The worst form of harsh speech is the insulting of parents or an Arhant.

7. Gossip mongering

a. Rebirth in the animal realm

b. Although reborn human, there is neither discipline nor virtue in speech.

c. Rebirth in a place with reversed summer and winter seasons, when wells go dry.

The worst form of gossip is to distract religious people; gossip is the lightest of acts, but the greatest waste of time.

8. Covetousness

a. Rebirth in the preta realm.

- b. Although reborn human, there is always dissatisfaction, discontent, and failure in ventures.
- c. Rebirth in an isolated area.

The worst form of covetousness is the desire for a Noble Being's belongings and spiritual instruments.

9. Malice

- a. Rebirth in the hells.
- b. Although reborn human, hatred increases through never being believed.
- c. Rebirth in a place with only bad tasting food.

The worst form of malice is the thought of committing one of the five inexpressible sins.

10. Heresy

- a. Rebirth in the animal realm.
- b. Although reborn human, ignorance increases.
- c. Rebirth in a place bearing no crops or fruit.

The worst form of heresy is disbelief in the Buddha, his path and his followers.

With any action one has to consider:

- 1. impulse
- 2. object
- 3. the act
- 4. completion of the act.

The results of the ten moralities are opposite to those of the ten immoralities.

The ten moralities are the basis of all happiness—of every realization, of Nirvana, and of full, pure Enlightenment. So, abstinence from the ten immoralities is of much greater value than filling many universes with jewels. Things of material worth never bring happiness, realizations or Enlightenment; but they may cause further greed and suffering. Those countless jewels can all be lost without causing rebirth in suffering realms for many lives. Only Dharma practice allows fulfilment of the purpose of the human rebirth.

Karma is Definite

Good karma causes happiness; bad karma causes suffering. It is not possible for good karma to result in suffering nor bad karma in happiness, just as a lethal, poisonous plant cannot bear life saving fruit. Mountains may crumble, oceans run dry, moons, suns and stars can fall, whole galaxies come and go, but the results of karma never change. Unless I attempt to avoid karmic results, they will certainly be experienced.

Karma is Expandable

One tiny karma can cause many results, just as one small seed can produce many thousands. There are countless examples of expanded karmic results, such as a single second of anger with a highly realized being causing many eons of suffering in the lower realms.

The invention of the atomic bomb is another example. The inventor's negative motive—desiring fame and reputation for temporal happiness—resulted in a negative creation and those who also contributed to this creation were caused to have negative actions. Further negativities resulted—the people of one nation became proud and callous, those of other nations became jealous and afraid. The bomb was exploded, bringing extreme suffering to innumerable beings. All those who contributed to the bomb's creation will suffer for eons, yet the original hope was for peace and happiness. A very high scientific accomplishment, but its inventor will have to suffer each result that harmed others through his creation.

This shows how any external development cannot bring peace—the motives are temporal. If such means caused real, satisfied peace they would have been shown long ago by the Perfect One.

All pure, religious people take care in every action of mind, speech and body and try to accumulate merits—the results of good karma—as they know that happiness and suffering depend on karma.

The pure essence of Dharma is not to create bad karma. Religion is thus an infallible method of God, or Perfect Buddha; living in the nature of highest compassion, rendering not the least infinitesimal harm to a single sentient being.

It is Impossible to Experience the Result Without Creating the Karma

I cannot suffer the karmic punishment of a thief if I do not steal. Nor can I enjoy a pleasant life without reason or cause, without being conscious of each of my actions.

The Result of the Karma Created is Never Lost

The specific result of any created karma is never lost, but need not be experienced if appropriate action is taken. The influence of karma can be stopped by insight into the nature of things and by attentive concentration to that which has been perceived.

As well as not creating further cause for suffering, I must avoid the results of past causes by eliminating the conditions required for their expression. It is analogous to the potential of a seed—a plant will grow unless the seed or the conditions, the four elements, are destroyed.

The Vinaya Teaching *Dül.wa.lung* says:

The accumulated karmas of even one hundred eons are never lost. If the aggregates (cause and conditions) and proper times coincide, those responsible receive the result.

Confession

The result of merits, happiness, can be blocked by the destructiveness of heresy and anger. Similarly, the potential of tremendous sins can be completely extinguished by deep, pure confession with great feeling, using the four powerful remedies:

1. Taking Refuge in the Guru, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.
2. Repentance, the strength of which determines the strength of the following:
3. Penance, to purify negativity, and
4. Vowing not to repeat the sin.

Confession is like a fire and negativities are the grain which can be burnt. Religious people fear the result of, and so confess, any negative karma. Likewise do they dedicate merits to Buddha when they create positive karma. They do this to bring happiness to all sentient beings.

Karmic result can be experienced during this life, the next, or in any future lifetime. What causes the countless billions of karmas to ripen at different times and manifest in samsara?

A Sutra says:

The heavier, closer or more habitual the karma, the sooner comes the result. If all are the same intensity, the result of the first committed comes first.

The Tibetan people regard the practice of morality as their constitution and as the best way to shape their lives. Monks keeping high

vows are respected and recognised as pure and Holy objects, to be offered service. To the laymen, such as monks are as diamonds. Keeping precepts is far higher than working for the happiness of a secular life. Temporal happiness has been enjoyed since beginningless time, yet has brought no satisfaction.

Tantric practice, the method of achieving everlasting peace and complete freedom, must be based on the understanding of reality's true nature—without the fundamental necessity of creating good karma it is all in vain, like trying to make a plant grow quickly by pouring water into space.

As realizations increase, profound points of the permissive and prohibitive precepts can be seen. But the most subtle points of karma are the object of only the Buddha's thought. Even Arhants with great prophetic and other psychic powers had to ask Guru Shakyamuni about the deepest aspects of karma.

Prayer to be Said After Meditation Two

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge that being in the three lower realms has the suffering of being in a burning fire, so that from the heart I may take Refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and make great efforts in practice and avoidance and in the collection of merits.

NGÄN.SONG	DUG.NGÄL	BAR.WÄ	ME.JIG.NÄ
<i>evil gone lower realms</i>	<i>suffering</i>	<i>burning</i>	<i>fire fear</i>
NYING.NÄ	KÖN.CH'OG	SUM.LA	KYAB.DRO.ZHING
<i>heart from</i>	<i>precious</i>	<i>three to</i>	<i>refuge go</i>
DIG.PONG	GE.TSOG	T'A.D'AG	DRUB.PA.LA
<i>sin abandon</i>	<i>virtues heap</i>	<i>all</i>	<i>attain to</i>
TZÖN.PA	LHUR.LEN	J'E.PAR	J'IN.GY'I.LOB
<i>effort</i>	<i>devotedly grasp</i>	<i>to do</i>	<i>please bless</i>

(Please bless me and all sentient beings to fear the burning fire of the three lower realms of suffering, to take Refuge from the heart, and to continue putting wilful effort into actions to abandon all negativities and to accomplish all merits.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

Meditation Three

The General Sufferings of Samsara

Even if born in the upper realms, we still suffer in samsara, the suffering of bondage and its cause, caught in the circle of the twelve dependent links.

Shantideva said:

One will only come up again and again in the happy realms, enjoy samsaric pleasures with greed, and then suffer for infinite times after the death of this all.

Using our present rebirth only to enjoy samsaric pleasures is being like a dumb animal that eats the grass at the edge of a cliff, in constant danger of falling off.

Previous yogis have greatly emphasized the necessity of attempting to subdue our mind well in a secluded place, seeing with dauntless renouncing mind that samsara is full only of catastrophe and suffering. Some beings of limited wisdom think that staying in a secluded place to think about the shortcomings of samsara with a renounced mind is a Hinayana practice. They think that this is not the Mahayana way because Mahayanists are supposed to work for other beings, and cannot do so by remaining in solitude, avoiding contact with the masses in the city. This is childish thinking, showing neither taste for nor any idea of Mahayana practice. It is not like that, for Bodhisattvas need greater aversion to samsara than those who follow the lesser vehicle. The Hinayanist meditates on the shortcomings of samsara and avoids delusions only for his own Liberation; the Bodhisattva has to realize the total shortcomings of samsara and use many methods to get rid of them with great compassion, which arises from remembering the sentient beings wandering in samsara. The Bodhisattva needs a hundred thousand times greater aversion

to samsara than the Hinayanist, who follows the path for the sake of only himself.

Some people of limited understanding think that the Bodhisattva who follows the Paramitayana needs this greater aversion, but that the Bodhisattva who follows the most supreme Tantrayana doesn't need to achieve aversion to samsara. Those who have such distorted notions only show the nature of their ignorance—the complete lack of knowledge of the purpose for following the Vajrayana Path—and are as foolish as those who could try to pluck fruit from thin air, not understanding the nature of seeds and stems.

Without achieving understanding of suffering, the doors to Vajrayana, Paramitayana and even Hinayana are closed. It is as hopeless as trying to get into the inner court of the king's palace when one hasn't even a visa for the country, let alone the other necessary credentials. This only causes oneself confusion. There has never been even one Bodhisattva who entered the Vajrayana Path without having depended upon receiving full aversion to samsara.

Only one with an egocentric mind would try to practise the Mahamudra without the practice of renunciation or understanding the nature of samsara. This would be like eating poisonous honey without knowing that it is poisonous.

Beings who have the Wisdom Eye should be careful that they understand the right way to practise. It is absolutely essential that yogis following the most supreme Tantrayana develop strong renunciation of samsara through strongly and extensively meditating on its sufferings.

One of the greatest Indian Yogic Tantric practitioners, *Lu.yi.pa*, was instructed by the Vajrayogini—a female aspect of the Buddha - to give up the temporal life and to make the dauntless effort to arouse strong aversion to samsara, for this is an absolute necessity for those who wish to practise Tantricism. According to the Vajrayogini's instruction, *Lu.yi.pa* went to a solitary place and through much austere practice received Siddhi. Because of their single pointed practice in solitary places constellations of yogis have received Siddhi. The great yogis have said in their Tantric Teachings that even the power and possessions of a king have to be meditated on as suffering.

Having the fully knowing Mind, the great Guru Tzong.k'a.pa said in the prayer of the Tantric Deity, Heruka:

Living beings travel on the right path by having full unshakeable belief in it, thinking deeply on the perfect human rebirth: its meaningfulness, rarity and perishability; on the suffering of the lower realms; on karma; and on the Refuge guiding them.

What is Nirvana?

The complete release from samsara—the formation of true suffering and its cause—is Nirvana. To receive Nirvana we must have:

1. effortless, energetic inspiration. This arises from
2. strong, effortless renunciation of samsara. This arises from
3. strong aversion to samsara, which depends on
4. deep, clear insight into the true nature of samsara.

Sha.kya.wa said:

The experienced, learned ones fear the upper realms as they do the narak. It is so rare for beings to fear any of the realms of samsara.

Every past realized Indian pandit and Tibetan ascetic Lama was released from samsara by truly seeing the whole of samsara in its suffering nature, like a blaze of fire with no real pleasure wherever we go. For them the mind renouncing samsara generates the energy to become Enlightened and work for all sentient beings until samsara ends.

Furthermore, this fully renouncing mind is most important because all the past Buddhas' Enlightenment was received through renunciation. Subsequently, galaxies of numberless Indian pandits, their disciples and Tibetan monks and ascetics became Enlightened in their lifetimes through a pure, renounced mind. They taught all

their experienced methods to their disciples, so the experiences have not been lost. This is why Tibetan monks still have the opportunity to achieve real experiences by developing their minds. Modern Europeans who are fortunate enough to study the Teachings can emulate these meditators and also achieve these experiences. Therefore, we have this present chance and it arose from all the original renounced minds, which have come inexhaustably to us. So, if we really achieve fully renounced mind, it helps in a limitless way for the numberless living beings, until samsara ends.

What has been stopping us from achieving the limitlessly valuable renounced mind? It is the ignorance that uncontrollably sees samsaric enjoyments as happiness. We wallow in the quagmire of samsara, believing completely that it is beautiful, yet hope to receive Enlightenment—an Enlightenment that no one has ever received—achieving only suffering as shown by our Gurus: greed and ignorance.

For all those ancient Indian pandits and ascetics, the best everlasting psychiatry in the power of the mind was full renunciation. We can prove it for ourselves by living that experience, but it comes only from pure practice and understanding how samsaric nature is truly in the nature of suffering. That is why Guru Shakyamuni showed us the four Noble Truths.

The Teaching of the Fully Enlightened One

Basis	Path	Result
Absolute Truth	Wisdom and method	Two aspects of the Buddha:
Relative truth		The Holy Body of Dharma
		The Holy Body of Form

The Four Noble Truths

1. True Suffering

Has four aspects

True realizations

1. Being transience because its phenomena change in the minutest moment.
2. Being suffering because
 - a. suffering of feelings,
 - b. samsaric happiness, and
 - c. uncontrolled because of delusion and karma.
3. Being voidness because everything is void of not having any connection with its cause.
4. Being non-selfness because it depends on numbers of objects.

Wrong conceptions

That suffering is permanent.

That suffering is happiness.

That suffering is unconnected from its cause.

That suffering is a self entity not depending on parts.

II. True Cause of Suffering

Has four aspects

True realizations

1. Being the cause because it is delusion and karma.
2. Being all-arising because it produces frequent suffering.
3. Being strongly arising because it strongly brings the result of suffering.
4. Being co-operative causes because it is these that bring about the different sufferings.

Wrong conceptions

- That there is no cause of (reason for) suffering.
- That suffering arises from one cause only (and not from co-operative causes).
- That suffering is created by God, i.e., some other being.
- That suffering is momentarily impermanent though its nature is being permanent.

III. True Cessation of Suffering

True realizations

1. Being cessation because it is not tied by delusion and karma (*Ching.pa*, tied).
2. Being peace because it is not tied by delusion.
3. Being perfection because it is not tied, and in the nature of happiness and panacea.
4. Being definite removal because it unties from the suffering arising again.

Wrong conceptions

- That there is no Liberation (*Tar.pa*, release).
- That any phenomena arising from delusion are peace.
- That some delusions are perfect.
- That suffering arises again after being removed once.

IV. True Path of Cessation

Has four aspects

True realizations

1. Being the path because the right-seeing path fully sees the non-selfness.
2. Being Wisdom because the path goes against the delusions.
3. Being attainment because it is fully attained through fully realising the nature of the path.
4. Being the definite remover because it eradicates the whole of delusion.

Wrong conceptions

- That there is no path to Liberation.
- That the Wisdom of fully realising non-selfness is not the path to Liberation.
- That attainment in meditations, such as ordinary Samadhi meditation or Chakra meditation, without full renunciation of samsara is the path to Liberation.
- That there is no path to complete cessation of suffering.

The Three Upper Realms of Suffering

1. Human

There are sufferings in the human realms as well as in the others. The beggar and the rich man alike have problems: mental and physical. There are problems of families, societies and countries. The king and the populace have their problems. No matter how I try to solve them, problems always remain.

2. Asura (Lha.ma.yin)

In this realm too, there is always the suffering of fighting and discord resulting from jealousy. The Asuras are mischievous gods.

There is no way for them to perceive the Absolute Truth.

3. Sura (Lha)

Gods of the senses

These have three kinds of suffering:

- a. They are usually reborn in the three lower realms, and have the karmic power to see their realm of rebirth for seven days prior to death. During this time they undergo the five signs of death.

All this causes incredible suffering.

- b. Embarrassment at not having as many possessions as other gods.

- c. Being killed or injured by many different sorts of weapons; they are always fighting.

They can be banished to the Asura realm.

Gods of form and formlessness

These gods have many distractions, such as being unconscious for many eons. They have no control over the length of time they spend in their realm.

Therefore, the whole of samsara is really like a blazing inferno, and it is not definite that I shall not be born in one of these suffering realms.

The First Noble Truth: The Truth of Suffering

Suffering can be clearly understood by considering the following three methods of classification.

1. The Eight Sufferings

1. The suffering of rebirth

- a. The suffering of the birth.

Beings born in the narak, as a constantly suffering preta, or from the egg and the womb are all born with much heavy suffering.

P'ag.pa.tog.me said:

*The Rebirths of all other beings are the same,
even my upper rebirth. We are all born with
suffering.*

- b. The suffering of rebirth into wickedness (depravity).

From the seed of ignorance springs the rebirth, giving delusion its birth, its existence and its increase. Hence it is difficult to use the life for virtuous work or to control the suffering as desired.

- c. The suffering of rebirth into a suffering realm.

Rebirth into the worlds of the senses, of form or of formlessness inevitably brings the sufferings of old age, sickness and death.

d. The suffering of rebirth into a deluded place.

In samsara the negative minds of greed, hatred and ignorance manifest in relation to objects of beauty, ugliness and indifference respectively. As these negative minds arise, the body and mind become unsubdued and experience suffering.

e. **The suffering of separation.**

From the moment of rebirth the life goes towards the inevitable karmic death. This totally unwanted event brings suffering to the uncontrolled mind and body; instead of release from suffering, death only brings more.

Rebirth in the Womb

Nagarjuna said:

*All over one is encased by an extremely horrible odour.
It is dirty, clouded and very dark. The whole body is
compressed and one suffers greatly by living in the womb.*

The womb is full of thick fluid, secretions and excretions, filthy odours, and innumerable subtle germs. It is narrow, with many ridges and irregularities.

The baby usually faces backwards, towards the ka ka of the mother's food, spit and so on. Above the baby are the mother's intestines, containing old food, bile, etc. Hence, the baby feels all kinds of filthy dark things going up and down and its body suffers from things eaten—acid and sour foods, hot and cold liquids, spicy or heavy food, much food or a little, rough or greasy food, and sweets.

The baby is nourished by unclean liquid and feels as if in a hot quagmire of filth. The heat of the mother gives suffering to the baby's body, and it feels extremely hot, as if burnt or in a pit of coals.

When the mother moves the baby suffers: running, jumping, sitting, or in sexual intercourse. It feels pain when the mother is near a fire or wears tight clothing. Even its own posture makes it feel as if there were a stick running through its body.

There is great suffering during and soon after birth. At the time of leaving the womb, due to karmic air, its head is pushed down, its legs up, and its arms inwards; the hip bones are compressed towards each other. As a large object forced with difficulty through a too small and grudgingly yielding opening, the body feels like a raw wound, and turns blue.

It is born covered with partly dried and sticky secretions and excretions. The lips and throat and heart are dry. The contact of the skin with the outside atmosphere feels like that with very rough plants; the touch of the hand and cloth are like that of a sword. Held in the lap, the baby feels the suffering of a cow with its skin peeled off, being eaten by other animals.

A baby cries because it is suffering. But I see it only from my side, my vision and feelings, and don't consider the other.

2. The suffering of old age

a. Decaying.

The beautiful looking body becomes increasingly decrepit with each passing year, and loses its strength in a very short time.

b. Losing the power of the senses.

E.g., not being able to see clearly or hear distinctly.

c. Losing enjoyments.

Not finding satisfaction with objects or material pleasures, such as impaired digestion causing loss of enjoyment of favourite foods.

d. Losing the power of the mind.

Forgetting names, places, ideas and so on.

e. Worrying about life shortening and death approaching.

All in all, old age is like a very rotten orange, with no beauty without or within. It is full of worms, and has such a taste of sorrow.

It is easy to see how old people are. And looking old is such a big problem in the West, a bigger problem than other big problems.

I should visualise several old men and women, putting myself in their place, and check up, suffering the sicknesses, the physical changes, and the pain of being unable to enjoy beautiful objects to which I am attached, and having to accept and use undesirable foods, treatments and medicines. And having so much worry of death; when it comes there is the great suffering of separation from the body, relatives, friends and desirable enjoyments.

3. The suffering of sickness

4. The suffering of death

It is extremely important to make repeated observations on the sufferings of birth and death.

5. The suffering of release from beautiful objects and attachments

Separation and fear of separation from loved ones, enjoyments and possessions causes suffering during the whole life and at its end.

6. The suffering of encounters with ugly (disagreeable) objects

Suffering arises by contact with an enemy, having a catastrophe or involvement in problem situations.

7. The suffering of not obtaining desirable objects

There is suffering from not finding what is sought or from not obtaining satisfaction in any enjoyments.

The whole problem arises from the three principal negative minds, their objects, and the three resulting feelings.

- a. Greed: beautiful object: happiness

- b. Hatred: ugly (disagreeable) object: suffering
 - c. Ignorance: indifferent object: indifference.
8. **The suffering of this body created by delusion and karma**
- a. Taking this deluded body causes suffering even in future lives.
 - b. Because of the existence of this new formation, all the present life sufferings, old age and death arise.
 - c. Suffering of suffering and
 - d. Changeable suffering—both arise because the body is controlled by delusion and karma.
 - e. Pervading suffering, the suffering of conditioned existence, exists merely because the body exists. I am born in the nature of suffering—I decay and perish.

How to Stop the Three Negative Feelings

An instant, powerful method, like fire, to destroy the negative minds of greed, ignorance and hatred and their objects, is the Enlightened One's method to bring inner and outer peace, the well-subdued mind. But Guru Shakyamuni's experienced solution is ineffective if we do not live in the right practice.

Living in the right practice generates much faith, understanding and energy, leading to control, and these are the sublime qualities of his Teachings.

Päl.dän.ch'ö.dr'ag said:

Ordinary beings are always attached to the self-identity "I," saying "I, I, I," causing them to be attached to desirable objects. That attachment obscures the faults of ignorance.

As the conception of the self is the source of all samsaric problems, immediately a problem arises, the mind should be brought inside, away from distractions, and made to check up on the "I."

So, when the problems arise, there are several methods for dealing with them:

1. We should try to see the “I” as a non self entity (*Rang.gya.t’ub.pä.dzä.yö*: self entity), and the object of the problem in the same way. Also we should try to see the voidness of both “I” and object (*Rang.shin.gy’i.tong.pa*: voidness (emptied) of self nature).
2. We should think of the shortcomings of the delusions—greed, ignorance and hatred—and react to these negative minds with feelings, as to a burning fire, remembering that they
 - a. cause the sufferings of the six samsaric realms,
 - b. prevent my Enlightenment,
 - c. prevent my achieving the realizations of Bodhisattvas and Arhants,
 - d. distract from full renunciation, Bodhicitta and right view,
 - e. have given harm since beginningless time,
 - f. will continue to harm and give endless suffering,
 - g. do the same thing for all sentient beings, and
 - h. are my worst, most dangerous enemy.
3. We can change the aspect of objects: beauty into ugliness or vice versa.
4. We should view the object in terms of permanence and impermanence.
5. A lesser method for moments of uncontrolled mind is to make the mind like stone or a piece of wood.
6. We can think “the opposite is true, the complete opposite.” But, of themselves these words mean nothing. These methods depend on understanding and feeling. It is most important to try to live in the consciousness of these methods.

To give up this suffering samsara I must fully recognise its cause and let it go.

For all samsara and the true nature of suffering there are two causes: ignorance (giving rise to delusion and karma) and craving.

These are causes because they are the root of suffering and are continually arising, bringing the suffering result frequently and strongly.

II. The Six Sufferings

1. **The suffering of the indefinite nature of samsaric pleasures.** Whatever happiness they bring, it never lasts.
2. **The suffering of dissatisfaction.** I am constantly striving for more and better samsaric pleasures, not realising that I have experienced each and every one infinite times and am still not content.
3. **The suffering of leaving the body again and again.** No matter how beautiful my samsaric body, it will have to be given up for another.
4. **The suffering of joining with suffering again and again.** I have experienced each of the infinite samsaric sufferings infinite times.
5. **The suffering of rising and falling.** The result of being higher is to become lower; the result of a collection is its finish; meeting leads to separation; and life is ended by death. Whatever is samsaric in nature brings suffering.
6. **The suffering of being without a helper.** I cannot share my experience of problems; born alone, alone I die.

III. The Three Sufferings

1. **Suffering of suffering:** the pain and discomfort of disease, injury and other physical problems; mental anguish. Even lower beings recognise this sort of suffering.
2. **Changeable suffering:** all samsaric pleasure is changeable in nature—it does not last and, in time, turns into suffering of suffering. Attachment to samsaric pleasure brings rebirth in the lower realms. Even humans find this suffering difficult to recognise.
3. **Pervading suffering: my whole body is in the nature of suffering**—there is no part of it that never causes problems. From pervading suffering, the result of delusion and karma, arise from suffering of suffering and changeable suffering, and it is much more difficult to recognise than the others.

The Second Noble Truth

The True Cause of Suffering: the Delusions

1. The Six Principal Delusions (Root defilements)

(Tza.nyön dr'ug)

1. Ignorance (*Ma.rig.pa*)

This is not understanding the four Noble Truths, the nature of samsara, the law of karma. It is the cause of all delusions.

2. Greed (*Dö.ch'ag*)

This is craving for the world of the senses, for form, and for objects considered to be beautiful in their self nature.

3. Anger (*K'ong.tr'o*)

This is the opposite to humility and patience. It is the greatest barrier to Liberation and Enlightenment for myself and others.

4. Pride (*Nga.ky'äl*)

- a. General pride: I am uplifted by feeling higher than others.
- b. Double pride: I am on the same level as others, yet feel superior to them and extraordinary.
- c. Pride over pride: even in a very special group, I feel the most special of all.
- d. Pride of my consciousness: by regarding the five skandhas as self I, this delusion arises. Without the five skandhas there would be nothing left of pride, but until I

know Shunyata I cannot know who the “I” really is. This is the worst pride and causes those before.

- e. Pride of feeling (perception): I think I have special knowledge, unaware that it is only samsaric knowledge and not Dharma Wisdom.
- f. Equal pride: I feel that I am just as important as a very important person, or only slightly less so, e.g., “I am almost as Enlightened as Guru Shakyamuni.”
- g. Misbelieving pride: I take wrong influences or methods to be correct, e.g., that sexual intercourse is the essential Tantric practice.

Any knowledge that is not, for Liberation is neither real nor pure Knowledge. I should think of death and the shortcomings of pride. Great pure love stops pride.

5. Doubt (*T'e.tsom*)

Superstitions of two points is the greatest barrier to achieving Liberation. When I fully know the nature of Enlightenment, all doubts will be resolved.

Nagarjuna said:

Those who doubt powerfully have the power to realize the Truth, provided they investigate their doubts.

6. The doctrine of delusion (*Ta.wa*)

Ignorant beliefs, or wrong realizations.

- a. Belief that the five skandhas are “I.”
- b. Belief that the “I” ceases.
- c. Heresy—no belief, or not believing that immoral causes bring suffering or that moral causes bring happiness.
- d. Belief that the above three are best for me to believe in.
- e. The wrong conception that the main moral conduct is other than the real one, e.g., belief that the only way to reach Enlightenment is by bathing in a certain river. I cannot clean negativities by washing in water.

II. *The Twenty Secondary (Closer) Delusions*

(Nye.nyön.nyi.shu)

1. *Tr'o.wa*

Performing and provoking violent actions through anger.

2. *K'ön.dzin*

Bearing a grudge or ill will for a short or long time.

3. *Tsig.pa*

Speaking harshly or insultingly because of anger or a grudge, causing much pain to others.

4. *Nam.par.tse.wa*

Harming others through carelessness and lack of compassion because of anger.

5. *Tr'ag.d'og*

Envy of others' perfections and attachment to my own gifts and notoriety. This unhappy, uncontrolled mind is a basis of all other negativities.

6. *Yo*

Attachment to the pleasure of receiving respect and thing, heightening my vices and crooked mind. Arising from greed, ignorance or hatred, it is a cunning, pretending mind—wanting to continue but also hide itself. These vices greatly disturb my achieving perfect happiness.

7. *Gyu*

Because of ignorance and greed, I betray other beings by pretending or saying that I have achieved certain knowledge, although this is not true. It is done to gain reputation and position.

8. *Ngo.tsa.me.pa*

Not forbearing in the senses yet not feeling shame. Part of the three poisonous minds, it increases principal and secondary delusions, and causes many others.

9. *Dr'el.me.pa*

Not performing virtuous actions, neither caring nor feeling shame. Also part of the three poisonous minds, it increases principal and secondary delusions and causes many others.

10. *Ch'ab.pa*

Not wanting to follow Dharma instructions given by another. I hide my defilements and confess them neither to myself nor to others.

11. *Ser.na*

Miserliness; being tightly attached because of greed. The remedy is charity.

12. **Gyag.pa**

Attachment to the physical perfection of my body and to being without sicknesses. There is arrogance arising from my attachment; the basis of other deluded minds.

13. *Ma.d'ä.pa*

Neither believing nor having faith in the right objects, which is ignorance in Dharma practice and causes laziness.

14. *Le.lo*

Laziness; enjoyment of temporal happiness but not of virtuous work. Much is lost in the non performance of virtuous acts, and this is the opposite of energy and perseverance.

15. *Bag.me.pa*

Carelessness in not seriously following the practices, and not following the precepts prohibiting carelessness. The three poisons cause this careless mind, decreasing virtue and increasing non-virtue.

16. **Je.ngä**

An unclear mind which forgets the object of meditation or the Dharma subject and causes much distraction.

17. *She.zhin.me.pa*

Non consciousness. A deluded mind, distracting me from consciously following the actions of the three doors of body, speech and mind.

18. *Mug.pa*

A dark ignorant mind, feeling mentally and physically heavy. Not having the control to grasp the object of meditation correctly nor to keep the mind inside. This leads to delusion.

19. *Gö.pa*

Agitation due to greed; uncontrolled interruption of mental quiescence; being caught up by beautiful relative things and distracted by objects.

20. *Nam.yong*

Being distracted by other objects and not keeping one pointedness of mind on the subject of meditation. Caused by the three poisons.

III. Four Changeable Mental Actions (Zhän.gyur.zhi)

These “intermediate dharmas” can be positive or negative. The power of motivation can turn virtue into non virtue or indifference, and vice versa.

1. *Nyi*

Sleep. The action of the principal mind is absorbed and without control to see or think objects because of the uninterruptedly appearing darkness.

2. *Gyö*

Repentance. The mental action of feeling upset for doing past actions.

3. *Tog.pa*

The mental action of seeking the gross aspect in the object.

4. *Chö.pa*

The mental action of seeking the subtle aspect in the object.



Figure 4 – The Wheel of Life

How Delusion and Karma Bind Us to Samsara, the Wheel of Life

(Skt., Samsaracakra; Tib., Sib.pe.k'or.lo)

Another way to understand the suffering nature of samsara is to meditate on the gradual evolution of the twelve dependent links, as Guru Shakyamuni showed. This is represented by the symbolic drawing of the wheel of life, also called the circle of the twelve dependent originations (Skt., *Pratitya samutpada*; Tib., *Ten.drel. chu.nyi*). It is held in the mouth of the Lord of Death, showing how all beings who live in the six realms of samsara are controlled by impermanence and death. The wheel is also supported by his hands and feet, symbolising how these beings are trapped by true suffering and the true cause of suffering—delusion and karma.

I and most other sentient beings are suffering in this circle of interdependent origination. Its root is ignorance, which is the complete opposite of the Dharma Wisdom that perceives the Absolute reality.

1. Ignorance (*Ma.rig.pa*)

The blind man shown on the wheel of life symbolises the ignorant person, who does not see where he is going, where he will be reborn, what he has suffered or what he will suffer in rebirth. Ignorance is the cause of the 84,000 delusions.

There are two kinds of ignorance:

- a. Ignorance of Absolute Truth, which binds me more strongly to samsara. The main purpose of all the Teachings of Guru

Shakyamuni is to remove ignorance by realization of the Absolute Truth, just as the main purpose of medicine is to remove sickness.

b. Ignorance of karma arises from ignorance of Absolute Truth; it causes rebirth in the three lower realms.

2. **Karmic formation** (*Du.j'e.kyi.lä*)

Ignorance generates karmic formation.

This is symbolised by a man producing clay pots. Just as a clay pot can be fashioned into many sizes and shapes, so does the creation of different karmas bring different results.

Karma may be meritorious, demeritorious or indifferent.

3. **Consciousness** (*Nam.she*)

Karmic formation generates consciousness.

This is symbolised by a monkey with fruit in its hand, swinging from tree to tree, to show that consciousness, bearing karmic impressions, joins past to present and present to future. The monkey is uncontrolled, impure, because its outlook depends on its position in the tree, just as my consciousness depends on karma.

Consciousness is the mind, which perceives the different aspects of objects.

There are six kinds of consciousness: those of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind.

5. **Name and form** (*Ming.zug*)

Consciousness generates name (mind) and form (body).

This is symbolised by a man rowing a boat, and shows that to do so, many conditions such as the boat, the oars man, the ocean, etc., are necessary. Similarly, name and form could not exist without the five skandhas (aggregates).

The skandha of form (*Zug.kyi p'ung.po*) is the fertilised egg, and the skandhas of feeling (*Tsor.wä p'ung.po*), of cognition (*Du.she kyi p'ung.*

po), of compounded phenomena (volition) (*Du.j'e kyi p'ung.po*) and of consciousness (*Nam.she p'ung.po*), inhabiting the fertilised egg, are the name.

5. Six sense organs (*Kye.ch'e.dr'ug*)

Name and form generate the six sense organs.

This is symbolised by an empty house. From the distance the house looks full and lived in, but it is empty. Similarly, the six sense organs are empty because they are meaningless without an object.

For the six sense organs there are also six outer objects and six inner sense bases.

6. Contact (*Reg.pa*)

Six sense organs generate contact.

This is symbolised by the contact of a man and a woman, the meeting of sense organs with their objects.

There are six contacts.

7. Feeling (*Tsor.wa*)

Contact generates feeling.

This is symbolised by a man who, with an arrow in his eye, is suffering because of his contact with an object. Without contact there is no feeling; therefore, if my mind is uncontrolled, I am better off to avoid contact with objects that lead to more greed and further suffering. This is why Guru Shakyamuni, with great compassion, made the rule that one should be well contained and have few possessions.

There are three kinds of feeling:

- a. suffering,
- b. happiness, and
- c. indifference.

8. Craving (*Se.pa*)

Contact and feeling generate craving.

This is symbolised by a man drinking wine. Just as this man's thirst is never satisfied, so the person deluded by greed is never satisfied and craves more things. This greed ruins the present, and many future lives.

There are three kinds of craving, and all cause suffering:

- a. desiring release from fear and ugly objects,
- b. desiring no release from beautiful objects to which I am attached, and
- c. attachment to the body, fearing loss of the "I" at death.

9. Grasping (*Len.pa*)

Craving generates grasping.

This is symbolised by a monkey picking fruit from a tree. Having tasted one fruit, he clings to the tree for more and more. Grasping is created by craving and procreates becoming, just as human beings grasp at and cling to their physical bodies. This grasping causes greed, hatred and ignorance, bringing much suffering.

There are four kinds of grasping, and all cause suffering:

- a. attachment to beauty,
- b. attachment to wrong beliefs or doctrines, such as the belief that karma, and past and future lives are non-existent,
- c. clinging to the wrong conception of the self-existent "I," and
- d. holding the belief that immoralities, e.g., sacrificing living beings or deriving sexual happiness, are pure methods of receiving Liberation.

10. Becoming (*Si.pa*)

Grasping at the body generates becoming.

This is symbolised by a pregnant woman. The greater my attachment to the physical body, the sooner will rebirth come. The becoming caused by ignorance is strengthened because craving and grasping conditioned it.

There are four kinds of becoming, all under the control of delusion and karma:

- a. the becoming of rebirth,
- b. the becoming of death,
- c. the becoming of intermediate, and
- d. the becoming of lifetime.

11. Rebirth (*Kye.wa*)

Becoming generates rebirth.

This is symbolised by a woman giving birth. The skandhas are determined by delusion and karma, and determine the form of the present rebirth.

There are four kinds of rebirth:

- a. in the womb,
- b. from an egg,
- c. by heat, and
- d. intuitive, i.e., not needing the bodies of parents.

12. Old age (*Ga.wa*) **and death** (*Ch'i.wa*)

Birth usually generates old age.

This is symbolised by an old man walking with a cane. Becoming old is the result of delusion and karma.

Birth or old age generate death.

This is symbolised by a corpse. Death ends the life, and the round of existence circles again.

I do not desire suffering, so I must stop circling in samsara. To do so I must overcome delusion and karma. Ignorance leads to action, which leaves impressions on the consciousness. The results of those may appear in this lifetime, the next, or in subsequent lives.

The trip of the twelve dependents may be completed in two or three lifetimes. An example follows:

- a. In this lifetime I ignorantly create the karma for rebirth as a rat, this impression being left on my consciousness. But for the rest of my life I give up attachment to the samsaric life, become celibate and keep the precepts purely. So the craving, grasping and becoming of the rat rebirth are interrupted by those of the desired perfect human rebirth.
- b. I am reborn human, living in perfect chance, and the seven results from the dependence of a perfect human rebirth finish with this second life. But as this life is not spent in pure practice,
- c. rebirth as a rat occurs because its craving, grasping and becoming are now the strongest. In this life the dependence of the rat finishes.

Nagarjuna said:

Two deluded actions (links 2 and 10) arise from three deluded causes (links 1, 8 and 9); seven uncontrolled results (links 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11 and 12) arise from those two deluded actions. Again three deluded causes arise from these seven results. Such a wheel of life goes round and round.

The Teaching of Guru Shakyamuni that the six samsaric realms and their suffering are only internally caused by delusion and karma was believed and realized by a great number of ancient Indian and Tibetan pandits. They, as did Guru Shakyamuni, gave up princely lives and kingdoms to penetrate fully the Absolute Truth, because they realized the external nature of samsara.

A person walking in thorns that pierce his flesh realises that the resultant suffering derives only from his internal state of ignorance.

He could wear shoes and prevent his suffering. The suffering of samsara is also internally caused by ignorance. But if the nature of the thorns was the cause of suffering (external) and the cause was not in the nature of the sufferer, then even shoes would not prevent the suffering. And if the cause of samsaric suffering were external, then there would be no means for controlling samsara. Nor would there be any method of attaining final peace, of completing the state of perfect happiness by extinguishing samsara. Even medicine could not cure sickness. There would be neither perfect happiness nor people's suffering.

But people do suffer, as shown by the world's thirst for peace. Yet as we can experience greater and greater suffering, we can experience higher and higher happiness.

If it were God alone who created the samsaric realms and their suffering, then there would be no reason to follow the Teachings to be released, or to have the Teachings shown by God. All attempts would be in vain since every living being would have a samsaric nature rooted in suffering by God. If God were the cause of samsara he would be the creator of ignorance and suffering, and would be our worst enemy instead of a perfect guide. So the only way to final peace would be to extinguish God—the cause of all suffering.

There is no logical reason to say that the compassionate God created everything, for his Teachings were shown only to help us achieve happiness. For if he were the creator of all, he would have already created Enlightenment for each living being, and we would already have received it. But this sounds like the imagination of a little baby.

Universal evolution is created by the universal law of karma, created by the beings which inhabit the universe. That's why there is a logical reason for both the universe and its inhabitants.

Shantideva said:

*The weapons of the hell beings,
By whom and for whom were they created?
Who laid the foundation of the burning iron?
How did the limitless blaze happen?
All the suffering stages, even such as that one,
Arose from the veil mind.*

A beautiful girl is seen in beautiful ways by different people with varying levels of thought. Food tastes differently to different people. It depends on karma, and nothing is created by itself but by the individual mind.

World peace will not result through external development. It does not depend upon reducing noise in the city or hiding in a cave. The only cause that can bring peace to universal beings is to change ourselves into others, to be attached to the comfort of others instead of our own, which we would renounce. The negative thought that cherishes ourselves and not the other is the cause of all suffering and problems.

Prayer to Be Said After Meditation Three

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja:

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge that attachment to samsaric pleasures keeps me as if locked in an unbearable prison, and that the Three Trainings and Seven Noble Possessions can bring me to Nirvana.

ZÖ.KA <i>unbearable</i>	TZÖN.RA <i>prison</i>	DRA.WÄ <i>like</i>	K'OR.WA.DI <i>samsara this</i>
GA.WÄ <i>desirable</i>	TSÄL.TAR <i>as park</i>	T'ONG.WÄ <i>seeing of</i>	LO.PANG.NÄ <i>mind avoiding and</i>
LAB.SUM <i>trainings three</i>	P'AG.PÄ <i>noble of</i>	NOR.GY'I <i>possession</i>	DZÖ.ZUNG.TE <i>store by holding</i>
T'AR.PÄ <i>Nirvana of</i>	GYÄL.TSÄN <i>banner</i>	DZIN.PAR <i>to hold</i>	J'IN.GY'I.LOB <i>please bless</i>

(Please bless me and all sentient beings to bear the banner of Nirvana by holding the store of the Three Trainings and the Noble Possessions, and to avoid seeing the unbearable prison of samsara as a beautiful park.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

Meditation Four:
The Mahayana Equilibrium Meditation
(T'eg.pa.ch'en. pö.lo.jong.tsül)

It is never enough to gain only self Liberation. Attachment to my own self peace and striving solely for this is very selfish and cruel. Visualising a disturbing enemy, a helping friend and a stranger, surrounded by all sentient beings, after contemplating each section of this meditation, I should think, "There is no reason to be attached to, and help the friend, nor to hate the enemy and return harm."

1. If I were to work only to gain my own self peace, there would be no reason to have been born human, because, even as an animal, I could strive for this.

The different forms of animal have the same aim: self happiness, and perform many negative actions, such as destroying enemies, cheating others with political mind and fighting, as do many highly educated people, who also seek only their own self pleasure. There is almost no difference between them other than physical shape.

2. The main purpose of my being born human is to strive for and achieve higher aims: to bring every sentient being into everlasting happiness. This is something that no animal can do.
3. Just as I wish to avoid suffering and find happiness, so do all other sentient beings.

Therefore, I and all other sentient beings are equal; therefore there is no logical reason to care more for myself than for another and I should harm neither enemy nor any other sentient being.

4. For countless rebirths I have been discriminating all beings as either friend, enemy or stranger with the self “I” consciousness.

Päl.dän.ch'ö.dr'ag said:

If there is self “I” consciousness, then there is the discrimination of self others.

Attachment and hate arise from discriminated partisanship between other and self.

All negative things arise from acting under the influence of these negative minds.

- a. How the self “I” consciousness (ignorance, wrong conception) causes
“I” attachment (greed)
producing
attachment to self happiness (possessiveness).

All the different functions of the negative mind arise from the above.

- i. Anger is caused by greed and self attachment; it makes me discriminate against whoever disturbs my happiness, thus producing the enemy.
 - ii. Greed points out the friend who helps, and the enemy who hinders. Such reasoning comes from past, present and future instances of help and hindrance.
 - iii. Ignorance discriminates the stranger, who neither helps nor hinders.
- b. Results
 - i. Anger makes me hate and harm the enemy.
 - ii. Greed makes me be attached to, and help the friend.
 - iii. Ignorance makes me see the stranger as of a permanent self-nature.

By following the advice of these negative minds I become involved in suffering and complicated situations.

Greed creates suffering and danger for myself and all other beings. The whole Earth is in danger of explosion.

Attachment offers no peace, and only causes suffering.

5. The two negative actions, helping with greed and harming with anger, have thrown me into samsaric suffering for beginningless lives, making perfect peace and Enlightenment impossible to achieve.
6. To continue in this way will cause me the same suffering, receiving neither realizations nor Enlightenment, for countless eons.

Negative actions leave negative impressions on the consciousness. These ripen into negative karma, and create suffering ad infinitum.

7. The three objects—friend, enemy and stranger—are not definitely true. The reasons for their being what they are, are very temporal. The present friend, enemy and stranger have not always been the friend, enemy and stranger in past countless lives. Even the enemy of last year may be the friend of this year, or the friend of this morning become this afternoon's enemy. It can change within the hour, and does so because of attachment to food, clothing and reputation.

The Teaching, *Pungzang.g'i.zhug.pa* says:

If one tries to befriend an enemy for a moment, he becomes your friend. The same thing occurs when one treats a friend as an enemy. Therefore, knowledgeable ones are never attached to food, clothing or reputation, nor to friends or enemies, by understanding the impermanence of temporal relationships.

Guru Shakyamuni said:

The father becomes the son in another life, mother becomes wife, enemy becomes friend; it always changes. Therefore, there is nothing definite in samsara.

According to this realisable quotation, there is no reason to be attached to friends nor to hate the enemy.

8. If that ignorant, self “I” conception and all of its objects were true, these three distinctions (friend, enemy, stranger) should exist from countless previous lives to the present, and even beyond Enlightenment.

This contradicts the significance of Buddhahood, for the Enlightened Being is called Buddha because his wonderful, sublime Knowledge has not a tiny atom of the delusions and illusions that cause such discriminations.

Therefore, the fully understanding One showed his compassionate method, the Equilibrium Meditation, to free me from delusions, illusions and discriminations.

The discriminations are not true because that conception and its objects are totally illusive. There is no self “I.”

9. My afflictions are not created by the enemy but by myself. In my previous lives I afflicted others through ignorance, and the results of this return during my present life.

As a Sutra says:

I have killed all of you before and was chopped up by all of you in previous lives. We have all killed each other as enemies, so why should we be attached to each other?

Chandrakirti said:

It is very foolish and ignorant to retaliate with spite, in the hope of ending the attack of the enemy, because the retaliation itself only brings more suffering.

Therefore, there is no reason to retaliate.

- 10.. The enemy is the object of my practice of patience, to control my anger.

I should not hate the enemy who, by strengthening this practice, brings peace into my mind.

11. The enemy is infinitely more precious than any possession. He is the source of my past, present and future lives' happiness. I should never hate. Any material possession can be given up for his peace.

12. The enemy is my greatest need. He is the cause of all beings' Enlightenment, including mine. He is my best possession; for his peace I can give up myself.

From now on I must never hate nor harm the enemy, nor any other being.

13. The enemy harming me physically and mentally is under the control of his negative mind. He is like a stick which someone uses to beat another. There is no reason to get angry, harming the person in retaliation—it is not his fault; as the pain of the beating is not the fault of the stick.

14. If I had clear Wisdom, I would see that harming others with hate is, in fact, harming myself with hate. Obviously, I should not do it.

15. The enemy, as well as every other being, is the object of the Buddha's compassion. The numberless Buddhas hold the enemy and every other being as dear as their own heart.

Therefore, even lightly harming any being is like harming the infinite Buddhas.

16. The Buddha always considers all sentient beings, even enemies, more important than himself. Mindlessly harming any being for my own peace is the act of a mind like stone.

17. The enemy and all other beings have been my mother countless times. The Holy Body, Speech and Mind of the infinite Buddhas are servant to all beings, enemies included. So I must not give harm.

18. Not harming the worst enemy, which is in my mind, and destroying the outside enemy instead, is like shooting a friend and not shooting the enemy by not recognising the object.

I should not harm the outer enemy but the inner one that causes all the suffering.

19. Because of high realizations based on this meditation, a Bodhisattva would see no sentient being as an enemy even if all should rise against him.

The enemy is merely the conception of my hate, just as friend and stranger are conceived by greed and ignorance. I should not believe as my negative minds discriminate.

20. I should check up with my inner Wisdom Eye: the attached friend and hateful enemy will never be found anywhere, neither inside nor outside either of their bodies. With the true Wisdom Eye, I can see that these are only names.

For all these reasons I can now see clearly that I have been foolish and nonsensical for beginningless lifetimes.

Realization of this meditation is our most beneficial possession. It brings peace to numberless beings as well as to our many future lives. Inner realization of this meditation brings the true, well-subdued peace—as indestructible as a diamond. The enjoyment of this peace is invaluable and has no end.

All this is within our mind and is unshakeable, even if all sentient beings were to rise as an enemy against us, so why don't we try to experience this understanding peace as shown by the Enlightened Ones who completed this realization?

Prayer to Be Said After Meditation Four

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja:

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge that it is only the delusion of self-attachment that makes me differentiate myself as more important than others, and that the blessings of this prayer give much power to accomplish the Equilibrium Meditation.

DUG.NGÄL	TRA.MO	TZAM.YANG	ML.DÖ.CHING
<i>suffering</i>	<i>subtle</i>	<i>even</i>	<i>not desiring</i>
DE.LA	NAM. YANG	CH'OG.SHE	ME.PAR.NI
<i>happiness</i>	<i>to never</i>	<i>satisfaction</i>	<i>not having</i>
DAG.D'ANG	ZHÄN.LA	KY'Ä PAR	YÖ.MIN ZHE
<i>I and</i>	<i>others to</i>	<i>differences</i>	<i>having no saying</i>
ZHÄN.DE	GA.WA	KYE.PAR	J'IN.GY'I.LOB
<i>others</i>	<i>happiness</i>	<i>gladness generate</i>	<i>please bless</i>

(Please bless me and each sentient being to think continually that all others should have happiness and its cause, and to be happy when seeing another being create even the tiniest merit. For there is not the slightest difference between myself and all other beings, never finding satisfaction, even in dreams, nor desiring the smallest suffering.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

Meditation Five:

The Seven Techniques of Mahayanic Cause and Effect (Part I)

1. How Are All Sentient Beings my Mother?

That all sentient beings have been my mother is shown by:

1. Scriptural authority

Nagarjuna said:

*If we divided this Earth into pieces the size of juniper berries,
the number of these would not be as great as the number of
times that each sentient being has been our mother.*

2. Logical reasons

- a. Because of beginningless mind, samsaric transmigration is beginningless and my previous lives are numberless. But, due to different individual karmas, my present mother has not been my mother in all previous lives.

For instance, when this mother was an elephant I was an ant, born from a mother ant; when I was a yak, she was a flea; and so on.

- b. However, the mother of my present, human life has been my human mother numberless times.

She has also been my mother when we were turkeys, hens, cows, etc., countless times each.

- c. Of all the realms of samsara, there is none in which I was never born. I have been born in every single place throughout the entire extension of space.

Each and every physical form in existence, even the most ugly and miserable of all, seen or not seen by me, I have taken innumerable times.

- d. Finally, the time when sentient beings began to be mother does not exist.

Such a time is not the object of even the Omniscient Mind of Enlightened Beings, so it cannot be that of the limited minds of ordinary beings.

What is true, as above, for my present mother is also true for all other sentient beings.

II. Remembering the Kindness of All Mother Sentient Beings

Even worldly people are grateful for the kindness of the mother, which extends from conception until death.

My mother's kindness is responsible for all the opportunities I have, of making use of my physical body and of leading the sort of life that I do.

If she hadn't taken care of me when I was in the womb, I wouldn't have been born alive. If she hadn't fed me well afterwards, I wouldn't have enjoyed the various functions of my physical body, such as using

my eyes to see the most beautiful objects,

my ears to hear the most beautiful sounds,

my nose to smell the sweetest perfumes,

my tongue to enjoy the most delicious tastes, or

my body to enjoy sexual love, and have many children.

Also, becoming rich by working with my body, speech or mind, and being skilful and creative with my hands; all this depends on my mother's kindness. My mother always took good care of me, feeding

me properly, protecting me from many dangers, directing my life, and making me study so that I could have a comfortable life and good reputation.

From the time of my conception she has been worried and concerned about me. When I was in the womb she worried day and night, didn't move as freely as before, and always took more care of me than of herself, because of the great love and compassion she had for her baby. She took much care in eating—renouncing desirable food, and eating only that which would not give me harm, avoiding foods that were too hot and too cold, etc.

At the time of my birth, she bore the extreme suffering of feeling as if her body were about to split apart, and had fear that her life was in danger. If my mother hadn't wanted to bear the suffering of childbirth, I wouldn't have been born.

When I was a baby, in spite of disgust, she always kept me clean of ka ka, pi pi, snot, etc. She always tried to keep me warm and protected, and gave me the best clothes and food that she could. She would also keep the best part of her own food and other enjoyments for me.

My mother told lies to give me a good reputation, and to hide my faults and bad behaviour. To protect me from danger she fought or did anything possible to help, taking more care of me than of herself.

In all, my parents took great care of my life with much suffering, creating bad karma by making other beings suffer so that I would be happy.

Moreover, because my present mother has been my mother in countless human lives, she has been infinitely kind to me since time without beginning.

Nagarjuna said:

The amount of milk we have drunk from the one mother is greater than the amount of water in the oceans.

If all the milk I have ever received from my mother could be collected, it would fill infinite space, and I could continue to drink it in future lives. Similarly, the food received from her is as infinite as space, and all my past ka kas and pi pis, the result of that food, would fill an infinite, immense extension. So would the clothes she gave

me, the immense ocean of tears she shed out of worry for me, and the numberless bodies she sacrificed to protect my life.

Besides the kindnesses she gave me as a human, there are those she gave as all different beings.

I have received exactly the same amount of benefits from each sentient being. Therefore, as my present mother has been infinitely kind to me, so has every other sentient being.

III. Repaying All Mother Sentient Beings for Their Kindness

Receiving Bodhicitta depends on having Great Compassion. This depends on Great Love, which comes from the unselfish love that sees only beauty. This can be easily achieved by considering sentient beings as mother and remembering their kindness to me. This is done because living beings cherish, of the two parents, their mother more than their father.

Even worldly people feel the responsibility of repaying help received from their mother or from other people, even if this help is in small, insignificant things. For instance, this help may be in satisfying my desires, by giving invitations to parties, food, or sups of tea, or by saying one or two sweet, empty words, pleasing to my ears. Also, even deeply ignorant animals such as dogs help their master in return for kindness received, so why can't I do the same?

Yet, repaying mother sentient beings in their worldly needs is not enough nor is it the best way, because it can't extinguish their suffering or its cause.

The best method of repayment is by helping them with the true realization of Dharma, because this helps them to stop all interrupting mind, and so to receive Enlightenment.

Prayer to Be Said After the Third Technique

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja:

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge that all sentient beings are my mother, all have been constantly kind to me, and all are in great suffering.

NYAM.T'AG <i>tormented</i>	DRO.WA <i>living beings</i>	DI.KÜN <i>this all</i>	DAG.G'LMA <i>my mother</i>
YANG.YANG <i>again and again</i>	DR'IN.GY'I <i>have been kind</i>	KYANG.PÄ	TSÜL.SAM.NÄ <i>how thinking by</i>
DUG.PÄ <i>beautiful</i>	B'U.LA <i>beloved boy</i>	TZE.WÄ <i>of compassion</i>	MA.ZHIN.D'U <i>mother as</i>
CHÖ.MIN <i>effortless</i>	NYING.JE <i>compassion</i>	KYE.WAR <i>to generate</i>	J'IN.GY'I.LOB <i>please bless</i>

(Please bless me to generate true effortless compassion, such as a mother has for her beloved, beautiful boy, by thinking that all living beings are equally tormented, and that all are my mother, and have been constantly kind to me.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

After all this, I should check up in my mind to see if I am still harbouring thoughts of self attachment and self cherishing, which are my worst enemy.

If so, I should apply the following solution, with deep feeling.

IV. Equalising Oneself with Others

Shantideva said:

The practice of equalising oneself with others is a Holy and mystical practice.

How is this?

The greatly courageous mind takes on the suffering of others by taking more care of others than of itself and gives its own happiness and merits to others.

The importance of this Teaching is not grasped by those of lower understanding, and it is difficult for them to rejoice at this action. Therefore, this practice is recognised as Holy and mystical.

Guru Tzong.k'a.pa said:

Even the breath running in and out can become a great method of helping other beings—by making them receive the highest, most magnificent state, obtained through the practice of a Bodhisattva's deeds, characterised by Bodhicitta: taking more care of others than of oneself.

I should equalise myself with others because we are equal in fact: all sentient beings, myself included, desire happiness and dislike suffering.

Shantideva said:

We should primarily train ourselves in the practice of equalising oneself with others.

As all beings are equal in happiness and suffering, they should be protected as oneself.

There are many parts of the body, yet they protect each other from suffering, equally. Similarly, although the suffering of other beings is separate to me, we are all equal in desiring happiness. The action of curing the suffering of others should have no expectations, just as I don't expect to receive anything by curing my own suffering.

Therefore, as there is no reason to cherish myself more than others, I should take more care of others than of myself.

By deeply thinking of the numberless shortcomings of cherishing myself, and the numberless benefits of cherishing others, I can raise the greatly courageous thought: thinking of curing the suffering of all other beings by feeling even their smallest suffering as unbearable, and not being upset even by the thought of suffering all their sufferings.

Prayer to Be Said After Meditation Five

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja:

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge of my sameness with others, dispelling all haughty thoughts.

DOR.NA	J'I.PA	RANG.D'ÖN	K'O.NA.D'ANG
<i>in brief</i>	<i>little child</i>	<i>self interest</i>	<i>solely and</i>

T'UB.WANG	ZHÄN.D'ÖN	BA.ZHIG	DZÄ.PA.YI
<i>mighty power</i>	<i>others interest</i>	<i>only</i>	<i>he does</i>

KYÖN.D'ANG	YÖN.TÄN	YE.WA	TOG.PÄ.LÖ
<i>defect and</i>	<i>good quality</i>	<i>distinction</i>	<i>understand by mind</i>

DAG.ZHÄN	NYAM.JE	NÜ.PAR	J'IN.GY'I.LOB
<i>others</i>	<i>equalise</i>	<i>be able</i>	<i>please bless</i>

(Please bless me to be able to change myself into others and to equalise myself with them, by thinking of the benefits and shortcomings of the following actions: The Buddha works only for others; the limited minded child works only for himself.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

Meditation Six:
The Seven Techniques
of Mahyanic Cause and Effect
(Part II)

V. Shortcomings of the Self-Cherishing Conception

On the basis of the following short explanation, I should think about the shortcomings of self cherishing thoughts. The self cherishing conception:

1. has kept me locked in the prison of samsara for numberless lives since beginningless time, compelling me to bear the sufferings of the six realms as much as possible;
2. has kept me in ignorance, continuously obsessed by countless problems;
3. has prevented all opportunities of reaching Enlightenment;
4. has stopped my receiving any other realizations;
5. has prevented the understanding and practice of Dharma;
6. has not even allowed the enjoyment of temporal happiness;
7. will continually destroy me in the future, as it has done in the past; and
8. changes helpful living beings and inanimate objects into enemies who destroy me.

My Guru becomes my enemy. So do my friends—relatives and non-relatives—myself and my body, and possessions and non possessions.

Tzong.k'a.pa said:

All the defects and sufferings are the fault of only one thing—the self cherishing conception. From the beginninglessness of samsaric life, how much suffering has been experienced in all three samsaric worlds? But still the creator of all faults has not been recognised, and is sought in external objects. Because of this ignorance, I have held and harmed the wish fulfilling mother sentient being as an enemy. On the other hand, my worst enemy, the self cherishing conception, the cause of all suffering, has been held as the dearest friend. Whatever the action performed, it is under the control of the self cherishing conception.

Shantideva said:

How much suffering and fear, and how many harmful things are in existence? If all arise from clinging to the “I,” what should I do with this great demon?

There are three hundred and sixty kinds of harmful and interrupting evil spirits, one thousand and eighty kinds of hindering spirits, and four hundred and twenty four kinds of sickness. Yet all disturbances and sufferings of the present life, all sorts of human tribulations, quarrels, arguments and similar problems arise from the self cherishing conception. This wrong conception makes me create much evil karma by forcing me to work for self happiness, self perfection, good reputation, etc. It makes me jealous of those who possess even the most insignificant thing, proud of being rich and powerful, angry when I hear rude words or see ugly objects, regard other beings as enemies, break my relationships with friends, and not get along with my teacher, parents, spouse, brothers and sisters. The self cherishing conception disrupts the peace between all beings, and as long as this great demon lives in my heart, keeping peace from myself and others, there can be no method whatsoever by which permanent harmony can be found.

Sha.po.pa said:

Until oneself has been recognised as one's own enemy, no realized Guru can help. When one sees oneself as one's own enemy, then the Guru can be helpful.

This great enemy prevents my following the Guru's orders correctly, despite repeated warnings from Dharma friends. It makes me follow only my own habitual and very old, bad character. Thus, I appear hostile to those whose advice I ignore. Instead of recognising my own bad habits as the cause of all these problems, I blame other beings for them.

Prayer to Be Said After the Fifth Technique

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja:

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas, and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge of all the shortcomings of the self cherishing conception, completely dispelling this wrong conception from my mind.

RANG.NYI <i>myself</i>	CHE.PA <i>care</i>	DZIN.PA <i>holding</i>	CHONG.NÄ.DI <i>horrible disease this</i>
MI.DÖ <i>undesired</i>	DUG.NGÄL <i>suffering</i>	KYE.PÄ <i>arising</i>	GYUR.T'ONG.NÄ <i>as cause seeing by</i>
LE.LÄN <i>creator of faults</i>	DÄ.LA <i>regarding</i>	KÖN.D'U <i>spiteful</i>	ZUNG.J'Ä.TE <i>holding by</i>

DAG.DZIN	DÖN.CH'EN	JOM.PAR	J'IN.GY'I.LOB
<i>I clinging</i>	<i>demon great</i>	<i>destroy</i>	<i>please bless</i>

(Please bless me to destroy the great demon of the “I” clinging conception by seeing that horrible disease, the self cherishing mind, as a spiteful object and the cause of all the undesired suffering, and by blaming it for the creation of all faults.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

VI. The Benefits of Cherishing Others More Than Oneself

Infinite benefits result from taking care of others more than myself. A simple example, taking care of other beings makes them happy, as I am happy when cherished by others; and what could give me greater happiness than seeing my mother happy?

But this practice has great purpose and infinite benefits—the definite cessation of all interrupting obscurations and negative actions and imprints, that I have been creating from beginningless time until the present. Thus it allows me to accumulate merits, thereby receiving basic, gradual realizations leading to perfect Enlightenment, so pleasing the Kings Buddha and their sons: Bodhisattvas and Arhants.

Since reaching Buddhahood depends on this practice, it is of the utmost importance to cherish others more than myself.

How is this?

1. Buddhahood is the co operation of Dharmakaya and Rupakaya. Obtaining these depends on

- following and completing the co operative path of Method and Wisdom, which depends on
- practice and realization of the six Paramitas, which depends on
- Bodhicitta, which is based on
- Mahayana great compassion, and this depends on
- taking care of others more than myself.

2. Becoming an Arhant depends on the three Trainings:
 - Wisdom Training (penetrative insight) depends on
 - Concentration Training: disciplining the mind away from immoral actions, that is control of intense agitation and selfishness by moral discipline. This depends on
 - other beings—the object of keeping precepts.

Prayer to Be Said After Meditation Six

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja:

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge of how to take more care of all other sentient beings than of myself, and the Knowledge that taking greater care of other sentient beings and leading them to Enlightenment is the door to Infinite Knowledge.

MA.NAM CHE.ZUNG DE.LA GÖ.PÄ.LO
mother all taking care to happiness leading thought

T'A.YÄ YÖN.TÄN JUNG.WÄ GOR.T'ONG.NÄ
infinite knowledge door of seeing by

DRO.WA DI.D'AG DAG.G'I DRAR.LANG.KYANG
living beings this all my raise as enemy even

SOG.LÄ CHE.PAR DZIN.PAR J'IN.GY'I.LOB
life than as dear to hold please bless

(Please bless me to be able to hold sentient beings dearer than my life, even should they all rise against me as enemies, by seeing that the thought of taking the greatest care of sentient beings and leading them to Enlightenment is the door to Infinite Knowledge.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16 18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

Meditation Seven:
The Seven Techniques
of Mahayanic Cause and Effect
(Part III)

VII. Tong.len - Giving Away and Taking Over

All sentient beings should be living in perfect happiness and its cause right now, but it is extremely difficult for them to achieve this from their side alone.

As we look at kind mother sentient beings they appear lost, their Wisdom Eye blinded by the cataract of ignorance. They are crazy with delusion, unconscious, and always stepping over the very fearful precipice into the three lower realms.

All mother sentient beings are completely ignorant of the cause of happiness, yet are hungry for happiness; they create only the cause of suffering, although they do not desire suffering. They do not know the great Enlightened happiness, or the perfect self happiness. Blind in their Wisdom Eye, they recognise neither right practice nor right avoidance. Lacking the Guru who leads to those perfect goals, they commit many evil actions of the three doors of body, speech and mind, and so are constantly being reborn in the lower realms.

But we have received the perfect human rebirth with the possibilities of opening the Wisdom Eye and of practising Dharma, having met the Guru to lead us to Enlightenment. So we can recognise practice and avoidance by knowing the causes of temporal happiness and suffering, and of perfect happiness and actual suffering.

So for all these reasons we should feel pity, and take on ourselves the responsibility of making all mother sentient beings receive the cause of happiness and perfect happiness, and for releasing them from suffering and its cause, and we ourselves should make all sentient beings free from all suffering and its cause, and lead them to permanent great happiness and its cause. So we offer all our happiness, including Enlightenment, and all our belongings to all mother beings, and take over all their suffering and problems.

The practice of giving away makes the practice of great love practical and successful. The practice of taking over makes the practice of compassion successful and increase quickly.

Before starting this practice, the great Mahayana compassion should be meditated on deeply by thinking with feeling, how good it is that all mother sentient beings should be completely released from suffering, and by seeing all the different sufferings they are experiencing.

Also, the great Mahayana love should be deeply meditated on with strong heartfelt feeling, by rejoicing at the thought that all sentient beings should have the great happiness, and by visualising to give them all greatest pleasures including Enlightenment.

The main purpose of this practice is to control and extinguish self attachment, i.e., taking the greatest care of only ourselves.

Such a mind often doubts, and is worried and afraid of temporal life sufferings, hot and cold, hunger and thirst, etc.

This meditation, “Giving away and taking over,” is not the same as the great Mahayana thought but it requires greater skill than the other practices.

Besides all this, we should have deep understanding of the bad results and shortcomings of not giving, and the numberless benefits of giving. What our egotistic mind doesn't want to give away are:

1. our most cherished body,
2. our possessions and enjoyments, and
3. our merits.

These three objects should be dedicated to control instantly our egotistic mind, which is the main destroyer of happiness and Enlightenment, and the cause of all suffering and problems.

In *D'a.wa dröl.ma*, Guru Shakyamuni said:

This body, which becomes rotten, and this life change and separate without control; and the child of lower intelligence is often controlled by a sinful mind creating extremely unrighteous actions with greed for worldly objects, which are nothing but a dream or magic show. But wise people have left riding on death.

This quotation explains that the body is very trivial and perishable, that the greatest benefits are available to those who give without attachment, and that greed for dream like or phantom-like objects only creates continuous suffering.

The Teaching, *Lab.drön*, says:

If a body and mind such as mine—impermanent, changing every second and impure—can receive Enlightenment, is it received without a cause?

This emphasises that it is far better and more worthwhile to give for receiving Enlightenment, than living in and taking care of this miserable samsaric body.

The Teaching, *Kye.rab*, says:

It is unwise to be displeased when others can benefit by our own non self existent, perishable, trivial body, which is impure, always suffering and very unkind to us.

All problems that result from attachment to possessions are “protecting” problems, such as those of continually developing craving, holding, fear, finishing, looking after, increasing delusions and decreasing enjoyments. Keeping possessed objects is also an ungenerous, lower being action, admired only by humans who are like babies.

The total benefit of giving is to receive instantly the infinite Knowledge of Buddha by accomplishing all paths: it is one of the

quickest ways of cleaning ourselves of all obscurations. Also, it gives happiness and protection from problems, although these are not the aim of the practice.

The Sutra, *Dr'ag.shül.chän.gy'i.zhü.pa*, says:

Whatever is dedicated (given) causes no protection problems, stops craving and holding, frees from fear, helps the progress of Bodhicitta, never stops giving, brings pleasures, avoids delusions and increases enjoyments. Dedication always becomes a Holy Being action and is always admired by the Buddhas.

Whether we practise giving or not, there will come a time when we are separating from our body and all our possessions. We shall die against our will, our possessions will leave us, and we shall leave them. Therefore, we should die having performed meaningful actions, the mind happy having given up possessed objects. This done, we are not caught up with them at death, and being extremely happy and free from worries, we are reborn in this way.

A condensed meditation to be practised wholeheartedly follows:

Shantideva prayed:

May I receive every type of suffering that sentient beings experience.

I should definitely follow the Holy Bodhisattvas' deeds—I have a great responsibility to do so not only for the sake of all mother sentient beings, but for even my own.

1. I contemplate

that I am taking over all the different tremendous sufferings and problems, all the heavy and subtle obscurations of all the beings of narak so that they become Lord Buddha.

As I breathe in through my right nostril

these sufferings enter in the form of very dark horrible fogs.

These fogs become a thunderball, as great as Mount Meru (the greatest mountain in the world).

It plummets with the fierceful force of the lightning of a dangerous electrical storm.

It strikes the infinitely black, rigid, rocky earth which is the wrong conception of the self existent ‘I’ the attachment to taking more care of myself than of others, and ordinary conceptions, situated in the heart.

The great thunderball shatters the unimaginably large, rocky earth of all my delusions and obscurations—the interruptions to my Enlightenment—to pieces, as in an explosion of atoms, instantly disappearing, leaving only the mere emptiness of it all.

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya

of Lord Buddha by receiving all the gradual paths. All my speech, body and mind are one with Guru Lord Buddha’s Holy Speech, Body and Mind.

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha’s Holy Body, to each of the lower narak beings. Each wish fulfilling Lord Buddha’s Holy Body becomes everything in the nature of happiness that the beings need to cure their sufferings.

For example:

to the hot naraks appears a refreshing amrita rain to cool and give happiness;

to the cold naraks it appears as warm sunshine giving warmth and great happiness;

to the narak beings nearby these suffering places, who are also suffering in different ways, each Lord Buddha’s Holy Body becomes one and the same as the different things that are causing the suffering. These things suddenly appear as enjoyments, giving great happiness, eradicating the suffering.

This also happens to the ordinary narak beings whose sufferings can be seen by ordinary people.

Each of their enjoyments generates an understanding of Dharma and all the levels of realizations including Enlightenment.

All become one with Lord Buddha, their mind being Dharmakaya and their body being Rupakaya.

2. I contemplate

that I am taking over every different type of suffering that animals experience:

- a. suffering of deep ignorance,
- b. suffering from heat and cold,
- c. suffering from hunger and thirst, and
- d. suffering of being eaten by other beings, of torture, and of hard work given by others.

As I breathe in through the right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupaka...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body, to each of the animal beings. Each wish fulfilling Lord Buddha's Holy Body becomes everything in the nature of happiness that these beings need to cure their sufferings.

For example:

becoming heat to those who suffer cold;

becoming cool amrita water or a refreshing breeze to those who suffer from heat;

becoming amrita food for those who are hungry;

becoming amrita drink for the thirsty ones;

becoming all kinds of helpers and beautiful things, which guide them from life's dangers and such suffering as being eaten and beaten and tortured by other beings.

All of them receive all realizations including Enlightenment, beginning with Refuge, by enjoying all that was dedicated to them. All of them become Lord Buddha.

3. I contemplate

that I am taking over each preta's sufferings: the sufferings of inner and outer hindrances, and hindrances to eating food—all their obscurations—so that they become Lord Buddha.

As I breathe in through the right nostril...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body, to each of the pretas.

For example: becoming one with the hot burning sufferings in their stomachs, transforming all into the Gradual Path's realizations and infinite happiness.

It becomes one with the filthy, dirty, stagnant lakes which they cannot drink, transforming them into pure crystal amrita lakes, giving all the path's realizations and infinite happiness.

It becomes one with those interferences that keep them from enjoying food, and it instantly transforms them into Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Gurus, helping the pretas in many ways, granting them realizations in Dharma.

Also, I visualise as Guru Shantideva said:

May all pretas receive satisfaction from the continuously flowing amrita milk coming from Avalokiteshvara's hand and be always cool bathing in it.

All their minds become Dharmakaya and bodies Rupakaya, becoming one with Lord Buddha.

4. I contemplate

that I am taking over each human being's different sufferings and problems, every heavy and subtle obscuration that blocks the path to Enlightenment.

As I breathe in through the right nostril...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body. Each of Lord Buddha's Bodies becomes a method to cure their sufferings.

Shantideva said:

May I become food and drink in the famine suffering eons for those poverty stricken sufferers.

May I become never ending wish fulfilling treasures materialising in front of each of them as all the enjoyments they need.

May I be a guide for those who do not have a guide, a leader for those who journey, a boat for those who want to cross over, and all sorts of ships, bridges, beautiful parks for those who desire them, and light for those who need light.

And may I become sleeping clothes for those who need them, and a servant to all who need servants.

May I also become the basic conditions for all sentient beings, such as earth or even the sky which is indestructible by cause.

May I always be the living conditions for all sentient beings until all sentient beings are Enlightened.

May I also become the suffering cutting medicine for sick people, and cure sickness as an amrita drink for an undying life for those who suffer death.

And amrita food for old age suffering people, who enjoy it instantly, cutting off old age and death sufferings.

And become any object that they had difficulty in finding, such as parents, children, wives, husbands.

And become inseparable beautiful objects with them as they like, stopping the suffering of being separated from beautiful delightful objects.

And transform their bodies into Buddha's Holy Body by cutting off the sufferings of this delusion body.

All these enjoyments give them infinite happiness, and beginning with Refuge they become one with Lord Buddha—their mind becoming Dharmakaya, and their body becoming Rupakaya.

5. I contemplate

that I am taking over all the asuras' sufferings, worries, jealousies and all their delusions, heavy and subtle. Thus, they become one with Lord Buddha—their mind becoming Dharmakaya and their body becoming Rupakaya.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body, to each of the asuras.

It becomes one with the enemies with whom they fight, becomes one with the weapons which injure them and transforms enemies into Guru Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, showing the Dharma and leading them along the path.

It transforms weapons into a rain of flowers and beautiful rainbow coloured clouds, as beautiful decorations in the nature of making them receive realizations and infinite happiness.

Their mind becomes Dharmakaya and their body becomes Rupakaya.

6. I contemplate

that I am taking over all the sufferings and obscurations of the suras. Such sufferings as death, quarrels, fights, banishment and being controlled, as well as those of the unconscious suras.

They all become one with Lord Buddha, their mind becoming Dharmakaya and their body, Rupakaya.

As I breathe in through my right nostril...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body, to each of the suras.

It becomes one with the amrita of immortality—to abolish the suffering of death.

It becomes one with the weapons that injure them, and transforms all into the path to Enlightenment and into transcendental enjoyments; all interfering enemies are transformed into Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, leading them into Enlightenment.

It becomes the whole path beginning with Refuge for the cognitionless suras.

They all become one with Buddha, with the achievement of Dharmakaya and Rupakaya.

7. I contemplate

that I am taking over all the subtle superstitions interrupting Bodhisattvas from receiving Enlightenment; and the subtle illusive mind of Shravakas and the Pratyekabuddhas and their self cherishing conceptions.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body, to each of the Bodhisattva's and Arhants.

It becomes the higher Tantric realizations for the Bodhisattvas, bringing Enlightenment quickly by purifying the subtle illusive minds. It also becomes fundamental Mahayana realizations and higher Tantric realizations for the Arhants by purifying self cherishing conceptions and every other negative mind.

(There is not one tiny negativity to get from Guru Buddha's Nirmanakayas, because they are completely purified of every single defect.)

8. I contemplate

that I am taking over all hindrances to my Gurus living until I receive all Sutra Tantric Teachings and realizations that lead me into Enlightenment, especially to receive all the Teachings that lead me immediately into Enlightenment in this very lifetime.

Also the interruptions to my Gurus' Holy deeds spreading all over the samsaric realms, and to their becoming automatically successful in everything that they think of.

Now all my Gurus have eons of long life, until I receive all realizations and Teachings, there being many chances to receive all the explanations and Teachings from the Gurus.

All their deeds become capable of spreading through the universe without a single hindrance.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril ...

I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body, to each of the Gurus.

All the light becomes the Gurus' possessions and enjoyments, increasing their transcendental happiness for the sake of all sentient beings and myself.

9. I contemplate

that I am taking over all interruptions which shorten the Nirmanakayas' and Holy Beings' lives and the lives of Practitioners, as well as interruptions to the widespread development of their Holy deeds and practices.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body, to each of the Nirmanakayas, Holy Beings and Practitioners. The light makes everything that they undertake successful, and becomes the things they need.

10. I contemplate

that I am taking over all the negative influences—hindrances which cause degeneration or destruction of the Teachings of Lord

Buddha, as well as the hindrances to the Teachings of the Buddha prevailing in the universe.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which becomes continuously existing, uninterrupted Teachings. The light makes degeneration impossible until every sentient being receives Enlightenment.

Shantideva said:

May the Teachings of Buddha—the source of all happiness and the medicine to cure sentient beings’ suffering—live longer with honour and riches!

Dedication of My Own Body

My body should be dedicated to the realms and places of different beings, besides being dedicated to the living beings themselves.

1. I contemplate

that I am taking over all the old evil karma that resulted in the place of the narak beings, mostly horrible and extremely fearful, with red hot burning iron, hot water springs, etc. All of these places are purified by dedicating my body.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which becomes the pure land of the Buddhas. The whole ground becomes as smooth as palm, extremely soft, shiny, free of impure smells, having sandal smell, and strewn with all kinds of flowers.

All the walls are made of jewels, and lotuses, opal, and many other beautiful, sweetly scented flowers wave up and down. Many birds make charming sounds, and there are oceans with the sweet, tasty qualities of calmness, light and cool. All is transcendental happy, one with true understanding of the Dharma: Absolute True Nature and the relative truth, and delusions and problems never develop.

2. I contemplate

that I am dedicating my body to take over the animal and the preta world. They are all purified of impurities such as thorns, precipices, avalanches, ugly bushes and trees, etc.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light which becomes the same pure land as described above, and is the light of the delightful Buddha, which is myself. All this enjoyment causes them to become one with Lord Buddha.

3. I contemplate

that I am taking over and dedicating to the human realm, purifying all the ugly, suffering places and transforming them into pure realms. I also do this with the asura and sura realms.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light to the human realm. Their enjoyment causes them to become one with Lord Buddha. In this way I also purify the asura and sura realms.

4. I contemplate

that I am taking over the realms of Gurus, Arhants, Bodhisattvas and Buddhas.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above—in case of each)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light to each. The pure white light sent to the realm of Arhants makes them become one with Buddha. Pure realms that are offered to Gurus and Bodhisattvas are increased very much to help all sentient beings eradicate ignorance quickly.

Dedication of My Own Possessed Enjoyments

I should also dedicate my own possessed enjoyments to the six different realms, to the Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas, and to Bodhisattvas and Gurus. My enjoyments are changed into the wish-fulfilling precious things which are needed to give the path to Enlightenment and other needs.

I contemplate

that all these beings become one with Lord Buddha because of the dedicated enjoyments, and that the dedicated enjoyments become the six different offerings to their six senses, and are in the nature of infinite happiness.

The dedication prevents any interruption to the working of Dharma for all sentient beings, and it makes all sentient beings, as well as myself receive all the Teachings and to have a long life.

Dedication of Merits

The merits created by the practice of “Taking over and giving away” in the past, present and future, should be dedicated to the narak beings, becoming the enjoyments they need to cut off their ignorance and suffering.

Similarly, such merits should be dedicated to the pretas, animals, humans, asuras and suras.

The merits dedicated to Arhants, Bodhisattvas and Gurus become higher realizations, and they become one with Buddha by receiving these realizations.

The merits appear as all kinds of different offerings, for the enjoyment of Gurus, Bodhisattvas and Buddhas.

The final dedication of merits should be to prevent all hindrances to the Teachings of the Buddhas, so that they exist until the end of samsara.

The limited minded person may think that this practice is meaningless, since nothing is received or given. This results from ignorance of the essential mental practice.

Guru Tzong.k'a.pa said:

The practice of the higher Paramita is not material giving. The essential practice is giving up sincerely every possessed thing, even merits, by seeing detached and giving mentally, to other sentient beings.

Through such practices we can receive Enlightenment quickly, to help other beings besides helping ourselves. There are histories of past Holy Beings creating realms for other beings through this practice.

In previous times, for the sake of us degenerated beings, the Brahmin, Gya.tso.dül took Teachings from the Tathagata, Rin.ch'en.nying.po, and saying five hundred prayers he received Holy Bodhicitta. Later, as the compassionate Founder, Guru Shakyamuni, he descended for the sake of beings of the time of the five degenerations, beings who

had been given up by the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. (These beings had not been abandoned by those Holy Beings, but were so heavily deluded that they were karmically unapproachable by other than Guru Shakyamuni.) To create merits, an infinite number of Holy statues to him were built by the gods and other sentient beings for whom he worked as a saviour. And because of the great Bodhicitta that he had generated in his previous life as the Brahmin Gya.tso.dül, equalising and exchanging himself with others, in many other ways was he more greatly kind and powerful than other Buddhas.

While generating Bodhicitta, the Bodhisattva, *K'or.lo.gyur.gyäl tzip.kyi.mü.ky'ü* visualised the formation of the pure and happy paradise, enabling such heavenly realms to evolve. This he did in the presence of the Tathagata, *Rin.ch'en.nying.po*, with the thought of creating a blissful paradise of perfect Knowledge in which there are only perfectly knowledgeable Beings who have transcended from other Buddha realms. Thereafter, this realm became the object of the prayers of all present beings. But it is almost impossible to be born there, for even to create the cause of one magnificent wish fulfilling tree, from which we can receive any thing we desire, is extremely difficult for ordinary beings. Yet, even now, beings are taking birth there through just praying to, and reciting the name of the Buddha of Medicine, *Män.gy'i.la.be.tur ya.wang.g'i gyäl.po*. Also, beings are praying by reciting the names of the most venerable female Buddha, Tara, and of the noble, compassionate Buddha Avalokiteshvara. Some are reciting the Zang.po chö.pä mön.lam, the prayer of the Bodhisattva, *Kün.d'u zang.po*, to be able to emulate his deeds. And innumerable sentient beings can create the cause for rebirth in the Western Paradise because of *K'or.lo.gyur.gyal's* achievement of Bodhicitta.

A Sutra Teaching says:

It is possible to know and see the minds and behaviour of all living beings and to be able to count the atoms of the planet Earth, and were infinite space to be covered evenly with hairs it would be possible to count them. But it is not possible to completely enumerate the full Knowledge of Bodhicitta, for from this Bodhicitta arise the Buddhas of the three times, and so too does all worldly happiness.

As the quotation explains, it is only from Bodhicitta that all happiness of worldly beings arises; and all the Buddha realms, the infinite Knowledge of the Buddhas and the Holy actions that come from the Buddhas' Holy Body, Speech and Mind also come only from Bodhicitta. In all of Guru Shakyamuni's previous Bodhisattva lives, his only form of work was to cherish others more than himself, and this has been so with all Beings who have received Enlightenment. It is absolutely essential to understand and practise equalising and exchanging ourselves with others, as the Buddha has said in many Mahayana Sutra Teachings. This precious Citta is the fundamental, supreme heart of all Bodhisattva action. Many times has it been said in the Teachings that we beings who practise this are highly fortunate, for the point of such practice is incomprehensible to beings of lower Wisdom. Even places where Holy Beings with Holy Bodhicitta have been become places of veneration for gods and other sentient beings who wish to create merits, and these beings make offerings to objects such as even the dust upon which the great Bodhisattvas have stepped. Shravakas (Lang.gyäl) and Pratyekabuddhas (*Nyam.t'ö*) follow paths to release only themselves from suffering. The Buddha said that by making even a small offering to the lower Arhants one can receive limitless merits. If this is so, then why not give cause for receiving limitless merits by making offering to great Bodhisattvas. It is said that by even saying the names of the great Bodhisattvas one can bring all success and stop all turbulence, so why not pray to them?

Reciting the name of the Great Compassionate Guide, Avalokiteshvara, three times is enough to eliminate all fear of one's surroundings, just as one recitation of the name of Vajrapani, the owner of the Buddha's mysticism, can pacify the mischievous and disturbing spirits.

If we have strong belief in the power and effectiveness of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, then, keeping just the written letters of their names on our body or seeing the Holy statues helps us succeed as we desire, and pacifies all hindrances.

By constantly developing the understanding of this, we should try to have the firm belief that the precious Bodhicitta and changing oneself into others are all panaceas, and that through this arises the

happiness of ordinary world. If we do not have unshakeably firm belief on this point, then the root of the Mahayana Path is broken, and no matter how much we think of, listen to and meditate on whatever profound and extensive Teachings of Sutra and Tantra, we shall never approach the experience of the Mahayana Path, the Path that pleases the Buddhas. Therefore, we must follow the Holy Gurus and the Holy practitioners, and make purification of this sinfulness, accumulating the necessary and cooperative merits in many ways. We must pray constantly and hard to the Guru Deities and try to develop the ability to practise the Mahayana Path as widely as possible.

The Thought Training Teaching says:

One should complete that training of the wishing citta well, thinking of attaining Enlightenment.

With strong compassion, we should take upon ourselves the responsibility to eliminate the suffering of each and every sentient being through the training of the object and aspect of love and compassion.

If there is no Citta seeking Enlightenment, then we do not have the complete meaning of Bodhicitta. To have the perfect, complete meaning of Bodhicitta we must seek the Enlightenment of all other beings as well as of ourselves. If there is no Citta seeking to work for the Enlightenment of others, then it cannot become Bodhicitta or be a part of the Mahayana Path. This is easy to prove by the wisdom of logic; if there is no desire to release all mother sentient beings then we are not even in part Mahayanists. If there is no wish for Enlightenment, then we do not have the perfect, complete meaning of the word, "Bodhicitta."

The mind that longs to receive ultimate Enlightenment for the benefit of other beings is called "Bodhicitta." If we have real understanding of the essence of Bodhicitta then we definitely know that the wish for Enlightenment is needed. Therefore, the way to train the thought is to have a strong wish for Enlightenment, and simultaneously to attempt the Tonglen practice of taking over and giving up with the Citta or equalising and exchanging oneself with others. Having meditated for a long time on the great love and great compassion, we attempt the Tonglen practice with the Citta of equalising

and exchanging ourselves with others. Feeling the unbearable suffering of all mother sentient beings, we should feel the strong desire to take their negativeness and suffering upon ourselves in order to release them from the samsaric realms. We should take pleasure in taking on the samsaric suffering of all sentient beings by arousing great, dauntless compassion without feeling upset even at being in the lowest, most suffering narak for eons. We would not look back, but would think how to release each mother sentient being from suffering and by which method each could receive the ultimate Enlightenment. We should try to develop the Wisdom realising the dependent nature of all this.



Bodhicitta

The Practical, Skilfull Mahayana Method of Making Meaningless Daily Life Meaningful, in Order to Release Others from Sufferings

Those who practise Hinayana have the control to prevent the three negative feelings of happiness, suffering and indifference from arising from the three poisons of greed, hatred and ignorance. But this is not enough, as the Buddha said in the Sutra Teaching, Tzug.na.rin.po.ch'e do. The three feelings should be utilised in the cause of great compassion.

When the feeling of happiness arises in ourselves, we should summon up dauntless compassion, thinking, "I shall cut the continuity of suffering of sentient beings covering space, for they will endlessly experience samsaric suffering by their craving such happy feelings which will only increase their greed."

When an unhappy mind arises in ourselves because of the feeling of suffering, we should summon up dauntless compassion, thinking, "I shall cut the continuity of suffering of sentient beings covering space for they will endlessly experience samsaric suffering from such unhappy feelings, from which hatred arises, and they will again have to experience greater and greater suffering."

When there arises in ourselves the feeling of indifference for mother sentient beings covering space, who will endlessly experience samsaric suffering because of the arising of ignorance and craving, we should summon up dauntless compassion, thinking, "I shall eliminate their ignorant darkness as quickly as possible, by myself."

In the Sutra Teaching, *Do.de p'äl.po.ch'e*, the Buddha said that whatever suffering situation or aspect of sinfulness that appears to

ourselves should be taken as the occasion to take the suffering of all mother sentient beings onto ourselves. We should energetically develop the wish and the courage to experience by ourselves the sufferings of all sentient beings, no matter how great they are or how infinitely many they may be. Whatever happiness or merit that may appear to ourselves should be dedicated to all sentient beings, without expectation for ourselves—We should try to have such a strong wish, thinking how wonderful it would be if only all mother sentient beings could be happy, and should utilise everything in the Mahayana Path through the practice of *Tonglen*, no matter what aspect appears, be it beautiful, ugly or indifferent.

When greed for attractive objects arises, we should think, “There are many sentient beings who, like myself, have greed for such objects arising; by taking all their greed on myself, may the sentient beings have merits devoid of greed.”

When hatred towards ugly objects arises, as it does in countless beings including ourselves, then we should meditate on *Tonglen*, thinking, “May all mother sentient beings have the merits of not hating as I take all their hatred on myself.”

When ignorance arises due to indifferent objects, we should meditate sincerely and thoroughly, thinking, “May all sentient beings have merits by being devoid of ignorance.”

Even when pleasures, beautiful objects, sweet sounds and smells and so on appear, we should offer and dedicate them all to the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and noble Arhants, and train the mind strongly and sincerely to dedicate the merits of making offerings to all mother sentient beings. The merits of the dedication become unimaginably infinite, and varied offerings to the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and lower Arhants. The Buddha becomes extremely pleased by these most supreme, infinite pleasures, and the Bodhisattvas and Arhants are also pleased by the different offerings, as these offerings become the necessary outer and inner cause for completing the merits necessary to finish the Bodhisattva Path, and also become the necessary cause for the lower Arhants quickly to achieve the result of Nirvana.

The Thought Training

With all actions we should arouse the Bodhicitta, as shown in the following examples.

When we go into temples or rooms, we should think with Bodhicitta, “May all mother sentient beings be led into the city of Nirvana into which I am leading them just as I enter this place.”

When we come out, we should have the Bodhicitta thought, “May all sentient beings be released from the samsaric prison, and as I now leave I am leading them out.”

When we open doors, think, “May all the heavy birth beings be let out of the narak realms by the Transcendental Wisdom gone beyond the world, and I am opening the door.”

When we close doors we should make Bodhicitta arise, thinking, “May the doors to all the lower realms be closed so that beings cannot descend any lower, and I am closing them just as I close this one.”

When washing ourselves, we make Bodhicitta arise, thinking, “May all the smells of the sentient beings’ delusions be washed away.”

When we sweep, think, “May the sentient beings’ dust of hate, greed and ignorance be purified, just as I am sweeping away the dust now.”

When we sit down, think, “May all sentient beings reach Enlightenment.”

When we sit in the cross legged position, think, “May all sentient beings have firm merits in the immovable stage.”

When we get up from the cross legged position, think, “May all sentient beings clearly see that all causative existences are changeable by nature.”

When we sit on a cushion or bed, think, “May all sentient beings be able to understand all the Teachings of the Buddha in the path of the square.”

When we make prostrations, we should imagine that all sentient beings in human form are prostrating together with ourselves as

leader, thinking, “May all mother sentient beings be purified.”

When we lie down to sleep in the Buddha position, like Guru Shakyamuni, think, “May all sentient beings be led to the Nirvana stage, and I shall lead them to it.”

When we arise, think, “May all sentient beings be out of all delusions—I am getting them up out of samsara.”

When we leave to go, think, “May I lead all sentient beings on the Mahayana Path.”

When we read a book, think, “May all mother sentient beings be able to distinctly realize all the meanings of every word of the Buddha’s extensive and profound Teachings, without being mixed up; as I read and understand the subject I am making them fully realized.”

When we write, think, “May all sentient beings achieve great Wisdom, and understand all the subtle points of avoidance and observance of practice in all life times of existence, in relative and Absolute Truth, by themselves, as I am writing now.”

When one helps other people, think, “May all sentient beings be like Avalokiteshvara, who has completed all the Buddhas’ Holy deeds with skilful Bodhicitta, taking the work of other beings with gladness, and may I stop thinking mainly of my own progress and cease being lazy and discouraged in the practice of Bodhicitta.”

When we put a heel on the ground, think, “May all sentient beings be in the struggleless stage, completely free of all delusion.”

When we put cushions on the floor, think, “May all sentient beings achieve the Method and Wisdom of the Path to Enlightenment.”

When we put on a belt, think, “May all sentient beings achieve the two grade Tantric Path in their mind, and be always bound by the path of the three Higher Trainings.”

When we go to a quiet place, think, “May all sentient beings completely avoid sinful existence by avoiding greed, hatred and ignorance.”

When we offer scented flowers to Holy Objects, think, “May all sentient beings complete the practice of morality. Due to this, may all their broken precepts be purged and may they complete the Paramita path.”

When we light a lamp, think, “May I extinguish all sentient beings’ ignorant darkness and light their wisdom lamps, enabling them to see the Absolute Nature, by having the wisdom lamp within myself.”

When we eat food, think, “May I see the suffering of all present and future sentient beings, and feel their hunger and thirst, wishing that they may enjoy the undiluted, blissful nectar of Transcendental Wisdom.”

When we take medicine, think, “May I release all sentient beings from all sickness and become the Buddha of Medicine, who pacified all pain, and whose name, when mentioned, destroys the physical and mental sickness which disturbs the whole life’s practice for Enlightenment.”

When we see Holy statues of Buddha, think, “May all sentient beings receive the infinite supreme Knowledge of his supreme Body, Speech and Mind.”

When we see Stupas, think, “May all sentient beings achieve the Buddhas’ Omniscient Mind, which is symbolised by this Stupa.”

When we talk about or discuss the Dharma, think, “May all sentient beings be able to understand all the words in the practice of Bodhicitta, extinguishing each and every doubtful and unrealised mind as soon as it arises.”

When we excrete, think, “May all sentient beings’ delusions and mental defilements be removed, just as this.”

When we look at scenery, think, “May all sentient beings attain the Omniscient Mind, fully realising the vast number of varied existences in their Absolute, Pure Nature.”

The Bodhicitta

Equalising and exchanging ourselves with others, based on the prior development of great love and great compassion, is Bodhicitta. It is not enough to practise Bodhicitta only during meditation periods—it is extremely important to practise continually, even in break times, practising with every action and dedicating the merits. It makes each movement extremely beneficial, makes each action a Mahayana action, gives a great deal of help to making progress in our development of Bodhicitta and brings our mind closer to other paths.

If we have still not received the Holy Bodhicitta Mind, it is because we have wasted beginningless samsaric lifetimes in following useless superstitions and performing meaningless actions. Because of this, no matter how much effort we make, even in meditation time, there is no progress; and instead of virtuous meditation there are only deluded minds and superstitions. Therefore, if we are struggling we should seek the cause. What is lacking? At all times there is the definite need for constant memory and alertness.

We should guard the doors of the sense organs, and make any object of the six senses that appears the co operative cause for the progression of Bodhicitta. This is the most supremely wise Mahayana practice.

As it is said in the Bodhisattvas' Thought Training Teaching:

In order to keep the memory of one's thought, one should train oneself, even with words, in all actions.

But we should make as much steady progress as possible while there is the chance. It is of the utmost importance to do everything that is helpful for the practice of Bodhicitta, even in break times. The Tibetan ascetic follower of Atisha, the *Ka.dam.pa* Guru, Lang.ri.t'ang.pa, always trained himself by saying the dedicating prayer of Bodhicitta frequently. Another great *Ka.dam.pa* practitioner, the ascetic yogi Ch'ä.ka.wa, said, as his death approached, "Of all phenomenal sounds there is none so sweet as the sound of the Thought Training Prayer," and he asked the great ascetic *Lang.ri.t'ang.pa* to repeat the Prayer of the Thought Training before he died.

Guru *Tzong.k'a.pa* also said that no matter what concentrations are made on the path, realizations cannot intuitively arise; they need to be continuously meditated on, and we even had to be habituated to the saying of the Thought Training Prayer.

Those who long from the heart to follow the Mahayana Path should hold as the best Teaching this technique of the great, realized Bodhisattva, Shantideva, which the Great Father Atisha passed down in personal transmission to his spiritual son, and to his disciples.

The Benefits of Bodhicitta

The benefits of Bodhicitta are unimaginable but just to give a brief explanation the following are some of the benefits of receiving the precious Bodhicitta in our mind:

1. We can enter the door of the Mahayana, and deserve such Holy names as “The Son of the King (Buddha)” or “Bodhisattva.”
2. This Holy caste of beings surpasses even the great noble beings, Arhants of the Shravakayana and Pratyekabuddhayana.
3. These Bodhisattvas become the object of offerings made by gods and other sentient beings.
4. We quickly and happily collect merits and
5. purify all obstacles and sinfulness, which
6. quickly and effortlessly brings every success in all works for ourselves and all other beings.
7. We cannot be disturbed by hindrances and mischievousness.
8. Our mind becomes a Holy field from which each and every panacea and happiness arises. The happiness of all sentient beings depends on Bodhicitta and
9. Through the Bodhicitta, it is possible to instantly receive all five paths to the level of entering the door to the Mahayana. Even without fore knowledge or miracle making ability,

if there is this precious Citta, that person is recognised as a Mahayanist. But without Bodhicitta the person is not a Mahayanist, even if he has the power of fore knowledge and can make miracles. And even if we have achieved the Arhant stage, having full understanding of the nature of Shunyata and single minded concentration, if we do not have Bodhicitta we are unable to enter the door to the Mahayana Path. Hinayana and Mahayana are not differentiated by the avoidance or suppression of delusions, or the realization of Absolute True Nature.

One great yogi explained to the great *Ka.dam.pa* ascetic, *Geshe Ton.ba*, how he had such and such realization, and offered it to him. This great yogi was told by the follower of Atisha, the great Bodhisattva Drom: “You have such firm meditation that it cannot be disturbed by even a great drum beating in your ear. But if you don’t have the great love and compassion of Bodhicitta, your position is such that you should make confession day and night.”

When *Drom* was a little unwell this great yogi went to ask after his health, passing through the walls without resistance.

Drom said: “Are you frightened by your shameful limbs? Why, venerable yogi. have you forsaken the sentient beings?”

Prayer to Be Said After Meditation Seven

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja:

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge of how to bring happiness to all my mother sentient beings, by taking over all their suffering and defilements, and giving away to them all my happiness and virtues.

D'E.NA	JE.TZÜN	LA.MA	T'UG.JE.CHÄN
<i>then</i>	<i>venerable</i>	<i>Guru</i>	<i>kind</i>
MA.GY'UR	DRO.WÄ	DIG.DRIB	DUG.NGÄL.KÜN
<i>mother becomings</i>	<i>sinfulness</i>	<i>obscuriation</i>	<i>sufferings all</i>
MA.LÜ	D'A.TADAG.LA	MIN.PA.D'ANG	
<i>every and all</i>	<i>now me to</i>	<i>ripen and</i>	
DAG.G'I	DE.GE	ZHÄN.LA	TANG.WA.YI
<i>my</i>	<i>happiness</i>	<i>virtue others to by giving</i>	
DRO.KÜN	DE.D'ANG	DÄN.PAR	J'IN.GY'I.LOB
<i>living all</i>	<i>happiness and</i>	<i>to have</i>	<i>please bless</i>

(Most venerable guide, please bless all sentient beings to enjoy happiness, all their suffering and defilements ripening within me, and all my happiness and virtues be given away to them.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

The Bodhisattva's Actions

A Summary of the Salient Points

I. Taking the Bodhicitta Vows, with Prayers, in the presence of a Holy Object

1. We receive the Bodhicitta ordination that was not received before.
2. We can keep the ordination received, without letting it degenerate.

II. How to Follow the Holy Bodhisattva Deeds After Receiving Bodhicitta

1. Following the general deeds of the Bodhisattva.
 - a. Following the six Paramitas, to ripen our own mind.
 - b. Following the practices of the four virtuous collections, to ripen the minds of others.
2. Following the last two Paramitas especially.
3. Following the Vajrayana Path.

The Practice of the Six Paramitas (II.1.a.)

The meaning of the Paramita

The method of following the Paramita

The divisions of the Paramita

What should be done in the practice of the Paramita

Conclusion

1. Charity

The meaning of Charity

The method of following Charity

- a. Practising Charity with the six Paramitas—Morality, Patience, Energy, Concentration and Wisdom.
- b. Practising Charity with the six Holy things—the Holy subject, the Holy possession, the Holy purpose, the Holy skill, the Holy dedication and the Holy purity.
- c. The four actions:
 - i. dedicating,
 - ii. protecting,
 - iii. purifying, and
 - iv. increasing.

The divisions of Charity

- a. The Charity of Dharma.
- b. The Charity of fearlessness.
- c. Material Charity:
 - i. object: living being;
 - ii. motivation: the necessity, the possessions, the object.

What should be done in the practice of Charity

- a. What thoughts are evil and to be abandoned when Charity is made?
- b. With what actions should Charity not be made?
- c. With what actions should Charity be made?
- d. Actions that help others make Charity.
- e. With which materials should we make Charity and with which should we not?
- f. What should we do if unable to make Charity because of miserliness?

- g. How should we practise the remedies that destroy interruptions to making Charity?

Conclusion

2. Morality

The meaning of Morality

The method of following Morality

The divisions of Morality

- a. The Morality of abstaining from vices.
- b. The Morality of the totality of all virtue.
- c. The Morality of working for all other sentient beings.

What should be done in the practice of Morality

- a. Practising Morality with the six Paramitas.
- b. Practising Morality with the six Holy things.

Conclusion

3. Patience

The meaning of Patience

The method of following Patience

The divisions of Patience

- a. The Patience of having compassion for the enemy.
- b. The Patience of voluntarily bearing suffering.
- c. The Patience of definitely thinking about the Dharma.

What should be done in the practice of Patience

It should be practised with

- a. the six Paramitas, and
- b. the six Holy things.

Conclusion

4. Energy

The meaning of Energy

The method of following Energy

The divisions of Energy

- a. Dauntless, armour like Energy.
- b. The Energy of the totality of virtue.
- c. The Energy of working for other sentient beings.

What should be done in the practice of Energy

Remedies to the three kinds of laziness

- a. That causing procrastination.
- b. That resulting from attachment to samsaric work and pleasure.
- c. That of discouragement.

Meditation on the three prides:

- a. Pride of action.
- b. Pride of capability.
- c. Pride of delusion.

Practise with:

- a. The six Paramitas.
- b. The six Holy things.

Conclusion

5. Concentration

- a. The Concentration of worldly beings and of beings beyond the world. Samadhi and penetrative insight co operate together in practice. From the action of Concentration the body and mind are brought into the bliss stage.
- b. The Concentration to make one fully achieve All Knowledge.
- c. Concentration for the benefit of sentient beings.

6. Wisdom

- a. The Wisdom realising Absolute True Nature, the ultimate reality.
- b. The Wisdom realising relative nature.
- c. The Wisdom realising how to work for sentient beings.

The Practice of the Four Essential Divisions for Ripening the Minds of Others (II.1.b)

1. Giving to satisfy the temporal needs of others.
2. Talking sweetly.
3. Working in Dharma as asked to by others; living in the practice of Dharma as we show it to others.
4. The way of practising the last two Paramitas; Samadhi, mental quiescence, and the essential concentration of the essence of Wisdom.

Following the Last Two Paramitas Especially (II.2.)

1. Concentration: See Meditation Eight.
2. Wisdom: to be added to this book at a later date.

Details of the practice of the first four Paramitas follow this section.

The Bodhisattva's Actions

Even though we try to meditate on Teachings such as the becoming stage of the Tantric Path, the Madhyamaka, the Mahamudra and Kundalini Yoga, with the expectation of reaching Enlightenment, if we do this without Bodhicitta, we cannot pass through the door of the Mahayana Path, let alone get closer to that supreme and perfect goal. Therefore, Bodhicitta should be the main point in the practice of all practitioners, those who thirst for the most supreme happiness. After numberless eons of observation, even the Buddha's all knowing Holy Mind could not find any door of entry to the Path nor any special method other than Bodhicitta.

I. Taking the Bodhicitta Vows, with Prayers, in the Presence of a Holy Object

This has two aspects:

1. We receive the Bodhicitta ordination that was not received before.
2. We can keep the ordination received, without letting it degenerate.

II. How to Follow the Holy Bodhisattva's Deeds After Receiving Bodhicitta

Merely receiving Bodhicitta is not enough; it must be put into action, just as merely having the will to go to some country and save living beings suffering there from some epidemic disease is not enough—it is necessary to act by going there with the required equipment. Therefore, to benefit the innumerable, different, suffering living beings through being Enlightened, it is necessary to achieve the two

Kayas: Rupakaya and Dharmakaya. To achieve these two results, it is necessary to follow the inseparable path of Method and Wisdom. All the Buddhas' deeds are included in "Method and Wisdom": the first five Paramitas are the Method and the last Paramita, the penetrative insight, is the Wisdom.

How to follow the Holy Bodhisattva's deeds has three divisions.

1. Following the general deeds of the Bodhisattva which has two parts to show how this is done.
 - a. Following the six Paramitas, to ripen our own mind.
 - b. Following the practices of the four virtuous collections, to ripen the minds of others.
2. Following the last two Paramitas especially.
3. Following the Vajrayana Path.

The Practice of the Six Paramitas (II.1.a.)

There are five headings under which each Paramita can be considered.

The meaning of the Paramita

The method of following the Paramita

The divisions of the Paramita

What should be done in the practice of the Paramita

The Conclusion

1. Charity

The meaning of Charity

Practising Charity means having the will to dedicate body, possessions and merits to others, and making the actions of body and speech with such virtuous impulse.

The method of following Charity

The way to practise the Paramita of Charity is to develop the will to give in many ways. The destruction of miserliness in only the body and possessions is not called the Paramita of Charity. Miserliness is part of greed, so even the lower Arhant has to avoid completely even the seed of it. Therefore, as well as destroying the clinging miserliness which interrupts Charity, it is also necessary to arouse the will to give from the heart even all the results received from virtuous actions.

To be able to make Charity, we should follow the method of making meditation on the shortcomings of miserliness and greed, thinking how the body and possessions are trivial and betray those who seek to gain peace. We should cut attachment to our body by seeing it as illusory, a magic creation or a dream, and by thinking that it is dirty, a collection of impurities.

We should think like this: I am foolish not to train my thought in the way that brings countless and boundless successes to myself and others—dedicating the body, that which is trivial and has to be left, no matter how much good care I take of it.” By thinking in this way we should try to arouse the thought of giving to others as much as possible.

We should also remember Shantideva’s words:

One passes into Nirvana by dedicating all; one’s mind achieves Enlightenment at the same time leaving all. So it is best to dedicate to sentient beings.

We should make Charity of whatever merits are created, great or small, dedicating from the heart to obtain the greatest peace for sentient beings: temporary peace and ultimate peace. Hence, we complete an infinite accumulation of merits quickly, because we receive merits from each of the numberless sentient beings.

In the Teachings known as *The Jewelled Rosary*, the great pandit Nagarjuna said:

If all the merits received from saying prayers such as the dedicating prayer became matter, they could not fit into even the number of universes equal to the number of grains of sand in the Ganges. This

was said by Guru Shakyamuni and can also be realized logically: the world of sentient beings is infinite and so the benefits of the wish are that much.

After we have thought much about the benefits of giving and the shortcomings of keeping, and of the Bodhisattva's Holy Actions of making Charity, the thought of giving can arise spontaneously in us. Whoever destroys the craving for possessions and trains in the thought of giving to others is called a "Bodhisattva." It is also necessary to train in the thought of dedicating the body, but although the body is completely dedicated to others, it does not actually have to be sacrificed now; it can be, once the will has become ready and powerful enough. On the contrary, to sacrifice the whole body physically before such a stage of mental development has been reached can interrupt our Dharma practice. And we should not think, erroneously, that it is hypocritical to sacrifice the body mentally without giving it physically. When we practise each of the six Paramitas it should contain:

- a. all six Paramitas, and
- b. The six Holy things

a. Practising Charity with the Six Paramitas

If each Paramita is not practised with the others included, there will be much disturbance to the success of the Bodhisattva's actions, just as a soldier who does not protect the various parts of his body with different pieces of armour nor carry weapons to destroy others, runs the risk of incurring a fatal injury.

- i. The Morality of Charity

When we make Charity with the Bodhicitta impulse, we should avoid all the vices of our body, speech and mind, for if we do not, we break the precepts of Morality, which will cause us to suffer in the lower realms.

ii. The Patience of Charity

Also, we must have Patience, and not get angry with those who react badly to our Charity by speaking harshly or by showing displeasure. Without Patience, there is the danger of anger destroying the merits.

iii. The Energy of Charity

Charity must be made with continual, strong energy; otherwise we are in danger of becoming lazy, thinking that we can make Charity at some later time.

iv. The Concentration of Charity

There is need of concentration, thinking one pointedly of the benefits of making Charity and the shortcomings of not. If the one pointed concentration that prevents us from falling under the control of delusions is not made, then our virtuous possessions are in jeopardy of being stolen by that thief, distraction.

v. The Wisdom of Charity

Finally, at the time of making Charity, it is necessary for the discriminating Wisdom to be checking, “This should be practised, that should be abandoned,” lest the practice be made incorrectly, with corrupt actions. But especially, Charity should be made with the Wisdom concentrating on the circle of the three—subject, object and action—in Shunyata; otherwise the practice will not become a pure, Bodhisattva’s action.

b. Making the practice with the six Holy things

i. The Holy Subject: the Bodhicitta impulse.

ii. The Holy Possession: always having the Bodhicitta impulse, not only when making Charity of other possessions, but even when Charity of a special object is made.

iii. The Holy Purpose: making Charity to give temporary happiness to sentient beings to benefit for the ultimate goal.

- iv. The Holy Skill: possessed by the Wisdom of Shunyata.
- v. The Holy Dedication: dedicating the merits of Charity for the achievement of Enlightenment.
- vi. The Holy Purity: the purification of delusions and mental defilements.

Also, each Paramita should be practised with the four actions:

- i. Dedicating: dedicating our body to all sentient beings from the heart.
- ii. Protecting: having dedicated our body to sentient beings, we should protect it from being wasted in meaningless actions.
- iii. Purifying: making the charity of the body a pure practice by concentrating on the circle of the three in Shunyata.
- iv. Increasing: dedicating the merits of it to all sentient beings, equal to the sky, for their achievement of Enlightenment. We must not get shocked by thinking that if all is dedicated to sentient beings there is nothing left for me—it is a mental dedication, so there is nothing wrong with it. On the other hand, we cannot think that there is no point in dedicating mentally since there is nothing to receive.

The way to complete the Paramita of Charity is to complete the training in the thought of giving even the merits of virtuous actions, let alone abolishing miserliness in our possessions.

Completing the practice of the Paramita of Charity means neither completely eradicating starvation and thirst, nor satisfying the last beggar. If it did, then all the past Buddhas such as Guru Shakyamuni would have yet to complete the practice of Charity, having reached Enlightenment by mistake.

Those who have renounced the worldly life and are living in ordination should not put effort into collecting materials with which to make Charity if this interrupts meditation, listening to Teachings and leading a virtuous life. In this case, making material

Charity is not so important; but if, due to past karma, many materials have been effortlessly received without interrupting virtuous practices, then material Charity is needed.

The divisions of Charity

a. The Charity of Dharma

This includes showing the Dharma purely, giving ordination, teaching handicrafts such as religious paintings and mandala construction, teaching letters, and saying mantras and prayers with the impulse of Dharma Charity, visualising ourselves surrounded by all sentient beings who are listening to it.

b. The Charity of fearlessness

This includes saving beings from dangers caused by humans, animals or the elements.

c. Material Charity

There is actual physical Charity and mental Charity. How should we make material Charity?

- Object: living beings.
- Motivation: what motivation is necessary?
- i. The necessity: We should think of the necessity: “Due to this action I shall complete the Paramita of Charity, becoming fully Enlightened.”
- ii. The possessions: We should regard possessions in this way: as the Bodhisattvas have dedicated everything to sentient beings and consider that all things are the possessions of others, we should think that anything with which we make Charity is the property of the other, and so should feel as we do when returning to its rightful owner something that we were given for safe keeping.
- iii. The object: We should consider that the being to whom we make Charity is our Guru, helping us to complete the Paramita of Charity. If the object of our Charity

is an enemy, we should make Charity with a loving thought. If the object is suffering and miserable, we should make Charity with compassion. If the object is knowledgeable, we should make Charity with a rejoicing mind. If the object is a friend, a temporal helper, we should make Charity with the equilibrium thought.

What should be done in the practice of Charity?

- a. **What thoughts are evil and should be abandoned when Charity is made?**
 - i. The erroneous conception that Charity has no result.
 - ii. Pride: thinking that we are teaching the beggar, that we are competing with others, and that “I am so generous, others cannot give as I do.”
 - iii. The thought of dependence should be avoided, that is, expecting to receive something, such as reputation as a result of having given the material.
 - iv. We should not be discouraged by the difficult, extensive Bodhisattva’s Charity. Before making Charity the mind should be happy; while the Charity is made it should be calm; and afterwards, we should not regret having made the Charity.
 - v. We should not have partial thought, but make Charity with impartial compassion for both enemy and stranger.
 - vi. Without the slightest thought of reward for ourselves, we should think that the object of Charity is completely devoid of happiness and has no ability to remove suffering. “Without thought of reward” means that we must not think only of the results of Charity, such as receiving the perfect human rebirth or perfect possessions in future lifetimes, but that we should remember that possessions are trivial, and think of the benefits of Enlightenment which are received by making Charity.

- vii. At the time of making Charity, we should not feel afraid of becoming poor in the future, nor have treacherous thoughts of betraying the object of Charity.
- viii. If we perceive that the object of our Charity has certain faults, we should not have the evil thought to announce what we have seen.

b. With what actions should Charity not be made?

- i. We should not give small amounts or inferior articles, justifying such actions by reminding the other how much we gave before or how generous we are.
- ii. We should not make Charity by compelling the other to perform evil actions such as killing or destroying, or to carry out very hard work such as that usually done by animals.
- iii. If we became a king we could not deprive one family of their son or daughter and make Charity of the child to another.
- iv. We should not make Charity of materials taken by force from our parents or servants.
- v. We should not make Charity with the intention of harming a third party.
- vi. While making Charity we should not frighten the object with harsh words, e.g., abusing a beggar for not working.
- vii. We should not make Charity by breaking precepts.
- viii. We should not avoid making Charity while accumulating possessions, making it only after collecting for a long time.

c. With what actions should Charity be made?

We should make Charity

- i. Without harming others.
- ii. By bearing difficulties and troubles as they arise.
- iii. By our own hand, with respect for the object.

- iv. With sincere words.
- v. With a pleased and smiling face it.

Each of these actions has its result.

d. Actions that help others make Charity

- i. If we have materials with which to make Charity, we can go to miserly people, those who have never made Charity with pleasure or good feelings, and tell them that we have such and such possession and need to complete the practice of Charity, for which a beggar is required, so that if they see any beggars could they please bring them to us.
- ii. We can give our possessions to another and ask him to give them to the beggar.
- iii. We can advise the miserly person to try and rejoice at our Charity.

In these ways, the seed to dispel miserliness is planted, and helping others in this way we create much merit.

e. With which materials should we make Charity and with which should we not?

- i. We should give whatever material brings the future benefit of following the virtuous path. But, if the material brings harm in the future it should not be given, even though it might result in temporal pleasure.
- ii. If the body is begged for and the time is not right, it should not be given; i.e., before we have highly developed great compassion that prevents the difficulties of giving the body causing us to feel upset. Or, if it is more beneficial for sentient beings that the body exist, then despite its being begged for, even a part of the body should not be given. We cannot make Charity of the body to the wrong object. It cannot be given to be killed or to be used for some other evil purpose, causing us harm. Neither can the body be given for killing another.

Nor can we give it to those whose thoughts are evil because they are possessed by spirits or crazy. To give the body to such objects breaks the Bodhisattva's precepts.

Which possessions should not be given?

- i. According to time, e.g., obliging someone living in eight, thirty-six or two-hundred-and-fifty-three precepts to take a meal in the afternoon.
- ii. According to the material object, e.g., obliging ordained people to take things they cannot, such as garlic, meat or wine, or to give them such things as food left on others' plates or dirty food.

Also, we cannot give statues, Holy Texts, etc. to those who do not have the sincere desire to know the meaning and do not have devotion, regarding such things as merely material. We cannot make Charity of our parents, nor of the monk's yellow robes.

Nor should poisons, weapons or similar things with the potential of harming living beings be given to those who plan to injure others with them, and we cannot teach techniques such as shooting to those who ask with the intention of harming others or ourselves with them. But if someone should beg for poisons, weapons, wines, etc., desiring to use them for the benefit of other living beings, then we can make Charity of such things.

If there are two beggars, one better off than the other, if we cannot fulfil the desires of both we should, with a pleasant expression and a sweet tone, tell the former that "This portion has already been dedicated to this poor man, so please do not think that I do not care about you."

- f. **What should we do if unable to make Charity because of miserliness, although not wanting of possessions?**

We should think in this way: "It is inevitable that this object and I shall separate—it will leave me and I shall leave it. There-

fore, I make arrangements for death by taking the essence from it and making my mind joyful.”

g. How we should practise the remedies that destroy interruptions to making Charity

Such as:

- i. Not being used to making Charity, i.e., not wanting to make it even though we possess materials. We should realize that not wanting to dedicate to others is the result of having the same thought in previous lifetimes and that if Charity is still avoided, we shall be averse to it again in future lifetimes. Therefore, we should not allow ourselves to remain unused to making Charity.
- ii. Not wanting to give because of a paucity of material possessions. The remedy for this is to think: “Since I have suffered hunger and thirst, and many other unbearable samsaric sufferings, because delusion and karma have prevented me from benefiting others, rather than sending the beggar away empty handed, it is better to make Charity, even should it cost me this life, which itself is the result of benefiting others. I can always live by eating plants, even though there is not the enjoyment.” Then we should make the Charity, accepting that trouble.
- iii. When the thought of giving does not arise due to our attachment to extremely beautiful things, it is necessary to remember the shortcomings of greed as quickly as possible, and that the wrong belief, that this suffering is enjoyment or pleasure, only brings continual suffering in the future.

The Charity of the greatly wise Bodhisattvas is mental Charity, the mental transformation of the extensive and varied enjoyments that exist, into infinite offerings. They meditate truly from the heart, that all are given to sentient beings with complete, pure Bodhicitta, taking more care of others than ourselves, without difficulty and with such skill that it creates incredible merits and brings endless benefits.

While this is a practice that can be made by those who do not possess materials with which to make physical Charity, it does not mean that the rich in possessions cannot also make this practice.

Conclusion

Whoever takes the Bodhisattva ordination should understand the importance of following the practice of Charity as explained, starting immediately, and should pray to be able to follow the hardest practices of Charity on the higher levels in the future. We should feel pleased to practise developing the thought of giving through being detached from the body, possessions and merits, and displeased not to train in developing this thought. We should think that if the practice is abandoned, we are at present creating the negativities of breaking precepts, and in future lives shall find it extremely difficult to follow the Bodhisattva's deeds.

2. *Morality*

The meaning of Morality

Morality means giving up the thought of committing actions of body, speech and mind that are harmful to sentient beings.

Completing the practice of the Paramita of Morality does not mean making all other sentient beings devoid of harmfulness. If it did, then all the previous Buddhas would have yet to complete the practice of Morality. What it does mean is completing the progression of giving up the thought of actions harmful to sentient beings.

The method of following Morality

The way to practise Morality is to allow our minds to grow accustomed to giving up the thought of actions harmful to sentient beings. Our generating Bodhicitta and making the vow to follow the Bodhisattva's deeds means that we promise to work for all sentient beings, that they might attain the ornament of the Morality to full Enlightenment, thereby attaining the true meaning of Morality.

Before that, we must develop the strength to keep pure our own precepts of Morality. If these degenerate and become impure, we fall

into the lower realms and cannot even fulfil our own purpose, let alone that of others. Therefore, those who take the precepts, attempting to bring the success of others by leading others in Enlightenment, need to keep an extremely tight grip lest their precepts get lost, vigilantly protecting body, speech and mind from vices.

Keeping the precepts purely depends on adhering to the points of practice and avoidance as they were explained. This follows the strong wish and enthusiastic determination to keep the precepts, which arise from the understanding achieved through meditating long on the benefits of keeping precepts and the shortcomings of not. It is vital to be aware of the dangers, the suffering results, of breaking or not keeping precepts, and also to understand the need to avoid the smallest and lightest negativities, the actions forbidden by the Enlightened Being.

Those who observe the precepts in practising the Paramita of Morality benefit by the gradual transcendence of their mind—the level of the precepts in their mind develops to the same levels as those of the great Bodhisattvas, and they receive purely the Transcendental Wisdom, which has completely removed even the seeds of all vices.

If worldly, external ornaments are worn by the aged it looks absurd, but no matter who wears the ornaments of Morality, all other living beings are pleased.

The smell of Morality is the best perfume, the sweetest of scents to apply. Morality is the coolest lotion to alleviate the suffering of delusion's heat.

If we observe precepts correctly all enjoyments are received spontaneously, without our having to make efforts to obtain them. Other living beings can be controlled automatically, without the necessity of threats or violence, and even those who have not received his help naturally love whoever lives in the Paramita of Morality.

In his Teaching, Guru Shakyamuni said:

Morality is even the best ornament of all and a cooling nectar to alleviate suffering.

Gods and men touch their heads to the footprints of the moral person with great respect.

The reason for observing the Paramita of Morality should be to lead all sentient beings into the Paramita of Morality, and we should destroy the thoughts that wish for release from only the dangers of the lower suffering realms, and expect the temporal perfections of the god and human realms.

The divisions of Morality

a. The Morality of abstaining from vices

The Morality of the Bodhisattva's ordination, taken on the basis of the Pratimoksha precepts.

b. The Morality of the totality of all virtue

The Morality of trying to receive in our mind the realization of the Paramitas not yet received, and to steadily develop higher, without degeneration, those that have been. This includes all the virtue created by the Bodhisattva—that of living in the precepts and that of the efforts of creating meritorious actions, such as making prostrations and offerings, rendering service, listening, thinking and meditating on the Teachings, and explaining the Dharma.

c. The Morality of working for all other sentient beings, i.e., all virtuous actions of body, speech and mind, created with the thought of benefiting others

This includes Morality such as following the four total Bodhisattva's Actions, fulfilling the purpose of the present and future lives of sentient beings, with the eleven different forms of work and without the sinfulness of corrupting precepts. Saying that precepts such as the five, the eight, the thirty six and the two hundred and fifty three—the Pratimoksha precepts—are only Hinayana precepts, and to avoid their practice by saying that we are following the Bodhisattva's precepts, comes from understanding neither the basic points of the Bodhisattva's vow of Morality nor the Bodhisattva's training in Morality.

The first division of the three, “the Morality of abstaining from vices,” is fundamental to the second and the third, and mainly it means to follow the ten Moralities. Only if we train the thought in and are capable of keeping the basic ordinations, will we be able to follow the other Moralities.

What should be done in the practice of Morality

Morality should be practised with the six Holy things and the six Paramitas.

a. Morality with the six Paramitas

- i. The Charity of Morality: leading others in Morality by ourselves living in the precepts of Morality.
- ii. The Patience of Morality: while living in the precepts, not reacting to and having patience with the harmful actions of living beings.
- iii. The Energy of Morality: without following the negative mind as it arises, continually keeping Morality pure, the mind being pleased to do so.
- iv. The Concentration of Morality: without following the delusions as they arise, keeping the mind one pointedly on the thought of avoiding vices by thinking of the benefits of doing so and the shortcomings of not.
- v. The Wisdom of Morality: while the precepts are being observed, constantly checking to detect violation and to keep them in the Shunyata of the circle of the three.

Conclusion

The root of successfully following Bodhisattvas’ actions such as the practice of the Paramita of Morality—the training in the higher Morality—is to increase without degeneration the Bodhicitta, and following this Morality is the most skilful method to stop causing harm to other living beings.

It is necessary to constantly remember to abstain from the actions that are forbidden by the precepts we have taken by knowing

the prohibited actions as well as possible, and even the practice of the higher levels of Morality should be the object of our prayers. By praying in this way, because of the result similar to the cause, we can complete the Bodhisattva's Training. If it is abandoned we continuously collect heavy negativities, making us incapable of following the Bodhisattva's Training in future lifetimes. Therefore, we must make the effort, even from now.

3. *Patience*

The Meaning of Patience

Practising Patience means having a tranquil mind with the antagonist, and compassion for him.

The completion of the Paramita of Patience does not depend on the cessation of sentient beings causing bother. Rather, it only depends on our fully developing the training of the thought stopping our angry reactions.

In the Teaching, Following the Bodhisattva's Actions, Shantideva said:

Bothersome sentient beings are like the infinite sky; but once the angry mind is destroyed, all enemies are destroyed. There can never be enough leather to cover the Earth, but with the amount required to make the sole of a shoe, it is as if the whole Earth were covered. Similarly, while I cannot dispel external phenomena themselves, I can get rid of them by dispelling the one disturbing mind.

The method of following Patience

The overall method is to understand the great number of benefits of Patience and shortcomings of impatience. The patient person creates the good karma to have less enemies in this and future lifetimes; he dies without worry, and is reborn in upper realms such as those of the gods. Thinking of the benefits of Patience, we should try to be patient.

Also, by praising Patience we should encourage others to be patient. It guides us from our enemy, anger, which destroys our merits and those of others, and which makes us abandon working for others when their actions are harmful. If we continuously practise Patience we shall not

lose our happiness of mind, and besides keeping us happy during this lifetime, after death it closes the door to the lower realms, and also brings the ultimate goal, Enlightenment. Therefore, the present and future lifetimes are always in happiness.

In his Teachings, the great pandit, Shantideva spoke of the shortcomings of anger:

One second of anger can destroy all the entire accumulation of virtue, such as Charity and offerings made to Holy Beings, collected over a thousand eons.

Anger is the worst of the evil actions. If one who is not a Bodhisattva gets angry with one who is a Bodhisattva for only one second, then, as Shantideva said, it destroys the merits created in a thousand eons. If a Bodhisattva with less powerful realizations gets angry with a higher Bodhisattva, it destroys the merits created in a hundred eons.

It is necessary to practise Patience before anger arises as well as when we are angry, by thinking of its shortcomings. If we do not try to be patient, anger causes unhappiness and conflict for ourselves and others, and can even make us commit suicide. As we practise Patience, we find the greater the number of enemies, the more chance there is to practise. Therefore, we should consider each antagonist as a helper for our attainment of Enlightenment through the practice of Patience.

The great pandit, Atisha, always retained a very bad tempered Indian assistant, and when asked not to, Guru Atisha said: "Through this I have completed the Paramita of Patience."

We should remember that even the followers of the Shravakayana, who mainly work to obtain their own Liberation only, do not get angry at antagonists, so that to do so is not fitting for we who appear as Mahayanists.

Of the temporal life's problems due to anger and jealousy, the great pandit, Shantideva said in his Teachings:

Those who hold the painful, jealous mind lose what peace there is and do not experience more: happiness and gladness will not

be theirs. They cannot sleep and their minds are agitated and unsteady. Due to jealousy, the servant will kill even the kind master on whom he depends for material and other help. And even if Charity is made to the angry person, he does not remain free of hatred. All in all, while the angry mind remains, none can live in happiness.

Also, as Guru Shakyamuni said in his Teachings:

When the fire of anger colours the face, even the well decorated person cannot be attractive. Even if one lies on a comfortable bed, the pain of hatred makes the mind suffer. Anger makes us forget to do the work which benefits ourselves, brings us suffering and forces us to take the evil path. The angry person either loses fame or cannot achieve it. Having understood anger as the inner enemy, who will tolerate being under its control and getting angry?

The divisions of Patience

a. The Patience of having compassion for the enemy

When living and non-living things become harmful antagonists, we should remember the shortcomings of anger and try to be patient.

Once there was a disciple who was beating a thief, and no matter how his Guru tried to separate them, he could not. Finally, he wagged his finger under the disciple's nose, saying, "Patience! Patience!" Then, remembering Patience, the disciple replied, "What are the benefits of pretending to be patient once the whole angry episode has ended?" Although the practice of Patience is difficult at first, by training our mind in the thought of being patient we get accustomed to it, and then in all situations meditation on Patience becomes easier.

There are reasons showing why we should not get angry with the enemy. For example, we are hit on the head by a stick

wielded by somebody else: instead of being angry with that person, we should check up like this: “To be angry with the object causing me pain means I should be angry with the stick. But the stick itself is not responsible for this; it is under the control of the person and has none of its own. Also, the person wielding the stick has no control—he is obliged to do so by his deluded mind. How can I get angry with the person? I cannot. Being struck by the stick was the temporal co operative cause of my misbehaviour, but the principal cause of this suffering result is my past karma, such as harming other beings—it is the fault of such karma. Therefore, why should I get angry with the result of karma created by myself when it ripens on me? I should try to dispel the other person’s delusion without getting angry with him: he has no control and has become crazy with delusion. This is the same thing that a father would do if his son became crazy and started to beat him—instead of fighting with anger, the father would try to cure his son of the disturbance. And also, doctors try to cure their psychotic patients, even though attacked by them.”

We should also think like this: “When the fire burns my hand it is my fault for touching it—I cannot get angry with the fire. Just as I cannot get angry with the person, the outer enemy, because it is my own fault that he is obliged to harm me. Just as the nature of fire is burning hot and so I do not get angry with the fire when it burns me, if the nature of the person who is my enemy is to give harm, I cannot get angry with him, the living being.”

Then, the thought may arise that although we should not get angry with the enemy because it is his nature to harm, since it certainly came from him, perhaps it is worthwhile to get angry after all. This thought should be questioned thus: “If hail suddenly comes from the sky, is it worthwhile getting angry with the sky?” This is meaningless; therefore we cannot get angry.

When our body and mind suffer from physical and verbal assaults of others, we should not retaliate, again creating the

cause for rebirth in the three lower realms, but instead should practise Patience, the remedy to anger.

As the great pandit, Shantideva said:

*If I cannot tolerate even this present level of suffering,
why don't I get angry with the cause of the narak suffering
and destroy it?*

b. The Patience of voluntarily bearing suffering

When there are difficulties in the Dharma practice these should be borne, and such things as sickness and undesirable enemies and even the suffering in the dreams should all be made helpful for the Dharma practice, turning all these problems into treatment by not being attached to temporal comfort.

While experiencing trouble with enemies or non living things, we should think that the main cause of such situations is our own past lives' karma and delusion and it is our own fault that we suffer them. If this were not true, then those who had escaped from delusion and karma would still have enemies—but they do not. We should also try to feel unbearable compassion for the enemy, as he is creating extra negative karma while thinking that his actions are the cause of peace.

It is necessary to think about these samsaric sufferings that we are experiencing in the way shown in the Equilibrium Meditation. We should try to remember and feel pleased that through this practice the compulsion for our having to experience future sufferings such as those of the three lower realms is finishing. That is, just as someone who is to be executed does not mind cutting off his hand to escape from prison, so when we experience some trouble and difficulty without Dharma practice, we should feel that it is good to forebear these as it thereby finishes so much suffering in the three lower realms. At such times it is also necessary to remember the knowledge of the sufferings. Remembering our creation of negative karmas, we feel upset,

and we lose the pride with which we think, “I am faultless, I am perfectly good, I am not stupid.” And this also helps us to see how other people are suffering in the same situation, so that compassion can arise. All in all, it is very helpful because it makes us conscious and aware, careful to avoid sinful actions and happy to create virtuous ones.

Those with ordination, monks and nuns, voluntarily take on the suffering of lessening desire, being content with simple food, clothing and place of abode, even if there are difficulties. But the person who does not live in that situation, especially mentally, is always concerned with satisfying the desire that constantly wants more and better. As he always works for that without thinking of the Dharma, so his life is wasted.

For example, Guru Shakyamuni, when he was in the form of a monk, and the ancient great pandits and Tibetan saints—yogis such as Milarepa, Guru *Tzong.k'a.pa* and *En.sa.pa*, who achieved the Rainbow Body in their lifetime—voluntarily experienced deprivation to enhance their Dharma practice. When Guru *Tzong.k'a.pa* went into solitude with eight disciples to make purification and to create merits, they had only eight copper coins between them. In this way they tried to be content and have less desire.

Another example of this type of Patience is that of voluntarily making offerings to the Triple Gem. Also, there is the Patience of voluntarily suffering by avoiding the actions of the fastidious mind, even if the body is ugly or the clothes bad, the Patience of voluntarily taking the sufferings of exhaustion resulting from making efforts in virtue, such as bearing the difficulties of keeping precepts, and such Patience as that required for voluntarily bearing suffering if we have to experience trouble in leading others from life dangers, or if we experience trouble in avoiding making business.

c. **The Patience of definitely thinking about the Dharma**

This includes trying to learn by heart the words and understand the meanings of the Graduated Path, having knowledge of the Triple Gem, the path to Enlightenment and Shunyata, making observations in profound, extensive Teachings and trying to discover the realizations through meditation.

What should be done in the practice

Patience should be practised with the six Paramitas and the six Holy things. For example, the Charity of Patience—leading others to practise Patience by teaching the Dharma, and so on. (For the other Paramitas and the six Holy things see the previous explanations.)

Conclusion

If we are following the Bodhisattva's actions, remembering and meditating on Bodhicitta are the main factors bringing the desire to lead all sentient beings in the Paramita of Patience. To progress we should train by praying to reach even the highest levels of Patience, and beginners who are fully following the practice of Patience need to confess any violation of the discipline. If we give up during our practice of Patience, we continually create much negative karma, making the practice of the most exalted Bodhisattva's actions in future lifetimes extremely difficult.

By considering such practices as the most important aspects of the path, trying to practise what we are capable of practising and training our mind in that which we are not, we shall be able to complete the Paramita of Patience with few sufferings or difficulties.

4. Energy

The meaning of Energy

Practising Energy means being pleased to perform virtuous actions. The method of following Energy

We should be spontaneously aware of the greatly numerous benefits of practising Energy and the shortcomings of not.

Energy dispels all sufferings. Its practice is fundamental to the avoidance of suffering in the lower realms, and through it we receive both worldly realizations and transcendental realizations, those beyond the ordinary. Only Energy can be called the main and best cause for the complete attainment of all virtue. Through Energy we achieve the most sublime Enlightenment.

As it says in the Teachings:

If we have great Energy and do not get upset, there is nothing we cannot achieve.

Human and non human beings alike all are pleased to help the energetic person; he receives realizations, both day and night he brings result, and his knowledge never decreases.

Totally, Energy is the most important thing. If it is spontaneous, the life is made greatly meaningful, whether of long or short duration. And how quickly Enlightenment can be received also depends on Energy. It is the main thing that keeps us from life's distractions, laziness and sleep.

The Buddha said in his Teachings:

The lazy person is far from Enlightenment.

He does not practise the six Paramitas, from Charity to Wisdom, and does not work for others.

All in all, if there is no Energy and we are under the control of laziness, we lose all the white actions, all chances for the success of temporal work, and cannot fulfil our ultimate purpose.

The divisions of Energy

a. Dauntless, armour like Energy

When the Bodhisattva practises Energy, before any action he dons the mental armour of the pleased mind. This is the mind that is happy to try to achieve Enlightenment for the sake of extinguishing the suffering of just one sentient being, even if it means being in only the narak stages for a million million times the number of three countless great eons equal to the number of whiles (thang.chig) in the number of days in one thousand great eons.

From the Teaching, *Following the Bodhisattva's Actions*:

Because sinfulness is avoided, there is no suffering. Because skilful work is done for sentient beings, with Wisdom in the evolution of karma, there is no unhappiness.

Even if he has to suffer in the narak stage of unceasing suffering for the sake of sentient beings, the Bodhisattva purifies his sinfulness and has no suffering. He chooses to go there gladly, as he would to a paradise, and feels no unhappiness.

b. The Energy of the totality of virtue

This is practising the six Paramitas in order to fully attain them all, by such means as making offerings and purification.

c. The Energy of working for other sentient beings

By such means as following the practice of the Energy of the total actions of the Bodhisattva.

What should be done in the practice of Energy

The practice to receive Energy is extremely important—it is the most important thing, because receiving all the white dharmas and all progress depend on it. To arouse Energy it is first necessary to avoid its opponents. To do this they must be recognised and then the skilful methods to avoid them followed.

There are three kinds of laziness which prevent us from following the path, even though we see that we are capable of doing so, and a remedy for each.

a. The laziness of putting off the practice by thinking that there will still be time.

The remedy for this is to meditate strongly, with deep feeling, on the fact that the human rebirth we have received decays very quickly and, falling into the lower realms after death, it is extremely difficult to receive such a perfect rebirth again. By means of this meditation we should arouse the worry that our time is so short.

b. The laziness arising from attachment to performing lower, worldly work and being under its control.

This results from attachment to ordinary, samsaric pleasures, those received through the objects of the five senses or sleep, and from not having aversion to samsara. Such is the attachment to receiving respect and materials, to idle chatter, to work like farming or business, to travelling, all of which are done for the comfort of this life. Doing these evil things and bearing whatever difficulties arise is all negative energy, and is not called Energy from the Dharma point of view.

The remedy for this is to meditate on the fact that Dharma practice is the source of infinite happiness in the present and future lives and the way to decrease suffering. Meaningless actions such as unnecessary talk and scattered thought destroy the great meaningfulness of this life and cause innumerable meaningless sufferings to arise. It is necessary to try to feel like this: “Why are you pleased to create the cause of suffering, such as scattered thoughts, and distracting actions, avoiding the Holy Dharma from which arises the most supreme happiness?”

c. The laziness of discouragement

Saying, “If the result, Buddhahood means the complete cessation of every single defect and the complete accumulation of all Knowledge, then there are too many levels of realization to achieve and too many different practices and things to study. For me it is too difficult to receive each Knowledge and to correct every mistake. How can someone like me be capable of achieving that result, Buddhahood?” Should thoughts of discouragement arise like this, we create great negativeness because we abandon the Bodhicitta.

The remedy for this is to think, “The true, Holy Being tells only the truth, makes no mistakes and never lies. So if he says that even flies can reach Enlightenment, being born human with the capability of observing practice and avoidance, if I don’t give up Energy why should I not achieve Enlightenment?”

We should also think. “The past and present Buddhas, and also those who will reach Enlightenment in the future, did not achieve the path by already being Enlightened. So I too must have such Energy that, even if it takes me my whole life to realize only the meditation on the Perfect Human Rebirth and the difficulty of finding it, I shall do it, for they all achieved Enlightenment by following such a path, in such a way, with such Energy.”

Instead of feeling discouraged when we think of these high Bodhisattva’s practices, such as making Charity of the body or its parts for the attainment of Enlightenment, we should think as follows: “Not living in the Bodhisattva’s actions, I have been circling in samsara, experiencing unspeakable sufferings, such as the body being chopped and cut and burned, and none of this has helped to accomplish even my own purpose. But suffering, bearing the difficulties for the achievement of Enlightenment is never the same as the other. Also it is necessary for bringing my own and others’ success. In samsara, the body can be cut into pieces or burned countless hundreds of millions of times without the achieving of Enlightenment, but when these sufferings are experienced for the sake of achieving Enlightenment, their number has a limit. This is experiencing the temporal discomfort in order to cease those innumerable sufferings, just as patients experience the discomfort of surgery as doctors cure them of their illnesses.”

When the power of great compassion is strongly developed, Charity can be made of the body. This becomes greatly meaningful, and there are no difficulties experienced while making such Charity.

Shantideva said:

At first the Lord trains us to make Charity of vegetables and such-like. By training slowly from this we can eventually dedicate our own flesh. When we consider the body as we do vegetables, then there is no difficulty in dedicating our flesh.

Although it is necessary to completely accumulate infinite collections of merits in order to achieve Enlightenment, we must not be discouraged by thinking that it is extremely difficult and that we are incapable of doing so. When we observe ordinations motivated by the thought of accumulating infinite merits, that we might achieve the infinite Knowledge of Buddha to benefit infinite sentient beings, as long as we observe correctly—during the time of sleep and the time awake, the mind distracted and the mind not distracted—there is always the creation of merits equal to infinite space. Hence, there are no difficulties in accumulating infinite merits.

It is wonderful to arouse the thought of achieving Enlightenment for the sake of sentient beings in a short time, through the arousal and development of extremely great love and compassion. But if, when seeing the necessity for innumerable austere practices and from following the infinite practices of the Bodhisattvas for a long time, we think, “Who could be capable of that?”, our mind not the least part of that great Bodhicitta, this indirectly disturbs the Bodhicitta will, and directly disturbs following Bodhicitta. Such ideas put a great distance between ourselves and Enlightenment because they disturb the wide development of the power of the Bodhicitta.

If we think that the desire to follow the Tantric path, the short cut to Enlightenment, is a disturbance, the difference between these two minds is as great as that between earth and sky. For such motivation is based on the fundamental Bodhicitta thought: “For each sentient being I can experience suffering in the narak stages for eons equal in number to the drops in the ocean,” and on the feeling that each second of suffering of sentient beings is a very long time, which is like the strong feeling of compassion that a mother has for her dearly beloved only son who has been taken by a river.

Living with pessimistic mind brings no benefits and only makes us more discouraged. But if our thoughts are optimistic through having fully understood the methods of attaining Enlightenment, it is as if the attainment of all success is in our hand.

The Buddha said:

Feeling discouraged only results in loss and doesn't benefit for gaining Liberation.

So, if, without feeling upset, we follow the Wise One's method for the attainment of all necessities and release, even the greatly difficult practices become easy.

We should not be satisfied with limited knowledge of Dharma, even if we have achieved some part of Dharma Knowledge. If we find some subjects in the Teachings of certain meditations complicated or unintelligible and then feel discouraged and give up, instead of trying to understand them, it is a great loss of opportunity and a chance not regained for lifetimes.

For Energy to arise continuously, we must have the wish. How does the wish arise? The wish depends on our making checking meditation on the way that good and suffering results from white and black karmic actions respectively. The wish and Energy to observe the practice and avoidance come from this meditation, particularly that on the benefits that come from practising the Bodhisattva's deeds and the shortcomings that result from breaking the Bodhisattva's precepts, besides that on general karmic consequences. Our practising with the desire to enter the door of the Mahayana and complete the Mahayana Path means that we promise to eradicate all negativeness and shortcomings in ourselves and others and to attain all Knowledge. It is necessary to persuade ourselves by thinking like this: "It requires innumerable eons of training to completely achieve each Knowledge and purify each shortcoming and its impressions. Now I don't possess even a part of the Mahayana Energy required to achieve All Knowledge and to purify all shortcomings—instead, I use my energy in a meaningless way."

It is necessary to generate the Energy to comprehend any subject without flagging, but first we should check it carefully rather than attempting just any of the Bodhisattva's deeds. If we are capable of following that, then we should do so; if not, then it is better to avoid taking it on, rather than trying to do so and later giving it up. The reason for this is that as we give up what was promised, this becomes a habit and increases even in future lifetimes because of the result similar to the cause—giving up practices such as following precepts. In this lifetime also the negativeness created by this increases. Also, the suffering result of that karma increases in other lifetimes; the

complete result cannot be received because the previous practice—following the Bodhisattva’s deeds—was not completed, and the achievement of other practices is also interrupted.

Therefore, to complete the promise, we should meditate on the following three prides:

i. Pride of action

Thinking of achieving the path by ourselves alone without depending on any helper.

In his Teaching, Nagarjuna said:

Liberation depends on oneself—there is no such thing as another helping in this.

Our thinking to achieve this by ourselves, without expecting others to help, is akin to pride, so it is called pride.

ii. Pride of capability

Since sentient beings cannot achieve even their own self support through being under the control of delusion, we cannot even talk of their achieving that of others. We should practise by thinking, “I am capable of achieving the purpose of myself and others.”

As Nagarjuna said:

The worldly beings, sentient beings who are not free of delusion, are incapable of achieving their own purpose, and acting as I do. Therefore, I shall follow this.

We should also practise by thinking, “Even if sentient beings do not stop performing their lower, evil work, why should I not continue generating Energy to achieve that work which has perfect result? How can I live without doing this?” This does not mean that these two practices should be done with pride, giving up other beings. It is necessary to make the practice free of pride and without losing the thought of benefiting sentient beings. The thought that “I can do it and other sentient beings cannot,” is similar to pride—that is why it is called pride.

iii. Pride of delusion

We must arouse the courageous thought and make the firm resolution to destroy the negativities by thinking, “I must win the battle with delusions by avoiding them, and I must never allow them to win over me.”

As Nagarjuna said in his Teaching:

If a dead snake is encountered, even a crow flies high as a garuda. If I am weak, I am harmed by breaking even small precepts. Does he who is discouraged and gives up Energy win Liberation? His only result is loss.

If we have this pride then even the great opponents, evil actions and delusions, cannot hinder us. Therefore, it is necessary to arouse such pride.

Nagarjuna said:

By arising pride with Energy, it is difficult to be controlled by great opponents. If the mind is firm, the moral falls are prevented.

The practitioner who does not do this and does not desire to conquer the delusions of the three worlds, loses to the moral falls. Through the faculty of the strong wish we receive the Energy that has not been received, and through the faculty of pride we make firm and do not lose the Energy that has been received. When we follow, at first we do so with a happy mind, and while creating the action we do so not wishing to break it, a feeling dissatisfied and not doing better. This is the faculty of happiness and it is necessary to arouse it.

How should we arouse dissatisfaction in the work of the practice?

This is similar to the dissatisfaction that playing babies experience when the actions they create to bring pleasure do not satisfy them. It is necessary to think, “Ordinary beings still try for happy results despite the doubt of achieving them, so why should I not do the same?”

And as ordinary beings are not satisfied by enjoying the beautiful qualities of objects of the senses which, despite giving momentary pleasure, are the cause of extremely great sufferings, like honey on a sword, why should I be easily satisfied by the avoidance of vices and the creation of merits, actions which grant infinite happiness, present and ultimate?" By thinking like this we should arouse thoughts of dissatisfaction.

If our body and mind get tired through our having exerted much energy, or if there is a danger that tiredness will make us unable to continue in the future, it is necessary to take a short rest. On recovery we can resume our practice of Energy. As we achieve certain realizations we must continue the practice to reach higher levels.

How to put Energy into our practice.

Our attempts should lie between the two extremes, being neither sloppy nor fanatical. Also our practice should be steady and continuous, like the flow of a river, or like the crawling of a louse, which reaches its destination before the flea, which moves with jumps and pauses.

What should we do in the practice of Energy which avoids prohibited actions?

We should act as does the skilful veteran in combat—he doesn't plan only to destroy his opponents, but also expertly protects himself from the injuries their weapons might inflict. So the practitioner who plans to fight delusion, besides being skilful in the use of remedies against delusion, should take care lest they wound his mind. If he does not, while trying remedies to stop one kind of delusion, others may disturb his merits, making it difficult to progress in virtuous work.

For instance, if we practise Dharma, thinking that Knowledge is important, that just understanding the Dharma is the essential thing, and that ignorance can be dispelled merely by hearing, but are not careful to eradicate other delusions, during that time our mind develops so much negativity. So the main thing is the necessity to meditate thinking that subduing the mind is more important than mere intellectual understanding.

If a soldier drops his weapon while fighting, he picks it up immediately out of fear of being killed. If the practitioner drops his weapon—remembrance of the correct way to practise—he should recall it out of fear of falling into the lower realms. The object of remembrance should be clearly discriminated by Wisdom and held firm by remembrance.

How should the object of remembrance be discriminated by Wisdom?

We should know well all the points of the way to follow and what to avoid that the Holy Teachings explain; specifically the permitted and prohibited actions that we vow to observe in ordinations.

Knowing these well, we should remain conscious of them, and thereby we can complete our Dharma practice. But nothing can be completed by just remaining conscious, the mind focussed on one object only.

A soldier should try from the first not to drop his weapon, but if he does so he should pick it up instantly, with not just the word “fear” but with heartfelt terror of death. Like this should the meditator try not to lose his remembrance, being vigilant in observing the permitted and prohibited practices, so that the moment it is lost he instantly regains it. With fear that is not merely the word but is the unbearable fear of falling into the lower realms, the result of breaking precepts. This depends on observing karma as the most important thing. If we do not consider that such subjects as ordinations and karma are amongst the profound Teachings, for us the root of the Knowledge of attainment is cut, a leg to follow the path is broken.

It is necessary to purify immediately, having great fear of the negativeness created by even small vices and the breakage of even smallest precepts, and we must be determined not to continue to do so. Why is this necessary? Because just as a poison tipped arrow may inflict a wound that is only superficial but causes grave danger because of the poison spreading throughout the whole body, so that even that wound must be excised immediately, similarly, the negativeness due to breaking even a small precept, which causes a small wound to the mind, may spread through it becoming great and, therefore, has to be purified immediately. So it is necessary to prevent such breaks

from ever occurring; but should they happen to do so they must be purified immediately.

We might think, “How can remembrance and consciousness be retained, in order to win the war against delusion?”

A Teaching says:

He who is living in the ordination should be as vigilant and afraid as he who has to carry a pot, brimful of liquid butter, while another holding a sword threatens to kill him should he spill even a drop.

Being thus vigilant, at the first sign of laziness or sleep we must dispel them, as given in an example from the Teachings:

If sleep and laziness arise, dispel them quickly, just as one moves away from an approaching snake.

As vices are found we must arouse dislike for them, reasoning that we have been wandering in samsara since beginningless time, and that as we took precepts and are trying to live in the opposite actions it is ridiculous nonsense to do such things, and we must vow not to break them again. It is necessary for us to strive to be as careful as possible in maintaining continued powerful remembrance. This can be helped by such things as living with holy friends and Gurus, or listening much to Teachings, often hearing the subjects that cause continued powerful remembrance.

How can we bring the mind and body under control? In Sutra Teachings the Enlightened Being has explained that to build the faculty of control we must think of the necessity of following the Bodhisattva’s trainings, and of the great shortcomings—the creation of great negativeness—that result from not following as we vowed. We must consider delusions as our enemy and see any difficulties in our practice as ornaments. But to build this faculty of regarding obstacles in our practice as ornaments, not being bothered by them, it should be meditated upon before the Bodhisattva training is undertaken. Thus, by lessening the bother of interruptions to following the Bodhisattva’s deeds, the mind and body will be prepared and therefore more able to do so.

By trying this, what kind of Energy do we receive? When the power of happiness in performing virtuous work controls our mind

and body, like the wind controls the cotton bolls which sway to its command, we receive strong Energy, through which all accumulations can be quickly achieved.

How should we practise Energy while in the training? Whatever Energy is generated we should practise it with the six Paramitas and the six Holy things. For example, Charity of Energy is, while being in the practice of the Paramita of Energy ourselves, also leading others in its practice.

Conclusion

The meditator who follows the Bodhisattva's deeds persuades himself to practise the Paramita of Energy by frequently remembering and meditating on Bodhicitta. That is, to practise it to lead other sentient beings in the Paramita of Energy and also to increase the practice of Energy, training by praying to achieve its higher levels.

We should try to follow the lower forms of practising Energy according to our capability, with special emphasis on trying to prevent the opponent of Energy, laziness, from arising.

We should also try to train our thoughts in the armour like Energy that is pleased to experience infinite austerities and to achieve infinite accumulations of merit over great lengths of time in order that the suffering of sentient beings will be ceased and that they will achieve Enlightenment. We should also remember the infinite merits that result just from generating that great thought.

If such practice is not made, the Mahayana Knowledge power cannot develop and we always create many vices. In future lifetimes we shall find it difficult to follow the Bodhisattva's deeds.

Even though we cannot fully practise in this way, by understanding these points well we can project our mind in this direction, trying to generate as much Energy as possible. Then, in future lifetimes we shall quickly complete the Paramita of Energy with less suffering and less difficulties.

Meditation Eight:

The Fifth Paramita: the Paramita of Concentration: Samadhi Meditation

The following conditions are necessary for us to achieve the fifth paramita, the perfection of Concentration (Tib., *Sam.tan*)

1. We should be in a well contained place.
2. We should have little desire.
3. We should be satisfied with sense objects.
4. We should avoid distracting work.
5. We should be morally pure.
6. We should avoid the superstitions that make us attached to sense objects.

As there has not been time to complete this section of the Meditation Course book, the following has been copied from *The Opening of the Wisdom Eye* by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Madras, for the information of students.

The Training in Supreme Collectedness (Adhisamadhi siksa)

Only the person trained in virtue can train in collectedness. Usually the mind (*citta*) does not remain fixed for long upon one object since it is flickering here and there, being engaged with the objects of the various sense fields, but through this training it can be made one

pointed or perfectly concentrated. When the mind is concentrated upon a skilful object and not disturbed, then that one pointedness of mind is called “samadhi.”

Samadhi or collectedness may be analysed into various levels of mental absorption (dhyana). These are preceded by access collect-edness (upacara samadhi) in which the five hindrances (nivarana) commonly arising in the lower planes of desire are suppressed; but when the factors of absorption (dhyana) arise, this is the level of attainment collectedness (arpana samadhi). Collectedness is of two kinds, worldly and transcendental. The worldly variety is also of two sorts: pertaining to the form realm or else to the formless realm and within these two realms there are eight levels (bhumi), four in each realm. If by correct practice one has attained the absorptions both of form and of formlessness, then one has fulfilled the perfection of collectedness (samadhi paramita).

As we pointed out above, collectedness is classified as either worldly or transcendental. Here, by “world,” one should understand, are meant the three world elements (loka dhatu) within which all living beings are found. Thus worldly collectedness is that which has worldly objects and produces a worldly result, that of calm and happiness in this life and for the next, gives rise to a celestial birth (the experience of “heaven,” “paradise,” etc.) Unworldly or transcendental means that this sort of samadhi is aimed at freedom, its objects being essence lessness and not self-soulness (nihsvabhavata, anatmata). In order to achieve worldly and transcendental absorptions, one should first develop calm and insight (samatha vipasyana). Although at first one may seem to develop these aspects of samadhi separately, finally one must develop the collectedness in which they are yoked together. The aspect of collectedness which pacifies the fickleness of the mind is called “calm,” while that wisdom which penetrates to the three marks (of existence)—impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and not-self soul—is called “insight” (vipasyana, literally: deep insight).

The order of development regarding these two aspects of collect-edness in the mind is first calm (samatha) and then insight (vipasyana), or as they may also be termed: mental development (bhavana), and that including thorough examination. Once the mind is well

established in calm, the development including examination which yields insight becomes possible. Samatha is the calm and serene pond in which the fish (the faculty of deep insight) moves in examination. This is so because the mind at that time is fixed strongly upon its object and not easily disturbed. This state is very important and the skilful karma made while dwelling in it, is very powerful and of great fruit.

There are five obstacles to this development of calm which are sources of disturbance and stand opposed to tranquillity. They are:

1. Mental slackness (*kausidya*) creating discouragement so that the mind is not interested in the practice of collectedness. This is opposed by the mental factor called “determination” (*chanda*).
2. Lack of mindfulness (*musitasmrtita*) in achieving collectedness, for if this is to be experienced there must be constant mindfulness to ensure that the mind is established with concentration upon its object. Through lack of mindfulness the object of collectedness disappears from mind. This factor, therefore, is opposed to perfect (or right) mindfulness (*samyak smrti*).
3. Next comes sinking and scattering of the mind (*nirmagnataaud-dhatya*). “Sinking” means that the mind becomes submerged without awareness in the object, a state which bars further progress. It is necessary during meditation to be mindful of the object, while at the same time the mind should not sink into it. “Scattering” is a kind of fickleness of the mind because of which the mind cannot remain fixed upon its object. This pair of obstacles oppose clear comprehension.
4. Association with the above pair of obstacles (*samskarasevana*) is itself counted as an obstacle to collectedness. In this case one knows that the mind is overpowered by sinking and scattering but still one does not make an effort to develop those factors which oppose them and are able to cure the mind.
5. It sometimes happens that having made this effort and produced the counteractive factors, one goes on practising them at a time when they are not needed (*samskarasevana disassociation*). This

is an ignorant way of practising and shows that the mind is not fully aware or focussed upon its object.

It is impossible to achieve the perfection of collectedness unless one puts away these five opposing factors.

For training the mind to avoid these five there are eight dharmas which stand in opposition. They counteract the obstacles in this way:

1. Trust (sraddha) opposes mental slackness.
2. Determination (chanda) opposes mental slackness.
3. Perseverance (virya) opposes mental slackness.
4. Tranquillity (prasrabdhi) opposes mental slackness.
5. Mindfulness (smrti) opposes lack of mindfulness.
6. Comprehension (samprajanya) opposes sinking and scattering.
7. Investigation (samskaracintana) opposes association with the above.
8. Equanimity (adhivasana) opposes non association.

Calm should be developed by the growth of these eight qualities. Now we shall go on to discuss the nine states of mind, the six powers and the four mental activities and how, due to them, collectedness is achieved.

Nine states of mind

1. **Cittasthapana.** This is the state in which the mind first becomes unaffected by outer objects and fixes in the meditation object.
2. **Cittaprahasamsthapa** is the establishment of the stream of mind, meaning that the mind is fixed upon the object for some time by compelling the mind to consider again and again the object of concentration.
3. **Cittapratiharana** is the state when, the mind being disturbed, one “brings back” the mind to the concentration object.

4. **Cittopasthapana** is the state in which the mind is expanded while exactly limited to the object.
5. **Cittadamana**—“mind taming” which is done by seeing the ill results of distracting thoughts and defilements, also perceiving the advantages of collectedness, so that one makes efforts to put away the former while establishing the mind in the latter.
6. **Cittasamana**—“mind calming” in which feelings antagonistic to the practice of collectedness are quelled. If boredom arises regarding collectedness since the mind is still hungry for sense objects, then it is thoroughly pacified at this stage.
7. **Cittavyupasamana** or the subtle pacification of mind. Even the subtle stains of mind are set aside here.
8. **Cittaikotikarana**. The mind here becomes like one undisturbed stream and continues to flow along one pointedly.
9. **Samadhana**. When this state is reached, there is no need for effort since the mind is naturally one pointed.

Six powers

1. **Srutibala**: Listening to a teacher or else reading books on the method of fixing the mind, such is meant by this first power.
2. **Asayabala**: By the power of repeated thought one establishes the mind in the way of collectedness.
3. **Smrtibala**: If the mind becomes distracted by some other object, it is by this power of mindfulness that it is returned to the meditation object and established therein.
4. **Samprajanyabala**: By means of this power of clear comprehension one comes to know the evil results of the mental stains and the beneficial fruits derived from collectedness thus making one delight in the latter.
5. **Viryabala**: This sort of skilful energy ensures that the mind is not influenced by the stains.

6. **Paricayabala:** The natural and thorough acquaintance of the mind with collectedness, forced application of mindfulness and clear comprehension being no longer needed.

Four mental activities

1. **Manonivesappravartak manaskara.** By means of this activity the mind enters into the object.
2. **Vicchinnappravartak manaskara.** Although the mind may in the beginning remain in concentration for some time, every now and then distraction will arise from the obstacles of sinking, scattering and so forth. This activity returns the mind to its object.
3. **Avicchinnappravartak manaskara.** Through this activity the mind is established in the object for a long period thus giving no chance to distractions.
4. **Ayatanappravartak manaskara.** When all the hindrances to collectedness have been set aside, it is through this activity that the mind is held effortlessly upon its object.

The successive attainment of collectedness

Now having given an outline of the various factors involved in the approach to collectedness, the subject to be explained here will be the progress through the nine states of mind and the hindrances which are encountered in them and how the various powers and mental activities bring them to an end.

As I said above, the first power consists of listening to the teaching and making the mind learn about the objects of concentration. Those who have heard this kind of teaching and who desire to experience collectedness, do not allow their minds to stray upon exterior objects. When the mind begins to be established in this object, it is called the first state of mind. Although the mind begins to be established in the object, it fails to be concentrated upon the same object for a long time. Thoughts pour from the mind like water in a waterfall and it seems as though a veritable flood of thoughts arise. The truth is that the mind has always been in this state but never before

was one aware of it, since one had never turned one's gaze within before. Now that the mind is turned inward because of the practice of mindfulness and clear comprehension, these thoughts become known. Just as upon a great and crowded highway, a careless person may not be aware how crowded it really is unless he examines carefully to see the different sorts and numbers of people, so in the same way the mind begins to know the variety and range of thoughts comprising it. This should not be regarded as a fault of practice but quite a natural experience for one beginning to take up concentration.

While experiencing the first state of mind, it is by means of the second power that the mind is repeatedly established upon the object. In this way the mind becomes restrained for some time by this power and so reaches the second state of mind. Here thoughts sometimes arise and disturb the mind after which they die away and it is then that the meditator realises for the first time the stopping of thoughts. Two faults are commonly found here: sinking and scattering. If the former then the mind sinks gently into the object and a sort of sleep is the result, while the latter makes the mind fickle and run after other objects. The result of these is that one's collectedness loses power and force. When this occurs, one should fix the mind unwaveringly upon the object and where this occurs, it is known as the first mental activity.

However, if after the mind has been earnestly tied to the object it is continually being disturbed by other objects, then it must be established again upon the object of concentration by the third power (of mindfulness). One will then reach the third state of mind.

As I said above, whenever the mind is not energetic and hence gets discouraged due to the faults of sinking and so on, then it is directed by the third power to return to the concentration object. Likewise, this power of mindfulness is needed to limit the mind when expanded, from straying to other objects. This is the fourth state of mind.

While practising concentration, thoughts and stains appear repeatedly and this is because the meditator does not know the unskilful and distracting results to be expected from them, nor does he realize the skilled fruits of collectedness. When by way of the fourth power (clear comprehension) one notices and comes to know these

faults, then they can be properly dealt with by means of this power. This means that stains already arisen are cut off, the mind being well established in the object, and when this occurs it is known as the fifth state of mind.

From time to time the mind is liable to become dissatisfied with concentration so that from the arising of boredom there is the experience of scattering. By means of the power of clear comprehension the bad fruits of this scatteredness are known thereby not permitting the mind to entertain boredom. This is called the sixth state of mind.

As far as this stage of practice is concerned, although faults and stains have been suppressed by reflection upon their unsatisfactory results for the future, this does not mean that they will not arise again. For this reason the meditator should beware. Whenever these stains become manifest in the mind, then the real value of awareness may be seen for whatever the stain, whether greed, lust, anger, and so forth, and whether arising in a gross or in a subtle form, it can be ended with this awareness where it is supported by earnestness and effort. This is the seventh state of mind.

Although from the third up to the seventh state the mind has been concentrated to a greater or lesser extent, even when well established in the object, stains such as sinking and scattering and so on will cause distraction from time to time though perhaps only after long intervals. This results in one's collectedness being broken and at such a time this is restored by the second mental activity. This activity has its application in all states of mind from the third to the seventh.

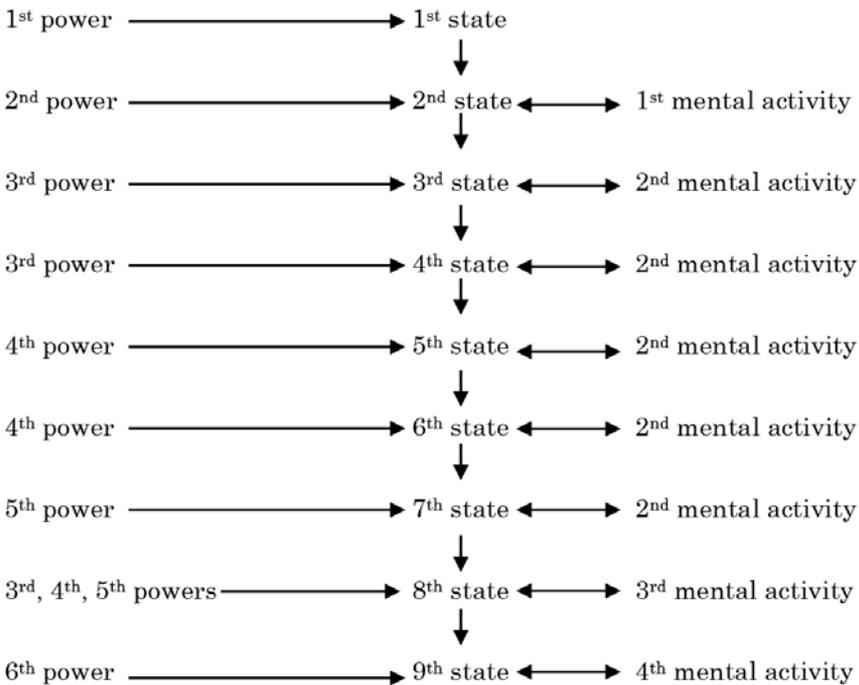
If the meditator develops both the third and fourth powers to counteract scattering and the fifth power against sinking, then these two stains will not arise as hindrances to collectedness. As a result of this, one's practice proceeds like an unbroken stream, this being the eighth state of mind.

While experiencing this state if one makes an effort carefully and persistently, then these two stains have no power to break into collectedness so that it proceeds unbroken and quite undisturbed, the third mental activity thus being found in this state.

Persistently and continuously developing collectedness, it is through the sixth power that the object becomes very clear. In this

state, the mind is effortlessly concentrated on the object without the support either of mindfulness or of clear comprehension. One has then reached the ninth state of mind. Just as a man who has learnt the scriptures well may, while chanting them, let his mind wander elsewhere, yet there is no hindrance to his chanting, so the mind which has been previously well established in the object is now fixed there effortlessly and without any hindrance. The current of collect- edness is now able to flow for a long time without effort made by the practicer, this being the fourth mental activity. The ninth state of mind is also called “access collectedness” (*upacara samadhi*).

Diagrammatic summary of progress through the nine states



Calm is found even in the mind of a meditator who begins to practise for the attainment of collectedness. As the strength of calm increases so stiffness both of mind and body decrease. This stiffness, dullness or unworkability of mind is associated with heaviness and mental inactivity, all of which are aspects of that root cause of the mental stains, delusion (moha). When we say that calm stands opposed to stiffness, we mean that this calm or samatha is accompanied by lightness both of mind and body. In a calm mind, joy (priti) arises and because of this the mind becomes established in the meditation object. The calm of mind also gives rise to a tranquil and relaxed body, such bodily peace being very helpful to the meditator.

As one progresses with collectedness this joy tends to decrease while equanimity (upeksa) replaces it, the mind being established in the object with greater stability, an experience known as samadhi upacara acala prasrabdhi (literally: the unshaken tranquillity of access to collectedness) and with it one enters a state very close to the first absorption (dhyana).

By continuing one's practice in this way, one does in fact reach the first absorption. We have already said that there are three great levels (bhumi), sometimes called world elements (dhatu) but these may be further subdivided to make up a total of nine levels:

1. Sensuous existence level (kama bhumi).
2. First absorption level (prathama dhyana bhumi).
3. Second absorption level (dvitiya dhyana bhumi).
4. Third absorption level (tritiya dhyana bhumi).
5. Fourth absorption level (caturtha dhyana bhumi).
6. Sphere of infinite space level (akasanantayatana bhumi).
7. Sphere of infinite consciousness level (vijnananantayatana bhumi).
8. Sphere of no-thingness level (akincanyayatana bhumi).
9. Sphere of neither perception nor nonperception level (naivasamjna nasamjnatayana bhumi) also called the summit of becoming (bhavagra).

These successive levels are attained by having no attachment for them and by seeing the advantages of the levels higher than those already attained together with the disadvantages of those already reached.

These absorption attainments (dhyana samapatti), that is the last eight of these nine levels, are causal factors since by means of their attainment (when a man) one may be reborn among the celestials of form or formlessness (according to the type of absorption reached).

His Holiness then goes on to describe the method for the attainment of the absorptions, the fruits of accomplished absorptions, the four formless absorptions and special virtues and knowledges.

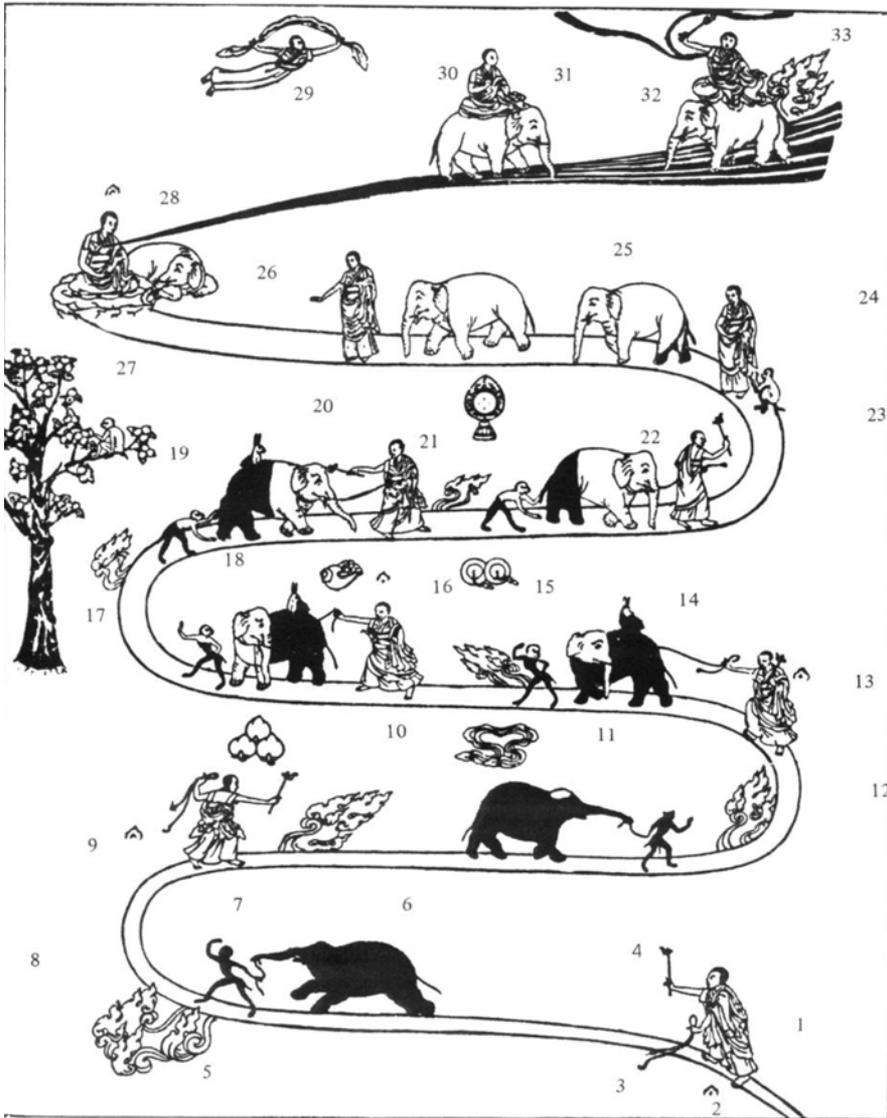


Figure 12—Progress on the path of Samatha meditation

Samatha (Quietude) Meditation (Zhi.na)

1. The first is the force of hearing. The first stage of meditation is attained through the force of hearing.
2. Fixing the mind on the object of concentration.
3. The force of recollection (mindfulness).
4. The force of consciousness (clear comprehension).
5. From here until the seventh stage of mental absorption will be found a flame decreasing in size at each progressive stage until it becomes conspicuously absent. This difference in size, absence and presence of the flame denotes the measure of effort and strength of recollection and consciousness.
6. The elephant represents mind, its black colour the mental factor of sinking.
7. The monkey represents interruption (distraction), and its black colour the mental factor of scattering.
8. The force of reflection. This achieves the second stage of mental absorption.
9. Uninterrupted and continuous absorption on the object of concentration (lengthening of the period of concentration).
10. The five sensual desires are the object of the mental factor of scattering.
11. From here the black colour, beginning from the head, changes into white. It denotes the progress in the clear grasping of the

- object of meditation and prolonged fixing of the mind on the object of concentration.
12. The force of recollection. The attainment of the third and fourth stages of mental absorption is achieved through the force of recollection.
 13. To return and fix the strayed mind on the object of concentration.
 14. The hare represents the subtle aspects of the mental factor of sinking. At this stage, one recognises the distinct nature of the subtle and gross aspects of the mental factor of sinking.
 15. Looking back means that having perceived the diversion of the mind, it is again brought back to the object of concentration.
 16. Maintaining a clear conception of even the minutest details of the object of concentration.
 17. The force of consciousness (clear comprehension). Through this is attained the fifth and sixth stages of mental absorption.
 18. The arising of the mental factor of scattering preceding the actual state of absorption is greatly reduced.
 19. At the time of Samatha meditation, even though thoughts of virtue arise these have to be eliminated and the mind tenaciously projected on the object of concentration. The reason is that such thought, in spite of its virtuousness, will act as interruption. Such elimination is not necessary when one is not doing Samatha meditation.
 20. The force of consciousness (clear comprehension) arrests the mind from drifting astray, and because of its sheer loftiness, the mind is drawn towards absorption.
 21. The mind is controlled.
 22. The mind is pacified.
 23. The force of mental absorption are accomplished through the force of mental energy.

24. The mind becomes perfectly pacified. At this stage the arising of the subtlest sinking and scattering will not be possible. Even if there occurs some, it will be immediately removed with the slightest effort.
25. Here the black colour of the elephant has completely faded out, and the monkey has also been left out. The meaning represented is: bereft of the interrupting factors of scattering and sinking, the mind can be settled continuously in absorption (on the subject of concentration) with perfect ease and steadfastness, beginning with the application of a slight amount of the forces of mindfulness and clear comprehension.
26. One pointedness of mind.
27. The force of perfection. The ninth stage of mental absorption is attained through the force of perfection.
28. Perfect equanimity.
29. Ecstasy of body.
30. Attainment of mental quiescence of Samatha.
31. Mental ecstasy.
32. The root of samsara or becoming is destroyed with the joint power of Samatha and the direct insight (vipasyana) with Shunyata (void) as the object of concentration.
33. The flame represents the dynamic forces of recollection (mindfulness) and consciousness (clear comprehension). Equipped with the power, one examines the nature and the sublime meaning of Shunyata (void)—the knowledge of the ultimate reality of all objects, material and phenomena.

Prayer to Be Said After Meditation Eight

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja:

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations, and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge of how to abandon mental dullness and mental agitation that I may accomplish the Perfection of Concentration by single minded concentration on the ultimate nature of all things.

J'ING.GÖ NAM.PAR YENG.WÄ KYÖNG.PANG.NÄ
CH'Ö.KÜN DEN.PÄ TONG.PÄ PÄ NÄ.LUG.LA
TZE.CHIG NYAM.PAR JOG.PÄ TING.DZIN.GYI
SAM.TÄN P'AR.CH'IN DZOG.PAR J'IN.GY'I.LOB

(By abandoning the faults of mental dullness and mental agitation, please bless me to accomplish the perfection of concentration, by single minded meditation on the ultimate nature of the voidness of all things.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

Dedication of Merits

GE.WA DI.YI NYUR.D'U.DAG

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LA.MA T'UB.WANG DRUB.GUR.NÄ

Guru controlled one attain and

DRO.WA CHIG.KYANG MA.LÜ.PA

Living beings even single and every

KY'E.KYI SA.LA GÖ.PAR.SHOG

your of to realm lead may

(May I quickly become Guru Lord Buddha and lead each and every sentient being into his Enlightened realm because of these merits.)

Notes:

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The Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT) is a dynamic worldwide organization devoted to education and public service. Established by Lama Thubten Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche, FPMT touches the lives of beings all over the world. In the early 1970s, young Westerners inspired by the intelligence and practicality of the Buddhist approach made contact with these lamas in Nepal and the organization was born. Now encompassing over 160 Dharma centers, projects, social services and publishing houses in thirty-three countries, we continue to bring the enlightened message of compassion, wisdom, and peace to the world.

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