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1. A Brief Teaching on the Practice of Noble Chenrezig, The Buddha of Infinite Compassion, by Khenpo Palden Sherab Rinpoche
2. Chenrezig Commentary, by Khenpo Donyo, San Francisco, July 17th, 1996
3. Chenrezig (Avalokiteshvara) - The Embodiment of Compassion in Tibetan Buddhism, from Dharma Haven
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Works Cited, and For further reading and listening, as you like

Preface

At present, I'm happy to say that I have three recent collections that focus on the practice of visualization. The first of these, *Instructions on Visualization*, was compiled in 2023, and is based on the Healing Buddha practice. The next one is called *White Tara Practice Instructions*, and the most recent is titled *Visualizations for Tara Practice*. Some time back I also edited two collections, *on Chenrezig* (Compassion), and *on Vajrasattva* (Purification) practice.

Each of these practices have elements in common that can be understood and applied to any Vajrayana practice. For this reason, I've gathered and arranged the various introductions I've written over the years as Front material, and I will include them in these volumes. This way, if someone encounters any one of these collections alone, they will also have the basis of these practices, as I've received them, and found viable.

*May they be a blessing
May all that the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas,
and all Noble Beings wish for us
be fully accomplished!*

Jason Espada
San Francisco,
April 27th, 2025

Instructions on Visualization - Introduction

Among the treasures we have received from Tibetan Buddhism are what are known as *the Tantras*. These are profound methods we can use to accomplish our purpose, and bring benefit to ourselves and to others.

Varjayana methods make use of visualization, which is something we are all familiar with, to some extent. We use this faculty all the time - when we are thinking ahead, imagining, recalling, planning or rehearsing a situation.

When we visualize as part of a meditation practice however, two things are different about it. The first is that it is done consciously, and second, any visualization we do as part of a spiritual practice is based on our world view - how we see ourselves and each other, and the world we live in.

Vajrayana practice is based on Sacred Outlook, or Pure Perception. For those who may be unfamiliar with this, I have included a summary called the Tenets of Pure Perception to begin this collection.

For more information on this subject, and for encouragement, I've also gathered a few writings that I will include here as *an appendix*.

This collection focusses on Healing Buddha practice. These methods of visualization can be used with any method, however. For those with an affinity with Tara, for example, here is *a set of teachings* on her practice. This is from a larger work called *A Collection of Buddhist Methods for Healing*.

Here are audio recordings of mantras.

One more note: When practicing for another, there are various ways we can visualize. We can see them with us, receiving the benefit of this practice alongside us, or we can see them in our heart in our meditations. In fact, we have this expression when we want to say we have a deep connection with someone. Surely we feel and share our lives with one another in this way.

*May the teachings on visualization,
prayer, and mantra recitation,
bring benefit just as our teachers,
the Noble Buddhas and Bodhisattvas have intended.*

Jason Espada,
August 17th, 2023

White Tara Practice Instructions

An Introduction for 2024

As I review my favorite teachings on White Tara practice, I can see what has been accessible, and what I have been able to use these last few years. This narrows down the material quite a bit.

I also can see what I feel like I need to bring to these practices, to understand them clearly, and make use of them. This is in comparison to the way many of the traditional teachings are presented, or come across for me.

Surprisingly, I've been feeling like I need to bring *sacred outlook* to these practices, more than what I can sense when I read about them.

That there are Holy Ones we can call on, that will respond and help...

As Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo said,

We are not alone. This universe is full of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who are on our side. And, as is known in all Buddhist countries, although it is not always emphasized in the West, we can pray to them...

And Lama Zopa Rinpoche has said,

You are not alone because all the time there are numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas surrounding you, loving you, guiding you, that is what they do....

I know this is the link between liberating teachings, and more universal, mystical themes.

So that is one difference in how I'm approaching the Vajrayana and White Tara practice now. How surprising!

Another element I feel I need to bring more of into these practices is *the wisdom aspect*. If this isn't clear to my mind, the practice continues grasping at self, other, objects, places, maybe even more strongly!

I read one commentary recently where a few of the questions were on just this point - of the need to bring together method and wisdom side of it. This is necessary to reflect on.

There are many themes in the Vajrayana that for Westerners can lend themselves to grasping even more strongly onto ideas if we are not careful here - such as those of compassion, and the nature of divinity.

For this reason, this much should also be very clear up front, so that the practice is complete, and liberating.

I will add then to the notes I have gathered so far: *Tenets of Pure Perception*, and also *Verses for generating the mind of enlightenment, including the wisdom aspect*. This is so important, I am thinking now.

Of course, all this being said, I have to add that there is also something magical about all these practices for me, far exceeding anything I could ever

say about them. They are effective, inspiring, onward leading, a comfort, strength and sustenance.

The Holy Ones are deserving my devout praise, every day, and I celebrate what we can accomplish through these practices.

*May we all find our way to teachings that are effective for us,
and care for one another in the best of ways*

Jason Espada

San Francisco,

October 13th, 2024

Note: There are a few themes that go to make up this practice that can be reflected on separately. Instead of including them in the main part of this collection, I've chosen to link at the end of this book to reflections that can be studied as needed. {This page is found [here](#).}

Going through the sadhanas then, or basic instructions on this practice is then enriched by our study. They are a kind of shorthand for these themes that we then experience in our meditations.

Tenets of Pure Perception

Sacred outlook is a way of experiencing the world as essentially divine in nature, having great beauty and potential. It is seeing:

That all life is sacred;

That the Divine, freedom and peace, the Kingdom of Heaven, is within us all

That our fundamental nature is pure

and therefore,

That we all have the potential to become free from suffering and attain happiness; we can accomplish great benefit for ourselves and others

That this world is sacred, intelligent, alive and responsive, and that we are inseparably connected to it;

That we are always connected to each other, to our whole family

That there are other realms of existence

That there are past and future lives

That karma works, negative actions create suffering and positive actions create happiness, and bring light into the world

That the way we experience ourselves and each other and the world
depends on our mind

That true mind sees things the way they are, and naturally has right values,
and is healing

That the purpose of our lives here is to care for each other, and,

Those who show us the best ways to do this are our venerable teachers

That there are many levels of beings, seen and unseen

That we are not alone in this world

That there are powers we can call on, Saints and Saviors, Buddhas and
Bodhisattvas, Ancestors, and divine beings that will respond and help

That we are multi-dimensional beings, and so, things such as distant
viewing, absent reading, and distant healing are possible

That there are faculties beyond the ordinary that can be developed, each
according to our unique temperament and gifts, but to some extent by
everyone

That vows are powerful

That prayer is effective

That ritual works,
and,

That mantra works

*May we all be aware of our true heritage,
and live lives of generosity,
great joy, and fulfillment,
of great peace, well being,
and benefit to all!*

For more information on Sacred Outlook, and Pure Perception, see:

A Belief in the Miraculous - Buddhism, Magic, and a Sense of the Sacred (2018)

The World As It Truly Is (2021)

Opening the Door to Pure Perception (2023)

Speaking of Angels, from this collection,

and,

Devanussati - Recollecting Devas, A Guided Meditation by Ajahn Achalo

Video, and Transcript

Mantra and Words of Power

A number of ancient traditions hold the belief that certain sounds have spiritual power, and that we can accomplish particular aims through their recitation. The sacred languages of Sanskrit and Hebrew have been used by priests for millennia, and the mantras in Tibetan Buddhism have proven their efficacy across the centuries.

There is an element of karmic affinity, or course, whenever a person connects with any spiritual tradition, and the same holds true for mantra practice. A tradition or mantra may work for one person, but not for another for this reason. How can we tell if we have a connection, or if a practice is suitable for us? Traditionally a person's teacher will recommend one practice. These days though, not everyone has a teacher, and mantras are printed in books and broadcast far and wide.

We can simply experiment with an open mind and see for ourselves if a mantra helps awaken our spiritual nature, of love and understanding, if it brings us health and strength, or if it clears obstacles. Sometimes it's not obvious at first if a practice is working, the effect being quite subtle, but perhaps there is some change we can feel in our body, or some new energy we can sense.

Different mantras have different purposes. For example, they can help awaken our compassion, or wisdom, they can help to heal, to protect, to overcome fears, or restore harmony. They have a great many other wonderful uses as well, and these can be studied in the context of their

individual practices. Most of all, we can refer to our own unfolding experience to understand the meaning, power, and purpose of mantra.

There's a teaching that says certain practices are 'self-secret', which means that they are known only by the right person at the right time. I've sensed the truth of this myself over the years. It's not at all easy to describe the profound effects of mantra, or connecting with a practice, but when it's right for us, we will feel at ease, and we will make progress in our meditation, and gain tangible results.

Things that can be done with mantra

As with other universal magical practices, we can use the methods known as tantras to heal, and to prolong life, to increase resources, clear away obstacles, remove harmful influences, and to calm fears.

At a certain level, we can influence the weather, put a stop to epidemics and fires, see and act in other realms, and receive prophecy.

Here is a list I made a number of years ago

Things that can be done with mantra

heal / strengthen / relieve

purify / bring light / protect

clarify / liberate from samsara / facilitate the liberation from samsara /

comfort the lonely / bring about the manifestation of the good / rescue the
crazy, the out of balance / hold back the endangered

give riches to the poor / relieve depression / cure depression

give direction / strengthen realization / eliminate maras

pacify, remove the influence of, transform maras /

increase realizations of the graduated path, and all realizations

In these and other ways, we can make use of these *magical means* to help ourselves and others. These are not difficult to understand, as both the use of verifiable working principles, and the expression of enlightened compassion.

- From On Buddhism and Magical Practice

On Self Generation and Front Generation

{The following comments apply to all the teachings in this collection}

It's traditionally taught that what's called 'self-generation' - where one visualizes oneself as the divine form, and maintains *Divine Pride*, should only be done by those who have received the initiation of a particular Bodhisattva Divinity, but that 'front generation' - where one visualizes the divine form in space above and in front of oneself - can be done by anyone.

In front generation, we visualize, and vividly see with the mind's eye above us, the Buddha or bodhisattva whose practice we are doing, and whose mantra we are reciting. At this time, it's taught that we should see the Buddha, ourselves and others, as having bodies that are made entirely of light, like a hologram. When doing this recitation and visualization, we can also see pure light and nectar streaming from the image we hold. These represent, or carry the blessings of the Buddha.

Traditionally, light goes out to the sources of benefit, making offerings out of respect, and prayerful requests, and then the light returns, bringing the blessings of these sources of healing benefit. These healing energies 'fall upon us as light and nectar', and dissolve into the front visualization and into us. We then have the thought and image clearly in our mind that all those we pray for, including ourselves, receive this positive energy, and that they are completely healed by it, and made entirely well and strong. This form of prayer is referred to in the Tibetan Tradition as 'gathering and spreading'.

Many teachers advise, too, when doing this kind of practice, that we see ourselves and others in a pure land, made of light, and to make the meditation as beautiful, peaceful, perfect, and pure as we can. All this is called *Clear Appearance*.

Many people, especially when they are new to these kinds of practices, say, 'Oh, I can't visualize, I can't visualize – I don't see anything' but that's just because it's not like seeing something with our physical eyes. The teacher Thrangu Rinpoche pointed out that visualization is not like seeing – in their terminology they say it's not experienced with eye-consciousness. It's more subtle than that. It's experienced with mind-consciousness.

Venerable Jigme explained that when we are visualizing we're working with our imagination... not only are we working with imagined sights, but we're also working with imagined touch and smells and sounds, physical sensations and feelings.

Of course, all this can be as detailed or as simple as we like. We can also do the practice without any elaborate or detailed visualization. For example, we can just see a healing sun, with beautiful light streaming down from above us while reciting. Or without any visualization at all, we can just recite the mantra. We should do whatever works best for us.

As Lama Lodro teaches, even if you just practice for a short while, try and practice as purely and as perfectly as you can. This means concentrating on the visualizations, if any are used, and the sound of the mantra, keeping in mind the meaning and the purpose of what we are doing. This is called *Clear Recollection*.

On The Refuge Tree

Sometimes when doing Vajrayana practice, what is called a Refuge Tree is visualized. All of this is seen to be in the nature of light. Around the central figure, whatever practice we are doing, one can visualize other Buddhas and Bodhisattvas or holy beings that we have a connection with. For example, White Tara can have the wonderful effect of truly strengthening the constitution and the central nervous system. Among other qualities, I bring this quality of enlightened action to mind at times when doing the Medicine Buddha practice, and imagine that She is there in the retinue of the Healing Buddha, bestowing her blessings as well.

We can include any divine figures we have a connection with to the refuge tree, such as Jesus, Mary, Kuan Yin, Tara or Manjushri, Angels, and the Saints we have devotion to.

We can add to a single visualization simply, or we can just have the sense that those other Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and holy beings are there, whatever brings the best results.

At the conclusion of any practice involving visualization, we dissolve the visualization, and dedicate the merit.

*

A personal note here, though I've not seen this written anywhere: after doing any practices that involve visualization, I think it's a good idea to meditate quietly, and to do something non-conceptual that puts us in touch

with the physical. It could be mindful walking, or sitting and breathing in and out with an awareness of our body for a while, or to do something else that is tangible with our hands and feet and body. This can keep us from 'spacing out', or from being one step removed from this level of reality. It can 'ground' us, so to speak. This can also help to more fully integrate the benefits of whatever practice we have been doing...

(2009)

A group of reflections

This life is precious, may I use it well...

May I see the truth of impermanence, and use this understanding well...

Actions bring results according to their cause,
and there is no lasting happiness in any of the realms of samsara...

Understanding this much,

I take refuge the Buddha, the Light of the World,
the Great Compassionate Teacher,

I take refuge in the Dharma, in all the Liberating Teachings
and I take refuge in the Noble Sangha,
the Accomplished Spiritual Community,
the Great Assembly of Saints and Bodhisattvas

May all share in these blessings

Especially now, may I think of all beings with great love and compassion,
and generate the supreme awakening mind...

May I think of them all as my family,
and care for them all as my own...

May the supreme jewel, bodhicitta,
arise where it has not yet arisen,
Where it has arisen, may it not diminish,
May it ever grow and flourish...

May I accomplish this one path,
and may all temporal and ultimate aims be fulfilled

Verses for generating the mind of enlightenment, with the wisdom aspect

Especially now, may I think all beings with great love and compassion,
and generate the supreme awakening mind...

May I think of them all as my family,
and care for them all as my own.

May all beings have happiness
and all the causes of true happiness flourishing...

May all beings be completely and permanently free of all suffering
and all the causes of suffering...

I celebrate all that is beautiful and right in the world,
I rejoice in all kindness, virtue, positive actions and intentions,
and in all success, happiness, and good fortune...

and abide in stable, impartial love...

Especially now, seeing the world of sentient beings,
so full of suffering, I will follow the bodhisattva's way.

May I clearly see that what I and all others so urgently need
is complete liberation of mind, perfect peace and freedom,
and that in taking care of myself, I am taking care of all of us
With an understanding of the Noble Truths,

may my love and compassion become the dedication to helping others
through my realization of this path

May I always cherish all living beings,
with the determination to accomplish for them this highest good
that is more precious than a wish-fulfilling jewel

An Awakened One has appeared in this world.
He has taught the way to freedom,
and generations of his followers to this day have realized his teachings.

Homage!

{The Bodhisattva Vow}

Just as all previous Buddhas first awakened the precious bodhimind,
and just as they then carefully followed each of the requisite stages of the
Bodhisattva disciplines,
in the same way, for the sake of living beings,
I will awaken and cultivate the bodhimind,
this all embracing intention,
and then train in every one of the essential disciplines of a Bodhisattva.

I take refuge in the Buddha, the Light of the World,
the Great Compassionate Teacher
I take refuge in the Dharma, in all the Liberating Teachings
and I take refuge in the Noble Sangha, the Accomplished Spiritual
Community, the Great Assembly of Saints and Bodhisattvas

By the merit I have accumulated by practicing Generosity, and other
 Virtues, {Ethics, Patience, Joyful Effort, Meditation, and Wisdom...}
 May I accomplish each of the stages of liberation and enlightened
 understanding and activity,
 and help bring all others, without a single exception,
 to these very same states.

With my heart going out with great compassion
 in whatever direction these most precious teachings and their result
 have not yet spread,
 or, once spread, have declined,
 there may I bring this treasure of happiness and aid!

Limitless is the extent of space,
 and limitless is the number of sentient beings
 Limitless are the karmas and delusions of beings
 Such then are the limits of my aspirations!

For as long as space endures,
 and for as long as living beings remain,
 until then, may I too abide,
 to dispel the misery of the world

May the supreme jewel, bodhicitta,
 arise where it has not yet arisen,
 Where it has arisen, may it not diminish,
 May it ever grow and flourish...

May I accomplish this one path,
and may all temporal and ultimate aims be fulfilled

However many species of living beings there are, we must lead all these beings to perfect peace and freedom; And when this innumerable, immeasurable, infinite number of beings has become liberated, we do not, in truth, think that a single being has been liberated...

Why is this so? If a bodhisattva holds on to the idea that a self, a person, a living being, or a life span exists, that person is not a bodhisattva {someone who is both willing and able to lead others to freedom}

{The Diamond Sutra, verse 3}

If no beings exist [in ultimate reality], toward whom should we have compassion? To attain the result [of buddhahood, which is to be achieved only through the awakening of both great compassion and wisdom], one should direct one's compassion toward whatever it is that unenlightened beings call 'beings.' {Shantideva}

On the conventional level of reality, beings do not exist as they see themselves or as they are seen by other unenlightened beings. The bodhisattva realizes that, in ultimate reality, there are no beings who exist as unenlightened beings think, but he directs his mind toward those beings as they perceive themselves.

On the ultimate level, he sees no beings, but he realizes that on the conventional level, beings think they exist and do experience suffering. Out of objectless compassion, therefore, he directs his mind toward them.
{Deshung Rinpoche}

So, Subhuti, all the bodhisattva mahasattvas should give rise to a pure and clear intention in this spirit... They should give rise to an intention with their minds not dwelling anywhere...

{The Diamond Sutra, verse 10}

From The Continual Practice of Right View

We can bring to mind *our motivation and Right View* in practices that use visualization.

The following is adapted from a teaching by Khenpo Palden Sherab Rinpoche:

(In Vajrayana) We aspire to a nonconceptually performed practice, free from grasping or clinging. This means that when we practice or meditate, we should not relate to our visualization as if it were a solid object.

Our visualization must be experienced as a dynamic display of the true nature, like a transcendent wisdom rainbow body. We must understand that the visualization is totally empty of inherent existence, yet totally full of dynamic energies of love, compassion, and wisdom...

Here is where we can use meditation to integrate our understanding.

We train in seeing the world we live in as translucent, made of light, and holy, and that we are upheld by countless Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, Saints and Sages, ancestors, and the sacred powers of the earth, sky, water, and fire. In this way, the tantras affirm that divine help is always available in abundance. Visualization in this way is the expression of Right View.

We can cultivate an awareness of the way things are by this practice of seeing ourselves and others and this world as transparent like a rainbow, with light shining through, appearing and yet ungraspable.

What's more, when we realize our inherent worth and the preciousness of ourselves and others and this world, we can intentionally visualize all this as being divine in nature, poetically adorned with jewels, exalted, and uplifting to behold in every way.

* * *

Creation stage practice is understanding the purity of all phenomena including yourself, so that everything is perceived within the buddha mandala. This mandala is not a solidly existent thing; it is of the nature of a reflection, a mirage, a dream or a rainbow. It is a wisdom display of clear light, the luminosity aspect of the true nature...

- Khenpo Palden Sherab Rinpoche

I call upon my Teachers and Spiritual Ancestors,
Lord Buddha with your Retinue of Holy Ones,
please come to this place

May we all receive your blessings
May we all receive your light, inspiration, and strength

A Simple Visualization - The Refuge Tree

In this practice, we imagine the Buddha, ourselves, and others, as having bodies that are made entirely of light... and we see ourselves as being in a Paradise, or in a Pure Land...

Imagine that you are in a large, open, sacred space, beautiful, adorned with flower gardens, lakes, and wonderful trees, with birds sweetly singing...

The sun is brightly shining, as a few clouds float by... It's a lovely day... perfect in every way...

We see before us now the Buddha, the Divine Form we are meditating upon, or our main teacher, at the center of what appears as a great Refuge Tree, surrounded by Bodhisattvas, and all our ancestral teachers, going back generations, right down to our very own Root Teacher or Teachers...

These holy ones are all made entirely of beautiful light, and appear in the space in front and above us, on celestial clouds, on lotuses and moon cushions... They smile upon us...

Whatever is most pleasing and uplifting, that is what we see and feel before us now...

Imagining yourself to be praying in a Paradise, or in a Pure Land, or in the Garden of Eden can be very helpful.

Imagine that you are now praying in a perfect Pure Land, together with, and in the presence of all the exalted souls of the Saints and righteous people of the past and present...

*Imagine, as you are praying, that the Saints you have personally known, physically seen, or have heard about * are praying with you...*

Feel the elevated bliss, light, and power generated from such a visualization flowing through your prayers...

Have the sense that all these Noble Ones, the whole company of heaven and faithful here on earth are present...

'All should join together - one to the other and one above another - so that they all can receive the heavenly flow of blessings {shefa}, by way of those above them who are closer to the source of supernal goodness...'

{The Baal Shem Tov}

With this Right View and a pure motivation, as we recite verses of refuge and aspiration prayers, meditate, and recite mantra, we visualize that we receive blessings from the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, from all the Bodhisattvas and Devas, from all Holy Beings, and from all that is sacred and pure in the universe, in the form of light and nectar. These dissolve into ourselves, and into all those we see as being with us now, our family and friends, those we don't know, and those who are experiencing any difficulty at all...

We visualize that the light and nectar purifies, heals and calms, nourishes, strengthens and inspires us all...

May all share in these blessings...

May all beings receive all they need to awaken and be free...

May all beings have happiness, and all the causes of happiness flourishing...

Meditate like this... Make prayers of aspiration...

To conclude, dedicate the merit to all beings.

From The Power of the Name

A word should be said here also about the place of of *silence* in the spiritual life.

See how common it is for monasteries and ashrams to be places of solitude, free of common distractions and noise, and also free of so much unnecessary talk. This naturally leads inwards, and refines the mind in ways that are too seldom known or held up as something we can and should all have as part of our lives. Without quiet, we stay on the surface of things, and then even our words, and the Names we use lose much of their potency.

One needs only take some time off from talking and from this immersion in language that is our common lot it seems, to see directly what I'm talking about here.

I used to take one day a week off from talking, and everyone I knew was aware of this. More time off from speaking will show the effect of so having many words and concepts. For the most part, we live in an ocean of language, with all the effects that has. Silence then purifies and sensitizes us to the deep effects that language can have at its best, such as we find in poetry, prayer, and sacred texts, and (such as we find) in the teachings of the Noble Ones.

Inner quiet enables us to benefit from mantra and from the Sacred Names we connect with and use, and receive sustenance, inspiration and guidance from them.

On mantra and breath meditation

To get the most out of any practice of reciting mantra, at some point during the session, meditate quietly. This can be done at any time, before, during, and after the reflections and recitation. When we do this, we communicate these beautiful, healing qualities to our body, via our conscious breathing. Then at the conclusion, dedicate the merit.

Communicating positive energy to our body with meditation

If you spend an hour meditating on love, generating the wish for ourselves and for others to be happy, and then consciously relax, and smile to each part of your body, along with your breath, your body will benefit because your mind is vibrating with love. We can give this wonderful, positive energy to our body.

In the same way, in sadhana practice, after dissolving the visualization and meditating on the true nature, it's so good to do breath meditation with an awareness of the body. Mindful breathing naturally transmits the positive energy of our practice throughout our body, feelings, and mind. Divine qualities can be integrated like this.

When on retreat, this is also a good way to practice throughout the day and into the evening hours. We can alternate reading and reflection, prayer and mantra, with a basic practice of meditation, *such as this one*.

How wonderful.

For further reading and listening, as you like

Articles:

[Sacred Outlook - Seeing beyond ordinary perception in modern culture and American Buddhism](#)

[An Introduction to Mantra](#)

[In Praise of the Vajrayana](#)

[On Buddhism and Magical Practice](#)

[An Introduction to the Bodhisattva-Divinity Tara](#)

[Ocean of Saints](#)

[On Recording Buddhist Teachings](#) (with links to recordings)

Books

[Living in Beauty - Buddhist Loving Kindness Practice](#) (2017)

On Sacred Outlook, and Pure Perception

[A Belief in the Miraculous - Buddhism, Magic, and a Sense of the Sacred](#)
(2017)

Opening the Door to Pure Perception (2023)

Speaking of Angels, from this collection, and,

Devanussati - Recollecting Devas, A Guided Meditation by Ajahn Achalo

Video, and Transcript

On the Mahayana

Metta and Readings on the Mahayana

Mahayana Prayers and Poetry.pdf, audio; on youtube

On Compassion - Essays and Poetry (2024)

Essays on Buddhist Prayer

On Devotion and Receiving Blessings

On the Vajrayana

Instructions on Visualization

White Tara Practice Instructions

Visualizations for Tara Practice

Poetry and Prayers to Tara (2025)

A Collection of Prayers to Tara

On the Elements

On the Wisdom Aspect

[On The Introduction to Awareness](#) – A wisdom teaching from the Nyingma Tradition, with [audio](#)

Chenrezig Sadhanas and Commentaries

Vajrasattva Sadhanas and Commentaries

Essays on Purification, by Various Authors

The Beautiful Path – Readings on Ethics, to Soothe and Brighten the Mind

A Collection of Buddhist Methods for Healing

Guru Rinpoche – An Anthology (2024)

{essays, poetry, prayers, and teachings}

Audio recordings of mantras [all](#)

At your leisure...

Chenrezig Sadhanas and Prayers

- 1. Chenrezig Puja, “For the Benefit of All Beings as Vast as the Skies”**
- 2. The Total Flowering of Activity to Help Others**
- 3. A Continuous Rain to Benefit Beings, by The Fifteenth Karmapa, Kakhyab Dorje**
- 4. The Inseparability of the Spiritual Master and Avalokiteshvara: A Source of All Powerful Attainments, by His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso**
- 5. Abbreviated Four-Armed Chenrezig Meditation**
- 6. Avalokiteshvara Who Liberates from the Three Lower Realms; A Short Sadhana, Extracted from teachings by H.H. Zong Rinpoche**
- 7. The Prayer Liberating Sakya from Disease, The Vajra Speech of the Mahasiddha T’ang Tong Gyalpo**
- 8. Meditation on Thousand-Armed Chenresig**
- 9. A Thousand-Armed Chenrezig Sadhana, given at an initiation by Bokar Rinpoche, in San Francisco, in the early 1990’s**
- 10. Meditations on love and compassion from How to Meditate, by Kathleen McDonald (contains a meditation on Avalokiteshvara)**
- 11. Invoking the Buddha of Compassion, from The Healing Power of the Mind, by Tulku Thondup**
- 12. A meditation by Patrul Rinpoche, with mantra, from The Healing Power of Loving Kindness, by Tulku Thondup**

13. The Ever-Flowing Water of Bodhicitta, Annihilating the Devil of the Self-Cherishing Mind, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche

14. The Mahakaruna Water Sadhana

Prayers

1. The Great Compassion Dharani

2. Request to the Supreme Compassionate One

3. A Lamentation Requesting Blessings from the Great Compassionate One, by Chandrakirti

4. Prayer to Chenrayzig, the Buddha of Compassion, by King Songtsen Gampo

Chenrezig Puja

This book contains the recitation for the meditation of the Great Compassionate One called 'For the Benefit of All Beings as Vast as the Skies', Tib. 'Dro.don.Kha.khyab.Ma.'

(Begin with REFUGE.)

From this moment until the Heart of Enlightenment is reached, I and all sentient beings as limitless as the sky
* go for refuge to all the glorious Holy Lamas; we go for refuge to all the Yidams, the Dieties gathered in the Mandalas; we go for refuge to all the Buddhas, those that have conquered and gone beyond; we go for refuge to all the Supreme Dharma; we go for refuge to all the Noble Sangha; we go for refuge to all the Dakas, Dakinis, Protectors and Defenders of Dharma who possess the eye of Transcending Awareness.

(Repeat three times from *.)

(Finishing the Refuge, the recitation for the Chenrezig meditation follows. First, the REFUGE and the Raising of BODHICITTA:)

* To the Buddhas, Dharma, and Supreme Assembly I go for refuge until Enlightenment. May I, through merit gained by gifts and so on, accomplish Buddhahood for the sake of all beings.

(Repeat three times from *.)

(VISUALIZATION of the DIETY)

On the crown of my head and all sentient beings pervading space, there rests a white lotus and moon seat. From HRI (on the lotus and moon seat) appears Noble All-Seeing One, white, bright, and radiating five-colored light rays, smiling charmingly and gazing with Eyes of Compassion.

He has four arms, the upper two joined together and the lower two holding a white lotus and crystal rosary. He is adorned by precious jewels and silks; a deer skin covers his upper part (left shoulder). The Buddha of Boundless Light adorns his head. He sits in the vajra asana. His back is supported by a stainless moon; he is the essence of all sources of refuge.

(Make the following prayer thinking all beings are making it with you as if in a single voice.)

* Lord, whose white body is not clothed by fault, whose head is adorned by a Perfect Buddha, who looks upon all beings with Eyes of Compassion, to you Chenrezig I pay homage.

(Repeat as least three times from *.)

(The SEVEN BRANCH PRAYER)

To the Sublime One, the Mighty Chenrezig, to the Buddhas and their Sons, who reside in the ten directions and the three times, with complete sincerity I pay homage.

I offer flowers, incense, butter-lamps, perfume, food, music, and other real and imaginary offerings and so on, and beseech the Noble Assembly to accept them.

I confess all the unskillful actions caused by the power of conflicting emotions, the ten unvirtuous deeds and the five sins of limitless consequence done from beginningless time until now.

I rejoice in the spiritual merit of whatever virtue Sravakas, Pratyeka Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and ordinary beings gather throughout the three times.

I pray that the Dharma Wheel of the Mahayana, Hinayana, and of the Teachings common to both be turned in accordance with the wishes and aptitudes of beings.

I beseech the Buddhas not to pass into Nirvana as long as samsara is not emptied, but to look with compassion upon sentient beings who wallow in the ocean of suffering.

May whatever merit I have accumulated be the cause for the Enlightenment of Beings; may I quickly become a splendid leader of beings.

(The Vajra words of prayer to the Excellent Chenrezig composed by the Great Mahasiddha, Tang tong Gyalpo, in his incarnation as Gelong Pema Karpo:)

I pray to you Lama Chenrezig. I pray to you Yidam Chenrezig. I pray to you Perfect Noble Chenrezig. I pray to you Lord Protector Chenrezig. I pray to you Lord of Love Chenrezig. Great Compassionate Victor, please hold us with your compassion, numberless beings who wander in endless samsara experiencing unbearable suffering. There is no other refuge than you, Protector! Please bestow the blessing to obtain omniscient Buddhahood.

By the power of accumulating negative Karma from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of anger, are born as hell beings and experience the suffering of heat and cold. May they all be born in your presence, Perfect Diety. OM MANI PADME HUNG

By the power of accumulating negative Karma from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of greed, are born in the realms of pretas and experience the suffering of hunger and thirst. May they all be born in your perfect realm, the Potala. OM MANI PADME HUNG

By the power of accumulating negative Karma from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of stupidity, are born as animals and experience the suffering of dullness and stupidity. May they all be born in your presence, Protector. OM MANI PADME HUNG

By the power of accumulating negative Karma from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of desire, are born in the human realm and experience the suffering of excessive activity and constant frustration. May they all be born in the Pure Land of Dewachen. OM MANI PADME HUNG

(This prayer, the vajra words of prayer to the Sublime Chenrezig, was composed by the Mahasiddha, Tang tong Gyalpo, who remembered them from a previous incarnation when he had been the monk Pema Karpo, who addressed this prayer one-pointedly to the Sublime Chenrezig while doing the Nyung Ne practice from his twentieth to his eightieth year.)

By the power of accumulating negative Karma from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of jealousy, are born in the realm of the demi-gods and experience the suffering of fighting and quarreling. May they all be born in your realm, the Potala. OM MANI PADME HUNG

By the power of accumulating negative Karma from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of pride, are born in the realm of the gods and experience the suffering of change and falling. May they all be born in your realm, the Potala. OM MANI PADME HUNG

Wherever I am born may my deeds, by equalling Chenrezig's, liberate beings from impure realms and spread the perfect sound of the six syllables in the ten directions. Through the power of praying to you Perfect Noble One, may beings who I am to discipline pay the greatest attention to action and result, and diligently practice virtue and the Dharma for the benefit of beings.

(And then:)

Through this one-pointed prayer, light radiates from the body of the Sublime One and purifies impure Karma, impure appearances, and the deluded mind. The outer realm is the Pure Land of Dewachen, and the body, speech, and mind of beings therein are the perfect form, sublime speech, and pure mind of Mighty Chenrezig, the indivisible union of appearance, sound, and vivid intelligence with voidness.

(Meditate like this as you recite the mantra.)

OM MANI PADME HUNG

(Recite as many times as you are able. Finally, let the mind remain absorbed in its own essence without making distinction between subject, object, and act. Then repeat:)

My body, the bodies of others and all appearances are the perfect form of the Sublime One, all sounds the melody of the Six Syllables, and all thoughts the vastness of the Great Jnana.

(DEDICATING the MERIT)

Through this virtue, may I quickly achieve the realization of Mighty Chenrezig and may I bring every single being to that same state.

(This text, called 'The Recitation for the Meditation of the Great Compassionate One for the Benefit of Beings as Vast as the Skies', was composed by the Mahasiddha Tang tong Gyalpo and bears the blessing of his speech.)

Through the merit of reciting and meditating may I and every being to whom I am connected, when these imperfect forms are left behind, be miraculously born in Dewachen. May I then immediately cross the ten levels and send out emanations for the benefit of others.

Through this virtue, may all beings perfect the accumulation of spiritual merit and awareness. May they attain the Two Supreme Bodies which arise from merit and awareness.

Bodhicitta is precious; may it arise in those who have not cultivated it. In those who have cultivated it, may it not diminish; may it ever grow and flourish.

The Total Flowering of Activity to Help Others

This series of prayers and meditations is concerned with mind training and constitutes the basis of the teaching of the forebears of the lineage. These are pith instructions of the transcending awareness dakinis, Nigume, and will create conditions such that it is impossible for others not to benefit.

First, imagine your guru as Chenrezig in front of you surrounded by an ocean of sources of refuge.

In the sky in front of me is a jeweled throne.
On this throne is a lotus and moon seat
On which sits my root guru in essence,
In form, the Lord Chenrezig,
Surrounded by throngs
Of buddhas and bodhisattvas.
Everything becomes so very real.

I and all sentient beings, my mothers,
Go for refuge to the guru, precious Buddha.
We go for refuge to the Buddha, dharma, and sangha.
We go for refuge to the guru, yidams and
Throngs of dakinis and protectors.
We go for refuge to mind itself,
Clear, empty dharmakaya.

Repeat this refuge prayer 3, 7, 21, 108 times and rest free of conceptualization.

All sentient beings are to attain the citadel
Of completely perfected buddhahood.
For this reason and to this end, I now enter the stages
Of honest virtuous action.

Repeat this prayer 3 times.

I appear clearly as the deity.
On a lotus-moon seat above my head,
Sits my root guru,
Clear, white, radiant with light,
With a loving expression and

Clothed in jewels and silk.

Light shines from the three letters
 At the three points,
 Inviting a throng of source and
 Transmission gurus, yidams,
 Peaceful and wrathful deities,
 Buddhas, bodhisattvas, dakinis, and protectors
 Who all dissolve into the guru.
 The guru becomes their embodiment.

When your mind is filled with intense devotion in the following prayer, your guru will definitely appear.

To you, my guru, completely pure and
 Universal spiritual friend, I pray for blessing.
 I pray for the blessings of loving-kindness,
 Compassion and bodhicitta.

Repeat this 3 , 7, 21, 108 times.

I pray that through you, my guru, precious Buddha,
 Only the welfare of others will be accomplished
 In this and other lives of mine.

Repeat this 3 times and then meditate on compassion, which encompasses all space.

Sentient beings fill all that space fills.
 Everyone, without a single exception,
 Has been my parent.
 Each and every one has helped me in countless lives.
 All of them, though wishing happiness,
 Accomplish suffering.
 Oh pitiable ones,
 Wandering endlessly in samsara . . .
 Through the power of immense compassion
 My guru is absorbed into me.
 Instantly I become in form
 The Great Compassionate One

Who tames beings.

And with loving heart
Is mindful of every sentient being.

*Imagining yourself to be Chenrezig, repeat the six syllables OM MANI
PADME HUM and meditate on taking and sending. Then:*

Alas my kindly parents,
The six kinds of beings
In beginningless and endless samsara
Are broken by intolerable suffering.
In this ocean of existence and suffering
Ever wander all sentient beings.
Alas, alas, oh pitiable ones,
All my parents are come to this.
How can I forsake and let them fall?
I must, right now, and all the time,
Work diligently for the
Welfare of all beings.

Now pray as follows:

Both in this and other lives
May this basic virtue of mine
Accomplish only that which benefits others.
May my body ripen all sentient beings
And set them free.
May my speech ripen all sentient beings
And set them free.
May my mind ripen all sentient beings
And set them free.
Until this ocean of suffering is emptied,
May all three,
My body, speech, and mind,
Ripen all sentient beings
And set them free.

Repeat 3 times.

May I become not only a lord protector
Of all sentient beings in all situations,
But also, fulfill every wish
Of each and every sentient being.

Repeat 3 times.

This service is practiced regularly at The Venerable Kalu Rinpoche's monastery in India. During his tour of North America, he gave this service and meditation to a number of centers, notably Vancouver, San Francisco, and Hawaii. The translation was by Ken McLeod.

Dedicated to The Venerable Dezhung Rinpoche.

A Continuous Rain to Benefit Beings

by The Fifteenth Karmapa, Kakhyab Dorje

*I bow to the Noble Lord, the All-Seeing One,
The expression of all Kings Great Compassion;
Inseparable from the Activity that stirs the depths of Samsara*

*I go for refuge, 'til Enlightenment
in Buddha, Dharma, and assembled Saints.*

*May I, with meditation's power and force,
Accomplish Buddha for all beings' sake.*

*Crowning the head of each and every being,
Whose numbers match the boundlessness of space,
There rests a lotus white and full moon seat.
From HRI appears the great All-Seeing One,
Five-colored rays shine from his clear white form,
And kindness in his eyes and smiling face.
Of his four hands, a pair are joined in prayer;
The left a lotus holds, and in the right
A crystal rosary. With silks he is
Adorned, with gems and ornaments of gold,
And o'er his shoulder falls a deer's soft pelt.
Immutable he sits, his legs crossed,
Leaning his back against a stainless moon,
And Buddha Boundless Light rests on his head.
All refuge deities in essence joined.*

*O Lord of whitest form not clothed by fault,
Whose head a perfect Buddha crowns in light,
Whose compassionate eyes see each living thing;
To you, All-Seeing One, I bow my head.*

*When I have prayed this way with mindfulness,
Light, shining from the holy form, removes
All impure karma and bewilderment:
The outer realm becomes the Realm of Bliss;*

*Each living being's body, speech, and mind
To All-Seeing One's three faculties are changed.
All knowledge, sound, and all appearing forms
Become inseparable from emptiness.*

Om mani padme hung

*Myself and others are the holy form;
The mantra sings and hums in every sound;
As deep and vast awareness, thoughts arise.*

*Through virtue of this practice may I now
Quickly achieve All-Seeing One's great state.
And to this same state may I come to lead
Every being, not one left behind.*

*When one meditates on one complete form,
The form of the Lord All-Seeing One,
Every Buddha is included.
Meditation (mindfulness) of this
Will remove the evil of even inexpressible action.*

*Listen well, Oh sons of noble family:
This hearts of gathered epitomes
Is, through the blessings of all Buddhas,
The source of benefit and joy,
The root of all accomplishments,
The steps which lead to higher births,
The barrier to lower births,
The ship which crosses Samsara,
The lighted lamp that banishes darkness,
The champion who conquers five poisons,
The flame that burns evil and obscurations,
The hammer that beats down sorrow,
The comrade who subdues savagery,
The fortune of Dharma in snowy lands,
The precious and distinguished monarch who is the core
That constitutes the essentials of hearing, thinking, and meditation,
And the essence of many sutras, tantras, and commentaries.*

Therefore, recite this six-syllable mantra.

*"I pray, casting my voice to the Potala,
The country of the blissful and free,
For Supreme Compassion's cord to draw
All beings from existence's sea."*

*"I, an old householder, offer my devoted thanks,
Having seen, as the gem of eternal bliss,
these few words of profound import.
This, the "Continual Rain to Benefit Beings," the divine instruction,
Was written by the Great Karmapa, the All-Seeing One in actuality."*

APPENDIX 1



The Inseparability of the Spiritual Master and Avalokiteshvara: A Source of All Powerful Attainments

By Tenzin Gyatso,
His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama

Translation and annotation by
Sharpa Tulku and Brian Beresford

This sadhana, entitled *The Inseparability of the Spiritual Master and Avalokiteshvara: A Source of all Powerful Attainments*, was composed when His Holiness was nineteen years of age and was first published in Tibet in the Wood Horse Year (1954). This translation was originally made at the wish of Mr. Ang Sim Chai of Malaysia. It is our sincere and deep hope that people, through this practice, will discover a universal means of creating happiness through generating compassion and love for all. May every creature share in its boundless effects.

Grateful acknowledgement is made to those who assisted in this work. The language of the initial rough translation was corrected and improved upon by India Stevens. Thanks also go to Alexander Berzin and Jonathan Landaw for their helpful suggestions.

Sharpa Tulku

INTRODUCTION

*To my spiritual master Avalokiteshvara,
The full-moon-like essence of the buddhas' vast compassion
And the radiant white nectar of their all-inspiring strength,
I pay my deep respect.
I shall now disseminate to all other beings the standard practice
of this profound yoga.*

The root of every inspiration and powerful attainment (*siddhi*) lies solely with the spiritual master (*lama* or *guru*). As such he has been praised in both sutras and tantras more than once. He is of fundamental importance because the basis for achieving everlasting happiness is requesting him to teach the untortured path. Thinking of him as being inseparable from the specific meditational deity with whom you feel a special affinity, you should visualize the two as one.

The vitality of the Mahayana tradition comes from compassion, love, and the altruistic aspiration to attain enlightenment (*bodhicitta*) in order to effectively help all creatures become free from their suffering. Moreover, the importance of compassion is emphasized throughout all stages of development. Therefore, if you wish to combine Avalokiteshvara, the meditational deity of compassion, with your own root guru, first gather fine offerings in a suitable place. Sitting on a comfortable seat in an especially virtuous state of mind, take refuge, generate an enlightened motive of the awakening mind, and meditate on the four immeasurable thoughts.

PRELIMINARIES

I. Refuge

Namo Gurubhyah	In the spiritual masters, I take refuge;
Namo Buddhaya	In the Awakened One, I take refuge;
Namo Dharmaya	In his Truth, I take refuge;
Namo Sanghaya	In the Spiritual Community, I take refuge.

II. Generating Bodhicitta

In the Supreme Awakened One, his Truth, and the Spiritual Community,

I seek refuge until becoming enlightened.

By the merit from practicing giving and other perfections,
May I accomplish full awakening for the benefit of all.

III. The Four Immeasurable Thoughts

May all sentient beings possess happiness and the cause of happiness.

May all sentient beings be parted from suffering and the cause of suffering.

May all sentient beings never be parted from the happiness that has no suffering.

May all sentient beings abide in equanimity without attachment or aversion for near or far.

Recite these prayers three times each.

THE ACTUAL PRACTICE

I. Purification

May the surface of the earth in every direction
Be stainless and pure, without roughness or fault,
As smooth as the palm of a child's soft hand
And as naturally polished as lapis lazuli.²

May the material offerings of gods³ and humans,
Both those set before me and those visualized
Like a cloud of the peerless offerings of Samantabhadra,⁴
Pervade and encompass the vastness of space.

Om namo bhagavate vajra sara pramardane tathagataya / arhate samyak sambuddhaya / tadyatha / om vajre vajre / maha vajre / maha teja vajre / maha vidya vajre / maha bodhicitta vajre / maha bodhi mando pasam kramana vajre / sarva karma avarana visho dhana vajre svaha.

Recite this purification mantra three times.

By the force of the truth of the Three Jewels of refuge,
By the firm inspiration from all bodhisattvas and buddhas,
By the power of the buddhas who have fully completed their
collections of both good merit and insight,
By the might of the void, inconceivable and pure,
May all of these offerings be hereby transformed into their actual
nature of voidness.

In this way bless the surroundings and the articles of offering.

II. Visualization

In the space of the dharmakayas of great spontaneous bliss,

In the midst of billowing clouds of magnificent offerings,
Upon a sparkling, jeweled throne supported by eight snow lions,⁶
On a seat composed of a lotus in bloom, the sun and the moon,⁷
Sits supreme exalted Avalokiteshvara, great treasure of compassion,
Assuming the form of a monk wearing saffron-colored robes.

O my Vajradhara master, kind in all three ways,⁸ holy Losang Tenzin Gyatso,

Endowed with a glowing fair complexion and a radiant smiling face,
Your right hand at your heart in a gesture expounding Dharma
Holds the stem of one white lotus that supports a book and sword;⁹
Your left hand resting in meditative pose holds a thousand-spoked
wheel.¹⁰

You are clothed in the three saffron robes of a monk,¹¹

And are crowned with the pointed, golden hat of a pandit.¹²

Your aggregates, sensory spheres, senses, and objects, as well as your
limbs,

Are a mandala complete with the five buddhas and their consorts,¹³

Male and female bodhisattvas and the wrathful protectors.

Encircled by a halo of five brilliant colors,¹⁴

My master is seated in full vajra posture,

Sending forth a network of cloud-like self-emanations
To tame the minds of all sentient beings.

Within his heart sits Avalokiteshvara, a wisdom-being,¹⁵
With one face and four arms.
His upper two hands are placed together,
His lower two hands hold a crystal rosary and white lotus.¹⁶
He is adorned with jeweled ornaments and heavenly raiment.
Over his left shoulder an antelope skin is draped,¹⁷
And cross-legged he is seated on a silver moon and lotus.¹⁸
The white syllable *Hrih*, a concentration-being at his heart,
Emits brilliant colored light in all the ten directions.

On my master's brow is a white *Om*,
Within his throat, a red *Ah*,
At his heart, a blue *Hum*
From which many lights shine out in myriad directions,
Inviting the Three Jewels of Refuge to dissolve into him,
Transforming him into the collected essence of the objects of refuge.

In this manner visualize the spiritual master.

III. The Seven-Limb Prayer

Prostrating

Your liberating body is fully adorned with all the signs of a buddha,¹⁹
Your melodious speech, complete with all sixty rhythms, flows
without hesitation;
Your vast, profound mind filled with wisdom and compassion is
beyond all conception;
I prostrate to the wheel of these three secret adornments of your body,
speech, and mind.

Offering

Material offerings of my own and those of others,
The actual objects and those that I visualize,
Body and wealth, and all virtues amassed throughout the three times,

I offer to you upon visualized oceans of clouds like Samantabhadra's offerings.

Confessing

My mind being oppressed by the stifling darkness of ignorance,
I have done many wrongs against reason and vows.
Whatever mistakes I have made in the past,
With a deep sense of regret I pledge never to repeat them
And without reservation I confess everything to you.

Rejoicing

From the depths of my heart,
I rejoice in the enlightening deeds of the sublime masters
And in the virtuous actions past, present, and future
Performed by myself and all others as well,
And by ordinary and exalted beings of the three sacred traditions.²⁰

Requesting

I request you to awaken every living being
From the sleep of ordinary and instinctive defilements
With the divine music of the Dharma's pure truth,
Resounding with the melody of profoundness and peace
And in accordance with the dispositions of your various disciples.

Entreating

I entreat you to firmly establish your feet upon the indestructible vajra
throne
In the indissoluble state of *E-vam*,²¹
Until every sentient being gains the calm breath of joy in the state of
final realization,
Unfettered by the extremes of worldliness or tranquil liberation.

Dedicating

I dedicate fully my virtuous actions of all the three times,
So that I may receive continuous care from a master
And attain full enlightenment for the benefit of all
Through accomplishing my prayers, the supreme deed of
Samantabhadra.

IV. The Mandala Offering

By the virtue of offering to you, assembly of buddhas visualized 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 boundless effects.

This offering I make of a precious jeweled mandala,
Together with other pure offerings and wealth
And the virtues we have collected throughout the three times
With our body, speech and mind.

O my masters, my yidams,²² and the Three Precious Jewels,
I offer all to you with unwavering faith.
Accepting these out of your boundless compassion,
Send forth to me waves of your inspiring strength.
Om idam guru ratna mandalakam niryatayami

Thus make the offering of the mandala together with the seven-limb prayer.

V. The Blessing by the Master

From the *Hrih* in the heart of Avalokiteshvara,
Seated in the heart of my venerable master,
Flow streams of nectar and rays of five colors
Penetrating the crown of my head,
Eliminating all obscurations and endowing me with both
Common and exclusive powerful attainments.

*Om ah guru vajradhara vagindra sumati shasana dhara samudra shri
bhadra sarva siddhi hum hum*

Recite the mantra of the spiritual master as many times as possible.

VI. The Prayer of the Graduated Path

Bestow on me your blessings to be devoted to my master
With the purest thoughts and actions, gaining confidence that you,
O compassionate holy master, are the basis of temporary and
everlasting bliss,

For you elucidate the true path free from all deception
And embody the totality of refuges past number.

Bestow on me your blessings to live a life of Dharma
Undistracted by the illusory preoccupations of this life,
For well I know that these leisures and endowments
Can never be surpassed by countless treasures of vast wealth,
And that this precious form once attained cannot endure,
For at any moment of time it may easily be destroyed.

Bestow on me your blessings to cease actions of nonvirtue
And accomplish wholesome deeds, by being always mindful
Of the causes and effects from kind and harmful acts,
While revering the Three Precious Jewels as the ultimate source of
refuge

And most trustworthy protection from the unendurable fears of
unfortunate rebirth states.

Bestow on me your blessings to practice the three higher trainings,²³
Motivated by firm renunciation gained from the clear comprehension
That even the prosperity of the lord of the devas²⁴
Is merely a deception, like a siren's alluring spell.

Bestow on me your blessings to master the oceans of practice,
Cultivating immediately the supreme enlightened motivation,
By reflecting on the predicament of all mother sentient beings,
Who have nourished me with kindness from beginningless time
And now are tortured while ensnared within one extreme or other,
Either on the wheel of suffering or in tranquil liberation.

Bestow on me your blessings to generate the yoga
Combining mental quiescence with penetrative insight,

In which the hundred-thousand-fold splendor of voidness, forever free from both extremes,²⁵
Reflects without obstruction in the clear mirror of the immutable meditation.

Bestow on me your blessings to observe in strict accordance
All the vows and words of honor that form the root of powerful attainments,
Having entered through the gate of the extremely profound tantra
By the kindness of my all-proficient master.

Bestow on me your blessings to attain within this lifetime
The blissful mahamudra of the union of body and wisdom,²⁶
Through severing completely my all-creating karmic energy
With wisdom's sharp sword of the nonduality of bliss and emptiness.²⁷

Having made requests in this way for the development in your mindstream of the entire paths of sutra and tantra, and thus having done a glance meditation on them, now recite the six-syllable mantra in connection with the merging of the spiritual master into your heart.

VII. *The Merging of the Spiritual Master*

My supreme master, requested in this way,
Now blissfully descends through the crown of my head
And dissolves in the indestructible point
At the center of my eight-petaled heart.²⁸
Now my master re-emerges on a moon and lotus.
In his heart sits Avalokiteshvara, within whose heart is the letter *Hrih*
Encircled by a rosary of the six-syllable mantra, the source from which streams of nectar flow,
Eliminating all obstacles and every disease
And expanding my knowledge of the scriptural and insight teachings of the Buddha.

Thus, I receive the entire blessings of the victorious ones and their children,
And radiant lights again shine forth
To cleanse away defects from all beings and their environment.

In this way I attain the supreme yogic state,
Transforming every appearance, sound, and thought
Into the three secret ways of the exalted ones.²⁹

After completing the above, recite the six-syllable mantra, Om mani padme hum, as many times as possible. Upon conclusion, recite once the hundred-syllable mantra of Vajrasattva.

Om vajrasattva samayam anupalaya, vajrasattva tvenopatishta, dridho me bhava, sutoshyo me bhava, suposhyo me bhava, anurakto me bhava, sarvasiddhim me prayacha, sarvakarma sucha me chittam shriyam kuru hum, ha ha ha ba bob bhagavan sarva tathagata vajra ma me muncha, vajra bhava mahamayasattva ah hum phat

VIII. *Dedication*

In the glorious hundred-thousand-fold radiance of the youthful moon of wholesome practice,
From the blue jasmine garden of Victorious Treasure Mind's method of truth³⁰
May the seeds of explanation and accomplishment germinate and flower across this vast earth;
May the ensuing auspiciousness beautify everything until the limit of the universe.³¹

By flying high above the three realms³²
The never-vanishing great jeweled banner of religious and secular rule,³³
Laden with millions of virtues and perfect accomplishments:
May myriad wishes for benefit and bliss pour down.

Having banished afar the dark weight of this era's degeneration
Across the extent of the earth sapphire held by a celestial maiden,
May all living creatures overflow with spontaneous gaiety and joy
In the significant encompassing brilliance of happiness and bliss.

In short, O protector, by the power of your affectionate care,
May I never be parted from you throughout the rosaries of my lives.

May I proceed directly, with an ease beyond effort,

Unto the great city of unification, the all-powerful cosmic state itself.³⁴

Having offered prayers of dedication in this way, also recite others such as the "Yearning Prayer of Samantabhadra's Activity" or "The Prayer of the Virtuous Beginning, Middle, and End." ³⁵ Upon conclusion recite the following prayer.

Conclusion

By the force of the immaculate compassion of the victorious ones and their sons,

May everything adverse be banished for eternity throughout the universe.

May all favorable omens become increasingly auspicious,

And may whatever is of virtue in the round of this existence or in tranquil liberation

Flourish and grow brighter like a new moon waxing full.

This has been written at the repeated request of the assistant cabinet minister, Mr. Shankawa Gyurme Sonam Tobgyal who, with sincere faith and offerings, asked me to write a simple and complete sadhana of the inseparability of Avalokiteshvara and myself. This devotion contains a short glance meditation on the entire graduated path and the mantras of the master and Avalokiteshvara. Although it is improper for me to write such a devotion about myself, waves of inspiration of the buddhas can be received from ordinary beings just as relics can come from a dog's tooth.³⁶ Therefore, I have composed this with the hope of benefiting a few faithful disciples.

The Buddhist monk

Ngawang Losang Tenzin Gyatso

maintaining the title of Holder of the White Lotus (Avalokiteshvara)

NOTES

1. The sutras are teachings of Buddha dealing with general subjects while the tantras concern esoteric matters.
2. Lapis lazuli is a semiprecious gem, deep blue in color, and usually highly polished.
3. *Gods* are those beings who abide in the celestial realms, the rebirth state with the least suffering within the cycle of existence (*samsara*).
4. Samantabhadra is one of the eight bodhisattvas of the Mahayana lineage. He is famed for the extensiveness of his offerings made to the buddhas of the ten directions. *Bodhisattva* literally means "courageously minded one striving for enlightenment." A bodhisattva courageously endures any hardship to overcome ignorance and the momentum of previous unskillful actions in order to attain full enlightenment for the benefit of all other beings.
5. The *dharmakaya* is the truth body of a fully enlightened being. It is the final accomplishment of all practices and results from an accumulation of meditative insight.
6. Four of the eight snow lions look upward, providing protection from interferences from above. Four gaze downward, protecting from interferences from below.
7. The lotus, rising through the mire of a swamp, symbolizes the purity of the bodhisattva who rises above the bonds of cyclic existence, uncontaminated by the confusion of the world. The moon symbolizes the conventional enlightened motivation of bodhicitta: the altruistic aspiration to attain buddhahood for the sake of others. The sun symbolizes the ultimate wisdom of bodhicitta: the direct cognition of voidness, the true mode of existence.
8. "Vajradhara master" is a name given to a tantric master, indicating that he is considered inseparable from Buddha Vajradhara (Tib. Dorje Chang, Holder of the Vajra), the tantric emanation of Buddha Shakyamuni. The vajra is a symbol of strength and unity. He is kind in three ways by giving the empowerment to practice the deity yoga of tantra, the oral transmission that remains unbroken from the Enlightened One himself, and the oral explanation of the tantric procedures based on his own experience.
9. The white lotus symbolizes the pure nature of the discriminating wisdom of penetrative insight into voidness. The knowledge of this is symbolized by the book of scripture resting on the lotus together with the flaming sword of total awareness that cuts through the root of ignorance. The scripture is one of the perfection of wisdom (*prajñāparamita*) sutras.
10. The thousand-spoked wheel signifies the turning of the wheel of truth (*dharmachakra*), the teachings of the Buddha.

11. The three robes stand for the three higher trainings in ethics, meditative stabilization, and discriminating wisdom.
12. The golden hat of a pandit symbolizes pure morality. Its point stands for penetrative wisdom. A pandit is a master of the five major branches of knowledge: art, medicine, grammar, reasoning, and the inner, or Buddhist, sciences.
13. Meditation on the five buddhas, or conquerors (*jina*), is visualized in tantric practice to purify the five aggregates (*skandha*) and to transform the five defilements of greed, hatred, self-importance, jealousy, and ignorance into the five wisdoms. The five aggregates are form, feeling, recognition, compositional factors, and consciousness. The five wisdoms are of voidness, equality, individuality, accomplishment, and the mirror-like wisdom.
14. The five colors are red, blue, yellow, green, and white. They are associated with the five conquerors.
15. A wisdom-being (*yeshe sempa*) is the actual implied being in one's visualization of a deity. Initially, in visualization, one conceptually creates a mentally manifested being (*damtsig sempa*) out of a relaxed but controlled imaginative concentration. This creation eventually merges with the wisdom-being when one's vision of the deity becomes nonconceptual.
16. The beads on the crystal rosary held by Avalokiteshvara symbolize sentient beings. The action of turning the beads indicates that he is drawing them out of their misery in cyclic existence and leading them into the state beyond sorrow (*nirvana*). The white lotus symbolizes his pure state of mind.
17. The antelope is known to be very kind and considerate toward its offspring and is therefore a symbol for bodhichitta, the cultivation of a kind and compassionate attitude toward others.
18. The moon stands for the method by which one follows the spiritual path and engages in the conduct of the bodhisattvas. The lotus symbolizes the discriminating wisdom of insight into voidness.
19. There are thirty-two major and eighty minor signs that indicate the attainments of an enlightened being.
20. The three sacred traditions of Buddhism are the vehicles of the *shravakas*, *pratyekabuddhas*, and *bodhisattvas*.
21. *E-vam* is a Sanskrit seed syllable meaning "thus." It symbolizes the unity of the positive and negative aspects of cosmic energy which, in terms of the momentum from the past and the potentiality of the future, are unified in the present.
22. The *yidam* is the meditational deity with whom one identifies when practicing tantric deity yoga. This should only be done after having received an empowerment from a fully qualified tantric master.
23. The three higher trainings are ethics (*shila*), meditative concentration (*samadhi*), and discriminating wisdom (*prajna*).
24. Even Indra, the lord of the devas, will one day expend the accumulation of virtuous actions that cause him to hold one of the highest positions within the six realms of cyclic existence, and he too will fall into a lower realm.
25. The two extremes are the beliefs in either true self-existence or nonexistence. The middle way (*madhyamaka*) shows a path that is neither of these.
26. The Great Seal (*mahamudra*, *chagya chenpo*) of the union of body and wisdom (*yuganaddha*, *zungjug*) is the unity of the clear light (*prabhasvara*, *ose*) and the illusory body (*mayakaya*, *gyulu*). The illusory body is the finest physical body, a combination of energy (*vayu*, *lung*) and consciousness (*chitta*, *sem*). The clear light is the wisdom of the nonduality of bliss and voidness.
27. The nonduality of bliss and voidness is the bliss of the direct understanding of voidness.
28. The heart wheel (*chakra*) of the central psychic channel (*nadi*) has eight divisions.
29. The three secret ways of the exalted ones are: (a) viewing all surroundings as a blissful abode (*mandala*) and all beings as manifestations of deities, (b) hearing all sound as mantra, and (c) intuitively knowing everything to be empty of true existence.
30. "Victorious Treasure Mind" is a name given to Mañjushri, the meditational deity embodying discriminating wisdom. His method of truth is the direct cognition of voidness.
31. The limit of the universe is when all beings attain full enlightenment.
32. The three realms are the desire, form, and formless realms.
33. Religious and secular rule refers to the form of government in Tibet prior to 1959.
34. The great city of unification, the all-powerful cosmic state, is buddhahood.
35. *Bhadracharyapranidhana* (*Zangpo chope monlam*) is the "Yearning Prayer of Samantabhadra's Activity." *Togtama* by Je Tsongkhapa is "The Prayer of the Virtuous Beginning, Middle, and End."
36. Once in Tibet a very devout woman asked her son, who journeyed on trading expeditions to India, to bring back for her a relic of Buddha. Although the son went three times, each time he forgot the promised relic. Not wanting to disappoint his mother again, he picked up a dog's tooth as he was nearing home on

his last journey and reverently presented that to her. She was overjoyed and placed the tooth upon the family altar. She then made many devotions to the "holy tooth" and, to the amazement of her son, from the tooth came several true relics.

Appendix 2~ The Meditations

THE TEN MEDITATIONS that Lama Yeshe guides the reader through are presented here altogether. There are eight steps, but each meditation does not necessarily cover all eight: one, for example, includes all except step 7, and another mentions only one step. Also, some meditations only briefly mention the steps. When doing the meditations, flesh out the appropriate steps, taking them from meditation 1, which explains the visualizations most extensively, or from variations that Lama gives in the later meditations. In all cases, for step 2 one needs to refer to the sadhana, appendix 1. All meditations should be preceded by the prayers of refuge, bodhichitta, etc., in the sadhana. The words in bold type show the new visualizations that Lama adds to each meditation as the course progresses.

MEDITATION 1 (CHAPTER 8) BECOMING THE MAHAMUDRA DEITY

I In the space in front of you there is a jeweled throne, held up by eight snow lions, which radiates light. On the throne, on a lotus and cushions of sun and moon, sits Avalokiteshvara in the aspect of a monk, wearing saffron-colored robes. Guru Avalokiteshvara's face is white and has a red vibration. His face is very loving, and his eyes are peaceful. His right hand is at his heart in the gesture of giving Dharma. It holds a white lotus, and resting on its petals is a prajñāparamita text containing Lord Buddha's teachings on the perfection of wisdom. Standing upright on the text is a sword, which symbolizes the knowledge-wisdom of all the past, present, and future buddhas. Fire radiates from the tip of the sword, burning up all our negative energy. Guru Avalokiteshvara's left hand is in his lap, palm upward in the samadhi mudra, the gesture of contemplation, holding an upright Dharma wheel. He sits in the vajra position, surrounded by rainbow light. He is simultaneously in samadhi and showing the aspect of teaching.

At his heart is the wisdom-being, Avalokiteshvara himself, sitting on a white lotus and a moon cushion. He is white, has one face and four arms. Two hands are together at his heart, signifying total unity, and the other two are held aloft, the left holding a crystal rosary and the right a lotus. An antelope skin is draped over his left shoulder, which symbolizes bodhichitta. At Avalokiteshvara's heart is a white syllable *Hrih*, the concentration-being.

Also at the heart of Guru Avalokiteshvara is a blue syllable *Hum*. At his throat is a red *Ah*, and at his crown, a white *Om*. From the *Hum*, much light radiates out into space to all the ten directions, invoking all the supreme beings to come to him and sink into his heart. Guru Avalokiteshvara is now totally one with all the collected energy of all the supreme beings.

2 Recite the Seven-limb Prayer, make a mandala offering, and recite the Prayer of the Graduated Path.

3 Now visualize that the radiant light throne absorbs into the lotus, the lotus into the sun and moon seats, and they absorb into the body of Guru Avalokiteshvara. Simultaneously from his crown downward and his feet upward, Guru Avalokiteshvara absorbs into the wisdom-being at his heart chakra, which, in turn, dissolves into radiant light.

This light, the transcendent supreme nature of Guru Avalokiteshvara, comes through your crown into your central channel to your heart. Feel complete unity, total oneness.

4 Now, your entire being and everything else magnetically dissolves into light, integrating into your heart chakra in the center of your chest. Everything gradually becomes smaller and smaller...atoms...neutrons...and eventually disappears into empty space. Experience nonduality, non-self-entity. As much as possible, stay in that empty space, seeing, contemplating everything with the right view of emptiness.

5 After some time, if you are sensitive, you will feel, "Now a relative vision is coming." There will be signs of this. Before the sun rises, there are indications that it's coming, aren't there? Now, in that very space from which you had disappeared, a moon disc, which symbolizes your consciousness, appears. Upon it stands a radiant seed syllable *Hrih*, a beam of light, filling all of space with light. With part of your mind, concentrate mindfully on this light, your own consciousness.

6 Now, from space, comes the sound *Om mani padme hum*. This acts as a cooperative cause for all the light to integrate back into the beam of light, the *Hrih*, which suddenly transforms into the divine white, radiant light body of Avalokiteshvara. You, Avalokiteshvara, have one face and four arms: two hands together at the heart signifying total unity and the other two held aloft, the left holding a crystal rosary and the right a precious lotus. You sit in the vajra position on sun and moon discs on a white lotus. Over your left shoulder an antelope skin is draped. Everything is made of radiant light.

As you experience a clear vision of yourself as the deity, simultaneously experience divine pride: "This is who I am." This is the practice of the evolutionary stage.

This divine vision automatically releases your mundane view of yourself: your deluded, guilty sense of self. You reach beyond your ego's idea. It becomes a transcendent, blissful experience.

Don't intellectualize; just contemplate.

MEDITATION 2 (CHAPTER 9) BECOMING THE MAHAMUDRA DEITY 2

1 In the space in front of you appears Guru Avalokiteshvara in the aspect of a monk, sitting on a throne held up by snow lions. His face is very loving, his eyes peaceful. In his right hand he holds a white lotus in which rests the prajnaparamita and, above that, a blazing sword. His left hand is in the meditation mudra in his lap and holds a Dharma wheel. At his brow is a white *Om*, his throat a red *Ah*, and his heart a blue *Hum*. Also at his heart is Avalokiteshvara, the wisdom-being.

2 Recite the Seven-limb Prayer, make a mandala offering, and recite the Prayer of the Graduated Path.

3 Now absorb Guru Avalokiteshvara into your heart. Visualize that the radiant light throne absorbs into the lotus, the lotus into the sun and moon seats, and they absorb into the body of Guru Avalokiteshvara. Simultaneously from his crown downward and his feet upward, Guru Avalokiteshvara absorbs into the wisdom-being at his heart chakra, which, in turn, dissolves into radiant light.

4 Then visualize that everything you are—your entire nervous system, your imagination, your body and mind—melts into light. This light then gets smaller and smaller until eventually it disappears. Now try to experience unity, the view of emptiness. Have a vision of empty space. This experience is not actual emptiness, but by losing your conception of self, your picture of who you are, you automatically feel a kind of emptiness. That is enough; just let go.

5 Eventually, out of the empty space, a moon disc, which is your consciousness, appears. Contemplate that. Then, at the center of the moon appears a beam of light, the *Hrih*. It radiates light throughout universal space, purifying all the impurities of all mother sentient beings and making offerings to all supreme beings. You don't need to think this; it happens automatically. Then the light absorbs back into the *Hrih*, which is you.

6 In space, you hear the sound of the mantra, *Om mani padme hum*. This energizes you—the beam of light—and you transform into the divine rainbow body of Avalokiteshvara. This is your own wisdom energy transforming into the mahamudra deity: white, four arms, sitting in the vajra posture on a white lotus. Your first two hands at your heart in the mudra of prayer; the second two held aloft holding crystal rosary and lotus. You see the crystal light body and simultaneously experience bliss and nonduality. That body is your mind. Your mind is object, your mind is subject: the unity of wisdom and method. You are the mahamudra deity.

Experience satisfaction. Don't think, "I want to see this, I want to see that; the face, the eyes..." Just see totality. Contemplate continually, your memory neither too tight nor too loose.

Your contemplating mind is not separate from memory; they are one. Your wisdom is memory. Intellectually, we think there is the contemplating mind and then there is memory, but they are one.

MEDITATION 3 (CHAPTER 10) CLARITY AND DIVINE PRIDE

1 In the space in front of you is Guru Avalokiteshvara. He sits on a throne held up by snow lions and looks at you lovingly. At his heart is the wisdom-being, Avalokiteshvara himself.

2 Recite the Seven-limb Prayer, make a mandala offering, and recite the Prayer of the Graduated Path.

3 Now visualize that the throne melts into light and absorbs into Guru Avalokiteshvara's body. His radiant light body melts into the moon at his heart, simultaneously from the feet upward and the crown downward. Then the moon absorbs into the *Hrih* at its center, which becomes like an egg of radiant light. This radiant light enters your central channel and descends to your heart chakra, the essence of Avalokiteshvara becoming one with you. The egg-light radiates throughout your entire nervous system.

4 All the energy of your own body melts, dissolves, into radiant light. This light becomes smaller, smaller...atoms...neutrons...then disappears into empty space. Let go into nothingness, with one part of your mind understanding the right view of non-self-entity.

5 Now a precious lotus appears. On the lotus is a moon with a beam of light at its center. Concentrate on the beam of light. Feel unity with the beam of light; let your mind sink into it. Don't think, "Now I'm concentrating." Feel that your mind actually goes into that beam of light; don't feel that you are looking at it from the outside.

Light radiates out from the beam to embrace all universal phenomena.

6 Then you hear the divine sound of *Om mani padme hum* coming from space, energizing, stimulating the light to absorb back into the beam at your heart. Your liberated wisdom energy beam of light instantly transforms into Avalokiteshvara.

See each part of yourself clearly: your divine, radiant light body, as clean and clear as crystal; your two hands holding the rosary and lotus; the other two hands at your heart; your eyes; the antelope skin draped over your left shoulder. Everything is clean-clear. Concentrate on this clarity.

Do not feel that you are looking at an object outside yourself, as if it were another person. Feel: "This blissful, nonduality rainbow body is me; this is who I am." This is divine pride.

8 Now change your concentration. At the heart of you, Avalokiteshvara, there is a radiant light moon and upon it a beam of light. Instantly, your Avalokiteshvara rainbow body dissolves into the moon, from the feet upward and

the crown downward. The moon then dissolves into the beam of light. This becomes smaller, smaller...atoms...neutrons...and eventually disappears into empty space: experience nonduality, non-self-entity.

Now, in space, a beam of light appears on a moon, which transforms into Avalokiteshvara, which is yourself. See this clearly and at the same time experience the right view of emptiness. Experience this as if you were a magician who has conjured up, say, a horse: when ordinary people see it they think it is real, but the magician, who also sees it, knows that it is not.

In this way, experience the mahamudra deity.

MEDITATION 4 (CHAPTER II) THE HALLUCINATED VISION DISSOLVES INTO LIGHT

1, 2, 3, 4 Guru Avalokiteshvara sits on a throne, a sun, and moon disc, in the aspect of a monk, with Avalokiteshvara at his heart. After reciting the prayers, Guru Avalokiteshvara absorbs into you, and you dissolve into emptiness. Contemplate each step.

5 When from space the moon disc and beam of light appear and the light goes out to embrace all universal energy, everything that the light embraces—all of Chenrezig Institute, all of Queensland, all of Australia, the whole world—dissolves, melts; all sentient beings, everything, melt into radiant light.

Make sure you transform everything into light, especially whatever you're caught up in, whatever attracts you. Psychologically, this is incredibly effective. The entire puzzle-conflict environment is digested, magnetically absorbed into the radiant light, so now you can't have any concrete vision of real beaches or oceans or mountains. That hallucinated painting dissolves. You no longer have superstitious thoughts about what's going to come from the kitchen: "I wonder what they're going to give me for dinner?"

6 Then, after this strong absorption with strong, concentrated awareness, the beam of light is transformed into the Avalokiteshvara deity body. In the whole of universal space there is only you, Avalokiteshvara. Contemplate the clarity of this.

When distraction comes, recognize that it is superstitious mental energy.

Instead of rejecting it, watch it, intensively, consciously—the bubble, the superstitious distraction, will disappear of its own accord.

MEDITATION 5 (CHAPTER II) RECITING THE MANTRA

1 Visualize Guru Avalokiteshvara in the aspect of a monk, sitting on a throne held up by snow lions. At his heart is Avalokiteshvara.

2 Recite the Seven-limb Prayer, make a mandala offering, and recite the Prayer of the Graduated Path.

3 Now absorb Guru Avalokiteshvara into your heart. Visualize that the radiant light throne absorbs into the lotus, the lotus into the sun and moon seats, and they absorb into the body of Guru Avalokiteshvara. Simultaneously from his crown downward and his feet upward, Guru Avalokiteshvara absorbs into the wisdom-being at his heart chakra, which, in turn, dissolves into radiant light.

4 Then visualize that you melt into light. The light then gets smaller and smaller until eventually disappears. Experience unity, the view of emptiness. Have a vision of empty space.

5 Eventually, out of the empty space, a moon disc, which is your consciousness, appears. Contemplate that. Then, at the center of the moon appears a beam of light, the *Hrih*. It radiates light throughout universal space, purifying all the impurities of all mother sentient beings and making offerings to all supreme beings.

Then the light absorbs back into the *Hrih*, which is you.

6 In space, you hear the sound of the mantra, *Om mani padme hum*. This energizes you—the beam of light—and you transform into the divine rainbow body of Avalokiteshvara. This is your own wisdom energy transforming into the mahamudra deity: white, four arms, sitting in the vajra posture on a white lotus. Your first two hands at your heart in the mudra of prayer; the second two held aloft holding crystal rosary and lotus. You see the crystal light body and simultaneously experience bliss and nonduality. That body is your mind. Your mind

is object, your mind is subject: the unity of wisdom and method. You are the mahamudra deity.

- 7 When you feel that you can concentrate on the divine body as long as you wish, you'll be encouraged to move on to a more subtle concentration. At your Avalokiteshvara heart is the six-syllable mantra *Om mani padme hum*. Concentrate on the mantra as you recite it. Recite the mantra loud enough for you to hear it but not so loud that others can. Also, remember that the mantra, too, is the transformation of blissful wisdom.

While reciting the mantra, imagine light radiating from it throughout all universal space, transforming the energy of the universe into light, which sinks back into the mantra at your heart.

MEDITATION 6 (CHAPTER 12) TRANSFORM EVERYTHING INTO THE MANTRA

- 1 Visualize in front of you the inseparability of the guru and divine Avalokiteshvara, seated on a moon seat and lotus on a radiant throne. Don't think that you have put him there; instead, imagine that with his psychic ability he has come to you, in the space in front: "If you want me, look, here I am!"

Om mani padme hum, Om mani padme hum, Om mani padme hum...

- 2 Recite the Seven-limb Prayer, make a mandala offering, and recite the Prayer of the Graduated Path.

- 3 The radiant light throne absorbs into the lotus, the lotus into the moon seat, the moon seat into the body of Guru Avalokiteshvara. From his crown downward and his feet upward, he absorbs into his heart chakra, becoming a radiant egg of light. This egg-light, the transcendent supreme nature of Guru Avalokiteshvara, comes through your crown into your central channel to your heart. Feel unity, oneness, with Guru Avalokiteshvara.

- 4 From the egg-light much radiant light fills all your nervous system. Your radiant light body absorbs from the feet upward and the crown downward, becoming smaller, smaller, smaller...atoms...neutrons...and eventually disappearing into empty space, infinite in nature. Your consciousness goes into empty

space, seeing the nature of totality, no beginning...no end...no self-identity.... Let go of your mind into nonduality....

- 5 Suddenly, out of infinite space, nonduality, there appears a precious lotus and on it a moon disc. In the center of the moon a beam of light, a syllable *Hrih*, appears. Concentrate on that, without duality, your consciousness sinking into it. From the beam of light, infinite rays of light radiate out to all of universal space, magnetically touching all the energy of the universe, all the four elements, transforming everything into radiant light. Experience total unity, a feeling of integrated energy. Your consciousness embraces the entire universe.
- Now you hear the sound of *Om mani padme hum* resonating in space; it energizes the radiant light to reabsorb into the beam of light on the moon disc.

- 6 You, the beam of light, now transform into the mahamudra body of Avalokiteshvara: white, radiant light body, rainbow body, clarity body, profound body, crystal body, which can be seen through, in and out. So handsome, this divine body! One face, which stimulates such bliss just by looking at it. Four arms: two together at the heart signifying total unity and the other two held aloft, one holding a crystal rosary and the other a precious lotus.

Contemplate your divine Avalokiteshvara body, which is blissful in nature, without intellect, with the feeling of unity: "This is who I am." Let go. Just by seeing this most beautiful, divine body, bliss is automatically energized within you.

- 7 Now your concentration moves from the divine body to the mantra at your heart, which radiates light into your Avalokiteshvara nervous system. The light then goes out, embracing and purifying all of universal space, the four elements, transforming everything into the mantra and all sentient beings into Avalokiteshvara. Everything is in the nature of transcendent wisdom and compassion. Continue to concentrate on the mantra while reciting it.

Om mani padme hum, Om mani padme hum, Om mani padme hum...

- 8 Now you, Avalokiteshvara, melt from the feet upward and the crown downward into the moon disc at your heart; the rainbow light disappears. The moon absorbs into the mantra, *Om mani padme hum*, and this absorbs into the beam of light, the *Hrih*. The *Hrih* absorbs upward and disappears into empty space.

Again, in space appears a moon disc and on it a beam of light, which transforms into Avalokiteshvara's divine body. Concentrate on yourself in this aspect.

MEDITATION 7 (CHAPTER 12) MENTAL RECITATION AND HOLDING THE BREATH

7 Then, when you feel that your concentration on the divine body of Avalokiteshvara is good, shift it to the mantra. However, we will recite it mentally this time, not verbally.

At the same time use your physical energy, your breathing. While concentrating on the mantra in your mind, bring in your breath, slowly, gently, and completely. Hold it. Then, when you need to, slowly exhale. Don't pay any attention to your breathing; just focus on the mantra. This process makes it easier to develop strong concentration, the realization of samadhi.

When your concentration is good, you will feel that your breath has disappeared into your heart chakra. You will no longer feel its movement, as if your breathing has stopped.

MEDITATION 8 (CHAPTER 13) FEELING OF FIRE AND SOUND OF MANTRA

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 Guru Avalokiteshvara sits on a throne, a sun, and moon disc, in the aspect of a monk, with Avalokiteshvara at his heart. After reciting the prayers, Guru Avalokiteshvara absorbs into you, you dissolve into emptiness. Then visualize your mind appearing as the beam of light and, finally, manifesting as Avalokiteshvara. Contemplate each step.

7 Now, move your concentration from the rainbow body to the mantra at your heart, *Om mani padme hum*; this is subtler. The mantra surrounds the seed syllable *Hrih*, the beam of light. The *Hrih* and the mantra letters are white. As you recite the mantra, concentrate first on the seed syllable.

Then, when your concentration is strong, indestructible, imagine light radiating out from the mantra and the seed syllable at your Avalokiteshvara heart into universal space, purifying everything—all the sentient beings going here and there, all the things that grow, the very earth itself. Everything is transformed into blissful wisdom and all beings become Avalokiteshvara. Wherever you look, everything is in the nature of blissful light energy. Seeing everything in this way completely closes the door to negativity, jealousy, anger, attachment, and the rest. There is no way such emotions can arise; there is no space.

Now you Avalokiteshvara recite the mantra—first verbally, then with just your mind.

After that, contemplate the sound of the mantra without visualizing the letters.

Next, concentrate on the feeling of fire on the moon at your Avalokiteshvara heart.

Then, while continuing to concentrate on the feeling of fire, hear the sound of the transcendent mantra, *Om mani padme hum*. While you are contemplating the fire feeling, your liberated wisdom energy is simultaneously transformed into sound. The fire feeling is one with the sound of the mantra.

When you hear the mantra this time, instead of hearing the syllables one by one, you hear them together, all at once. This is a very important aspect of the technique. Feel it really opening your heart.

Concentrating simultaneously on the feeling of fire and the sound of the mantra has the magnetic power to bring all your wind energy into your central channel automatically.

MEDITATION 9 (CHAPTER 14) FEELING OF FIRE AND SOUND OF MANTRA 2

1, 2 Visualize Guru Avalokiteshvara, recite the prayers and offer a mandala. Now recite the mantra a few times.

Om mani padme hum, Om mani padme hum, Om mani padme hum...

3 Guru Avalokiteshvara's body melts into light, becomes an egg of radiant light. From the space in front of you it comes to your crown, enters through your crown chakra, and descends through your central channel to your heart chakra. It becomes one with your mind.

4 Now all the energy of your body also melts into radiant light and absorbs from the feet upward and the crown downward into your heart chakra...smaller...smaller...atoms...neutrons...totally disappearing into empty space. Your psyche lets go into empty space; no intellectualizing. Experience nonduality without conceptualizing.

5 A moon disc appears in space, on the center of which is a beam of light. From this, light radiates out into all of universal space, even beyond this solar system, transforming all universal energy into light. All this transformed energy now sinks into the beam of light: this is your consciousness.

6 This transforms into Avalokiteshvara's rainbow body: white radiant light, like crystal, which can be seen through, in and out; a beautiful rainbow body, like a clear reflection in a mirror, in the nature of blissful, conscious, liberated wisdom. It is a clean-clear divine form, with no substantial energy, just seeing such blissful energy stimulates a blissful experience in your mind. "This is who I am."

7 Bring your concentration into your Avalokiteshvara heart. On the moon disc is the feeling of fire energy. You concentrate on that, all the while recognizing that the fire feeling is a transformation of your blissful wisdom energy. Unified with that, you simultaneously hear the sound of the entire mantra, all at once instead of hearing it syllable by syllable as some kind of dualistic subject-object. Just let go; you don't have to work too hard at it. There's the fire feeling, into which your mind is transformed into mantra, and then you concentrate.

8 Now, your Avalokiteshvara body absorbs into the moon disc at your heart chakra; the moon sinks into the fire; the fire sinks into sound. Then the sound disappears into empty, universal space. Your mind goes into nothingness, emptiness, formlessness; no sound, no color.

When you have actualized the fire feeling meditation, you have reached the state beyond the recitation of mantra. At that time, you no longer have to count mantra; you have gone beyond that.

MEDITATION 10 (CHAPTER 15) THE MANTRA WITHIN LIGHT

1 Guru Avalokiteshvara appears in front of you in the aspect of a monk, wearing saffron-colored robes and sitting on a precious throne. His face is white and has a red vibration. He is looking at you with his peaceful, loving eyes.

His right hand at his heart in the gesture of giving Dharma holds a white lotus. Resting on its petals is a *prajñāparamita* text containing Lord Buddha's teachings on the perfection of wisdom, and standing upright on it is a sword,

which symbolizes the knowledge-wisdom of all the buddhas. Fire radiates from the tip of the sword, burning up all your negative energy.

Guru Avalokiteshvara's left hand is in his lap, palm upward in the *samadhi* mudra, holding an upright Dharma wheel. He sits in the vajra position, surrounded by rainbow light.

At his heart is the wisdom-being, Avalokiteshvara himself, sitting on a white lotus and a moon cushion. He is white, has one face and four arms. Two hands are together at his heart, signifying total unity, and the other two are held aloft, the left holding a crystal rosary and the right a lotus. An antelope skin is draped over his left shoulder, which symbolizes *bodhicitta*. At Avalokiteshvara's heart is a white syllable *Hrih*, the concentration-being.

Also at the heart of Guru Avalokiteshvara is a blue syllable *Hum*. At his throat is a red *Ah*, and at his crown, a white *Om*. From the *Hum*, much light radiates out into space to all the ten directions, invoking all the supreme beings to come to him and sink into his heart. Guru Avalokiteshvara is now totally one with all the collected energy of all the supreme beings.

2 Recite the Seven-limb Prayer, make a mandala offering, and recite the Prayer of the Graduated Path.

3 The radiant light throne absorbs into the lotus, the lotus into the sun and moon seats, and they absorb into the body of Guru Avalokiteshvara. Simultaneously from his crown downward and his feet upward, Guru Avalokiteshvara absorbs into the wisdom-being at his heart chakra, which, in turn, dissolves into radiant light.

This light, the supreme nature of Guru Avalokiteshvara, comes through your crown into your central channel to your heart. Feel complete unity, total oneness.

4 Now, your entire being and everything else magnetically dissolves into light, integrating into your heart chakra in the center of your chest. Everything gradually becomes smaller and smaller...atoms...neutrons...and eventually disappears into empty space. Experience nonduality, contemplating everything with the right view of emptiness.

5 Your consciousness manifests as a moon disc. Upon it stands a radiant seed syllable *Hrih*, a beam of light, filling all of space with light. With part of your mind, concentrate mindfully on this light.

6 This light, your consciousness, transforms into the divine body of Avalokiteshvara. You have one face, four arms, a white, blissful, rainbow body, which is the transformation of the liberated wisdom energy of your own mind. This body is crystal, clean-clear. Your rainbow body is the essence of total consciousness: the unity of blissful experience and nonduality, which is beyond conceptualization. Contemplate this.

7 Now we will add the more subtle meditation. In the space of your Avalokiteshvara heart is a moon disc, and on the moon is another tiny manifestation of Avalokiteshvara, very subtle, the size of a drop of water or a sesame seed. At the heart of the Avalokiteshvara at your heart is an extremely bright light; radiant, like the flame of a candle. Listen for the divine sound of the mantra within that light: *Om mani padme hum*. This is possible. Your liberated wisdom contemplates the sound of the transcendental mantra within the light.

Even if you lose concentration, as long as you experience some nonduality, that's okay. Don't push; just let go. Or if you experience radiant light embracing the universe's energy, that's okay, too. Let go. Don't intellectualize. Be intensely mindful.

Abbreviated Four-Armed Chenresig Meditation

Refuge (three times)

In the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, I take refuge until I reach enlightenment.

By the merit of this practice, generosity and so forth, May I achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Visualization

On the crown of the head of myself and all beings,

On a moon, on a lotus, is a HRI.

Chenresig arises from this.

He radiates bright clear light of five colors.

He gazes with compassionate eyes and a lovely smile.

He has four arms. The first two are folded in prayer.

The lower two hold a crystal rosary and white lotus.

He is arrayed in silks and jewels.

He wears an upper robe of doeskin (trinasara).

His head ornament is Amitabha, Buddha of Boundless Light.

His two feet are in the vajra position (asana).

A stainless moon is his backrest.

He is the essence of all those in whom we take refuge.



Mantra Recitation (repeat at least 108 times)

	<i>om mani padme hum</i>	
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Chenresig is translucent and filled with light; as we repeat the mantra, we visualize Chenresig sending loving kindness and healing to all sentient beings throughout the universe.

Absorption

Chenresig's form dissolves and we rest in primordial reality, not limited by mental constructions or fabrications. We rest here for a while. Coming out of that state of absorption, all that we perceive is part of the mandala of Chenresig. All sounds are mantra, all thoughts are part of Chenresig's unbounded compassion and insight, everything is viewed as enlightened nature.

Through the merit of this practice, may all beings become the embodiment of compassion and insight.

Colophon: This meditation of Four-Armed Chenresig was given to those who received the Four-Armed Chenresig empowerment from His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama on June 28, 1993 in Seattle, Washington, U.S.A.



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Avalokiteshvara
Who Liberates from the Three
Lower Realms
A Short Sadhana



Extracted from teachings by
H. H. Zong Rinpoche



Avalokiteshvara who Liberates from the Three Lower Realms

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Introduction

In thinking of the three deities comprising this practice - Avalokiteshvara, Tara, and Ekajati - there should be no question of one being essentially different from another. They are like a father with his two children, or like different organs of the same body. Just as the refuge tree shows many aspects of the guru-buddha, likewise a deity mandala shows different aspects of the same enlightening force. The reason for visualizing different aspects is that it creates more merit. This is why the refuge tree is called in Tibetan the *tsog zhin* or "merit tree." There is more merit because you remember your practice in more situations - you always have a way of relating to things with mindfulness.

The benefit of Avalokiteshvara (Chenrezig) practice is "compassion wisdom." You will be more aware of opportunities to help sentient beings, and your skill in helping them will increase. You will be a more complete bodhisattva and will experience the blessings of Avalokiteshvara's holy body, speech, and mind. His right hand in the mudra of granting realizations means that if you practice, he will grant you blessings.

The benefit of Green Tara practice is that everything you do becomes more successful. Whatever you, as a bodhisattva, want, Tara will help. Imagine that whatever you want accomplished is no different from Green Tara, and then pray to her. Then, be convinced that she accepts.

Ekajati, or Blue Tara, brings power to your practice, destroying spiritual obstacles and obscurations.



Chenrezig Who Liberates from the Three Lower Realms
(Chenrezig Ngön-sum Kun-dröl)



A Sadhana of Avalokiteshvara Who Liberates from the Three Lower Realms

(Chän rä zig ngön sum kün dröl)



Prepare a suitable environment, or at least visualize a very clean and appropriate setting. Think that you must achieve enlightenment in order to benefit all sentient beings and then repeat the bodhisattva vows. Imagine that all the beings of the three worlds are taking refuge with you. If you have any general prayers or requests, you should make them at this time.

Taking the Bodhisattva Vows

I go for refuge to the Three Jewels.
I confess each negative action,
Rejoice in the virtue of living beings,
And hold the thought of the enlightened mind of Buddha.

Self Generation

OM SVABHAVA SHUDDHA SARVA DHARMA SVABHAVA SHUDDHO
HAM

Everything dissolves into emptiness. From the sphere of emptiness, a brilliant red AH syllable arises spontaneously and transforms into three white lotuses. On the center lotus is a moon disk, above which is a white seed syllable HRIH. On the lotus on the left is a moon disk, above which is a



green seed syllable TAM. On the lotus on the right is a moon disk, above which is a light blue seed syllable HUM. Think that you are these seed syllables, and that the center HRIH is in the place of your heart. Suddenly, these seed syllables transform into the three deities. Each is visualized - from the inside, so to speak, using its own senses - in the minutest detail of color, posture, mudra, and so forth.

The seed syllable HRIH transforms into Avalokiteshvara. With one face and two arms, Avalokiteshvara is seated in the royal posture with right knee raised. He wears a white deer skin over his chest, symbolizing compassion, and is adorned with the bodhisattva ornaments. His right hand rests on his knee, palm outward, and holds a crystal rosary in the mudra of granting realizations. His left hand holds a white lotus, and his demeanor is very calm and peaceful. Light emanates from him and he is surrounded by a rainbow.



The seed syllable TAM above the lotus on the left transforms into Green Tara. She sits in the half vajra posture, with her right leg extended forward and supported by a lotus. Her right hand is in the mudra of granting realizations, and her left hand is at her heart, palm outward, thumb touching her fourth finger, holding the stem of a blue lotus.



The seed syllable HUM above the lotus on the right transforms into Ekajati (*Rāṅgima*, a form of Blue Tara). She has a wrathful demeanor, wears bone ornaments, and stands on both feet. She holds a slaying knife in her right hand and a skullcup in her left. Her color is black.



At each of their crowns is a white syllable OM, at their throats, a red syllable AH, and at their hearts, a blue syllable HUM.

Then, with divine pride thinking, "I am Avalokiteshvara," visualize that many Avalokiteshvaras of different sizes and colors descend like snowfall and absorb into your body. Think strongly with conviction that you have received all the blessings and all the power of all the Avalokiteshvaras of the three times. You are 100 percent Avalokiteshvara.

JAH HUM BAM HO (with mudras)



Front Generation

Once again, everything dissolves into emptiness. Out of emptiness in the space in front of you arises AH, from which arise the three lotuses and seed syllables, from which appear the three deities.

Prostrations and Offerings

Make many prostrations and offerings—actual or mentally imagined offerings, or offerings by means of mudras.

Requesting the Four Initiations

Then request the four initiations.

Please, Guru Avalokiteshvara, for the benefit of all sentient beings, bless me with the four initiations.

In order to save myself and all sentient beings from the three lower states, I will keep all the samaya vows.

Guru Avalokiteshvara,

Please grant me the blessings of your holy body.



From the crown of Guru Avalokiteshvara, innumerable white Avalokiteshvaras and white OMs emanate and absorb into your crown. Your body is completely purified and becomes one with the holy body of Guru Avalokiteshvara.

In order to save myself and all sentient beings from the three lower states, I will keep all the samaya vows.

Guru Avalokiteshvara,

Please grant me the blessings of your holy speech.



From the throat of Guru Avalokiteshvara, innumerable red Avalokiteshvaras and red AHs emanate and absorb into your throat. Your speech is completely purified and becomes one with the holy speech of Guru Avalokiteshvara.

In order to save myself and all sentient beings from the three lower states, I will keep all the samaya vows.

Guru Avalokiteshvara,

Please grant me the blessings of your holy mind.



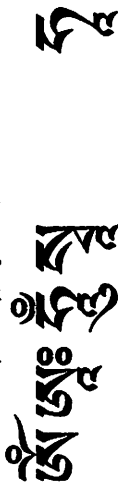
From the heart of Guru Avalokiteshvara, innumerable blue Avalokiteshvaras and blue HUMs emanate and absorb into your heart. Your mind is completely purified and becomes one with the holy mind of Guru Avalokiteshvara.

In order to save myself and all sentient beings from the three lower states, I will keep all the samaya vows.

Guru Avalokiteshvara,

Please grant me every blessing of your holy body, speech, and mind.

Again, from the five places of Guru Avalokiteshvara, innumerable Avalokiteshvaras of the five colors (white, red, blue, yellow, and green) and five-colored seed syllables (OM, AH, HUM, SVA, and HA) emanate and absorb into your five places (crown, throat, heart, navel, and secret place). Your body, speech, and mind are completely purified and become one with the holy body, speech, and mind of Guru Avalokiteshvara.



Make any specific requests or prayers (e.g., for knowledge, realizations, etc.) that you may wish.

Think that you have received all the blessings of Avalokiteshvara. Think that you are no different from him: "I am Avalokiteshvara."

Mantra Recitation

Holding this attitude of divine pride, recite Avalokiteshvara's mantra, which brings enlightenment to the beings of the six realms, 1,000 or 10,000 times. Then, with the strong divine pride thinking, "I am Green Tara," recite Tara's mantra 100 or 1,000 times – that is, one tenth the number of mantras that you recited for Avalokiteshvara. Then, with the strong divine pride thinking, "I am Ekajati," recite the same number of Ekajati's mantra as Tara mantras.

OM MANI PÄDME HUM

(1,000 or 10,000 times)



OM ARYA TARE TAM SVAHA (100 or 1,000 times)

OM EKAJATI HUM SVAHA (100 or 1,000 times)

To conclude, recite the Padmasattva mantra three times to purify any errors of recitation.

OM PADMASATTVA SAMAYAM ANUPALAYA PADMASATTVA
TVENOPATISHTHA DRIDHO ME BHAVA SUTO SHYO ME BHAVA
SUPO SHYO ME BHAVA ANURAKTO ME BHAVA SARVA SIDDHIM ME
PRAYACCHA SARVA KARMA SU CHA ME CHITTAM SHRIYAM KURU
HUM HA HA HA HO BHAGAVAN SARVA TATHAGATA PADMA
MA ME MUNCHA PADMA BHAVA MAHASAMAYA SATTVA AH HUM
PHAT (3x)

End the sadhana with a short period of meditation. Then dedicate the merits.

Prayers of Dedication

May the supreme jewel bodhichitta
That has not arisen, arise and grow;
And may that which has arisen not diminish
But increase more and more.



Through the merits of these virtuous actions
May I quickly attain the state of a guru-buddha
And lead all living beings, without exception,
Into that enlightened state.

Just as the brave Manjushri, and Samantabhadra too,
Realized things as they are,
Also I dedicate all these merits in the best way,
That I may follow their perfect example.

I dedicate all these roots of virtue
With the dedication praised as the best
By the victorious ones thus-gone of the three times,
So that I might perform the noble bodhisattvas' deeds.





Long Life Prayer for His Holiness the Dalai Lama

In the land encircled by snow mountains
You are the source of all happiness and good;
All-powerful Chenrezig, Tenzin Gyatso,
Please remain until samsara ends.



Additional Advice

To help a person who is suffering from illness or other adversity, you may use a similar technique. Visualize Avalokiteshvara, make prostrations mentally or with mudras, make requests on behalf of the sick person, and think that Avalokiteshvara accepts out of compassion. Visualize the blessings on the form of Avalokiteshvaras and seed syllables descending upon the person and being absorbed. Then say the mantras silently, thinking that the syllables of the mantras enter him or her like a continuous rosary.



Colophon:

This sadhana of Chemzig Ngön Sum Kun Dröl, or Avalokiteshvara Who Liberates from the Three Lower Realms, has been adapted from a translation and commentary compiled by the students of Geshe Khemab Gajam from the transcript of an initiation given in June 1978 in Montreal, Canada by His Holiness Zong Rinpoche and translated by Ven. Thubten Zopa Rinpoche. The original materials were scribed in September 1978 by Karma Doshag Gyatso.

This compilation has been extracted and edited by Ven. Constance Miller, FPMT Education Services, in March 2001 for the use of students and centers of the FPMT. The introduction is primarily drawn from commentary given by Geshe Khenrab on the occasion of the initiation. The sadhana has been drawn from the oral instructions of His Holiness Zong Rinpoche during and after the initiation itself. Additional dedication prayers have been added for the convenience of the practitioner. All errors are the fault of the editor.
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Line drawing of Avalokiteshvara adapted from a line drawing by Sherab Palden Berni.

Care of Dharma Books



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

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

THE VAJRA⁴ SPEECH OF THE
MAHASIDDHA T'ANG TONG GYÁLPO:

'THE PRAYER LIBERATING SAKYA
FROM DISEASE'

Translated and edited by
Bhikshu Thubten Tsültrim (George Churinoff)

Motivation

All sentient beings, equal to space, go for refuge to the precious guru-buddha. We go for refuge to the Buddha,⁵ the Dharma, and the Sangha.⁶

We go for refuge to the assembly of gurus, meditational deities, and dākinīs. We go for refuge to the empty clarity of our own minds, the dharmakāya.

Recite these verses as many times as you are able.

OM MA.NI PĀ.ME HUNG

(Skt: OM MANI PADME HŪM)

Recite this mantra hundreds of times, as many as you are able.

Then:

May all the diseases that sadden the minds of sentient beings that result from karma and temporary conditions, such as the harms of spirits, illnesses, and the elements, not occur in the realms of the world.

May whatever sufferings there are from life-threatening diseases that, like a butcher leading a being to be slaughtered, separate the body from the mind in a mere instant, not occur in the realms of the world.

May all embodied beings be unharmed by acute, chronic,⁷ and other infectious diseases, the mere sound of whose names terrifies beings, as though they had been placed inside the mouth of Yama, the Lord of Death.

May all embodied beings be unharmed by the 80,000 classes of harmful interferers,⁸ the 360 evil spirits⁹ that harm suddenly, the 424 diseases, and so forth.

May whatever sufferings there are due to disturbances of the four elements, depriving the body and mind of every pleasure, be totally pacified, and may the body and mind have radiance and power and be endowed with long life, good health, and well-being.

By the compassion of the gurus and the Triple Gem, by the power of the dākinīs, Dharma protectors, and guardians, and by the strength of the infallibility of karma and its results, may these many dedications and prayers be fulfilled as soon as they are made.

Colophon

Once an epidemic was spreading from one person to another at the great monastery of the Glorious Sakya (tradition). Whatever the mantric masters tried—effigies, tormas, medicines, mantras, protection-amulets, and so forth—had no effect, and the monastery was in danger of annihilation. At that time, the master Mahāsiddha (Tang Tong Gyälpo) performed the ‘Space’ refuge,¹⁰ recited a number of Mañis,¹¹ and proclaimed this prayer called ‘Attainment,’ during which the entire epidemic immediately ceased in dependence upon its performance. Thereby, it became renowned as the vajra speech radiating masses of clouds of blessing entitled ‘The Prayer Liberating Sakya from Disease.’

*Sarvamaṅgalam*¹²

Notes

1. Base, path, and result refer to the basis of practice, or the mental continuum of the practitioner; the path, or methods, of practice; and the result of practice, or the attainment of the purified state of buddhahood.
2. An epithet for the Healing Buddha.
3. See, for example, Lama Yeshe's *The Tantric Path of Purification*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1994.
4. The vajra (Tib: *rho-rje*) is a symbol of immutability, the unchanging union of wisdom and method.
5. The guru (Tib: *bla-ma*) is the spiritual guide who in esoteric practice is understood to be an emanation of the Buddha and directs our practice. The Buddha is a fully enlightened being and represents our ultimate potential of spiritual growth and healing. The Dharma is that which protects us from suffering—the spiritual teachings and their realization in practice. The Sangha is the spiritual community who, through example and guidance, help us practice Dharma. Thus, the Three Jewels of Refuge—Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—are the spiritual equivalents of doctor, medicine, and nurse.
6. This form of “going for refuge” was given by Ārya Avalokiteśvara to Ka-nga-pa Päljor Sherab, and by him to the Mahāsiddha T’ang Tong Gyälpo. Afterwards, it provided

infinite benefits for migrating beings. (Note: *dka-lnga-pa* is Tibetan for a person who has mastered the five (*lnga*) difficult (*dka*) teachings: the perfection of wisdom (*prajñā-parāmitā*), the middle way philosophy (*mādhyamika*), higher knowledge (*abhidharma*), epistemology (*prāmaṇa*), and discipline (*vinaya*).)

7. Acute infectious diseases affect the patient for a short time, whereas chronic diseases last for months or years. Many types of infectious disease are mentioned in certain prayers to the tantric deity White Parasol (Tib: *sDugs-dkar*; Skt: *Śitātapatrā*).
8. In general, harmful interferers (Tib: *bgegs*; Skt: *vighna*) are sentient beings, but they may also be events, such as famines.
9. Evil spirits (Tib: *ye-'drog*) are non-humans who interrupt virtuous practice and connect one with what is unwanted. The term is synonymous with demon (Tib: *gdön*; Skt: *graha*).
10. Tib: *Nam-mka'-mäi skyab-'dro*, so-called because the verse has the words "equal to space."
11. Short for the mantra *Om mani päme hung*.
12. Sanskrit for "May all be auspicious!"

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Meditation on 1000-Armed Chenresig

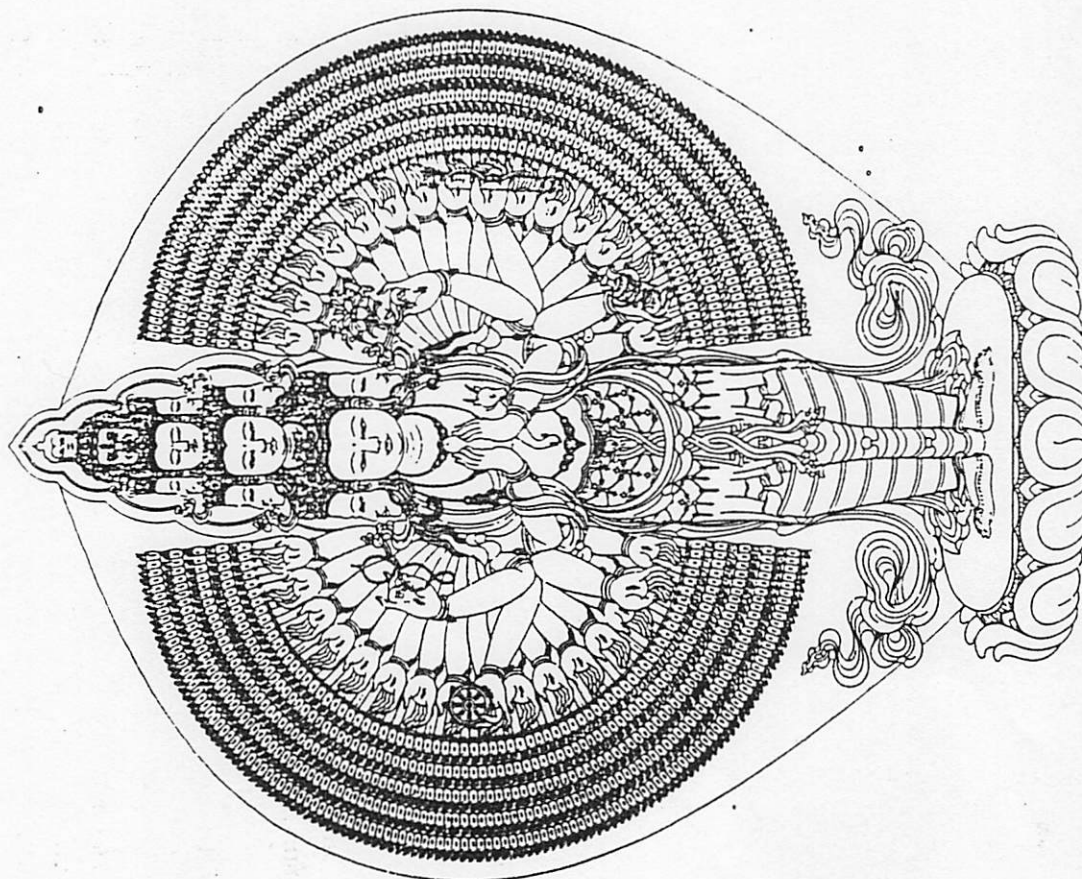
Visualization

In the space in front of you visualize the divine form of 1000-armed Chenresig, who is the embodiment of all the infinite Buddhas' compassionate wisdom. He stands on a lotus and moon seat. His body is in the nature of white light, youthful, and decorated with magnificent jewel ornaments. (The visualization may also be done on the top of your head.)

He has eleven faces. Of the three on his shoulders, his center face is white, the right green and the left red. Above those, his center face is green, right red and left white. Above those, his center face is red, right white and left green. Above those is a wrathful dark blue face with yellow hair standing erect. On the top of that is the red head of Amitabha Buddha, peaceful and smiling.

Chenresig's first two hands are at his heart, palms together, holding a wish-fulfilling gem. On his right, the second hand holds a crystal rosary, reminding you to recite the mantra. The third hand is in the gesture of giving realizations and from it a rain of nectar falls, curing the hunger and thirst of the hungry ghosts. The fourth hand holds a Dharma wheel.

On his left, the second hand holds a white lotus, the purest of flowers although it is born from the mud. The third hand holds a vase containing the nectar of his compassionate wisdom. The fourth holds a bow and arrow, symbolizing defeat of the four negative forces. The other 992 hands are in the gesture of giving the highest realizations. An antelope skin is draped over his left shoulder, symbolizing that hatred is overcome completely by peaceful, compassionate wisdom. (Please note, the third hands are lower than the fourth.)



Taking Refuge and Generating the Altruistic Intention (Bodhicitta)

I take refuge until I am enlightened in the Buddhas, the Dharma and the Sangha. By the positive potential I create by practicing generosity and the other far-reaching attitudes, may I attain Buddhahood in order to benefit all sentient beings. (Recite 3 times from the depth of your heart.)

The Four Immeasurables

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were to abide in equanimity, free of bias, attachment and anger. May they abide in this way. I shall cause them to abide in this way. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings had happiness and its causes. May they have these. I shall cause them to have these. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were free from suffering and its causes. May they be free. I shall cause them to be free. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were never parted from upper rebirth and liberation's excellent bliss. May they never be parted. I shall cause them never to be parted. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

Special Altruistic Intention

Especially for the sake of all mother sentient beings, I must quickly and more quickly — in this very life — attain the precious state of complete and perfect Buddhahood. Therefore, I shall practice the gradual path of Guru Chenresig yoga.

Seven-limb Prayer (to purify and accumulate positive potential)

Reverently I prostrate with my body, speech and mind,
And present clouds of every type of offering, actual and mentally transformed.

I confess all my negative actions accumulated since beginning-less time,

And rejoice in the virtues of all holy and ordinary beings.

Please remain until cyclic existence ends,

And turn the wheel of Dharma for sentient beings.

I dedicate all the virtues of myself and others to the great enlightenment.

Mandala Offering

This ground, anointed with perfume, flowers strewn,

Mount Meru, four lands, sun and moon,

Imagined as a Buddha land and offered to you

May all beings enjoy this pure land.

The objects of attachment, aversion and ignorance — friends, enemies and strangers, my body, wealth and enjoyments — I offer these without any sense of loss. Please accept them with pleasure and inspire me and others to be free from the three poisonous attitudes.

idam guru ratna mandalakam nirya tayami

Request Prayer

O Arya Compassionate-eyed One
 Who is the treasure of compassion,
 I request you, please listen to me,
 Please guide myself, mothers and fathers
 In all six realms to be freed quickly
 From the great ocean of samsara.
 I request that the vast and profound
 Peerless awakening mind may grow.
 With the tear of your great compassion,
 Please cleanse all karmas and delusion.
 Please lead with your hand of compassion
 Me and migrators to fields of bliss.
 Please Amitabha and Chenresig
 In all my lives be virtuous friends.
 Show well the undeceptive pure path
 And quickly place us in Buddha's state.

Meditation on the "Eight Verses of Thought Transformation"

After each verse, visualize much light coming from Chenresig, flowing into you and completely filling your whole body. It purifies the selfishness and ignorance which prevent you from understanding the meaning of that verse, and gives you the ability to understand and integrate each verse into your life. Say the six-syllable mantra a few times while doing the visualization.

1. With the thought of attaining enlightenment
 For the welfare of all beings,
 Who are more precious than a wish-fulfilling jewel,
 I will constantly practice holding them dear.

2. Whenever I am with others
 I will practice seeing myself as the lowest of all,
 And from the very depth of my heart
 I will respectfully hold others as supreme.
3. In all actions I will examine my mind
 And the moment a disturbing attitude arises,
 Endangering myself and others,
 I will firmly confront and avert it.
4. Whenever I meet a person of bad nature
 Who is overwhelmed by negative energy and intense suffering,
 I will hold such a rare one dear,
 As if I had found a precious treasure.
5. When others, out of jealousy,
 Mistreat me with abuse, slander and so on,
 I will practice accepting defeat
 And offering the victory to them.
6. When someone I have benefited
 And in whom I have placed great trust
 Hurts me very badly,
 I will practice seeing that person as my supreme teacher.
7. In short, I will offer directly and indirectly
 Every benefit and happiness to all beings, my mothers.
 I will practice in secret taking upon myself
 All their harmful actions and sufferings.
8. Without these practices being defiled by the stains of the eight
 worldly concerns,
 By perceiving all phenomena as illusory,
 I will practice without grasping to release all beings
 From the bondage of the disturbing unsubdued mind and
 karma.

Purification Meditation and Mantra Recitation

Chenresig now comes on top of your head, facing the same direction as you. Visualize Chenresig on the heads of all sentient beings who are seated around you. At each of the Chenresigs' heart, visualize a lotus and flat moon disc. Standing at the center of the moon is the seed-syllable HRI, the essence of Chenresig's omniscient mind of wisdom and compassion. This is surrounded by the letters of the long mantra, and inside this stand the letters of the six-syllable mantra. All of it is made of radiant light.

From the mantras and HRI much white light and nectar, which represent the nature of Chenresig's blissful omniscient mind, flow into your body, permeating your entire nervous system. They totally purify all disturbing attitudes, negative karmic imprints, diseases and obscurations. Feel completely pure and blissful. Similarly, light and nectar from the Chenresigs on the crowns of all the sentient beings flow into them, purifying all negativities and obscurations. Do this visualization while reciting the long mantra (3, 7 or 21 times) and then the six-syllable mantra (21x, 108x or as much as possible).

Long mantra:

*namo ratna trayaya/ namo arya gyana sagara/ berotsana buha radzaya/
tatagataya/ arhate/ sanyaksam buddhaya/ namo sarwa tatagathebye/ arhatebhye/
sanyaksam buddhebye/ namo arya avalokite/ shoraya/ bodhi satoya/ maha
satoya/ maha karunikaya/ tayata/ om/ dara dara/ diri diri/ duru duru/ itte
wate/ tsale tsale/ partsale partsale/ kusume kusume ware/ ihli mili/ tsiti dzola/
ahpanaye soha/*

Six-syllable mantra:

om mani paymay hung (also written *om mani padme hum*)

Absorption

Think, "I will live my life in a meaningful way, and do all actions with the motivation to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings." Because you have such a noble intention, Chenresig is extremely pleased. He melts into white light and absorbs into your heart.

For those who have not received the great empowerment into the Chenresig mandala: By Chenresig absorbing into you, your mind becomes the nature of great compassion, loving-kindness, and bodhicitta. Your body is filled with light and becomes very pure and clear, like crystal. Concentrate on this for a while.

The Chenresigs on the heads of all the sentient beings melt into light, absorb into the sentient beings and bless them so that they may progress along the gradual path to enlightenment. Then dedicate the positive potential from doing the meditation by reciting the prayers below.

For those who have received the great empowerment into the Chenresig mandala: By Chenresig absorbing into you, your body becomes white blissful light. Think that your body, speech and mind are unified with Chenresig's holy body, speech and mind.

Then your body dissolves into clear light and all your ordinary concepts about who you are vanish. Meditate on the emptiness of inherent existence of yourself and all phenomena.

Out of the clear light, your mind, which is oneness with Guru Chenresig's blissful wisdom, manifests as a lotus, moon disc and upon this, yourself as Chenresig, made of radiant light.

At your heart, visualize a lotus, moon disc and the syllable HRI, surrounded by the two mantras. With great compassion, send much blissful light from the HRI and the mantras to all the sentient beings who are suffering and who have been so kind to you. The light purifies all the sentient beings of their disturbing attitudes, and negativities of body, speech and mind. The light becomes everything that sentient beings want, so they receive temporal happiness. The light also ripens their minds so that they receive the realizations of the gradual path to enlightenment and attain the ultimate happiness of Buddhahood.

Again send light rays which carry offerings to all the Buddhas and to all the sentient beings who have become Chenresig. They are extremely pleased and experience bliss.

Then all the qualities of Chenresig's holy body, speech and mind in the form of white light come from all the Chenresigs and absorb into your heart, blessing your mind. All the Buddhas and all the sentient beings who have become Chenresigs fall like snow flakes into your body. Feel very blissful and think that your body, speech and mind have become completely one with Guru Chenresig's holy body, speech and mind.

While doing the above visualizations, recite the long mantra (3, 7 or 21 times) and the six-syllable mantra as much as possible.

Dedication

Due to this merit may I soon
 Attain the enlightened state of Chenresig
 That I may be able to liberate
 All sentient beings from their sufferings.
 May the precious bodhi mind
 Not yet born arise and grow.
 May that born have no decline
 But increase forever more.

Due to the positive potential accumulated by myself and others in the past, present and future, may anyone who merely sees, hears, remembers, touches or talks to me be freed in that very instant from all sufferings and abide in happiness forever.

In all rebirths, may I and all sentient beings be born in a good family, have clear wisdom, have great compassion, be free of pride and devoted to our spiritual masters, and live in accordance with our vows and commitments to the spiritual masters.

In whatever guise you appear, O Chenresig, whatever your retinue, your life span and pure land, whatever your name most noble and holy, may I and all others attain only these.

By the force of these praises and requests made to you, may all disease, poverty, fighting and quarrels be calmed. May the Dharma and all auspiciousness increase throughout the worlds and directions where I and all others dwell.

Daily Activities

When you are not meditating, but are doing your daily activities, visualize and be mindful of a small Chenresig made of radiant light at your heart. This is especially effective to help you be mindful of your actions, for Chenresig is a witness to all you do or say during the day. Also, whenever you eat or enjoy other sense pleasures, imagine offering them to Chenresig. Whenever you are praised, rather than become proud, think the other people are praising Chenresig.

|| ཚེས་དང་སྤྱི་ལོ་དང་པོ་སྐྱབས་སེམས་ནི།

The rite itself starts with the taking of Refuge and the generation of the Thought of Enlightenment.



|| སངས་རྒྱལ་ཚེས་དང་ཚེས་ཀྱི་མཚན་ལྟེན་ལ།

SANG GYE CHÖ DANG TSOK KYI CHOK NAM LA

|| བྱང་ཆུབ་པར་དྲ་བ་དག་ནི་སྐྱབས་སྐྱེ་མཚན།

JANG CHUB BAR DU DAK NI KYAB SU CHI

I take Refuge, until I obtain Enlightenment, in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sublime Assembly. By the merit that

བདག་གིས་སྐྱེ་བ་སྐྱེ་བ་ཀྱིས་པའི་བསོད་ནམས་ཀྱིས།

DA GI JIN SOK GYI PAI SÖNAM KYI

|| འགྲོ་ལ་ཡན་ཕྱར་སངས་རྒྱལ་ཐོབ་པར་ཤོག།

DRO LA PEN CHIR SANG GYE TOB PAR SHOK

I have accumulated through generosity and other virtues, may I obtain Buddhahood for the sake of all beings.

ལན་གསུམ། || ཚེས་ལས་ལས་ནི།

(repeat 3 times)

|| སྐྱོན་གྱི་མ་གོས་སྐྱེ་མདོག་དགར།

KYÖN GYI MA GÖ KU DOK KAR

|| རྒྱལ་སངས་རྒྱལ་ཀྱི་དབྱེ་ལ་བརྒྱུན།

DZOK SANG GYE KYI U LA GYEN

|| ཐུགས་རྒྱུ་

TUK JET

You who have no stain, white is your body. The perfect Buddha adorns your head.

You look upon

སྐྱེ་བ་ཀྱིས་འགྲོ་ལ་གཞིགས།

CHEN GYI DRO LA ZIG

|| སྐྱེ་བ་ཀྱིས་ཞིགས་ལ་ཕྱག་འཇམ་ལ་བསྐྱོད།

CHENREZIG LA CHAK TSAL TÖ

all beings with eyes of compassion. I pay deeply felt homage to you.

|| བ་མོ་རྩ་རྩ་ཡུལ།

NAMO RATNA TRAYAYA

|| བ་མ་ཡུལ་རྩ་རྩ་ཡུལ་རྩ་རྩ་ཡུལ།

NAMA ARYA JNYANA SAGARA BE ROTSANA BAYU HARADZAYA

|| རྩ་རྩ་ཡུལ།

TATHAGATAYA

absorbed back into the Hri.

འཕྲིན་ལྷན་པུ་ལྷན་པུ།

|| བ་མ་མཐོང་རྩ་རྩ་ཡུལ་རྩ་རྩ་ཡུལ་རྩ་རྩ་ཡུལ།

ARHATE SAMYAK SAMBUDDHAYA

NAMA SARVA TATHAGATE BHAYA

ARHAT BHAYA

SAMYAK SAMBUDDHEBHAYA

NAMA ARYA

ॐ

| अ॒रू॒य |
AVALOKITESHVARAYA

| बो॒धि॒स॒ट्टो॒य |
BODHI SATOYA

| मा॒ह॒स॒ट्टो॒य |
MAHA SATOYA

| मा॒ह॒क॒रु॒ण॒ि॒क॒ो॒य |
MAHA KARUNIKAYA

ते॒ या॒ ता॒
TE YA TA

| ओ॒ं ह॒र॒ह॒र॒ |
OM DHARA DHARA

| धि॒रि॒ धि॒रि॒ |
DHIRI DHIRI

| द॒धु॒रु॒ द॒धु॒रु॒ |
DHURU DHURU

| इ॒त्ते॒ वि॒त्ते॒ |
ITTE WITTE

| त॒स॒ले॒ त॒स॒ले॒ |
TSALE TSALE

| प्र॒त॒स॒ले॒ प्र॒त॒स॒ले॒ |
PRATSALE PRATSALE

| कु॒सु॒मे॒ कु॒सु॒म॒वा॒रे॒ |
KUSUME KUSUMA VA RE

| इ॒लि॒मि॒लि॒ त॒सि॒ति॒ द॒डो॒ ला॒ मा॒पा॒ना॒या॒ सो॒हा॒ |
ILIMILI TSITI DZO LA MAPANAYA SOHA

| ओ॒म॒ म॒नि॒ पे॒मे॒ हु॒ण्ग॒ |
OM MANI PEME HUNG

(recite the entire Zung once and 108 times the section beginning with TE YA TA ... then say the six-syllable mantra as many times as you can.)

| पु॒न॒र॒स॒म॒स॒ वि॒ वि॒ च॒के॒ |
JANG CHUB SEM NI RIN PO CHE

| मा॒क्ये॒ पा॒ न॒म॒ क्ये॒ ग्यु॒र॒ चि॒क॒ |
MA KYE PA NAM KYE GYUR CHIK

| क्ये॒ पा॒ न्या॒म॒ पा॒ मे॒ पा॒ द॒ङ्ग॒ |
KYE PA NYAM PA ME PA DANG

The Precious Bodhicitta Thought, in whom it has not been born, may it arise, in whom it has arisen may it not diminish,

| ग॒ङ्ग॒ ने॒ ग॒ङ्ग॒ दु॒ पे॒ल॒ वा॒र॒ द॒डो॒ |
GONG NE GONG DU PEL WAR DZÖ

but grow and flourish.

| ग॒वा॒ दि॒ यि॒ न्यु॒र॒ दु॒ द॒क॒ |
GE WA DI YI NYUR DU DAK

| च॒न॒रे॒जि॒क॒ वा॒ङ्ग॒ द्रु॒ब॒ ग्यु॒र॒ ने॒ |
CHENREZIG WANG DRUB GYUR NE

| द्रो॒ |
DRO

Having by this virtue, realised the state of Chenresig, the powerful One, may I establish in it all beings

| वा॒ चि॒क॒ क्य॒ङ्ग॒ मा॒ लु॒ पा॒ |
WA CHIK KYANG MA LÜ PA

| दे॒ यि॒ सा॒ ला॒ गो॒ प॒र॒ शो॒क॒ |
DE YI SA LA GÖ PAR SHOK

without exception. (The end of the Sadhana.)



want others to be happy, regardless of their relationship to us.

THE PRACTICE

Sit comfortably. Relax your body and mind and let all thoughts and worries subside. Mindfully observe your breath until you are calm and your awareness is focussed in the here-and-now.

Start by imagining all living beings around you: your mother is on your left, your father on your right, and other relatives and friends are behind you. Visualize in front of you those you dislike or who have hurt you. And extending in every direction, right to the horizon, are all other beings. Feel that they are there, all in human form, sitting quietly, like you. Stay relaxed – don't feel crowded or tense, but imagine that a sense of harmony and peace pervades everyone.

Consider how nice it would be, for yourself and others, if you were able to love all these beings. Consider that everyone wants to be happy and to avoid suffering, just as you do. They are all trying to make the best of their lives, even those who are angry and violent.

Now generate a feeling of love in your heart. You can do this by thinking of someone you love and letting your natural good feelings for this person arise. You might like to imagine your love as a warm, bright light, not physical, but pure, positive energy glowing in your heart.

Before you can truly love others you need to love yourself. Loving yourself means accepting yourself as you are, with your present faults and shortcomings, and recognizing you have the potential to free yourself from all your problems. So, really wish yourself all the happiness and goodness there is. Imagine that the warm energy in your heart expands until it completely fills your body and mind.

Now let your love flow out to others. Start with your family and close friends sitting near you. Imagine the warm, luminous energy radiating from your body, touching them and filling their bodies and minds. Think, and feel sincerely,

7 *Meditation on Love*

Love is wanting others to be happy. It is a natural quality of mind, but until we develop it through meditation and other practices it remains limited, reserved for a few select individuals. Genuine love is universal in scope, extending to everyone, without exception.

Although we might agree with this idea in principle, we probably find it difficult to actualize. Does love arise spontaneously for all the people in the street and the supermarket? Do we feel love for the politicians we don't like, racists, and parents who beat their children? If not, we have work to do!

We should begin with mindfulness: observing our reactions to the people we encounter, looking out for feelings of attraction, aversion and indifference. As long as we continue to discriminate between those we like, those we dislike and those we do not care about we can never even take the first step.

To counteract this mistaken discrimination, we can practise the equilibrium meditation (page 89) and the methods for dealing with attachment and anger (page 97). The following meditation is a good complement to these; it helps us tap our natural resource of love and channel it to all living beings. If we practice it with concentration and sincerity, really getting in touch with our heart, we will find that it is possible to truly

"May you be happy; may all your thoughts be positive and all your experiences good. May you be free of problems, sickness and sadness. May your lives be long and peaceful and may you quickly reach enlightenment."

Then turn your attention to the people in front of you, those you have difficulty with. Contemplate that they also need and deserve your love. Imagine your positive, loving energy flowing out from your heart to these people. Wish them to be free of the confusion, the anger and self-centredness that drive them to act the way they do. Really want them to find peace of mind, happiness, and finally enlightenment. Pour out your love to all of them.

Continue to send your positive, warm feelings out to all the other people around you. Love is an unlimited spring of good energy, so you shouldn't worry that it will run out! Completely open your heart and imagine your love flowing to every direction, reaching all the beings who are lonely, sick, hungry, confused, oppressed, frustrated, frightened. Their suffering disappears and their minds become peaceful, clear and full of pure happiness. Wish them to have every good experience, from the satisfaction of ordinary needs and desires all the way to enlightenment. Concentrate on this feeling of love as long as possible.

Conclude the session by thinking that you definitely have the potential to love everyone, even those who annoy or hurt you, and those you don't even know. Generate a strong wish to work on your own anger, impatience, selfishness and the other problems that prevent you from having such love. Keeping your mind open and trying to overcome ego's prejudiced attitudes will leave much space in your heart for pure, universal love – and thus happiness for yourself and others – to develop.

Finally, dedicate the positive energy of your meditation to all beings, that they find happiness and enlightenment.

4 *Meditation on Compassion*

Whereas love is the desire for others to be happy, compassion is the desire actually to bring about their happiness by freeing them from their suffering.

Compassion is not the sad, anxious feeling we often experience when we see or hear about people's pain. Neither is it a sentimental involvement in their problems nor, on the other hand, a self-conscious holding-back. All these responses are inappropriate and show that we do not understand the causes of the problems, or the solution.

With true compassion we are more wise: we understand how and why suffering occurs and can deal realistically with the situation. It gives us the energy to do what we can to help and the wisdom to accept our limitations and not worry about what we cannot do.

An *attitude* of compassion is what really counts; we cannot expect to actually eliminate someone else's unhappiness while our own mind is still troubled by misconceptions and confused emotions. We should, therefore, work simultaneously on developing the wisdom to see clearly how things are and the compassionate wish to alleviate others' suffering – then our actions will be truly skilful.

Compassion benefits not only others but ourselves as well. As the Dalai Lama has said, "If you want others to be happy, practise loving-compassion; if you want yourself to be happy, practise loving-compassion."

We all possess the potential to be limitlessly compassionate. A powerful way of awakening and developing this potential is by visualizing Avalokiteshvara (Tibetan: Chenrezig), the embodiment of compassion, and contemplating his mantra.

A mantra is a series of syllables that corresponds to certain subtle vibrations within us. A mantra has built up its energy for good by being used by millions of people for thousands of years. Its effectiveness does not lie in our understanding its literal meaning but in concentrating on its sound as we recite it aloud or silently.

Avalokiteshvara's mantra, *om mani padme hum* (pronounced *om mah-nee ped-may hoon*), expresses the pure energy of compassion that exists in every being. Reciting it, either in meditation or while going about our daily activities, not only awakens our own compassion but, by joining with the millions of other people saying it too, adds to the growth of peaceful, loving energy in the world. At the very least, concentrating on the compassion-mantra helps our mind stay alert and positive rather than scattered and negative.

This practice combines an analytical meditation for generating compassion with a stabilizing meditation on the image and mantra of Avalokiteshvara.

THE PRACTICE

Relax your body and mind and bring your awareness to the present by mindfully watching your breath. Check your thoughts and feelings and generate a positive motivation for doing the meditation.

Imagine that all of space is filled with beings, sitting around you and extending beyond the horizon. Contemplate their suffering. First, think of the suffering of your parents and the other people you are close to. Open your heart to the



physical and psychological problems they are experiencing and think that, just like you, they want to be free of all suffering. Feel how wonderful it would be if they were free and could enjoy the peace and bliss of enlightenment.

Then think of the people you do not like or who have hurt you. Imagine their suffering: physical pain and discomfort, feelings of loneliness, insecurity, fear, dissatisfaction. Just like you, they don't want problems but they have no choice: as long as the mind is confused and ignorant of reality, it cannot find peace. Open your heart to these people for whom normally you feel irritation or anger.

Expand your awareness to take in the troubles and pain of other human beings and of animals; whoever has an uncontrolled mind necessarily has suffering.

But don't be overwhelmed by all of this! Remember that suffering, unhappiness and pain are mental experiences, impermanent and changeable. They arise because of misunderstanding and confused emotions, and once their causes have been eliminated they disappear. It is a matter of each one of us working on our own mind, dealing with our misconceptions and negative energy and gradually developing a correct understanding of the way things actually exist.

Feel strongly the aspiration to do this yourself, so that you can help others to be free of their suffering.

Now, visualize just above your head and facing the same way as you Avalokiteshvara, the manifestation of pure unobstructed compassion, love and wisdom. His body is of white light, transparent and radiant. Try to feel his living presence.

His face is peaceful and smiling and he radiates his love to you and all the beings surrounding you. He has four arms. His first two hands are together at his heart and hold a jewel that fulfils all wishes; his second two are raised to the level of his shoulders, the right holding a crystal rosary and the left a white lotus. He is sitting on a white moon disc upon an open lotus, his legs crossed in the full-lotus posture. He wears exquisite silk and precious jewels.

Hold your awareness on this visualization until it is stable. Stay relaxed and comfortable and open to Avalokiteshvara's serene and loving energy.

Now, make a prayer from your heart, to overcome your misconceptions and negative energy and to develop pure love and compassion for all beings. Feel that you are connecting with your own true nature, your highest potential.

In response to your request, Avalokiteshvara lovingly sends streams of white light, filling every cell and atom of your body. It purifies all your negativities and problems, all your past harmful actions and your potential to give harm in the future, and completely fills you with his limitless love and compassion. Your body feels light and blissful, your mind peaceful and clear.

The light from Avalokiteshvara radiates out to every living being, purifying their negative energy and filling them with bliss.

Now, while concentrating on this visualization, recite the mantra, *om mani padme hum*, aloud for a while and then silently, as many times as you like.

When you have finished the recitation, visualize Avalokiteshvara dissolving into white light, which flows down through the crown of your head and reaches your heart-centre. Your mind merges indistinguishably with Avalokiteshvara's mind and you experience complete tranquillity and bliss.

Hold this feeling as long as possible. Whenever your usual sense of I starts to arise – an I that is bored, restless, hungry; whatever – think that this is not your real self. Simply bring your attention back again and again to the experience of being oneness with the qualities of Avalokiteshvara's mind: infinite love and compassion.

Finally, dedicate the positive energy you have created by doing this meditation to the happiness of all living beings. (For another meditation on Avalokiteshvara, see page 160.)

From the true nature [Buddhahood],

In all directions, arises the power of compassion,

Accomplishing the prosperity of others through its play.

INVOKING THE BUDDHA OF COMPASSION TO OPEN OUR HEARTS

Meditating upon any source of power can help us to open to compassion, like the sowing of seeds in fertile ground. It is especially powerful to contemplate a divinity as the image of inspiration. The particular exercise I will describe calls upon Avalokiteshvara, the Buddha of Compassion. The approach and content of this visualization are similar to other exercises that can lead us to openness. The key here is the intention to open our hearts. Even if we sometimes find it hard in everyday life to feel compassion, the intention itself is very healing.

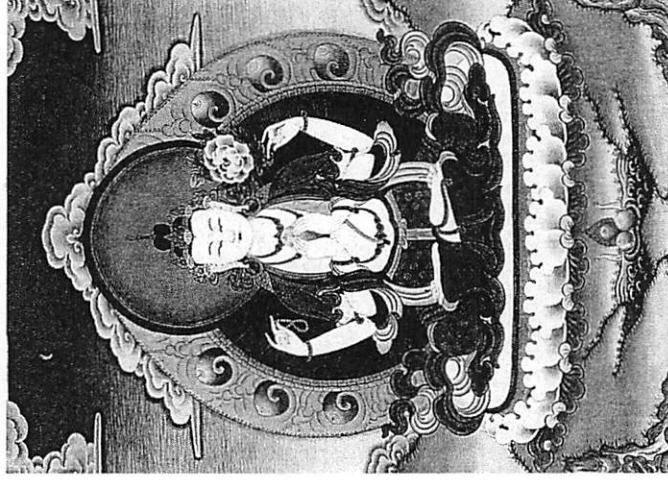
Call up this visualization in however much detail as you comfortably can, contemplating the imagery with a relaxed but heartfelt concentration. Give yourself to the meditation, so that awareness and image are one.

Imagine you are at a high place such as a mountain, looking at the limitless sky. Take a deep breath, and stay in this openness for however long you want, releasing all your stress and worries.

Avalokiteshvara emerges from the open sky in front of you, in the most inspiring, peaceful, and enchanting form you can imagine. His body is white, radiant with light, like a snowy or crystal mountain touched by the rays of thousands of suns.

He is adorned with silks and jewels, and sits upon a moon disc, which rests in the middle of a beautiful lotus. The Buddha is firmly seated, symbolizing the unmoving state of Buddhahood.

In this meditation, the Buddha is endowed with four arms, which dispense boundless compassion to every being in the universe. His first two hands are folded together at his heart in a gesture that symbolizes the oneness of nirvana and samsara—the union of enlightenment with the suffering of the world, the per-



Avalokiteshvara

fection of everything as it is, including mundane struggles and impermanence. In his folded hands, he holds a wish-fulfilling jewel, which represents the “skillful means” that fulfill the needs of all beings who are open to the opportunity. The divinity’s second right hand holds a crystal rosary to symbolize the constancy of his compassion for all. His second left hand holds a white lotus to symbolize his unstained, boundless knowledge and wisdom.

His eyes are full of infinite kindness and caring, and look at everyone without blinking, in unconditioned and unceasing love. He is both youthful and ageless, beyond all suffering, and his joyful, smiling face brings release from suffering to everyone.

Develop the feeling in your heart that this is not just a form created by your mind, but the true and pure form of the Buddha of Compassion, the embodiment of all Buddhas and enlightened beings. Trust in this image as the reflection of the pure nature of

your own mind, which has appeared as the Buddha. Feel his presence in your heart, body, and mind. Rejoice in the blessings he brings to the place where you live, the people you are with, the whole universe.

On the ground facing Avalokiteshvara, visualize all sorts of beings who are overjoyed to be in the presence of the Buddha. Now, with a feeling of warmth, think that all the beings on earth are joining you in chanting the following mantra:

OM MANI PADME HUNG HRI

or

OM MANI PADME HUNG

This can be translated as "Buddha of the Jewel and Lotus, we invoke you," or more broadly as "O Buddha who holds the jewel and lotus of compassion and wisdom, please grant us your blessings."

Give yourself completely to the sound of the chant; say or sing it again and again, in a way that you find inspiring. As you do so, refresh your visualization. With warmth and devotion, imagine that all beings everywhere are looking with wide, joyful eyes at the Buddha. The sweet sound of the mantra fills the universe in a symphony that transforms every form, sound, and concept into a celebration of the Buddha of Compassion.

Now in your mind hear the soothing voice of the Buddha, who is saying again and again: "All your unwholesome actions and feelings are totally and completely healed. Now you are pure and perfect. Feel happiness and peace." Allow the meaning of these words to sink into your heart, not just as words that come and go, but as a true and deeply felt empowerment and blessing.

Now beams of healing light blaze from Avalokiteshvara, and as they touch you, your heart opens fully to all the mother-beings that surround the divinity. These lights are not just beautiful, pure forms but the energy of peace, warmth, bliss, and openness. The light from the Buddha flows through you, to all beings, dis-

PELLING all pain and suffering. Allow a feeling of calm and openness to spread through you. Feel that the whole world has become one in compassion. The ice-like coldness and hardness of your untamed mind melts, and by the power of the Buddha's compassionate light your own body is transformed into pure light. The light of the Buddha is like a thousand suns, but it never hurts anyone's eyes; instead it brings a soothing feeling of peace and release. As this infinite light radiates in every direction, the universe merges in peace and oneness.

Feel the vastness and openness of the universe. Allow all your thoughts and feelings to vanish into the Buddha's infinite peace and warmth, in whose compassion there is no distinction between pain and pleasure, good and bad, this and that, you and me. All are one and the same in great peace. Rest in the openness of your healing mind. You may then repeat this meditation again and again, as often as it is comfortable.

This meditation can be varied by using other forms of healing energy as discussed earlier in this book. Karma Chakme, the great master of liturgy, condenses many practices of the common and sacred scriptures, as well as the mystical teachings, in a meditation upon the Buddha of Compassion that can be used to heal ordinary sickness.

Imagine the divinity above the head of the sick person, who could be yourself or someone else. Here the Buddha of Compassion is envisioned with two arms, his right hand offered in protective gesture, his left hand holding a white lotus at his heart. Among the many aspects of his wondrous appearance is the vision of his mantra, OM MANI PADME HUNG, moving in a circle around his heart. Glorious light radiates from the mantra.

Pray to the Buddha of Compassion, the great bodhisattva, provider of fearlessness. Ask for freedom from sickness, and believe that this prayer will be answered.

The rest of the meditation is described by Karma Chakme as follows:

From the body of the Buddha a stream of nectar descends, and washes away all the sickness and ill effects of the sick person, and then nectar-of-bliss fills his or her body.

Then repeat the following mantra as many times as you can: "OM MANI PADME HUNG SARVA SHANTING KURUYE SOHA."**

Then the Buddha above the person's head dissolves into light and merges into the sick person.

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Meditations



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Remember that you can always bring the feeling and energy from any meditation on compassion into your daily life; it is a blessing always available to us. Welcome everything life brings you—it is all an opportunity to realize our true nature.

When you are happy, feel it fully as the blessing energy of the Buddha, without grasping at it. When you suffer, think: "May this pain be a ransom to relieve the pain of all beloved mother-beings," and consider the suffering as a positive force that brings spiritual inspiration and awareness, the supreme goal of human life.

**"O Buddha of Compassion and Wisdom, may all [these sicknesses] be pacified."

So, if your mind is occupied mostly by negative emotions, first, you must focus on purifying them and getting freedom from them through positive approaches such as devotion, pure perception, and serving others. When your mind functions mainly with positive thoughts and feelings, then and only then you should start to train on the path of perfection, the ultimate goal.

As long as your mind is occupied with negative ideas and emotions, even if your ultimate goal is perfection, you cannot jump from negative mind to perfection. Even if you have devoted yourself to the best teachings, your jumping effort might only land you in the ditch of the neutral state with no awakening or enlightenment, because your mind is not yet prepared for such a goal. Only when your mind is purified and refined by positive training will the realization of perfection become feasible.

Therefore, if you have already refined your mind with training on the positive path and are ready to start on the path of perfection, then this eleventh stage is the meditation on the union of awareness and emptiness (openness), the true nature of your mind. If you are not yet ready for the path of perfection, this stage is for bringing the results of your meditation on loving-kindness into a deeper level of your mind, as discussed before. So, remaining in such

awareness, sing, OM MANI PADME HUNG. And contemplate the words of Paltrul Rinpoche:

Your mind is the union of awareness and emptiness, the *dharmakaya* [the ultimate body].

Rest in its innate state, without modification. The self-luminosity will arise.

Complete all that is to be done by just stopping all and doing nothing.

Recite the six syllables by dwelling in the naked union of awareness and emptiness.

Realizing all phenomena as emptiness is the crucial point of view.

It liberates all the concepts of truth and falsehood into their true nature.

Unite—without clinging—all the existents of samsara and nirvana as the *dharmakaya*,

Recite the six syllables as the self-liberation of all thoughts.

Clinging to the appearances as real is delusion, the cause of samsara.

Mind remaining in its natural state, free from thoughts, is Avalokitesvara.

Resting in Natural Mind is not other than [being in] Avalokitesvara.

Recite the six syllables by remaining in the nature of the mind, the *dharmakaya*.¹⁴

STAGE TWELVE— DEDICATE THE MERIT TO OTHERS AND MAKE ASPIRATIONS

At the end of the meditation session dedicate all the merit or positive karma, the deeds of the meditation and prayers, to others—to your mother, to a neutral person, to a so-called foe, and to all beings as the cause of happiness, peace, and the realization of awareness of loving-kindness. Feel happiness for having this merit and giving it away to bring benefit to others.

If you dedicate the merit of loving-kindness to others or offer any positive deeds toward others with loving-kindness, you will generate merit, positive karma, bringing future happiness for yourself. If you give away your merit, it will not actually be lost or decrease—it will increase, because giving the gift of merit to others is itself an important and powerful means of merit-making.

Now that the merit has been dedicated, invoke the power

of the Enlightened Ones and make positive aspirations. Think and say, “By the power of the Buddha of Loving-Kindness, and by the power of the merit of my prayers and meditations on loving-kindness, may all beings, without exception, receive and be inseparable from the blessing light of omniscient wisdom and unconditional love of the Buddha of Loving-Kindness. May the darkness of mental and emotional afflictions, fears and sadness, mental and physical ills, and confusion and struggles of the whole universe be pacified by the power of the blessing light of the Buddha’s loving-kindness. May every being realize the blessing light, omniscient wisdom, and unconditional love of the Buddha and remain inseparable from them.

“May I always remain in union with the luminous blessing light, and the omniscient wisdom, and the unconditional love of the Buddha. May I be the source of the Buddha’s blessings for all beings and especially for those who are close to me, are connected with me, and rely on me.”

Benefits of the Twelve Stages of Meditation

Physically, these meditations are helpful in easing tension, by balancing the elements of earth, water, fire, and air, the building blocks of the body. They will clear and open the blocked veins, arteries, and channels of the body. They will

HOW TO PRACTISE THE THOUGHT-TRAINING TEACHING ENTITLED:

THE EVER-FLOWING WATER OF BODHICITTA, ANNIHILATING THE DEVIL OF THE SELF-CHERISHING MIND

Here is shown a teaching in eight verses that includes the whole technique of training the thought in relative and absolute Bodhicitta.

It has been composed by Lang.ri T'ang.pa Dor.je Seng.ge, a disciple of the virtuous friend perfect in all knowledge, Ka.d'am.pa Po.to.wa Rin.ch'en Sal, who was the only one of his Guru's eight Heart-sons to receive the special instructions of the teaching on changing oneself into others.

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

1. The Preparation

Seated comfortably, generate a particularly virtuous motivation. Then, either make a glance meditation on the Lam.rim Teachings, from the beginning - devotion to the Guru - to the end, or with strong feeling, think as follows:

"It is inadequate merely to ensure that I shall not be reborn in the suffering lower realms: I must release myself from the whole of samsara.

"Yet neither is this enough. All sentient beings have been my mother; there is not a single one who has not. Each has been my mother time without number, and each time has been as kind as my present mother.

"At this very moment, not only are these kind mother sentient beings in great and real suffering, but they are also running constantly to create the cause for more. There is not a minute nor even a second in which they can experience an instant's happiness. If a mother's suffering is not alleviated by her own son or daughter, then who else will do it?

"Even though it is up to me alone to bear the burden of eradicating the suffering of all mother sentient beings, at the moment I am incapable of

relieving the suffering of even one sentient being. But if I were to receive the Enlightened, Holy Body, just one ray of its light could ripen the minds of countless sentient beings, leading them into a state of great peace.

"Therefore, to release all mother sentient beings from suffering and lead them into the most sublime happiness of Enlightenment, I must attain the state of Buddhahood.

"The attainment of Buddhahood is not without cause or conditions; the principal cause is the two Bodhicittas. Therefore, I am going to practise the profound oral teaching on training the mind in Bodhicitta."

Visualise, at the level of your forehead at a distance of a body's length, your Root Guru in the manifestation of and inseparable from one-thousand arm Avalokiteshvara, standing on a moon disc which rests upon a lotus.

Now perform the seven-limb practice:

La. ma Chan.ra.zig zig.la ch'ag.tsal.lo

Ngo.sham yi.trul ch'o.trin ma.lu.bul

T'o.me na.sag dig.tung t'am.cha.shag

Kye.p'ag ge.wa nam.la je.yi rang

K'or.wa ma.dong b'ar.d'u leg.zhug.na

Dro.la ch'o.gy'i k'or.lo k'or.wa.d'ang

Dag.zhan ge.nam j'ang.ch'ub ch'en.por.ngo

(I prostrate to Guru Avalokiteshvara; 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 at 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. Because of the merits created by myself and others, may the two Bodhicittas ripen and Buddhahood be received, for the sake of all sentient beings.)

Now make the following heartfelt request:

"Precious Guru, please bestow upon me your blessings: help stop any wrong conceptions from ever entering my mind, make my mind one with Dharma and bring me correct realizations of the whole Path, from Guru devotion to the completion of training, the unified Vajra state. And please bestow upon me special blessings, so that I shall receive immediately the loving, compassionate Bodhicitta."

2. The Actual Practice

1. Determined to obtain the greatest possible benefit from all sentient beings, who excel even the wish-fulfilling jewel, may I hold them most dear at all times.

Visualization:

From the seed syllable HRIH on a lotus and moon at the heart of Avalokiteshvara, much blissful, white nectar streams down through the centre of your head, filling your whole body, purifying all obscurations, especially those that prevent you from holding others most dear, and bringing all realizations, especially those of holding others most dear.

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

Repeat the visualization, the nectar purifying especially the obscurations that prevent you from holding others dear and supreme and bringing realizations of how to do this.

3. Vigilant, the moment a delusion appears endangering myself and others, may I confront and avert it without delay.

Repeat the visualization, the nectar purifying especially the obscurations that prevent you from confronting and averting delusions, and bringing realizations of how to do this.

4. Whenever I see beings of wicked nature overwhelmed by violent, negative actions and sufferings, may I hold such rare ones dear, as if I had found a precious treasure.

Repeat the visualization, the nectar purifying especially the obscurations that prevent you from regarding harmful beings as precious and dear, and bringing realizations of how to do

this.

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

Repeat the visualization, the nectar purifying especially the obscurations that prevent me from accepting defeat and offering victory to others, and bringing realizations of how to do this.

6. When someone I have benefitted and in whom I have great hopes gives me terrible harm, may I regard him as my Holy Guru.

Repeat the visualization, the nectar purifying especially the obscurations that prevent you from regarding harmful beings as your Holy Guru, and bringing realizations of how to do this.

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

Repeat the visualization, the nectar purifying especially the obscurations that prevent you from taking the harmful actions and suffering of all mother sentient beings upon yourself, and bringing realizations of how to do this.

8. Not to be defiled at any time by the stains of the superstitions of the eight worldly dharmas by perceiving all dharmas as illusory, may I be released from the bondage of attachment.

Repeat the visualization, the nectar purifying especially the obscurations that prevent you from perceiving all dharmas as illusory and bringing release from the bondage of attachment.

3. The Completion

Then request: "Precious Guru, please bless me and all mother sentient beings to attain the precious Guru Buddha's Enlightened state."

Extremely pleased by this request, your Guru descends through the crown of your head to your heart. Much blissful white light emanates from the seed syllable HRIH at the heart of Guru Avalokiteshvara,

passing through infinite space in all directions, purifying all sentient beings. Then visualize all these beings as having become Avaloketeshvara.

Finally, make this dedication prayer:

"May the suffering and the causes of suffering of all sentient beings ripen on me now, and may all sentient beings receive the results of my virtuous actions and Bodhicitta."

It is essential to wish and pray like this always, to create such merit constantly, and to find such virtuous Gurus and meet such virtuous friends in all future lives.

This Teaching was dictated by Lama Thubten Zopa and transcribed by Venerable Thubten Donyo in October 1975.

It has been done not only for my own benefit, but with the thought that it may help those intelligent, young Westerners of today, who have found that their lives are full of problems for which they can find no solution. These seekers are greatly fortunate merely being able to see a Teaching such as this - The Bodhicitta Thought-Training - that contains the method of transforming any of the present day's sufferings into happiness, while leading the practitioner to the ultimate happiness of Enlightenment. This precious Bodhicitta Teaching is priceless; the benefits it brings could never be bought by even countless galaxies full of wish-fulfilling jewels.

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The Mahakaruna Water Sadhana

This sadhana is used to make a special type of holy water called the Mahakaruna Mantra Water. This mantra water can cure many diseases. This is a very special mantra water. These are the materials you need to have :

1. A glass or pitcher to put in water.
2. Some joss sticks (it is optional)

All the mantras and praises that are to be recited are typed in regular font. All visualizations are typed in italic.

The Mahakaruna Mantra Water Practice

Join your palms together and recite:

I prostrate and take refuge in the Three Precious Ones (recite once)
I prostrate and take refuge in Bodhisattva Kuan-Yin.

Visualize that the merits of reciting the Mahakaruna Mantra are used to aide the illnesses of all beings, not just for yourself.

-Recite the Pure Dharma Realm Mantra:

Om Ling (recite three times)

This mantra is used to take the dirty things in the glass of water (or pitcher) before you. You then visualize your heart emitting a red ray of light that shines on the glass of water. All of the defilements in the water are removed.

-Recite the Six Syllable Mantra of Avalokitesvara:

Om Mani Padme Hung (recite it 21 times)

After reciting this mantra, visualize Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara (look in the image gallery for a image of him) and your heart emitting a white ray of light, and shining on the glass of water.)

**-Recite either the Great Compassionate Heart Dharani or the Short Great Compassionate Heart Dharani 21 times*

-recite the Mahakaruna Heart Mantra 21 times:

Om Vajra dhar-shi

-recite the Verse of Dedication once:

May the powers of my practices,
Cure the illnesses of all sentient beings.
May the beings of the three realms,
All attain the liberation and enlightenment!

This is the end to this practice. Now, you have made Mahakaruna Mantra Water. Mantra Water is a water that has the power to cure illnesses because of the power of mantra recited to the water. You visualize rays of light bestowing power to the water. Then with the recitation of mantra, the mantra binds this power in the water.

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The Short Great Compassionate Heart Dharani

[Sound file of the mantra according to the recitation method of HH the Dalai Lama](#)

Namo Ratna trayaya. Namah Arya Jnana Sagara. Vairochana,
Vyuha Rajaya. Tathagataya Arhate samyaksam buddhaya.
Namah Sarva Tathagatebhyah, Arhadbhyah, Samyak sam
buddhebhyah.

Namah Arya Avalokitesvaraya Bodhisattvaya Mahasattvaya
Mahakarunikaya

Tadyatha

Om

Dhara dhara, dhiri dhiri, dhuru dhuru, itti vatte, Chale Chale,
Prachale prachale, Kusume kusume vare, ili mili citi Jvalam,
Apanaye svaha.

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Request to the Supreme Compassionate One

Praise to the beautiful four-armed lord of the world,
Sublime embodiment emanating from the unity of all the victorious ones of the three times;
Possessor of all knowledge and holder of the lotus,
Your immaculate feet beautifully ornament my crown.

May the karmic pollution of myself and others be washed away
By the cool tear of your compassion, great loving protector,
Sole refuge of pitiful, transmigrating beings who have no guide.
You generated bodhichitta first and then reached the extreme limit.

O merciful one, please behold with your compassionate eye
The beings of the evil-gone, caught in realms difficult to escape,
Experiencing the individual results of evil actions,
As hell beings or pretas, amongst animals, asuras, and so on.

Behold with compassion the thoughtless ones who return empty-handed;
Even their high rebirth was without meaning.
Their human bodies were so rare and fragile, but their lives were consumed only in suffering.
Amidst their endless actions the lord of death arrived.

Behold with compassion tough-skinned beings like me
Who maintain a religious manner but do not achieve the great meaning,
Being overwhelmed by attachment, hatred, and the eight worldly concerns,
Without having subdued our minds by observing cause and result.

With compassion, please lead those without refuge on the path.
For when their vision of this life fades,
The vision of their self-created karma arises as the enemy in the bardo,
And they are taken on a precipitous route by Yama's messenger.

Look upon us with compassion, O Lama Chenrezig,
Mother attached by compassion to all sentient beings,
Who is the special sole refuge of the Snow Land.
May I and all others quickly attain your state of enlightenment.

Colophon:

I, Pu.lha, who bear the name "incarnate lama," made the retreat of the supreme Compassionate One when I was fifteen years old. Because many bad appearances arose as objects of mind, with devotion I wrote this request. By this, may the prayers of all parent sentient beings be instantly fulfilled.

June 8, 1993

A Lamentation Requesting Blessings from the Great Compassionate One

by Chandrakirti

Herein lies a request for blessings through lamentation to the Lord of the World, Avalokiteshvara, composed by the Master Chandrakirti.

I prostrate to the all-mighty Bodhisattva Chenrezig

Arya Chenrezig, the great compassionate one,
Your perfect body the color of a stainless conch
Beautified by a pure, luminous moon disk
Like a thousand rays of sun shining in the sky
Overshadowing the brilliant light of the dakas
Renowned as the teacher and guide of the beings of the three realms of existence
You are the single friend of all migratory
Loving compassion protector deity, please consider me

I, from beginningless time
Have wandered in cyclic existence, on mistaken and abandoned paths
Erring due to mistakes and non-virtues of the past
I deeply regret and feel sorrow for all of my misdeeds

By the force of my egotistical actions
I am sinking within the ocean of cyclic suffering,
The blazing fire of anger burning my mind
The accumulated darkness of ignorance obscuring my wisdom.

My consciousness is submerged within the ocean of attachment
The mountain of great pride forces me down to the lower realms
The swirling winds of jealousy distract me in samsara
I am bound by the tight knots of egotistical view

Fallen into this pit of desire, like a well of burning coals
The mire of violent suffering falls like rain
The fire element, the scorching sun, burns from above
The water element, the moisture of the earth, brings cold from below
Outside the bitter cold burns
Raging winds terrorize me to the depths of my heart

This suffering is intensely difficult to bear -
How can you restrain yourself?
All of this suffering I have confronted
Never abandoning aspiring faith for you, Supreme Arya
Noble protector, how could you think not to benefit beings?

Loving protector, why won't you show me compassion?
Miserable by reason of birth, I am weary of karma
Though despondent from fatigue, the force of karma cannot be changed
Its impetus is like a stream of water
And, like a hurricane, the power of karma is extremely difficult to reverse
These hardships are difficult to express

My body, speech, and mind come under the command of non-virtue
By the force of the fierce burning fire of negative karma
The miserable result of consciousness arises
If the aggregate - this body of illusion - cannot bear this
Loving protector Chenrezig, can you bear it?

When I seek to see the Compassionate One's face
Luminous like the sun, lustrous like the moon
I cannot see with eyes afflicted
By the eye-disease of beginningless ignorance
Protector of the world, where are you now?
Unable to tolerate this terrible suffering
Reeling from the panic of extreme terror and fear
I utter this longing lamentation
A miserable, desperate plea for help
Loving protector Chenrezig, how can you bear it?
When, at the time of death, I change my body
I will be separated from friends and relatives, taken by the Lord of Death
My worldly relatives will not want to let me go
But due to the power of karma, I will be taken alone
If, at that time, no refuge exists for me
Will you, loving protector, dismiss me into samsara?

A being like me, oppressed by karma
Due to wrong prayers from beginningless time
Has not yet been released from the three realms, the place of samsara
As many times as I have taken rebirth over countless eons
Taking countless bodies which fell apart
If I collected the flesh and bones they would fill the world
If I collected the pus and blood it would equal the great ocean -
But if I consider what remains of my karma, it is beyond thought, inexpressible

Although I have passed through the three realms countless times
All of my actions have been a meaningless waste
Among all of my possibly existent countless rebirths
If there had been only one in which
I had completed a single action towards the unsurpassable purpose of enlightenment
From doing only that, there would have been some meaning

Karma is powerful, and due to the great force of the afflictions
Beings take bodies of flesh and blood and wander in samsara
Caught in the wretched misery of the prison of existence
Due to my wrongdoings all of this fierce, inexhaustible suffering
Arises from my own actions -
I request you, with your great compassion, to cut this continuum
And destroy the winds of affliction and karma

As I wander perpetually in the darkness of ignorance
By the power of the winds of affliction and karma
Can't you see with the rays of your lamp of wisdom?
Since I cannot endure the results of my wrong actions
Won't you carry out your compassionate enlightened activity?
Since I suffer the sickness of the three poisons, so difficult to
bear
Won't you heal me with the skillful medicine of compassion?
Since I plummet from the cliff of wrong views
Won't you catch me with your compassionate hand?
Since I burn in the great suffering fire of karma
Won't you allow the cooling continuum of the water of your
compassion to fall upon me?

Once I have purified my karma in the three realms of cyclic
existence
And obtained my goal
At that time your great compassion will be of no benefit to me
If you disregard the karmic propensities of sentient beings
For whom will your great compassion act?
To you, supreme tamer of beings, endowed with the power of
compassion
Please don't be careless, indifferent or lazy -
Compassionate victor, from your heart, look upon me!

Colophon: Translated by the Venerable Yangsi Rinpoche with
Tenzin Namdrol at Deer Park Buddhist Center, Madison,
Wisconsin, August 2001.



Prayer to Chenrayzig, the Buddha of Compassion
By King Songtsen Gampo
Commentary and English translation by Lama Thubten Choedak



Namo Lokishvaraya

O Mighty Ruler of the World, watch upon us with your Compassion

Reverend Lord, Treasure of Compassion, be our protector and refuge.

Most Exalted Chenrayzig, I pray to you.

Chenrayzig, guide and liberate us from the great and boundless ocean of Samsara.

**When we clouded by the darkness of ignorance and misunderstanding,
Chenrayzig, be torch to dispel it.**

When we are inflamed with hatred like fire against enemies,

**Chenrayzig, be a stream of water to pacify it.
When we caught up in attachment to our relatives as if in a whirlpool,
Chenrayzig, enable us to realize the nature of existence.**

**When we are tied by the knots of miserliness to wealth,
Chenrayzig, help us to develop generosity.
When this body is afflicted by the diseases of the four elements,
Chenrayzig, be the king of physicians.
When we are tormented by terror and fear at the moment of death,
Chenrayzig, encourage us by showing your face.**

**When we wander in the narrow abyss of the Bardo without a friend,
Chenrayzig, help us to recognize you as our friend.
When we have to go alone among many,
Chenrayzig, guide us to the Pure realms.
When we experience the sufferings in the Karmic Womb,
Chenrayzig, manifest the mansion of light to us.**

**When I possess the body of an ignorant child,
Chenrayzig, be my supreme guide and friend.
When praying and meditating upon our crown,
Chenrayzig, be our root master.
When relying upon you by meditating upon the lotus in our hearts,
Chenrayzig, be our supreme tutelary deity.**

**When we face external and internal obstacles and interruptions,
Chenrayzig, be our guide to overcome them.
When we suffer from hunger and thirst,
Chenrayzig, bestow on us whatever accomplishments we wish.
Death will inevitably occur as a result of birth,
Chenrayzig, foretell out future.**

**As we pray to you with distinct recitation of the Six-syllables,
Chenrayzig, look upon us continuously with your compassion.**

**OM MA-NI PAY MAY HUNG OM MA-NI PAY MAY HUNG OM MA-NI PAY
MAY HUNG**

(Repeat as many times as possible)

**Chenrayzig, may we quickly attain the supreme Buddhahood through the merit of
this prayer.**

Chenrezig Commentaries

- 1. A Brief Teaching on the Practice of Noble Chenrezig, The Buddha of Infinite Compassion, by Khenpo Palden Sherab Rinpoche**
- 2. Chenrezig Commentary, by Khenpo Donyo, San Francisco, July 17th, 1996**
- 3. Chenrezig (Avalokiteshvara) - The Embodiment of Compassion in Tibetan Buddhism, from Dharma Haven**
- 4. A Teaching on the Chenrezig Sadhana, by Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche**
- 5. The Nature of the Deity, by Bokar Rinpoche**
- 6. A teaching on the Bodhisattva Chenrezig, by Acharya Lama Sönam Rabgye**
- 7 - 9. Three commentaries by Lama Lodu Rinpoche, on the Chenrezig sadhana, 'For the Benefit of All Beings as Vast as the Skies'**
- 10. An explanation of The Total Flowering of Activity to Help Others, by Dezhung Rinpoche**
- 11. A commentary on A Continuous Rain to Benefit Beings, by The Fifteenth Karmapa, Kakhyab Dorje**
- 12. A commentary on The Sadhana of Thousand-Armed Avalokiteshvara, by Lama Lodu**
- 13. Motivations for mantra recitation, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche**

On the mantra

- 14., & 15. The Benefits of Reciting Om Mani Peme Hum, I and II, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche**
- 16. Explanation of the Mantra of Avalokiteshvara, by Geshe Dhargyey**
- 17. On the meaning of: OM MANI PADME HUM, by His Holiness, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama**

A Brief Teaching on the Practice of Noble Chenrezig, The Buddha of Infinite Compassion

A teaching given by Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche during the Nyungne Retreat at Palden Padma Samye Ling, October 8, 2006.

The gracious and kind Buddha gave many teachings on the Hinayana, Mahayana, Vajrayana, and Dzogchen paths. The essence of all of these teachings is to bring more peace, calm, and joy to ourselves and others. This is the heart of the teachings of the Awakened One, and thus every Buddhist practice points in the same direction. But how do we start to cultivate the authentic peace and joy that will result in happiness and benefit for all living beings? We cannot begin this process outside ourselves; we have to begin with our own hearts and minds. The Buddha explained that the genuine starting point of our spiritual path is love, compassion, and wisdom, along with joyful effort. As members of the sangha, we need to remind each other to continually restrengthen these virtuous qualities. In the ocean of Dharma, there are no emergency exits or detours that bypass these beautiful teachings!

Guru Padmasambhava repeatedly taught that love, compassion, and wisdom—together known as bodhichitta—are the indivisible nature of the Buddha's enlightened mind: love is the Buddha; compassion is the Buddha; and wisdom is the Buddha. Chenrezig (Skt. Avalokiteshvara), the Buddha of Infinite Compassion, is the embodiment of these virtuous qualities. Therefore, absolute Chenrezig is none other than love, compassion, wisdom. The figure we visualize during Chenrezig practice is symbolic, yet practicing on this relative manifestation will usher our minds into the absolute state of bodhichitta.

Many great practitioners and lineage masters of the past experienced various kinds of obstacles to their practice. However, by receiving instructions on Chenrezig and meditating according to those instructions, they were able to overcome every difficulty and cultivate absolute bodhichitta. These masters eventually became beautiful symbols of love and compassion. By opening our hearts and minds to the lineage blessings, we follow the footsteps of all the noble beings and enjoy the nourishing food of Chenrezig practice, which comes to us like a well-prepared meal. In this way, we ourselves begin to recognize the absolute Chenrezig in our own hearts and minds.

The practice begins by visualizing ourselves as Chenrezig. This visualization arises from our strong foundation of bodhichitta, the essence of our love, compassion, and wisdom. All our habit patterns of duality, hesitation, and doubt are overpowered by the absolute state of Chenrezig. As we begin to meditate, it is important to remember that we are not imagining ourselves to be something other than what we truly are; in reality we are reconnecting with our own innate nature, which is like a treasure that has been hidden for quite a long time. This treasure is our buddha-nature, or tathagatagarbha, the essence of all sentient beings. Due to not recognizing the natural state of absolute bodhichitta—our buddha-nature—we have wandered endlessly in the world of duality, the world of samsara.

Hence, by invoking the absolute Chenrezig without any doubt or hesitation, these virtuous qualities inherent in us all will spontaneously manifest as our self-visualization.

The Vajrayana teachings instruct us to bring forth our “vajra pride” or “vajra confidence” when we visualize ourselves as the deity. This means we are not going to let hesitation and duality undermine and cover up what we really are. For a very long time, our nature has been obscured by the six poisons of (1) attachment, (2) anger, (3) ignorance, (4) jealousy, (5) arrogance, and (6) doubt. The curtains of these six poisons have veiled the wonderful qualities of our buddha-nature, the inherent, absolute Chenrezig. Through our practice on the Buddha of Infinite Compassion, we will eventually put an end to our obscurations and unleash the power and beauty of our primordial nature.

Negative emotions—characterized by the six poisons—are the primary cause of the arising of existence in the six realms, and the inhabitants of each of these realms are dominated by a specific poison. For instance, the power of anger arises as existence in one of the hells, and thus hell beings are constantly tormented by anger. Strong attachment arises as existence in the hungry ghost realm, and thus hungry ghosts are constantly tormented by desire and attachment. Ignorance arises as existence in the animal realm, and thus animals are obscured by dullness and stupidity. Doubt and hesitation arise as existence within the human realm, and thus humans are constantly second-guessing, anxious, and worried. Jealousy arises as existence in the realm of the asuras, or demigods, who are driven mad by jealousy. Finally, arrogance is reflected as existence in the god realms, where gods experience long periods of bliss and rapture, only to eventually plunge back into the sufferings of the lower realms at the time of death.

The flux of these negative emotions is not limited to this present lifetime, but has continued since beginningless time. As a result, the poisons have gradually become prolonged habit patterns. We have difficulty recognizing ourselves as the absolute nature of Chenrezig, because we have become accustomed to being distracted and overpowered by the strength of the six poisons. Due to these habit patterns—rooted in our misunderstanding of our innate nature—we have created a chain reaction of cause and effect. This causal chain constantly creates karma and propels us into the different realms of existence. On the relative level, engaging in Chenrezig practice will restrengthen and ignite the power of our bodhichitta; in turn, the power of our bodhichitta will reach out to benefit ourselves and all beings of the six realms. On the absolute level, engaging in Chenrezig practice will help us transcend the six poisons and experience realizations we may then share with limitless sentient beings. By helping other beings uncover their intrinsic nature of absolute Chenrezig, we will be able to ease their difficult experiences, bringing peace, calm, and joy to their minds.

While visualizing ourselves as the Buddha of Infinite Compassion, we should not perceive ourselves as ordinary, mundane beings in ordinary, mundane surroundings. Rather, we should view our physical form and environment as the body of Chenrezig and

his mandala. We should experience our conceptions as none other than the wisdom mind of Chenrezig. And we should hear all sounds as inseparable from the mantra of Chenrezig. In summary: all sights are perceived as the display of Chenrezig's body; all sounds are heard as the voice, or recitation of the mantra, of Chenrezig; and all thoughts about ourselves and all beings are understood as inseparable from the mind of Chenrezig. Maintaining this view in our awareness, we continually recite Chenrezig's mantra. This is a brief description of the special Vajrayana teachings on the "three vajra states," which describe appearance, sound, and awareness as deity, mantra, and dharmakaya, respectively.

The condensed, six-syllable mantra Om mani padme hung (pronounced "om mani peme hung") is associated with all the emanations of Chenrezig. Although initially it may be somewhat difficult to maintain continual awareness of the three vajra states during practice, it is important to recite this mantra without distracting or unpleasant thoughts. Your mantra recitation must be accompanied by an attitude of love and compassion: Simply relax your mind in the natural state of emptiness while reciting the mantra, which is actually the self-reciting echo of great emptiness. This provokes a chain reaction of bodhichitta that extends to all universes and to all beings in the six realms. It spontaneously removes their obstacles, obscurations, and sicknesses, fulfilling all their wishes. Meditating in this way while abiding in rigpa—the state of great emptiness, or Dzogchen—is the practice of Chenrezig.

The Buddha's teachings state that Chenrezig possesses one thousand arms because he is the embodiment of the one thousand buddhas of this fortunate aeon, and his eleven heads are symbolic of enlightenment. Many times we speak of Chenrezig as a bodhisattva, but this doesn't mean he has not achieved complete enlightenment; Chenrezig is actually a fully-enlightened buddha who, due to his great compassion for all sentient beings, appears to us in the form of a bodhisattva. His eleventh head is that of Buddha Amitabha, signifying that Chenrezig and Amitabha are one and the same, whereas his tenth head is that of Hayagriva, who is the wrathful form of the buddha Amitabha. Again, this shows us that Chenrezig is inseparable from Hayagriva. When we refer to Chenrezig as a bodhisattva, we should understand that this is just one of the many ways to describe him.

The word "bodhisattva" itself comes from the Sanskrit words bodhi, or "enlightenment," and sattva, meaning "courageous one." Thus, in his enlightened state, Chenrezig is courageous. His love, wisdom, and compassion are indestructible due to this courage: no matter what happens, Chenrezig tirelessly continues to benefit every single being without ever becoming bored or confused. Because Chenrezig continuously cares for all beings without exception, free from hesitation and weariness, he is referred to as a "bodhisattva." The Buddha's teachings also state that the great Buddha Chenrezig appeared on this earth in the form of a bodhisattva in order to reach out, protect, and ultimately benefit all beings.

Sometimes when we chant the mantra of Chenrezig—Om mani peme hung—we add

the syllable Hri, his heart syllable. These six syllables both symbolize and protect all beings within the six realms. Om is an antidote to arrogance and provides protection to all beings within the god realms. Ma eliminates the affliction of jealousy, thus protecting all asuras of the desire realm. The third syllable, Ni, is able to dispel the negative emotions of both doubt and hesitation. This syllable protects human beings from their afflictions within the human realm. Pe is another very special syllable which purifies the darkness of ignorance, protecting all beings within the animal realm. The next syllable, Me, uproots and purifies all forms of greed, thus protecting all beings within the hungry ghost realm. The syllable Hung uproots the negative emotions of anger. As such, it protects all beings within the hell realms. In this way, the six-syllable mantra protects and eases the suffering of beings by purifying the six negative emotions, all of which cause the arising of the six realms. This mantra also purifies the consequences of the six negative emotions, including all the difficulties experienced by the various beings of the six realms.

When reciting the Chenrezig mantra, you can visualize that white light emanates from the Om syllable directly to the god realms. Due to the power of the mantra and this white light, suffering within the god realms, and in particular the suffering that gods experience due to their power struggles and subsequent downfalls, is immediately purified and removed. Arrogance, which is the principal cause of suffering within the god realm is also instantly removed. If you can, visualize that with the removal of suffering, the energy of the six syllable mantra continually echoes throughout the god realm, creating a peaceful and soothing sound.

From the second syllable, Ma, green light emerges along with the full six-syllable mantra, shining directly into the asura realm. The troubles of the asuras, including their constant arguing, fighting, and quarrelling, as well as their continual experience of anger, rage, and war are instantly removed. Jealousy, the cause of this suffering, is similarly removed. Based upon the power of Chenrezig's peaceful mantra, the sound and energy of love and compassion echo gently and soothingly throughout the asura realm, showering down countless blessings. While continually reciting the mantra, visualize that peace, joy, appreciation, and calm arises in the hearts and minds of every being in the asura realm.

From the third syllable, Ni, yellow light emanates throughout the human realm, instantly removing the principal troubling emotions of doubt and hesitation. Within the busyness of the human realm, anxieties, worries, hopes, expectations, and all similar afflictions are completely removed, bringing forth goodness, calm, and peace. Having thus removed the doubt and hesitation of all human beings, great confidence, joy, and satisfaction arise in their hearts and minds. As a result, all humans abide peacefully and harmoniously, coexisting with great appreciation and love for one another. Along with the continuous recitation of the mantra, visualize that the energy of love and compassion echoes throughout the entire human realm like a peaceful song, showering down infinite blessings.

From the fourth syllable, Pe, light blue light emanates to the animal realm and totally removes their suffering, which arises from dullness and stupidity of mind. These afflictions are rooted in ignorance, the primary cause of suffering in the animal realm. All ignorance is completely removed. Imagine that great wisdom arises in the hearts and minds of every animal, in addition to the dense power of love and compassion. As the mantra continually echoes throughout the animal realm, the great blue light of the mantra showers down, uprooting all troubles and difficulties. As a result, all animal beings experience great peace, joy, and happiness.

From the fifth syllable, Me, very powerful and soothing red light emanates directly to the hungry ghost realm. The moment this red light and the six-syllable mantra touch beings in this realm, they experience blessings that remove their sufferings related with all kinds of poverty, hunger, and thirst, as well as their tremendous fear, insecurity, and feelings of danger. Visualize that each of these troubles are completely and instantly removed. Attachment and greed, the primary causes of suffering in the hungry ghost realm, are also completely annihilated. Then imagine that all hungry ghosts obtain a great abundance of luxuries, prosperity, and wealth, thereby dispelling all the difficulties associated with greed and attachment. As in the other realms, great love and compassion arise within each being as the mantra resounds, and each hungry ghost uncovers the inner state of absolute Chenrezig.

From the sixth syllable, Hung, dark blue light emanates to the hell realms, removing all the sufferings of extreme heat and cold, as well as the painful experiences of terrifying and torturous situations. Visualize that all hell beings immediately become extremely relaxed and happy. Anger, the principal cause of the arising of existence in the hell realms is instantly removed, so that hell beings no longer experience any difficulties; instead, all beings have great confidence, joy, peace, and happiness. Again, the power of the Chenrezig mantra ceaselessly echoes throughout the hell realms, showering blessings that nurture a state of love, wisdom, and compassion. Thus all six realms are transformed into the state of Chenrezig with the recitation of the mantra.

Practicing according to these instructions will activate the power of absolute Chenrezig. Of course, in the beginning we may not be able to concentrate on all the visualizations at the same time; but if we can continually focus on the different aspects of these visualizations during our meditation and recitation practice, we will activate its beneficial powers and bring about realization in all sentient beings. Additionally, this practice will invoke the qualities and actualize the realization of Chenrezig hidden within us. By using these techniques for the benefit of all sentient beings of the six realms, we will also sharpen our own realization.

As we mentioned earlier in our discussion of the three vajra states, all forms, sounds, and aspects of awareness should be considered the form, sound, and mind emanations of Chenrezig. While relaxing our minds in the present state of awareness, we

continually recite the mantra of Chenrezig with the understanding that it is no other than the sound of emptiness. Practicing in this way is the union of shamatha and vipashyana meditation, one of the special techniques of the Vajrayana. Instead of engaging in shamatha and vipashyana separately, we practice them simultaneously and achieve realization that will quickly benefit ourselves and other beings.

To summarize, we begin the practice by visualizing ourselves as Chenrezig. This visualization is based upon our indivisible, innate nature of love, compassion, and wisdom—or bodhichitta—which together represent the absolute Chenrezig. Then we invoke the actual living, historical Chenrezig from the pureland of Potala and visualize him in front of ourselves. Next, we perform the seven-branch accumulation practice in his presence. Thus we simultaneously visualize the actual Chenrezig and ourselves as Chenrezig, which helps us easily accumulate merit and purify the negativities.

It is important to bring these teachings into a single, beautiful state, and to activate the power of the practice with our devotion, bodhichitta, and confidence. Therefore, we should meditate on Chenrezig without any doubt, hesitation, or conceptualization. Following the instructions in this way, we will be able to benefit ourselves and other living beings. This is a brief teaching on the practice of Noble Chenrezig.

Chenrezig Commentary, by Kenpo Donyo, July 17th, 1996

Lord of refuge, Kyabje Kalu Rinpoche pointed out that the essence of all deities is the Bodhisattva Chenrezig; the essence of all mantra is the Six-Syllable Mantra; the essence of all teaching is cultivating the Mind of Awakening, of bodhicitta; and the essence of all practices, the embodiment of all practices is the practice of Chenrezig.

Because it is the very embodiment of the enlightened compassion of all Buddhas, it is the very embodiment of all deities. If one does only the practice of Chenrezig, reciting the Six-Syllables, it is the embodiment of all mantra, and all deities.

As beings in cyclic existence, we experience various forms of suffering. The root of all suffering is basically ego-clinging, clinging to the notion of 'I', or a 'me', and always asserting the existence of a self-entity that we can call 'I', and out of that we engage in self-cherishing.

The root cause of suffering is ego-clinging. If we are liberated from ego-clinging we will be free from suffering.

The method to become free from ego-clinging is the development of bodhicitta, cultivating the mind of loving-kindness and compassion, embracing the wish for the happiness of others, and the wish for others to be free from suffering.

The more we cultivate loving-kindness, the more we are undoing the pattern of ego-clinging. When we have embraced fully loving-kindness, we have become Chenrezig, we have realized Chenrezig.

Because of our habit we have externalized a reference point as Chenrezig. But what is Chenrezig in essence?

Ultimately, Chenrezig is the very embodiment of enlightened compassion of all Buddhas. When we have realized Chenrezig, loving-kindness and compassion, there is no external refuge that we have to go to. Our mind is Chenrezig.

The habit of ego-clinging has been developed since beginningless time, so it is not something that one can easily remove or cast aside. But since it is not our essential nature, ego-clinging can be removed. It's not easy, but it can be done.

We have to appreciate the challenge- both in terms of appreciating our potentiality, and appreciating the worthiness of the challenge. Westerners particularly are stimulated by something that is a challenge.

It's very important to have the attitude that no matter how difficult, it must be possible, and I'm going to do it. That confidence, or conviction is very important. That's very much in line with the Bodhisattva attitude.

In the Tibetan: Chang chub sem pa, pa refers to the all-accommodatingness of the mind, the unhesitating conviction of the mind. Given that such resources are directed for beneficial purposes, that is an expression of Big Mind.

Even if habitual fixation cannot be removed immediately, it's very important to have the attitude of good- heartedness, of kind-heartedness.

This is something that is amazing!, because just having the attitude of kind-heartedness paves the way towards action in a kind and beneficial way.

Without good-heartedness or kind-heartedness, if to appearances something looks beneficial, it's just a show.

The attitude is most important. With an attitude of kindness, one is then inspired to carry out the action, to support the integrity of the action.

In connection with the actual practice: as a backdrop, it's important to get a sense that essentially Chenrezig is unconditional bodhicitta, unconditional loving-kindness and compassion.

That is beyond our experience right now, so Buddhas and Bodhisattvas have given form to unconditional bodhicitta. For beings dwelling within the world of references, this form appears as a method.

Essentially what we are doing in a state of visualization is embracing the mind of bodhicitta. We must appreciate the essential characteristic of Chenrizig, loving-kindness, bodhicitta. That is what Chenrizig is in essence.

The ultimate purpose of Chenrizig practice is for developing the mind of bodhicitta. The immediate purpose is this: because of habitual tendencies our mind is distracted. Therefore, the immediate purpose is that it is a method of achieving shinay- to bring about the calm abiding of the mind.

In the context of Chenrezig practice, shinay is the calm abiding of the mind on the appearance of Chenrezig. With the experience of the calm abiding of the mind, habitual thoughts are liberated.

From the fruition point of view, we talk of experiencing the Two-fold Kaya, the Dharmakaya, the Truth Body, and the Rupakaya, the Form Body. Through the practice we are able to embody the Rupakaya- the vehicle for manifesting light and activity.

In doing the visualization of Chenrezig, if you have visualization occurring, you have a thought occurring. So, in that sense, meditation is a thought.

But if one has the notion, 'I'm just making this up', that's not correct. It's not just a thought.

You are applying ways to familiarize yourself with your potential, that has been obscured by habitual tendencies. You are highlighting your potential, familiarizing yourself with your potential, with the fact that you embody the essential qualities of Chenrezig. You are tuning in with your own potential. It is being present with your potential. Through familiarization you can actualize your potential.

If it were not there in the first place, it wouldn't result in anything. It would be like taking a piece of coal and thinking it was gold. That wouldn't make it so, no matter how much you had that thought.

When working with the practice of Chenrezig it is important to recognize that you are not working with something external or foreign to yourself.

This is the essence of what it means to do the practice of Chenrezig. As for the details, this is quite self-explanatory. What is important is to keep in mind what one is really doing.

Chenrezig, or any practice of Dharma, is preceded by taking refuge. Regarding that, you are the one who is calling the attention to all sentient beings. You are leading the way, as it were.

Then, with the mind of bodhicitta, one wants to bring about the liberation of all sentient beings. To do that, one wants to be equipped with the realization and skillful means to accomplish this, so, therefore, one embarks on the practice.

In doing the visualization: there are a number of ways, but most commonly, there is the self-visualization, immediately to start off visualizing oneself as Chenrezig. Another way is to see Chenrezig on the crown of your head, as taught by Kalu Rinpoche. This practice comes from Tang Tong Gyalpo, and the meaning is true to the name: 'The Practice of All-Pervasive Benefit'.

In this practice, initially one is thinking, or visualizing that above the crown of one's head, and the head of all sentient beings there is a white lotus and the syllable 'HRI'.

The lotus and moon seat, in essence, symbolize the inseparability of the wisdom of emptiness and the skillful means of compassion.

The 'HRI' is the essence of Chenrezig. We can think of the 'HRI' as the initials of Chenrezig, like the initials of a person. 'HRI' is the expression of the essence of Chenrezig.

Light goes out and manifests in the form of offerings to enlightened beings, and goes all over and benefits beings in cyclic existence. The light returns and immediately transforms into the complete form of Chenrezig.

He has four arms, the first two joined at the heart, the left holding a lotus, and the right hand holding a crystal rosary. (as described in the sadhana)

Your thought should be different from the thought of a person who is just looking at a picture. Instead, look with the view that Chenrezig embodies the wisdom of all enlightened ones, the unconditional compassion that embraces all beings, and is endowed with inconceivable activity for benefiting living beings.

He is free from being tainted with substantiality- yet endowed with wisdom, compassion and activity. Free from the 'taint' of materiality, yet endowed with all the qualities.

Above his crown is Amitaba, the Lama of Chenrezig, red in color.

Further, you visualize, or think, that on the forehead of Chenrezig there is the white syllable 'OM', the embodiment of all enlightened bodies; at the throat center there is a red 'AH', which is the embodiment of all enlightened speech;

and at the heart center there is a blue syllable 'HUNG', the essence of the awakened mind of all Buddhas.

Also, at Chenrezig's heart, we visualize the seed syllable 'HRI', circled by the Six-Syllable Mantra, 'OM MANI PADME HUNG'.

In form, visualizing this. In meaning, Chenrezig being the embodiment of the compassion of all enlightened ones, never tainted by the limitations of samsara. He is the very heart essence of all bodhisattva activity.

The four arms symbolize the Four Immeasurables: Loving-kindness, Compassion, Joy, and Equanimity, or unconditional impartiality.

The two arms joined represent the wish-fulfilling jewel, fulfilling the wishes of living beings.

The mala means continually benefitting, and the lotus, the activity of compassion.

The jewel crown and ornaments are all expressions of Chenrezig being the compassion of all Buddhas, endowed with the qualities, or Paramitas, the Six Perfections (Generosity, Morality, Patience, Diligence, Meditation, and Wisdom).

What Chenrezig is, is expressed through these different attributes or adornments.

Having visualized in this way, and appreciating what Chenrezig is in essence, supported by the visualization, in this way we pray with an appreciation of enlightened qualities, and offer praises. As a result of this appreciation and homage, light radiates from the body of Chenrezig, and all beings and yourself become the form of Chenrezig.

With that outlook, one does the repetition of the mantra of Chenrezig.

When doing the practice, while reciting the mantra, one can familiarize oneself with the different aspects of Chenrezig, each of which has tremendous benefits.

Work with familiarizing yourself with loving-kindness and compassion. Then, at other times, attend to the details of seeing yourself as Chenrezig.

Perhaps the visualization doesn't come easy. Don't be concerned. It is sufficient to start with just the thought that you are Chenrezig. Then, it's a matter of

familiarization. Through familiarization nothing is difficult. It's not a matter of being difficult, it's a matter of how much you have familiarized yourself with what you would know.

Sometimes consider the suffering of fellow sentient beings, and how, if one could only benefit sentient beings, the need being so clear and apparent.

Then, sometimes, just focus on the sound.

Then, sometimes, if you know how, you can do tonglen, sending your goodness and virtue along with your breath in the form of clear light towards all beings, carrying these to all sentient beings, then dissolving all sufferings and negativities into your heart.

It's important to shift it around and get a sense of the wholeness of the practice. The main point is that one's meditation does not depart from the Dharmic atmosphere of the practice. In this way one can work with the visualization.

Then sometimes one can just focus on the seed-syllable 'HRI', using that as the object of attention for one's mind.

At other times one can attend to the details of the syllable, from top to bottom. Then one can move on to OM, and so forth, MA..., NI..., PE..., ME..., HUNG... Having familiarized yourself in this way, if the visualization of the syllables is very clear, then it is an indication that you are accomplishing your visualization of the development stage of Chenrezig practice.

Maintaining the tension of one's mind on the seed-syllable, or focusing on the mantra as a whole, produces the benefit of taming the mind, of shinay. And it produces the benefit of pure outlook, making the mind relate with something that embodies the qualities of enlightened outlook and enlightened expressions.

This is in connection with the creation stage.

Then, after the recitations are completed, practice familiarizing yourself with the point of view of the ultimate nature.

All beings, in the form of Chenrezig, melt into light; this dissolves into yourself as Chenzig; you dissolve into the mantra, which dissolves into HRI, and that

dissolves from the bottom up, until it is one final visible point, and that dissolves into the luminous space of emptiness.

In that luminous, non-referential emptiness, rest for whatever amount time allows.

Then, from the non-referential outlook, immediately one comes out into sacred outlook, all forms as Chenrezig...

Then conclude with the dedication prayer.

As one goes about one's life, try to maintain mindfulness of the practice.

Through the dissolution, one familiarizes oneself with the Dharmakaya, Wisdom Mind, and through the Generation, or Creation stage we familiarize ourselves with the Rupakaya, to be able to manifest, or display the enlightened qualities in a seemingly tangible way.

This is a brief explanation of the Chenrezig practice.

Chenrezig (Avalokiteshvara) - The Embodiment of Compassion in Tibetan Buddhism

Overview

"Every person whose heart is moved by love and compassion, who deeply and sincerely acts for the benefit of others without concern for fame, profit, social position, or recognition expresses the activity of Chenrezig."

Bokar Rinpoche

-- Chenrezig: Lord of Love

In the Tibetan Buddhist pantheon of enlightened beings, Chenrezig is renowned as the embodiment of the compassion of all the Buddhas, the Bodhisattva of Compassion.

Avalokiteshvara is the earthly manifestation of the self born, eternal Buddha, Amitabha. He guards this world in the interval between the historical Sakyamuni Buddha, and the next Buddha of the Future Maitreya.

According to legend, Chenrezig made a a vow that he would not rest until he had liberated all the beings in all the realms of suffering. After working diligently at this task for a very long time, he looked out and realized the immense number of miserable beings yet to be saved. Seeing this, he became despondent and his head split into thousands of pieces. Amitabha Buddha put the pieces back together as a body with very many arms and many heads, so that Chenrezig could work with myriad beings all at the same time. Sometimes Chenrezig is visualized with eleven heads, and a thousand arms fanned out around him.

Chenrezig may be the most popular of all Buddhist deities, except for Buddha himself -- he is beloved throughout the Buddhist world. He is known by different names in different lands: as Avalokiteshvara in the ancient Sanskrit language of India, as Kuan-yin in China, as Kannon in Japan.

As Chenrezig, he is considered the patron Bodhisattva of Tibet, and his meditation is practiced in all the great lineages of Tibetan Buddhism. The beloved king

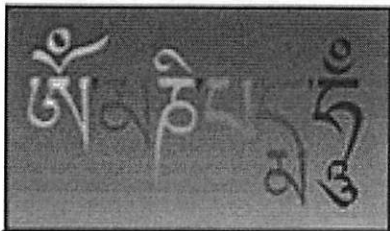
Songtsen Gampo was believed to be an emanation of Chenrezig, and some of the most respected meditation masters (lamas), like the Dalai Lamas and Karmapas, who are considered living Buddhas, are also believed to be emanations of Chenrezig.

Whenever we are compassionate, or feel love for anyone, or for an animal or some part of the natural world, we experience a taste of our own natural connection with Chenrezig. Although we may not be as consistently compassionate as some of the great meditation masters, Tibetan Buddhists believe that we all share, in our basic nature, unconditional compassion and wisdom that is no different from what we see in Chenrezig and in these lamas.

We might have trouble believing that we are no different than Chenrezig -- but learning about the nature of compassion, and learning about Chenrezig, repeating his mantra *Om Mani Padme Hum* and imagining that we would like to be like Chenrezig, pretending that we really are just like Chenrezig, we actually can become aware of increasing compassion in our lives, and ultimately, the lamas tell us, awaken as completely wise and compassionate buddhas.

This page explores some of the many facets of Chenrezig and his meditation, and the Buddhist view of compassion. First, though, I want to call your attention to two more pages that are closely related to this one. One of them is a page about Chenrezig's mantra *Om Mani Padme Hum*, and the other is about prayer wheels, or *Mani* wheels.

This is *Om Mani Padme Hum*, the famous mantra of Chenrezig, written in Tibetan script. It is said that all the teachings of the Buddha are contained in this mantra. Tibetan Buddhists believe that saying the mantra (prayer), out loud



or silently to oneself, invokes his powerful benevolent attention. Viewing the written form of the mantra is said to have the same effect, and it is often carved into stones, placed where people can see them.

We've placed a whole page about the *Mani* mantra on the Web where you can see it:

Om Mani Padme Hum: The Meaning of the Mantra

Spinning the written form of the mantra around in a *Mani* wheel (prayer wheel) is also believed to give the same benefit as saying the mantra, and *Mani* wheels, small hand wheels and large wheels with millions of copies of the mantra inside, are found everywhere in the lands influenced by Tibetan Buddhism. Here's a page about *Mani* wheels:

The Prayer Wheel: Spiritual Technology from Tibet

If you go look at it, lots of copies of the mantra will be spinning around on the hard drive of your computer while you read it.

You might wonder how twirling a roll of printed copies of *Om Mani Padme Hum* round and round in a *Mani* wheel could be a way to be more aware of the compassionate quality of one's basic nature. To understand that, it might be best to begin by learning a little about the Buddhist understanding of compassion -- so that is the topic of the next section.

A Buddhist Perspective on Compassion

Buddha taught that none of his students should worship him, or anyone else -- nor any god or gods or anything else under the sun or beyond it. For Buddhists, the ultimate goal of spiritual practice is to awaken to one's own true nature, which is the nature of a fully enlightened Buddha.

Buddhism offers many different types of mental and physical and spiritual exercises to help individuals move toward this goal of awakening. One form of practice, highly respected by Tibetan Buddhists, is connecting with the qualities of an enlightened being, one who is already awake, as an example and inspiration.

Various awakened beings are seen as manifesting various superlative qualities of awakened mind. Among the best known are three bodhisattvas, or buddhas of the future -- Avalokiteshvara, Manjushri and Vajrapani. Manjushri manifests supreme intelligence, insight, and wisdom; Vajrapani represents the power aspect of complete enlightenment; and Avalokiteshvara embodies unlimited loving kindness and compassion. Chenrezig is what the Tibetans call Avalokiteshvara.

We shouldn't go much further in this discussion of Chenrezig as the Embodiment of compassion without being clear about how Buddhists understand the concept of compassion. The following brief discussion of compassion from the Buddhist

perspective comes from a dharma talk, *The Reason We Practice Meditation*, by Venerable Thrangu Rinpoche, a senior meditation master and scholar in the Kagyu lineage of Tibetan Buddhism.

"The importance of love and compassion is not an idea that is particular to Buddhism. Everyone throughout the world talks about the importance of love and compassion. There's no one who says love and compassion are bad and we should try and get rid of them. However, there is an uncommon element in the method or approach which is taken to these by Buddhism. In general, when we think of compassion, we think of a natural or spontaneous sympathy or empathy which we experience when we perceive the suffering of someone else. And we generally think of compassion as being a state of pain, of sadness, because you see the suffering of someone else and you see what's causing that suffering and you know you can't do anything to remove the cause of that suffering and therefore the suffering itself. So, whereas before you generated compassion, one person was miserable, and after you generate compassion, two people are miserable. And this actually happens.

"However, the approach [that the Buddhist tradition takes] to compassion is a little bit different, because it's founded on the recognition that, whether or not you can benefit that being or that person in their immediate situation and circumstances, you can generate the basis for their ultimate benefit. And the confidence in that removes the frustration or the misery which otherwise somehow afflicts ordinary compassion. So, when compassion is cultivated in that way, it is experienced as delightful rather than miserable.

"The way that we cultivate compassion is called immeasurable compassion. And, in fact, to be precise, there are four aspects of what we would, in general, call compassion, that are called, therefore, the four immeasurables. Now, normally, when we think of something that's called immeasurable, we mean immeasurably vast. Here, the primary connotation of the term is not vastness but impartiality. And the point of saying immeasurable compassion is compassion that is not going to help one person at the expense of hurting another. It is a compassion that is felt equally for all beings.

"The basis of the generation of such an impartial compassion is the recognition of the fact that all beings without exception really want and don't want the same things. All beings, without exception, want to be happy and want to avoid suffering. There is no being anywhere who really wants to suffer. And if you understand that, and to the extent that you understand that, you will have the intense wish that all beings be free from suffering. And there is no being anywhere

who does not want to be happy; and if you understand that, and to the extent that you understand that, you will have the intense wish that all beings actually achieve the happiness that they wish to achieve. Now, because the experience of happiness and freedom from suffering depend upon the generation of the causes of these, then the actual form your aspiration takes is that all beings possess not only happiness but the causes of happiness, that they not only be free of suffering but of the causes of suffering."

With this understanding of what Buddhists mean when they talk about compassion, we can proceed to consider Chenrezig as an embodiment of boundless loving kindness and compassion.

Chenrezig / Avalokiteshvara The Embodiment of Compassion

Having trouble seeing how your real nature could be no different from that of a being who constantly manifests unsurpassable intelligence, wisdom, compassion, and confidence? We know we're not always compassionate, that we care much more about the well being of certain people than about others, that we hardly know what it would mean to give without expecting anything in return. The descriptions of Chenrezig as consistently compassionate to all beings, impartially, don't sound like anyone we've ever met.

The image of Chenrezig that is visualized in the meditation practice is not a real person who happens to be perfect in every imaginable way. It is an image, an imaginary form with certain wonderful qualities -- Chenrezig glows in the dark -- Chenrezig even glows in the daylight. In his Teaching on the Chenrezig Sadhana, Kalu Rinpoche said "one does not think of the deity's body as solid or material, made of flesh and blood like one's ordinary body, or made of metal or stone like an idol. One thinks of it as appearance that is inseparable from emptiness, like a rainbow or like a reflection in a mirror."

The particular wonderful qualities that Chenrezig manifests for us are just the ones we need to get more in touch with, as aspects of our own nature, if we want to become an enlightened buddha, or even if we just want to become a truly compassionate person. We and the image of Chenrezig are two extremes -- we have flesh and blood bodies, but not as much compassion as we would like to have, and Chenrezig has a body made of rainbows, and boundless impartial compassion. When we put those two extremes together, in the Chenrezig meditation, we move in the direction of manifesting as a being with a flesh-and-blood body and unlimited compassion -- with maybe a few rainbows thrown in for decoration.

Imagining that we are just like Chenrezig is not just wishful thinking, like wanting to become a supercomputer or a Lear jet: We do already have everything we need to awaken to our own unlimited compassion. The purpose of the Chenrezig meditation is to help us realize that, to become conscious of that aspect of our intrinsic nature.

Various aspects of the form we visualize remind us of the most important qualities of this particular manifestation of awakened mind, the qualities we are trying to connect to.

Chenrezig is visualized in many forms, with various numbers of faces and arms, and various colors and ornaments. Here we are discussing the white four-armed form with one face, the one illustrated here, which is the most common visualization.

This manifestation of Chenrezig is the radiant white Buddha form which represents purity and power of the enlightened mind's loving kindness and compassion. He should be seen as a somewhat transparent, rainbow like form, like a reflection in water, which represents the empty/open aspect of awakened mind; we cannot latch on to Chenrezig with our concepts -- he transcends the solidification of concepts, including our idea that he is "out there," separate from us.

He sits on a lotus and the flat disc of the moon, with another moon disk behind him, reflecting his total purity. Two of his four arms are joined in the prayer position holding the wish fulfilling gem. In his other left hand he holds a lotus flower and in his other right hand, a crystal *mala* (rosary), which he is using to count the repetitions of his mantra, *Om Mani Padme Hum*, which liberates all beings from suffering. He wears the silks and ornaments of a Bodhisattva, representing all his special qualities, and the soft skin of an antelope over his shoulder, symbolizing his complete freedom from violence.

He smiles with deep understanding, love and compassion as his eyes look upon all beings -- just like a mother watching her only child.

In "A Teaching on the Chenrezig Sadhana" Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche explains the significance of the four arms in the image:

"The four arms and hands signify the four immeasurables: immeasurable loving kindness, immeasurable compassion, immeasurable joy, and immeasurable equanimity. Chenrezig, the Bodhisattva of Boundless Compassion, is the very embodiment and realization of the four immeasurables. The four immeasurables

are the vehicles through which Chenrezig benefits beings; therefore, Chenrezig has four arms.

"The first two, the inner arms, have palms joined at the heart, holding a sky-blue, wish fulfilling jewel. This symbolizes that in whatever way Chenrezig manifests to benefit beings, the quality of Chenrezig's mind is never separate from the all pervasive, non referential state of dharmakaya (primordial wisdom).

"In the outer right hand, Chenrezig is holding crystal beads and moving them the way we use a mala to count mantras. This symbolizes that there is not one moment when Chenrezig does not benefit beings. Like the steady movement of counting the beads, Chenrezig is continuously benefiting sentient beings and turning the wheel of enlightened activity.

"In the outer left hand, Chenrezig holds a lotus flower. This symbolizes that, in benefiting sentient beings, Chenrezig manifests in whatever forms are necessary in accordance with the mental capacities, circumstances, and aptitudes of sentient beings. For instance, if Chenrezig appeared in the form of a human among certain kinds of sentient beings, (animals, for instance), these animals might run away. For this reason, Chenrezig may appear in the form of an animal. In a similar way, Chenrezig may appear in any of the different realms, such as the hell realm or the hungry ghost realm. However Chenrezig may appear, he remains free from any of the samsaric stains of the various realms, the way a lotus flower growing in a swamp appears free of the stain of the mud. The left hand of Chenrezig, holding the flower, symbolizes that stainlessness."

All the various features of this image have meaningful connections to the wonderful qualities of Chenrezig, and by focusing on these details as we visualize the image in the meditation, we can gradually awaken our own awareness of those same qualities in ourselves. The next section is devoted to this particular meditation practice, described in *The Sadhana of Chenrezig*.

Meditation: *The Sadhana of Chenrezig*

The Sadhana of Chenrezig is open to anyone who feels inspired to practice it -- unlike most of the Tibetan Buddhist practices, which require prior initiation by a lama (meditation master).

Here is an explanation given by Kyabje Kalu Rinpoche, who served for many years as the Chief Meditation Master of the Kagyu Lineage, from his book *Gently Whispered*:

"Most tantrayana or vajrarana visualization and mantra practices require that an initiation and subsequent authorization and instruction be given by a qualified lama before the sadhana, or ritual practice, can begin. However, a few practices, those that were given publicly by Lord Buddha Shakyamuni, do not fall under such restrictions. Very definitely, all the practices given in the Sutras have the full blessing of the Buddha and therefore can be practiced if one has the aspiration to do so. Such practices include those of the noble Chenrezig and of the mother of the buddhas, Green Tara. Naturally, whenever it is possible for you to take the vajrayana initiation of Chenrezig or Green Tara, you are encouraged to do so."

Bokar Rinpoche wrote, in *Chenrezig: Lord of Love*, these clarifying remarks: "As long as one considers Chenrezig outside oneself, the initiation, in fact, is not indispensable. However, to meditate on oneself in the form of the deity and to actually accomplish the phases of creation and completion, the initiation is necessary."

While even hearing the name of Chenrezig, or seeing his image, is said to bring inconceivable blessings, performing Chenrezig practices will speed the development of one's compassion in this life, and performing them regularly, ideally every day, is even better. Chenrezig practices are even more effective when performed under the guidance of a qualified teacher. To begin working with such a teacher, you might contact one of the many Traditional Tibetan Meditation Centers that are now flourishing in many Western countries.

In visualization practice we imagine ourselves to be in the presence of a buddha, in this case the Buddha of Compassion, Chenrezig. By accepting the blessing of Chenrezig, you gradually reduce and eventually remove the fixation on your personal self, which expands your loving kindness and compassion, toward yourself and toward others. In the same process, your intelligence and wisdom become enhanced, allowing you to see clearly what someone really needs and to communicate with them clearly and accurately.

In most religious traditions one prays to the deities of the tradition in the hopes of receiving their blessing, which will benefit one in some way. In the vajrayana Buddhist tradition, however, the blessing and the power and the superlative qualities of the enlightened beings are not considered as coming from an outside source, but are believed to be innate, to be aspects of our own true nature. Chenrezig and his love and compassion are within us.

Buddhists all over the world like to keep a special place which they use only for meditation and for studying the dharma (Buddhist teachings). Depending on one's

condition, as wealthy or poor or in between, that place might be just a certain corner in ones room, or might be a separate room, or even a separate building. In any case, it would be attractive, with fresh flowers if possible, or dried flowers or even plastic flowers or just colored pieces of cloth, and would have a raised area for special objects connected with the meditation. These might be pictures or statues of buddhas or ones meditation masters, or in this case perhaps a picture of Chenrezig. A book of dharma teachings is also often included. All of the things on this shrine are above ones waist, but low enough to be easily viewed when sitting in meditation posture.

A session of meditation might begin by lighting incense, and possibly a candle or light of some sort (Tibetans use butter lamps) and bowing or prostrating to the shrine. One then sits down comfortably on a cushion, in a cross-legged position, or in a chair if sitting on a cushion is physically difficult. The hands rest at the level of the navel, palms upward, one on top of the other, or palms downward on the knees.

The actual practice begins by connecting to Chenrezig's wish to save all beings from suffering by establishing them in the state of Buddhahood, and proceeds through the various stages of the liturgy, until we arrive at the section where we repeat the mantra, *Om Mani Padme Hung*. As we repeat the mantra, over and over, for as long as we wish to continue the practice, we visualize Chenrezig sending loving kindness and healing to all sentient beings throughout the universe.

When we arise from the practice, we might bow to the shrine again, to close the session, after putting out the candle if we have offered one. As we do this, we might dedicate the merit gained by the practice to the benefit of all beings.

Tibetan Buddhists often continue the mantra practice during ordinary activities, and they might also use a prayer wheel to amplify the benefit of the mantra.

Different lineages of Tibetan Buddhism use somewhat different forms of the Sadhana, and if you have a connection to a meditation master from a particular lineage, then it would be best to use the version of the Sadhana that your teacher recommends. However, if you don't yet have a connection with a particular lineage, it would be fine to use any version of the *Sadhana of FourArmed Chenrezig*. Links to versions that are available on the Web are given below in the Resources section. (If you decide use one of these from the Web, you will probably want to print it out, unless you plan on turning your computer into a shrine.)

Printed copies of the *Sadhana* are available from sources listed in the Resources section. One very nice version is printed, with detailed instructions and

commentary, in the book *Gently Whispered*, by Kalu Rinpoche. If you are going to use it regularly, you might want to Xerox it, so that it will easily lay flat.

One last consideration, before we end this section. Some versions of the *Sadhana* are available with transliterated Tibetan pronunciation of all the words, some with English translations or translations into other Western languages, and some with both the transliteration and the translation. (Some versions that are available on the Web provide only the translation, but they aren't recommended -- it's better if you have some idea of what you are saying.) You can do the practice by saying the words in Tibetan using the transliterations, or just say the translated version in whatever language you prefer, if you have it. In any case, the mantra *Om Mani Padme Hum* is done in Sanskrit.

"Buddha of great compassion, hold me fast in your compassion. From time without beginning, beings have wandered in samsara, Undergoing unendurable suffering. They have no other protector than you. Please bless them that they may achieve the omniscient state of buddhahood.

With the power of evil karma gathered from beginningless time, Sentient beings, through the force of anger, are born as hell beings and experience the suffering of heat and cold. May they all be born in your presence, perfect deity."

- *The Meditation and Recitation of Four Armed Chenresig*

A Teaching on the Chenrezig Sadhana

Ven. Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche



THE PRACTICE OF CHENREZIG is presented here from the perspective of someone who is starting their practice of Dharma at the beginning stage and working toward the experience of complete enlightenment. This is a very strong approach: beginning the practice of Dharma as an ordinary being with the goal of full enlightenment. Here, as indicated in the text, you visualize Chenrezig above the crown of your head and above the crowns of the heads of all beings. There is a sense of a limitless number of sentient beings as boundless as space. Above the crowns of the heads of all beings, you develop the visualization of Chenrezig. You visualize Chenrezig above the crown of your head as an expression of acknowledgment that a fully enlightened being is superior to yourself as an ordinary being, in the sense that they have actualized the potential we all have. So Chenrezig is visualized higher than yourself.

Chenrezig appears brilliantly, spotlessly white, free of stains or defects of any kind. This is an expression of the quality of the enlightened mind of Chenrezig. From the beginning of generating the enlightened mind until it is fulfilled, there have never been the stains of selfishness and attachment, aversion toward and rejection of others, or indifference and lack of concern. This freedom from stains is signified by the brilliant white appearance.



From the body of Chenrezig emanates predominantly clear white light, along with light of the other five colors. This indicates that Chenrezig, when benefiting sentient beings, does so mainly through gentle and peaceful means. Among the different enlightened activities, this is how Chenrezig benefits beings. But Chenrezig also benefits beings in any and all necessary ways (such as enriching or magnetizing), which is signified by the

colors. Therefore, it is possible that the Chenrezig practice by itself can completely accomplish whatever we need to realize.

In this way, you visualize Chenrezig above the crown of your head, facing the same direction you are. This Chenrezig has a most beautiful or handsome appearance. This is not just facial beauty but encompasses the entire body, in terms of right proportion, so when you look at Chenrezig, you see the beauty, elegance, dignity and majesty of that form. It is a form completely free of any defects whatsoever. Anyone with the good fortune to be able to look at Chenrezig face to face would be completely captivated by his most handsome and majestic appearance. If an individual is experiencing tremendous pain, grief, or suffering of any kind, the sight of Chenrezig's appearance would so fully captivate his or her mind that the pain and the suffering would, in that instant, be forgotten. The captivating quality of the form of Chenrezig cannot be measured, it is immeasurably wonderful. Again, this is the result of having indulged in nothing harmful or egocentric.

A form that has a soothing, healing effect is the result of a mind that is free from harmfulness and defects. The whole form of Chenrezig is like that, and Chenrezig's face is constantly smiling. His eyes are constantly gazing, not closing for a moment, gazing with a very gentle and soothing smile. In the context of our experience, probably the best example we could draw is how a loving mother looks at her infant child: the eyes, the face with the smile, and the concentrated look at the child. You can see on that face and in those eyes the care, affection, sincerity, and gentleness she has toward her child. Similarly, and unceasingly, Chenrezig has this feeling toward all beings without exception. This is indicated by his constant gaze and the smile on his face, which is an expression of limitless and constant loving-kindness and compassion toward beings.



The visualization of Chenrezig in this practice, unlike many other deities, has four arms and four hands. The four arms and hands signify the four immeasurables: immeasurable loving-kindness, immeasurable compassion, immeasurable joy, and immeasurable equanimity. Chenrezig, the Bodhisattva of Boundless Compassion, is the very embodiment and realization of the four immeasurables. The four immeasurables are the vehicles through which Chenrezig benefits beings; therefore, Chenrezig has four arms.

The first two, the inner arms, have palms joined at the heart, holding a sky-blue, wish fulfilling jewel. This symbolizes that in whatever way Chenrezig manifests to benefit beings, the quality of Chenrezig's mind is never separate from the all-pervasive, nonreferential state of dharmakaya (primordial wisdom). In the outer right hand, Chenrezig is holding crystal beads and moving them the way we use a mala to count mantras. This symbolizes that there is not one moment when Chenrezig does not benefit beings. Like the steady movement of counting the beads, Chenrezig is continuously benefiting sentient beings and turning the wheel of enlightened activity. In the outer left hand, Chenrezig holds a lotus flower. This symbolizes that, in benefiting sentient beings, Chenrezig manifests in whatever forms are necessary in accordance with the mental capacities, circumstances, and aptitudes of sentient beings. For instance, if Chenrezig appeared in the form of a human among certain kinds of sentient beings, (animals, for instance), these animals might run away. For this reason, Chenrezig may appear in the form of an animal. In a similar way, Chenrezig may appear in any of the different realms, such as the hell realm or the hungry ghost realm. However Chenrezig may appear, he remains free from any of the samsaric stains of the various realms, the way a lotus flower growing in a swamp appears free of the stain of the mud. The left hand of Chenrezig, holding the flower, symbolizes that stainlessness.



The being to whom we make a sincere request or petition must be worthy of such a request, which is to say the being must have the qualities to be able to grant the requests we make. If the being of whom we are requesting something lacks those qualities, it would not help, because there would not be anything that could be granted. So here we must also take into account the fact that we are relating to worthy objects in this very practical way. There is a saying in Tibetan about an incident where a huge hawk picks up a rabbit and takes it into the sky. When the poor rabbit is up in midair with this hawk, it screams and shouts for help, but there is no one to help it. This is not that kind of situation; we are involved with a workable, practical situation. That is why we make the earnest request here to not just anybody but to Lama Chenrezig, lama meaning one who has superior realization, superior knowledge, who has overcome all defilements, and who is thus capable of helping those with defilements become free of them. We also make supplication to Chenrezig as having the qualities of a yidam. The nature of a yidam is such that, when the

practitioner's mind makes a connection with it, he or she can rely on that connection, and the yidam can provide the necessary benefit for which the connection is made. A yidam is a supreme connection that is made through the mind, and Chenrezig is capable of facilitating that connection. Therefore we petition Chenrezig as a yidam.

Since Chenrezig is the embodiment of so many noble qualities, the qualities of a lama, the qualities of a yidam, the qualities of the perfectly noble one among realized beings, then Chenrezig is the lord of protection, or KYAP GON CHENREZIG. KYAP means "to protect" and GON means "lord," the leader. So KYAP GON means "lord of protection," indicating that Chenrezig embodies all of these qualities, is worthy of leading beings toward liberation, and is capable of protecting beings from their confusion and suffering. On our relative level, even if certain individuals have the power or the authority or the ability to protect others in some simple mundane circumstances, they may not necessarily initiate the act of protecting others. By comparison, Chenrezig is the embodiment of the realization of spontaneous enlightened mind of loving-kindness and compassion. Such qualities of kindness are the spontaneous expression of Chenrezig, the quality of the nonreferential flow of Chenrezig's mind, so Chenrezig is also the lord of loving-kindness, of warm consideration toward the benefit of others. Not even for a moment does Chenrezig close his eyes. He is constantly gazing, never taking his attention from benefiting sentient beings. In this way, we make an earnest request to Chenrezig, the Lord of Loving-Kindness .



In this prayer we are earnestly and sincerely calling to Chenrezig, referring to who he is and by what we need from him. Since Chenrezig is the embodiment of spontaneous compassion, we ask Chenrezig, as the one of great compassion, to hold beings like ourselves, the practitioners, fast in his compassion. We are making a very sincere, straightforward point. To put it simply we are saying: "what is your compassion and realization, what is it all for?" We are saying it is for nothing other than benefiting beings, and here we are, we who need to be benefited, so extend the compassionate qualities of your mind. On a very relative and mundane level, this is like saying "Mother, you have wealth and I am your only child. I am in need of your wealth, and you should help me." It is almost as simple as that. What is a mother if she is not going to help her only child when she has the capacity to do so? What is this relationship for, what is the purpose of being the

mother and having wealth, if the child is deprived? So we make this earnest request to Chenrezig on that basic level.

The reason we so earnestly want to be held fast in the compassion of Chenrezig is that sentient beings have been caught up in samsara from time without beginning. We are developing the wish that all sentient beings will be liberated from the suffering of samsara. Generally, the Dharma teaching is that there are six different realms where sentient beings experience tremendous, unbearable suffering. The experience of suffering of the majority of sentient beings in the different realms of existence is as if we were thrown naked into blazing fire. They have that kind of experience all the time, of pain and torment due to the intensity of their accumulation of defilements. This is the normal state of affairs of sentient beings, so we pray with the attitude that there is no other protection for sentient beings than that which Chenrezig can provide. Chenrezig is the protector, since he is the embodiment of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas who are capable of providing such protection. We take the attitude that "there is no one other than you that sentient beings like us can turn to." Although there are beings close to us (our parents, for instance), when it comes to guiding us toward the experience of complete enlightened mind and protection, because they themselves are sentient beings, caught up in the confusion of such realms, they are not in a position to protect us or lead us from confusion and suffering. There are people among us who play leadership roles, but they themselves are subject to the suffering and confusion of cyclic existence. Beyond that, there are devas, nagas, higher categories of devas such as Brahma or Shiva, and so on. Even they are not free from cyclic existence. Thus there is no one to turn to other than Chenrezig.



The key point is "May you, Chenrezig, hold all beings fast in your enlightened compassion until all sentient beings have established themselves in the state of Buddhahood." This is an earnest request, a very direct, sincere, and heartfelt request we are making on behalf of all sentient beings.

While we are doing the Chenrezig prayer we pray that all beings of the six realms may be established in the pure realm of Amitabha or of Chenrezig, whichever you are aiming for. There is ultimately no difference, since the basic point here is aiming toward their liberation from the six realms.

Then, having prayed first for the establishment of all beings in a

pure realm, we pray that we ourselves may be able to benefit living beings with as much strength and power as Chenrezig, not only in this lifetime, but in all our future births, throughout our many existences. We pray that we may be able to develop the qualities that Chenrezig developed, and having developed enlightenment ourselves, we pray that we may be able to benefit beings through removing defilements, just as Chenrezig does, with the six-syllable mantra. It is really a prayer that we ourselves will have the capacity to benefit others.

Taken from a transcript of a teaching given by [Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche](#) at KTD in July, 1986. This transcript is available in its entirety from [Namse Bangdzo Bookstore](#).

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On the other hand, definitive meaning, for instance the *mahamudra*, directly expresses the ultimate truth.

It is necessary to see, however, that the literal meaning is not in opposition to definitive meaning. The literal meaning is a part of the definitive meaning, approximates it and has a pedagogical value. We should consider it to be a little like the reality that is the sky and the different descriptions of it by a painter, poet, meteorologist, school teacher, or astrophysicist. These descriptions are not wrong, but partial. The sky is a reality more vast than any of these descriptions and beyond them, but this fact does not make these partial descriptions invalid.

The definitive meaning and literal meaning are not in opposition to each other and are not mutually exclusive. It is necessary to grasp the subtle and noncontradictory play of their relationship in order to understand the link between the mind and the deity.

In addition to questioning the nature of the deity, Westerners often ask about the functioning of a meditation such as Chenrezig. How does the visualization of a deity and the recitation of a mantra affect the mind? The reader will find in the second chapter an extremely interesting exposition on this matter that clarifies the process of purifying unconscious conditioning and developing the potential of awakening.

The following chapters describe this specific method of meditation and the way in which to apply it to the different circumstances of daily life. On the latter point, Bokar Rinpoche wanted to give instructions at the deepest level—the one of *mahamudra*. The reader will find here a great richness but also, perhaps, some difficulty!

Most of the teachings gathered in this book were given privately by Bokar Rinpoche. This way of working allowed us to approach and make precise many facets of the teachings that the general framework of a public lecture usually does not permit. This means that one can read in the French text explanations that are not given elsewhere.

François Jacquemart

Nature of the Deity

ABSOLUTE AND RELATIVE CHENREZIG

*Lord with a white body unstained by defects,
The perfect Buddha is the ornament on your head.
You look with compassion on all beings,
Before you, Chenrezig, I bow down.*

Thus a famous praise is addressed to the most popular deity of Tibet.

Who really is Chenrezig, deity with a white body and four, sometimes one thousand, arms? Who is this deity for whom the Tibetans nourish a special devotion and whose

meditation is now also practiced by many Westerners?

Is it a luminous god, soft and compassionate, who, from the far heavens, keeps watch over the fate of beings as most of Tibetan people believe? Is it a simple symbolic image as Westerners sometimes think? Is it still another reality, deeper and richer?

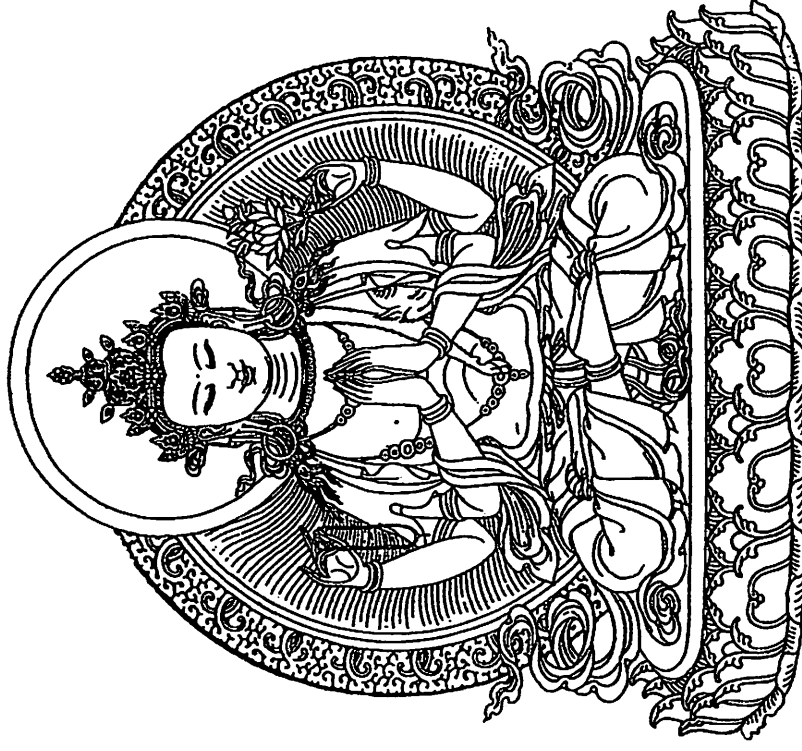
First we need to understand that Chenrezig is both an appearance, the divine manifestation as well as an essence, the inner reality, with one not excluding or contradicting the other. The appearance of Chenrezig is the symbol of his essence made manifest. Through this appearance we can approach the essence of Chenrezig. The appearance does not exhaust the essence anymore than the essence negates the appearance. To pretend that Chenrezig only has an existence outside ourselves would be a mistake. But it would also be a mistake to see him only as an abstraction. Grasping the link between the two aspects of the deity (appearance and essence) is necessary in order to understand both his nature and meditation.

First, who is Chenrezig in essence?

Chenrezig is the mode of being of the mind that is the union of emptiness and compassion. From the viewpoint of the definitive meaning Chenrezig is the ultimate nature of the mind. In other words, one may say that Chenrezig is *bodhicitta* in its two aspects:

- Absolute *bodhicitta* corresponding to emptiness,
- Relative *bodhicitta* corresponding to compassion.

When the nature of the mind is described, one most



Four Arm Chenrezig

often uses the terms emptiness and clarity rather than emptiness and compassion as we just did. In fact, clarity and compassion are one and the same; they designate the dynamic expression of the mind. Many synonyms are used to describe these two indissolubly united aspects:

- emptiness and compassion,
- knowledge and means,
- absolute aspect and relative aspect,
- mode of being and mode of manifestation, and so on.

Whatever words one uses for it, Chenrezig appears from this same reality. He is the awakened nature of each being's own mind, the love and compassion primordially present in the *dharmakaya*.

Chenrezig is within us because love and compassion are not qualities added to the mind. These qualities are part of the awakened state even if, for the moment, this state exists only as a potential for us.

The different degrees of love and compassion that we can observe from one being to another correspond to a greater or smaller actualization of this potential, and to the influence in greater or lesser degree of Chenrezig in ourselves. But one cannot say that any being is totally without love and compassion, because this would deny in that being the awakened nature common to all beings. Merely, the veils covering the mind can temporarily be so thick that the latent qualities cannot express themselves at all.

The fundamental dysfunctioning of our mind takes the form of a separation between I and other. We falsely grasp

at an "I" on which attachment grafts itself at the same time as we conceive of an "other" that is the basis of aversion. This duality prevents the free and spontaneous expression of love and compassion and holds them in a potential state. The result of this is that, instead of wishing for the happiness of beings, we wish for our own happiness. Instead of aspiring to the removal of their suffering, we aspire to the removal of our own suffering. Instead of rejoicing in the happiness of others, we rejoice in our own happiness. Instead of looking equally on all beings, we become involved in games of preference and partiality. Therefore, "our" Chenrezig remains hidden.

Saying that Chenrezig is the ultimate nature of the mind does not negate his form manifestation. The essence expresses itself through an appearance. Chenrezig exists on the level of definitive meaning and also on the level of literal meaning where he appears in the form of the deity by which he is usually known. He is the visible expression taken by all the buddhas to help us activate the love and compassion that are presently only a potential in us and to reveal the ultimate Chenrezig in ourselves. Even his name expresses his nature; each syllable that composes it in Tibetan has a meaning:

- *chen* means eye;
- *re* gives an idea of continuity;
- *zig* means to look.

Therefore *Chenrezig* is the one who "continually looks upon all beings with the eye of compassion."

The relationship between Chenrezig as the potential of

compassion in our mind and Chenrezig appearing as a divine form is the real foundation of the practice:

- On one hand, Chenrezig as a manifested deity is charged with and transmits the power of the grace and compassion of the mind of all buddhas;
- On the other hand, our own mind is endowed with the potentiality of love and compassion;
- Thirdly, the ineluctable interconnection that links everything causes the first factor to necessarily act on the second one and reveal it.

Without the potentiality of our mind the deity remains an external, beautiful, and luminous but ineffectual appearance. Without the deity our potential remains ineffective. This is from the point of view of the path. However, from the point of view of the ultimate awakening beyond the notions of external and internal and beyond any duality, no difference exists any longer between the deity and our own mind that is itself buddha.

When we do the meditation of Chenrezig, if we see love and compassion grow in our mind, it is a sign that our practice is fruitful. The relative Chenrezig is then a support to develop the absolute Chenrezig who always dwells within us. Understanding that Chenrezig is never in reality separated from us and that he is inherent in our mind allows us to deeply penetrate the practice.

We need the relative Chenrezig to realize the ultimate Chenrezig. The meditation on the form and attributes of the deity and the recitation of his *mantra* brings us to the realization of the compassion present in our own mind that

is also emptiness. The power of grace transmitted by the relative Chenrezig leads us to the absolute nature of our own mind whose dynamic is love and compassion.

COMPASSION

Chenrezig and compassion are, as we have just seen, the same reality. The Great Compassionate One is the form taken by the dynamic of the formless mind. One should therefore understand the nature of love and compassion.

We must first appreciate how fortunate we are to have a human existence. If we compare our greatest sufferings or gravest difficulties to those animals endure, we will see that our condition is not nearly as painful as theirs. When, for instance, an animal is sick, its physical suffering is the same as that of a human who falls sick, but the animal has no means to lessen its pain; it cannot describe it, it has neither a physician nor medicine on which to rely. When it is exposed to great cold or intense heat, it does not have any means of protecting itself. When one imposes on it the hardest work, the animal has no freedom to refuse. Whereas humans, even the poorest and most impoverished, have a small measure of freedom with which they can attempt to find the means that will improve their lot.

Most people, however, only see their own suffering and lament ceaselessly about themselves: "How much I suffer! How long is the sickness! How painful my condition! How great our difficulties!" They never think of

A teaching on the Bodhisattva Chenrezig, by Acharya Lama Sönam Rabgye, from August, 2009, in Munster, Germany

Introduction

May I greet you kindly and say many tashi-de-le to you. I am very happy that you have come to take part in the Chenrezig course. Before discussing the practice, let us chant The Short Dorje Chang Lineage Prayer together and relax for a few minutes afterwards.

The Reason for Practicing

Let me first speak about the reason we engage in the practice of Bodhisattva Chenrezig and Buddhist meditations. Chenrezig meditation is one of the main practices in Buddhism, especially in Mahayana and Tibetan Buddhism. It's a very profound and widespread practice. Even little children in Himalayan countries recite the mantra of Noble Chenrezig very easily. Knowing or not knowing the meaning and reason for practicing make a big difference, though.

Knowledge of the meaning and benefit of practice is won by examining and testing. Knowing through analysis means understanding, "Oh yes, this is why people practice Chenrezig and why they are meditating. I want to find out for myself, so I will practice too."

Knowing the reason stabilizes our confidence and determination. By finding the reason, our doubts are dispelled and then we have more energy and strength. Some disciples don't need to find reasons and needn't engage in analytical research to know why it's good to practice, because they have inner faith and trust that practicing is beneficial. But such persons are an exception. They have no doubts and are certain, "This is authentic and true."

His Holiness the Gyalwa Karmapa said that one's practice is more stable if one knows the reason why one is practicing. In Tibet, many people only have trust and confidence and are very successful. Some people in Tibet don't even know what the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha are and don't know what taking refuge means, but inside they have deep faith and confidence in the Three Jewels.

There was a great man named Kongpo Ben in Tibet. He travelled to visit the Jowo Statue of Buddha Shakyamuni in the Jokhang at Lhasa. After he entered the temple, he talked to the Buddha statue because he felt that it was real. He said to

the Buddha, “I came the long distance from Kongpo and am so happy to see you. Please accept my shoes as a present to you. I want to make three prostrations and circumambulate you.” He made three prostrations and placed his shoes next to the statue on the shrine before setting out to make circumambulations. He saw all the offerings and the huge butter lamp on the shrine and thought they were meant for visitors. He was hungry, so he took a little bit from the offerings. The caretaker came, saw him eating the offerings, and said, “Why did you take food from the offering bowls? And you shouldn’t put your shoes on the shrine.” He wanted to throw the shoes out and the Buddha statue spoke, “No, no, don’t throw my shoes out.” After the Buddha had spoken and he had met him face-to-face, Kongpo Ben was certain that the Buddha had a very pure heart. He asked the Buddha, “Do you want to come to my place next year? I have very special beer and dry meat that I would like to give to you.”

After having returned home, Kongpo Ben did not stop thinking that the Buddha had promised to visit him. When his wife went down to the river to fetch water every day, she kept watching to see if a visitor was arriving. After all, her husband never stopped telling everyone that the Buddha would come and they should inform him if they saw anyone special.

One day his wife returned home from the river with a bucket of water and told him, “You always told me that you are expecting a very important visitor. I just saw someone who looked important at the river.” Kongpo Ben rushed to the river and saw the image of the Buddha in the water. Worried about the Buddha being underwater, he jumped into the river, caught hold of him, and pulled him out. The Buddha said to him, “Actually, I am beyond a physical body. But I appeared here because you always remember me. You are a very special and faithful disciple, so we have a connection.” As they proceeded towards the village, they arrived in front of a big rock on the side of the road. The Buddha did not want to go any further and disappeared into the rock. Even today, an image of the Buddha is visible in the rock. If you have the sacred text composed by Patrul Rinpoche, Kun-bzang-bla-ma'i-zhāl-lung, translated into English as *Words of My Perfect Teacher*, you can read the story of Kongpo Ben who later became known as Jowo Ben.

It’s very important to know why we practice. From the Buddhist point of view, since beginningless time all sentient beings have Bodhicitta-mind or the true nature of mind – these are a few of the many terms used when referring to the Buddha nature. We read in *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* by Je Gampopa that all living beings, even the smallest animals, have the inner, unlimited potential of

Buddhahood. Nobody is higher or lower or bigger or smaller than anyone else – everyone is the same in that they have the Buddha nature.

Gampopa presented the example of milk and butter and wrote that butter is always connected with milk, just like oil is always inside a sesame seed. But we can't see this. Why? Because they are concealed. Likewise, we have the same essence as the Buddha and in that respect aren't different from him. But the Buddha had overcome all obscurations, like the mental defilements and negative emotions, and therefore his Buddha nature manifested clearly in many places and in many ways. As long as we aren't free from our obscurations, our true nature cannot manifest fully. It's important for us to feel that we are always endowed with the great quality of Buddha nature, just like milk and butter are indivisible, but butter can't be won if milk isn't churned. If we know how to churn milk, it's easy for us to win butter. In the same way, sentient beings haven't revealed their Buddha nature but can manifest it if they work at it.

Lord Buddha said, "I realized reality and showed the different methods of the path. Whether you walk the path or not depends on you. If you walk the path, you will find your Buddha nature." We have to learn to appreciate and acknowledge that we already have all good qualities within and therefore can develop and benefit in many good ways in our ordinary lives. So, those are the reasons we practice. We don't only practice for the sake of our ordinary life but also for the sake of our spiritual life. Therefore we meditate.

The main and basic quality that we have to develop is inner peace of mind and loving kindness and compassion, Bodhicitta. We all have Bodhicitta by nature. We really want to understand and develop it fully, though, and we should never become discouraged. All sentient beings have the root of loving kindness and compassion, but it needs to be developed and increased through meditation. We can feel deep inside that we have Bodhicitta when we have love and compassion for those who are near and dear to us, for example, for our family members and friends. We can really feel this when things aren't going well for them and we want to help them.

We try all the time to rid ourselves of any suffering we have and to be happy. We think that nobody is different, that all sentient beings are the same. Everybody tries to become free of any suffering or unhappiness they have and try their best to be happy. Therefore we feel, "Just as I want to be happy and do not want to suffer or be unhappy, may all sentient beings be happy and free of suffering." That is how

we train and develop our practice. But we have to really feel inside, “Oh, I have a lot of compassion.”

A second way to understand that we have Bodhicitta is reading the life stories of great masters, for instance, the life story of Lord Buddha, Jetsün Milarepa, or His Holiness the Gyalwa Karmapa. When we learn about their lives, sometimes tears come to our eyes or our body hairs stand up. These are also signs that we have the pure potential or seed of Bodhicitta within. Another sign is that people cry when they see a high person like His Holiness the Gyalwa Karmapa. Our potential is awakened in moments like that. Je Gampopa said that all sentient beings are endowed with this quality, but in some it is awakened and in others it's not awakened. So we all have to awaken our love and compassion. How do we do this?

The first step is recognizing that we have love and compassion. We can acknowledge this due to feelings of love and compassion that we have and the energy flowing through our body when we see someone in sickness or pain. Or we can acknowledge this due to the feelings we have, like our body hairs rising or tears coming to our eyes when we hear about the lives of Bodhisattvas or see a highly realized master. These are signs that we have the good qualities.

In the monasteries, we carry out debates and dispute this issue with each other. In the debates, we ask each other questions like, “What is the source of smoke?” The answer is, “Fire causes smoke.” Everything has a cause and result, so in the same way as fire is the source of smoke, Bodhicitta-mind is the source of love and compassion. Through debating in this way, doubts are eliminated and we come to really know. Let us do a short meditation now and see if we can feel the warmth of love and compassion in our heart.

Having spoken about the reasons we practice and confident that practicing will be very beneficial, the second point I want to discuss is the root or basis of our practice, which is loving kindness and compassion

The Basis of Practice

The Buddha spoke about the main point of practice in the 84,000 teachings that he gave. All teachings are contained in The Three Pitakas, the Vinaya-Pitaka, the Sutra-Pitaka, and the Abhidharma-Pitaka. The first concerns giving up harming others, and the second deals with trying to benefit oneself as well as all sentient beings. Again, the root of Buddhist practice is love and compassion which are developed by refraining from harming others and by benefiting oneself and all

sentient beings. From among the two, compassion is more powerful than love and is our principal motivation. Daia is the Sanskrit term for ‘love,’ and karuna is the Sanskrit term for ‘compassion.’

Practice means connecting our mind more and more with the quality of loving kindness and compassion. If our negative emotions diminish through practice and we try to benefit others, a peaceful and harmonious energy naturally arises within us, like the sun and moon. This is the essence and main teaching of all religions. If we really feel love and compassion, we will be able to deal with our emotions more easily, our life will be more harmonious and relaxed, and we will be more reliable. Our energy will be more peaceful and we can share with all sentient beings.

Sometimes we have problems, which are emotional, right? Emotions - disturbing emotions like desire, attachment, anger, aggression, sadness, doubt, fear, and so forth - always cause problems and disturb our lives. So our practice consists of overcoming our emotions. How do we do this? By recognizing that an emotion is an emotion and isn’t permanent, by remembering that we don’t want to take it seriously, and by knowing that the true nature of our mind is always pure. Then we can develop love and compassion, even when an emotion arises. We try to let an emotion be by meditating love and compassion. If we see other people giving in to their emotions, we realize that this isn’t their true nature and have love and compassion for them. Meditation is like this.

Of course, disturbing emotions arise in our daily life due to causes and conditions and because we aren’t really free from attachment, desire, and anger. We lead our lives in dependence upon causes and conditions, which are our emotions. We’re all subject to the karmic workings of our emotions, so it’s important to understand this process and then to deal with our emotions through the meditation practice of love and compassion.

Compassion means having a big, open, and vast heart. In the Milarepa Guru Yoga, a big and open heart is described as snying-rje-chen-po, ‘great compassion,’ sems-chen-snying-rje-chen-po. Sems-chen-po means ‘big and vast mind.’ Great diligence and great Geduld (‘patience’ in German) are also qualities of a Bodhisattva. Whoever has great compassion, great love, great diligence, and great patience is called “a Bodhisattva.” This is pure and supreme Bodhicitta. We know that we all have the chance to develop Bodhicitta and that it’s very important in life. If we lose contact to our big heart, then our life becomes very difficult. When we realize this, then we have the energy to develop Bodhicitta, not only on a

spiritual level but also in daily life. We need to help and connect meaningfully with each other all the time, so we need to stabilize our qualities. It's especially important to apply love and compassion when angry and aggressive emotions arise.

What is the opposite of love and compassion? Anger and hatred. If we are aggressive and angry all the time, we cannot feel love and compassion because our energy is disturbed. It's very necessary to have love, compassion, and patience in society. In the sixth chapter on patience in *The Bodhicharyavatara*, Shantideva said that next to love and compassion, patience is most important. He said that if we lose patience and are angry and aggressive, we cannot connect with people, not even with people near and dear to us. When we have a bad temper, our body shakes and we make many mistakes. Then our face changes fully, turns red, and people feel sad. For example, if I am a very good person but become involved with my emotions, or am in a bad mood, or become angry, then all my friends and relations distance themselves from me. They think, "He is really a nice person but is fully changed. He has lost his love and compassion and is full of anger and rage." Friends and relatives feel sad and think, "I am sorry for that." We need to recognize an emotion when it arises and know through reasoning that becoming involved with any emotion helps nobody.

Turning our attention inwards on our essence is having Bodhicitta-mind. Our inner essence is pure – it is the Buddha nature. So, it's better to distance ourselves from people who are not nice to us, who tell us, "You are bad," because we might become involved in an argument with them and will then lose our peaceful mind of loving kindness and compassion. By understanding this, we can develop our inner quality. This is one method. Another method to settle down so that we can develop and increase our Bodhicitta is to turn to Bodhisattva Chenrezig and recite his mantra, OM MANI PEMA HUNG.

We are all good people, but we have to stabilize our goodness. If we lose our love and compassion and become impatient and aggressive, we become bad people.

We are taught that love and compassion is the root of all practices. There are eight great Bodhisattvas. Chenrezig is one of the main Bodhisattvas and is fully enlightened. He is the great Bodhisattva of love and compassion. In a Sutra, the Buddha said, "No other Bodhisattva has as much love and compassion as Chenrezig. His love and compassion are limitless."

There are long and short meditation practices of Noble Chenrezig. They can be practiced on the level of both Sutrayana and Tantrayana and are just different means to develop Bodhicitta more and more. You are welcome to ask any questions that you might have.

Question: “If I know that I am right and someone I am arguing with makes contrary claims and becomes aggressive, what should I do?”

Translator: “What’s the problem? Do you beat each other up?”

Same student: “No. How should I deal with this?”

Lama Sönam: You have to find out why he thinks differently and find another solution.

Same student: “It’s not a matter of finding a topic but of dealing with his emotions.”

Translator: “It’s not the subject but the attitude.”

Lama Sönam: Attitude, yes, that comes out sometimes. If someone tries to convince you of his point of view and becomes aggressive, it would be good to distance yourself. Mindfulness and awareness are important.

Translator: “Immer wieder Selbstprüfung (‘check yourself again and again’).”

Next question: “Is the aim of the Chenrezig meditation to always maintain and be connected with one’s true nature of love and compassion in daily life?”

Lama Sönam: Yes, it’s like that. Through the practice of Chenrezig, we connect with the blessing. Love and compassion are always there. Same student: “What about the path of practice? There is one part, which is to recite the text, and there is the other practice of dealing with problems in normal life.”

Lama Sönam: You can also engage in the practices of the four immeasurables - immeasurable love, immeasurable compassion, immeasurable joy, and immeasurable equanimity.

Same student: “I formulated my question wrongly. Maybe the problem is that I didn’t ask my question right but just said something and wanted to hear if I

understood correctly. So, we practice the recitation and we have practice for daily life. How can I use the practice of Chenrezig and respond in daily life when I encounter problems?”

Lama Sönam: As I mentioned earlier, the essence of Chenrezig is love and compassion. Apply the practice and look inside when problems and emotions arise in daily life. This is the remedy. If you don't have enough time to recite the entire Sadhana, which is the case when you encounter problems, just feel love and compassion inside and recite Chenrezig's mantra, OM MANI PEMA HUNG. This mantra is the essence of the entire Chenrezig practice. You can also recite the mantra when people expect things of you.

Same student: “How can my practice be more aimed in daily life? ... It's hard for me to formulate my question correctly. I understood that Chenrezig meditation is a means to experience my own nature in a protected place. How can I connect with my inner nature by reciting the mantra when I encounter daily problems? Can I have a key to unlock the door to be able to deal with situations better?”

Lama Sönam: “I don't understand you clearly because my English isn't good enough.

Same student: “My understanding is that through Chenrezig meditation, I make a connection with my true nature. It's easier for me to do prayers, to open my heart, to be stable in a special place. When I am confronted with problems in daily life, do I use the key of the mantra to contact my true nature again quickly? Is this the right understanding?”

Lama Sönam: Yes, that is correct. Translator: “He asked if there are any other tools to directly go into the stream of his big heart when he is angry, because anger is very strong? The mantra is okay, but maybe you know another tool how to directly make his true nature present?”

Lama Sönam: Yes, the true nature. Patience. It's not easy at a beginning level, but you have to try and then it becomes something that you can experience within. Jetsün Milarepa said, “sGom-pa-ma-yin gom-pa-yin.” The two words sound alike but the spelling is different. Gom-pa means ‘to become familiar’ and sgom-pa means ‘to meditate.’ In this instruction, Milarepa taught that true meditation means having becoming familiar with our true nature. If you are familiar with your meditation, then you can relax. But you have to train again and again and then it comes spontaneously

Let us sing the following spiritual song together before turning our attention to the Sadhana:

*“All you sentient beings I have a good or bad connection with
As soon as you’ve left this confus’d dimension,
May you be born in the West, in Sukhavati,
And when you’re born there, complete the bhumis and the paths.”*

The Sadhana of Bodhisattva Chenrezig, entitled The Universal Practice to Benefit Beings – A Meditation on the Most Sublime Chenrezig and the Recitation of His Mantra, as He Transmitted it Directly to Tangtong Gyalpo, Prince of Siddhas

The Chenrezig Sadhana that we will be practicing and studying was composed by Tangtong Gyalpo, who was born approx. 1361 C.E. and lived until 1485. He is revered as a great Mahasiddha in Tibet because he was very special. It is said that he was the very emanation of Bodhisattva Chenrezig. While meditating, Chenrezig appeared to Tangtong Gyalpo face-to-face and gave him the instructions. He wrote them down, so the Sadhana is not an ordinary text but is very precious. It has an exceptional blessing and therefore is the main practice of many monks and lay people of Tibet who wish to be connected with Chenrezig.

In the Sadhana, first there is the short Lineage Prayer to Vajradhara and then the long Lineage Prayer. We can choose to recite the one or the other because this prayer is extra and then we can proceed to the main section of the practice.

Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana practices always begin with taking refuge. It is recited to establish the appropriate base and is the first gate we enter. The second gate is generating Bodhicitta to establish the appropriate base for Mahayana. The third gate is the visualization practice of the creation and completion stages, which is Vajrayana. The conclusion is dedicating the merit and prayers. So Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana are included in the practice of Chenrezig.

1. Taking Refuge and Generating Bodhicitta

The Refuge Prayer in the Chenrezig Sadhana that we recite is:

*“In the Buddha, Dharma, and noblest Sangha
I take refuge until enlightenment is reached.”*

There is an outer refuge and an inner refuge. The Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha are the outer refuges. A thangka (‘painting’) or statue of the Buddha is a symbol of the Buddha. A text symbolizes his teachings, the Dharma, and the assembly of the fully ordained and lay practitioners stands for the noble Sangha. The inner aspect of Zuflucht (‘refuge’ in German) is the Lama, Yidam, and Wisdom-Protectors.

As practitioners, we’re not concerned about having more than we already have nor do we care about being better off – it’s not like that. In the way of Chenrezig, we pray on behalf of and for the sake of all sentient beings - all our male family members and friends who we imagine are at our right side and all our female family members and friends who we imagine are at our left side. We imagine all our human relatives and relations, our mother, father, brothers, sisters, sons, and daughters at our right and left sides.

All sentient beings of the six realms we feel indifferent about are situated behind us. The texts state that it’s most difficult to have love and compassion for our enemies, so we imagine them in front of us. Always complaining and blaming us, being a nuisance, being angry, and not being nice to us, it’s not easy to have love and compassion for them. This is one aspect of our enemies. Another aspect of our enemies is our karmic connections that manifest as suffering and problems due to negativities we did in past lives. So we imagine all our enemies in front of us. We see ourselves as the guide and guardian of all those beings we imagine surrounding us when we take refuge.

Why do we practice taking refuge in the Three Jewels? The Buddha is the supreme human being who is fully free from suffering. We take refuge in the Buddha because he protects against the confusion and temporary suffering of samsara. He is like a physician. The Dharma is his teachings and is like medicine. The Sangha are the helpers who show us how to practice; they are like nurses who are always nice to patients, take care of them, and tell them how to use the medicine correctly. We need the protection of the Three Jewels so that we become cured of our negative emotions and wrong ways of seeing things.

The ultimate refuge is our Buddha nature or Bodhicitta. When we have realized our mind’s true nature or Bodhicitta, then we will have vanquished all our negative

emotions and defilements and will have reached the state of Buddhahood. At that time, we don't need the Dharma and the Sangha anymore. The example is crossing a big river. When crossing a big river, we need a boat. When we have reached the other shore, we don't need the boat anymore. Until we reach the state of Buddhahood, we need the Dharma and the Sangha. When we have become a buddha and are thus fully enlightened, we don't need the Dharma and Sangha anymore.

Translator: "So we don't need the Buddha then?"

Lama Sönam: When we have reached the state of a buddha, we don't need the two other objects of refuge to cross the ocean of samsara because we will have crossed it. Therefore we continually practice going for refuge in the Three Jewels.

Bodhisattva Chenrezig is our main object of refuge. He is the embodiment of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. Whoever we see as our Root Guru - whether His Holiness the Gyalwa Karmapa or our Root Lama -, we visualize Chenrezig and our Root Guru as inseparable in space in front of us. This is the same as the outer practice of Guru Yoga. Chenrezig's heart is the Buddha, his speech is the Dharma, and his body is the Sangha. Without any doubt, we need to trust him fully.

Just as Je Gampopa stated in *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*, we need to fully appreciate what we are doing. He spoke about three kinds of faith and wrote, "Whenever we practice, we need trusting faith, longing faith, and clear faith." We know without doubt that Chenrezig is enough – he is our guide, our protector, and our main Yidam deity. He is the embodiment of all aspects of enlightenment. When we imagine him in front, we feel and think, "You are my only guide and protector. You are enough for me."

Having taken refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha in the name of all living beings, we develop Bodhicitta, which means not being concerned about ourselves, i.e., if we have enough, we have enough; if we are healthy, then it's okay. We need something to work with, so by meditating Chenrezig and reciting *The Bodhicitta Prayer*, we imagine that all suffering, illusions, and disturbing emotions of all sentient beings are pacified. This is one way of developing and increasing Bodhicitta.

Another way to develop and increase Bodhicitta is to reflect that all sentient beings are just like our mother in this life. We contemplate how our mother gave birth to us, how she cared for us, how she kept us warm when we were cold, that

she always gave us milk to drink, that she showed us everything, and that she was extremely kind to us. In Buddhism, we think that we had a mother in every former life, that she was just as kind to us as our present mother, and that all sentient beings are connected as child-mother and mother-child. Realizing this, we want to share the best with them by attaining the Bodhisattva qualities of Noble Chenrezig. This is the purpose of The Bodhicitta Aspiration Prayer - we want to attain the same qualities that Chenrezig has to be able to help all mother-sentient beings who are confused and suffering in samsara. We really want to help them and therefore resolve to transcend samsara and attain liberation.

The Bodhicitta Aspiration Prayer that we recite with pure intention is:

*“Through the virtue generated by this meditation and mantra-recitation,
May I achieve Buddhahood for the benefit of all beings.”*

Having meditated this way, Chenrezig dissolves into light, dissolves into us, and we feel that we have received the power of his blessings; we feel that we have connected with him. This is the training.

I’m sure you all have a good connection to Bodhisttva Chenrezig. Although it isn’t necessary, I give the oral reading transmission in accordance with the tradition so that you can practice the Sadhana.

2. The Creation Stage of Practice

Visualizing Chenrezig is a Vajrayana practice and includes calm abiding meditation through the creation stage of practice and special insight meditation through the completion stage of practice. The terms are different, but the meaning is almost the same. Since all appearances and experiences are the inseparability of the ultimate and relative truths, both aspects are a part of Vajrayana meditation practices. The completion stage of practice is carried out after the creation stage, ‘completion’ meaning the dissolution of everything into emptiness. This stage of practice coincides with the ultimate truth.

We visualize above our heads and the heads of all sentient beings surrounding us a lotus flower with eight petals that serves as a seat. On top of the lotus-seat is a moon-disc that serves as a cushion. On top of the moon-disc is Chenrezig’s seed syllable, the extraordinary letter HRIH, which is just as white as sparkling snow. This is a very nice calm abiding meditation with a pure object. We visualize that bright, five-coloured light radiates from the syllable HRIH as an offering to the

Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the ten directions. The light returns and dissolves into the syllable HRIH, which transforms into Chenrezig.

We know how Chenrezig looks from thangkas and statues. His body is white in colour, which means that he has purified and is free from all negativities and that he has realized the inseparability of relative and ultimate Bodhicitta. There are images of different aspects of Chenrezig, with one thousand arms, eleven arms, four arms, two arms - but there is no one-armed Chenrezig. The main practice of Chenrezig is the four-armed Chenrezig. The four arms symbolize that he has ultimate Bodhicitta, which are the four immeasurables - immeasurable love, immeasurable compassion, immeasurable joy, and immeasurable equanimity.

The first two hands of Chenrezig are folded at his heart and hold a jewel. A jewel is something very precious and symbolizes richness and wealth, so possessing it means that one has no problems and is always happy and content. In the hands of Chenrezig, the jewel symbolizes that through his immeasurable love and compassion he fulfils the wishes and needs of all sentient beings. Chenrezig is like that. In his right hand he holds a mala, in his left hand a lotus flower. His mala is just as precious as a rosary is to Christians. It symbolizes Chenrezig's pledge and commitment to lead all sentient beings to enlightenment. His realization is the same as that of the Buddha, but he remains on the ten Bodhisattva bhumis, i.e., he is still with us and, just as he promised, he will continue emanating in the world until all sentient beings are completely enlightened. This is why many emanations of Chenrezig appear in the world, like His Holiness the Gyalwa Karmapa and other great masters. The lotus flower in his left hand means he dwells in samsara. Just as the pure lotus abides in mud, he is free from defilements and obscurations while abiding in samsara.

The lines of the creation stage of visualization practice in the Sadhana are very clear and easy to understand. The first verse that we recite while visualizing the instructions is:

“Above my head and above the heads of all beings throughout space is a white lotus flower bearing a moon-disc. Upon it is the syllable HRIH, which becomes the most sublime Chenrezig, white, bright, radiating five-coloured lights, smiling, gazing with great compassion, having one face, four arms, the upper two held together, and the lower holding a crystal rosary and white lotus.”

Bodhisattva Chenrezig appears in the Sambhogakaya form. As you know, there are three kayas. They are the Dharmakaya ('the truth body'), the Sambhogakaya ('the

enjoyment body’), and the Nirmanakaya (‘the manifest body’). The three kayas are the pure, inner qualities of our body, speech, and mind. All Sambhogakaya deities, e.g., Arya Tara, Dorje Sempa, Vajradhara, have the same eight ornaments and wear the same five peaceful robes; they are the thirteen symbols of the Sambhogakaya form. Chenrezig also wears the five peaceful robes and is also adorned with eight ornaments. The eight ornaments are the crown, earrings, finger rings, necklaces, jewelled shoulder pads, bracelets, anklets, and a belt studded with jewels; so, not only the female Yidams wear jewels. The five peaceful robes are two upper garments, two lower garments, and a shawl over the shoulder. You can learn the names of the robes in commentaries on the Chenrezig Sadhana.

The antelope is a very special animal and represents Krishna in Hindu mythology. It’s also said to be an emanation of Chenrezig. The antelope is always completely peaceful, and Chenrezig is also always completely peaceful and smiling. Therefore he has an antelope pelt over his left breast. Chenrezig is the Bodhisattva of the inseparability of supreme compassion and wisdom of emptiness, symbolized by the antelope pelt.

Chenrezig belongs to the family of Buddha Amitabha, therefore the Buddha of Limitless Light is above the crown of Chenrezig. We can say that Buddha Amitabha is Chenrezig’s Lehrer (‘teacher’ in German). They are always united.

Chenrezig is always seated in the vajra-posture and is seen leaning back against a pure and bright moon-disc, which means that he is always at peace. He has an unimaginable, extraordinary energy and therefore he smiles very peacefully. He is the very embodiment of the Three Jewels and the Three Roots - the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, the Lama, the Yidams, and the Protectors - and he is always with us. We visualize this during the creation stage of meditation.

We recite the verse of the Sadhana while visualizing the instructions, which is:

“Adorned with fine silken clothes and precious gems, wearing an antelope-skin as a mantlet, crowned with the glory of Amitabha, seated in the vajra-posture with an immaculate moon for a backrest – this is the essence of all sources of refuge, fused together.”

Then we visualize that from Chenrezig’s body - his forehead, his throat, and his heart - five-coloured light radiates out to all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in the ten directions, returns, and dissolves into all sentient beings, purifying them of all their negativities and defilements. Then they transform into Chenrezig. We just feel this,

and this is how we train to have the pure vision, pure concepts, pure appearances. All impurities of beings in the six realms of samsara are purified and they transform into Chenrezig, becoming brothers and sisters or sons and daughters of Chenrezig. We feel that the entire outer world has been transformed into the Pure Land of Chenrezig and all sentient beings of the inner world are transformed into Chenrezig. Let us recite the prayer and meditate in this way for a short while together:

“I and all beings pray to our Lama, the most sublime Chenrezig, clearly visualized as above. We pray in unison and with full concentration, ‘Whatever you do, you know best; we rely on you single-mindedly, regardless of any other concern. Please free us from the six realms of samsara and lead us to the all-knowing state.’”

(It is written in the Sadhana: *“Repeat this prayer as much as you can, 7, 21, 100, or any number of times until your being ‘boils up’ with fervour and your disposition has definitely changed. If you so wish, here you may insert The Seven-Branch Prayer composed by Gelongma Palmo, or Gelong Pema Karpo’s prayer to Chenrezig, his Yidam, or any other such prayer rich in blessing. This will be of further benefit.”*) Before continuing with the teachings, though, please ask any questions you might have.

Question: “I have a question. When visualizing, do I imagine Chenrezig as he is seen in a picture in the thangka or statue? How large should he be? Is he just light? Is he like a real person?”

Lama Sönam: He should not be visualized like a body consisting of flesh and bones. The deities are visualized as the inseparability of form and emptiness. The example used is the rainbow. Its colours appear brightly and intensely, but it doesn’t truly exist. It arises and ceases again, right? In visualization practice, the deity’s form is like a rainbow – the inseparability of form and emptiness. The image we visualize is not a flat body like in the in a thangka, but it is form-emptiness, i.e., wisdom and compassion inseparable.

Same student: “But it’s here?”

Lama Sönam: Yes, you visualize the deity in front of yourself. The text doesn’t state how big or small the image should be. You just imagine the size of the deity according to your inner feeling, how comfortable you feel, and how familiar you are with it.

Next question: “Why is it the syllable HRIH and not HUNG?”

Lama Sönam: Each deity has an own seed-syllable because it means something different. For instance, the seed-syllable of Arya Tara is TAM.

Translator: “So it’s a matter of the language, whether you say ‘cow’ or Kuh (‘cow’ in German).”

Lama Sönam: The seed-syllable of each deity refers to a different aspect and a special connection. The seed-syllable of Chenrezig is HRIH; the seed-syllable of Tara is TAM.

Same student: “So, there’s no reason why it’s so? You cannot make it another way?”

Lama Sönam: Another way? A specific seed-syllable is connected with a specific deity.

Same student: “So, there’s no text written by somebody who explained why it’s like this?”

Lama Sönam: You mean why HRIH, for example, isn’t the seed-syllable of all deities?

Same student: “Yes, or why it arises out of a syllable? HUNG is easier, but HRIH is difficult. I painted it again and again and thought it would become easier, but it didn’t.”

Lama Sönam: Everything has a reason, the different colours, the arms and hands, the mala, and the flower. HRHI is Chenrezig’s element. The seed of an ordinary being is the union of the father and mother elements, right? After the elements have united, the seed develops more and more and a form with eyes, ears, nose, tongue, etc. evolves and grows. Slowly this form grows and grows and grows and is born into the world. The process of visualization is like this. When you visualize Chenrezig, the HRIH is like this. We visualize light offerings going out from the HRIH to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The light returns and dissolves into the seed-syllable. Then HRIH completely becomes Chenrezig. Every deity has a different seed-syllable, and HRIH is the seed-syllable of Chenrezig. Is it clear?

Same student: “A little bit.”

Translator: “The Christian Bible begins with the statement, ‘In the beginning was the word.’”

Lama Sönam: In Vajrayana, visualizing a deity is similar to the process of becoming a human being. It is practicing to transform one’s impure seed, one’s body, speech, and mind, into the pure form of a deity. That is why we engage in visualization practices. It’s not necessary to ponder why HRIH isn’t visualized for Tara, which would only be a terminological issue. Each deity has an own seed-syllable, just like the father and mother elements unite and become a specific seed. We could ask: If everything is the same, why aren’t there totally identical people? Why do people have different characters if everything is the same? There’s no answer to questions like this. The father and mother elements are the seed that are like a deity’s seed-syllable. The seed-syllables of a deity vary, because every deity has a specific aspect.

Next question: “I have a short question. I always noticed that Chenrezig is connected to Buddha Amitabha. Is it wrong to connect his mantra to Amitabha?”

Lama Sönam: Chenrezig belongs to the Buddha family of Amitabha.

Translator: “White Tara also belongs?”

Lama Sönam: Yes, that refers to the different texts. There are lotus and vajra texts of deities of deities. There are five Buddha families in all and each has different texts. Many peaceful deities belong to the lotus family. Amitabha is the main deity of the lotus family, so he has lotus texts. There are also the Buddha families of Amoghasiddhi and Ratnasambhava and they have other texts. Tara and Chenrezig belong to the lotus family. But it would go too far to discuss this. We are concentrating on Chenrezig now.

The Seven-Branch Prayer

Let us recite The Seven-Branch Prayer together. It is:

“Filled with appreciation, I pay homage to the sublime One, mighty Chenrezig, and to all the Victors and their Sons in the ten directions and three times.

Offering flowers, incense, butter-lamps, perfumes, food, music, and other real and imaginary offerings, I pray this gathering of Realised Beings to accept them.

I confess all faults committed since beginningless time through a mind overpowered by negativity – the ten unvirtuous actions, the five capital offences of no reprieve, and so forth.

I rejoice in the goodness of whatever virtue Shravakas, Pratyekabuddhas, Bodhisattvas, ordinary beings, or anybody has accumulated in the three times.

I pray that the Dharma Wheel – of the Mahayana, Hinayana, and of the teachings common to both – be turned in accordance with the wishes and aptitudes of beings.

I pray that until samsara has been completely annihilated, you will not pass away but will look with compassion upon the beings sunk in suffering's vast ocean.

Whatever virtue I thus accumulate, may it all be a cause for enlightenment. May I reach without delay the full skills of a true guide for beings."

The first branch of the prayer is making prostrations and paying homage to Bodhisattva Chenrezig. The purpose of making phyag-'tsäl-lo is to overcome pride. The second branch concerns making actual and mental offerings to the deity to overcome greed and grasping, which can be a problem - sometimes. People have many things, keep what they have for themselves, and cannot give anything away. They cannot be generous, so making offerings is practiced to overcome miserliness.

The third branch of the prayer is making confessions, which is a power of thought to clear away hindrances to spiritual progress. Sometimes we do things knowingly; sometimes we do things without control. This verse addresses the ten unvirtuous actions that we knowingly or unknowingly committed and we confess to Chenrezig. The most negative deeds are killing one's mother, father, or an Arhat, splitting the Sangha, etc. Of course, we never did things like that, but maybe we did in a previous life.

We aren't Bodhisattvas and it's normal not to want to hurt anyone, but it happens. It's important to recognize and know, "Oh, I did something wrong that isn't good for others and isn't good karma for me." We just need to recognize anything negative we did and refrain from repeating it. Knowing that we did something wrong and regretting it, we confess it to Chenrezig. If we confess with remorse, then our negative karma becomes purified. Now, unvirtuous deeds are not qualities, but confessing them is a quality. If we recognize that we did something wrong and

really regret it, we confess and promise, “I will never do that again.” That’s how we purify our negative karma.

The fourth branch addresses rejoicing in the *bsöd-nams*, ‘virtue,’ of other living beings. It is: “I rejoice in the goodness of whatever virtue Shravakas, Pratyekabuddhas, Bodhisattvas, ordinary beings, or anybody has accumulated in the three times.” Rejoicing in others’ positive deeds dispels our jealousy and hatred. It is very great to realize that it’s special and thus to be happy when someone else does something good with body, speech, and mind. By rejoicing in others’ good deeds, the beneficial result is the same as if we had performed the virtuous action ourselves. On the other hand, if we are happy that someone did something bad and engaged in wrong-doing by thinking, for example, “He did something really good when he beat that other person up and stole from him,” then the result is the same as if we had committed the unvirtuous action ourselves. So, it’s only beneficial to rejoice in the good deeds of others and not to be happy when they hurt others. There is a story about a king who lived during the Buddha’s times, 2600 years ago, that I want to tell. It exemplifies the remedy against hatred and jealousy.

The king invited Lord Buddha and his 500 monks to his palace to offer them many nice things. A very old and very poor lady who always sat at the entrance to the royal grounds dreamed about this and rejoiced about the king’s decision. She exclaimed, “Super!” She realized that he had done something good in his previous life to become a king in this life and even cried that in this life he would be offering many nice things and meals for an entire day to the Buddha and his 500 monks. The Buddha saw this. After the festivities were over, the Buddha asked the king, “Today we did so many good things and accumulated much merit. Of course, we usually dedicate the merit to all sentient beings, but today to whom specifically should we dedicate the merit?” The king was very proud of himself, of how well everything went, and replied, “Today I did so many good things and accumulated much merit. Of course I dedicate it to you.” Lord Buddha told him, “Today we dedicate the merit to the old lady, because she has a pure and clear heart. She rejoiced with body, speech, and mind in your deed.” The moral of the story is to not be jealous but to just rejoice in others’ good deeds. The benefit of rejoicing in others’ good deeds is the same as though we had performed the action, therefore it’s very important.

The fifth verse of The Seven-Branch Prayer is the request that the Wheel of Dharma be turned. We recite it to overcome our ignorance. It is: “I pray that the

Dharma-Wheel – of the Mahayana, Hinayana, and of the teachings common to both – be turned in accordance with the wishes and aptitudes of beings.”

The sixth branch is: “I pray that, until samsara has been completely annihilated, you will not pass away but will look with compassion upon the beings sunk in suffering’s vast ocean.” This line is requesting the teacher not to enter nirvana but to remain in the world so that all sentient beings are rescued from samsaric existence. We recite it to overcome our false views.

The last point, the seventh branch, is: “Whatever virtue I thus accumulate, may it all be a cause for enlightenment. May I reach without delay the full skills of a true guide for beings.” This line is the dedication of merit that we have been able to accumulate so that all sentient beings become liberated. The dedication is very important. Even if we only meditate for five minutes, we are practicing the first paramita of generosity by dedicating the merit to sentient beings. It’s a very good practice

We realize why The Seven-Branch Prayer is included in all Mahayana practices. It’s included in the Medicine Buddha Practice, too.

So far we have looked at the first preliminary practice of taking refuge and generating Bodhicitta and secondly at the main practice of visualizing Chenrezig in what is the creation stage of practice. Thirdly, we discussed The Seven-Branch Prayer. Now I will speak about the mantra-recitation.

The Mantra-Recitation

There is a short special prayer to Chenrezig in the Sadhana that was spoken and composed by Mahasiddha Tangtong Gyalpo in his life as Gelong Pema Karpo. It is entitled, The Vajra Words of Prayer to the Sublime Chenrezig. After having recited this prayer and the mantra, let us do a short meditation and then continue with the dissolution stage of practice.

“The Vajra Words of Prayer to the Sublime Chenrezig,” spoken by the great Mahasiddha (Tangtong Gyalpo) in his existence as Gelong Pema Karpo is:

“I pray to you, Lama Chenrezig,

I pray to you, Yidam Chenrezig,

I pray to you, most sublime Chenrezig,

I pray to you, great Refuge and Protector Chenrezig,

to you I pray, loving Protector Chenrezig.

Please hold us with your compassion, compassionate Buddha.

For all beings who have been wandering countless numbers of times in endless samsara and who endure unbearable torments,

There is no other refuge than you, Great Protector.

Through the power of bad actions accumulated since beginningless time under the influence of hatred, one is born in the hells. May all beings who endure the tortures of heat and cold be reborn in your presence, great symbol of perfection.

OM MANI PEMA HUNG.

Through the power of bad actions accumulated since beginningless time under the influence of avarice, one is born in the realm of the craving spirits. May all beings who undergo the torments of starvation and thirst be reborn in your presence in the perfect Pure Land of Potala.

OM MANI PEMA HUNG.

Through the power of bad actions accumulated since beginningless time under the influence of ignorance, one is born as an animal. May all beings afflicted by the sufferings of stupidity and dullness be reborn in your presence, O Protector.

OM MANI PEMA HUNG.

Through the power of bad actions accumulated since beginningless time under the influence of desire, one is born in the realm of men. May all beings who endure the pains due to excessive activity and constant frustration be reborn in the perfect Pure Land of Dewachen.

OM MANI PEMA HUNG.”

(Then it is written in the Sadhana: “*This prayer, ‘The Vajra Words of Prayer to the Sublime Chenrezig,’ was spoken by the Mahasiddha Tangtong Gyalpo, who remembered them from a previous life when he had been the monk Pema Karpo, who addressed this prayer one-pointedly to the Sublime Chenrezig whilst doing the Nyung-Ne practice from his twentieth to his eightieth year.*”)

Continuing with the Sadhana, we pray:

“Through the power of bad actions accumulated since beginningless time under the influence of jealousy, one is born in the realm of the jealous semi-gods. May all beings who endure the pains of fighting and quarrelling be reborn in the Pure Land of the Potala.

OM MANI PEMA HUNG.

Through the power of bad actions accumulated since beginningless time under the influence of pride, one is born in the realm of the gods. May all beings who undergo the sufferings of transmigration and fall be reborn in the Pure Land of the Potala.

OM MANI PEMA HUNG.

Throughout all my existences may I, by deeds like those of Chenrezig, also liberate beings in impure places and spread the supreme sound of the six-syllable mantra throughout the ten directions.

By the power of thus praying to you, most Sublime One, may all the beings I will have to train pay the greatest of attention to karma, strive to act virtuously, and practice the Dharma for the sake of all beings.”

(Then it is written in the Sadhana: “*While keeping the meaning of the preceding verses well in mind, recite the OM MANI PEMA HUNG mantra as much as appropriate, either 100, 1,000, 10,000, 100,000 times, or any number of times, spending the great part of the session on this.*”)

This is the mantra-recitation, which we can repeat with ease as often as we want and depending upon the time we have. We can repeat it 108 times by counting the beads on our mala, or two times of our mala, or more. While reciting Chenrezig’s very special mantra, we imagine the world as Chenrezig’s pure mandala, all

sentient beings as emanations of Noble Chenrezig, and all sounds as his wonderful mantra.

What is the meaning of the six-syllable mantra? There are many explanations on the meaning of the mantra, long, middle-length, and short. I will offer a short explanation. First, though, it would be good to know what the term mantra means. It is a Sanskrit term. Man means ‘mind’ and tra means ‘protection.’ In Tibetan, the meaning is described as tha-mal-kyi-s nang-shen-le-skyop-par-byed-pa, ‘protection from attachment to appearances of the ordinary mind,’ i.e., protection from negative emotions and from attachment and grasping to worldly appearances. That is the meaning of the Sanskrit word mantra.

Noble Chenrezig’s mantra was adapted from the Sanskrit language into Tibetan. OM is a very special syllable in Mahayana and Vajrayana and is the essence of the three kayas, the Dharmakaya, the Sambhogakaya, the Nirmanakaya, as well as the essence of the five bodies of a buddha. The syllable MANI was translated into Tibetan as nor-bu. What is nor-bu? An invaluable, precious jewel. PEMA means ‘lotus’ and in the mantra of Noble Chenrezig it means nor-bu-pe-ma-chen, ‘a great, invaluable jewel-lotus.’ It is Chenrezig’s name.

The texts state that all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas gave Chenrezig this name, so the syllable PEMA in his mantra signifies his name. This is why the four-armed Chenrezig holds the invaluable jewel in the two hands that are folded at his heart. He also holds the precious mala in his other right hand, and a wonderful lotus flower in his other left hand. The sixth and last syllable HUNG in the mantra symbolizes Chenrezig’s extraordinary activities.

Through his supreme compassion of a Bodhisattva, Chenrezig performs extraordinary activities for the benefit and welfare of all living beings. He also protects all sentient beings from suffering and confusion. He has many aspects. Since he cannot always help all living beings at the same time with four arms only, he also manifests with a thousand eyes, a thousand hands, and a thousand tongues, protecting and helping every living being with each one. These are all aspects of Chenrezig.

While repeating his mantra, we address all aspects of Chenrezig – his compassion, his love, his help in eliminating all suffering and confusion of sentient beings in samsara. While repeating his mantra, we are praying to him, “You are our protector. Please give your blessing to all living beings and help everyone connect with you fully and perfectly.”

When we have time and if we have a mala, we are free to hold the mala at our heart and repeat the mantra while counting the beads. We can do this 100 times, 1000 times, 100,000 times. Repeating Chenrezig's mantra, which is his name, is actually calling him. When we have a wish, we can call him, similar to calling him on the phone. He will answer. We should make best use of our phone, otherwise leasing one is useless. And the more often we call him, the more closely we will be connected with him.

This practice is another way of engaging in the Guru Yoga practice of calling the Lama from afar, and the connection takes place through devotion. Some people are really very impressed and cry when they chant the sacred text, Calling the Lama from Afar that was composed by Jamgon Kongtrul Lodrö Thaye. I have seen this happen in monasteries many times and experienced it myself, too. We recite the mantra very often and our feelings change through the very strong blessings we receive from chanting the mantra.

Presently, we're not totally free from ordinary emotions and thoughts, but we can feel that our negative emotions and thoughts are calmed down and transformed into positive ones when we repeat Chenrezig's mantra. Not all emotions are negative; there are also positive emotions.

There are different ways of speaking mantras, loudly or silently. Making a sound while repeating Chenrezig's mantra is all right. There are mantras that are only recited in the mind and are referred to as "secret." Chenrezig's mantra isn't secret. There are also many different melodies to sing his mantra. We can compose our own melody to sing his mantra.

In Himalayan countries, people even repeat Chenrezig's mantra when they go to the bathroom or do hard work or tend their fields, and it leads to good results. Our connection becomes closer and closer the more we chant his mantra, and then, one day, we will see Chenrezig face-to-face. Many great masters saw him face-to-face. We, too, can see him. When we do, our negativities will have been dispelled and we will belong to his family. Then we will be enlightened and will have become Chenrezig.

In the old tradition, Chenrezig's mantra consisted of seven syllables, OM MANI PEMA HUNG HRIH. But in the Sadhana composed by Tangtong Gyalpo, HRIH is the seed-syllable, so the mantra consists of the six-syllables.

There are extensive explanations of the mantra, but there was no time during this retreat to discuss them in detail. Padma Karpo explained that the mantra transforms the six realms of samsara. The hell, hungry ghost, and animal realms are the lower realms that are transformed into pure realms through the mantra. The realms of humans, demi-gods, and gods are the higher realms that are transformed through the mantra. These realms become transcendent through the six paramitas. There are so many ways in which the six realms are purified and then those dwelling there become Noble Chenrezig.

I spoke of visualization as the method to transform our impure outer world into Chenrezig's Pure Land and the inner world into disciples or emanations of Chenrezig. We don't only see this for ourselves but for all sentient beings at the same time. We fully feel, "I and all sentient beings take refuge in Chenrezig. All of us are the Yidam and our practice and mantra-recitation are manifestations of Noble Chenrezig."

When we recite the following prayer to Chenrezig, it will become clear to us and we will understand:

"Highest One, unblemished by any fault and of white form, whose head is crowned by a perfect Buddha, you look upon beings with eyes of compassion – I bow down to Chenrezig."

3. The Dissolution Stage of Practice

Having fervently recited the above prayer, we visualize the following instructions that we recite:

"Through this one-pointed prayer, light radiates from the form of the Sublime One and purifies impure karma, impure appearances, and the deluded mind. The outer environment is the Pure Land of Dewachen and the body, speech, and mind of beings therein are the perfect Form, sublime Speech, and pure Mind of mighty Chenrezig, the indivisible union of appearance, sound, and vivid intelligence with Voidness.

OM MANI PEMA HUNG."

The dissolution practice is called rdzogs-rim in Tibetan ('completion stage of practice'). In this meditation, we visualize as before the outer world as the pure

realm of Chenrezig and the inner world that consists of all sentient beings as emanations of Chenrezig. Everyone is included in the family of Chenrezig who is our Root Guru. We visualize that the outer world and sentient beings dissolve into light. This light dissolves into Chenrezig. Then he melts into light that dissolves into us. Then we visualize that we melt into light and are like a rainbow. Slowly the rainbow vanishes. This doesn't mean that we disappear or turn into a vacuum, rather we realize emptiness. If we don't do this, there is the danger that we become attached to Chenrezig, which would also be a concept.

Sometimes we have a clear visualization and don't want to let go of it. So the completion stage of practice is a remedy against being attached to the deity and the mantra through realization of 'khor-gsum-mi-mig-pa, 'the non-referential three spheres or concepts of subject, object and action.' We are the subject, Chenrezig is the object, and the mantra-recitation and meditation are the action. Wisdom means realizing that these three 'spheres' don't truly exist, i.e., they are empty of inherent existence. This is the meaning of 'emptiness' and is the ultimate truth. As mentioned, the creation stage of practice is similar to training calm abiding meditation and the completion stage of practice is similar to training special insight meditation.

4. Post-Meditation

The last phase of practice is post meditation and dedication, i.e., integrating our practice in daily life.

Having meditated the completion stage of practice, we "wake up" from our practice and continue with daily life. We have to eat, go shopping, look after our daily chores, tend our friendships, and go to work to earn our living. We couldn't survive without Geld ('money' in German). We may not be careless, and of course our practice is always connected to daily life. As Jetsün Milarepa taught, "We turn daily behaviour to the Dharma."

Let us recite the verse for post-meditation together. It is:

"My body, the bodies of others, and all appearances are the perfect form of the Sublime One, all sounds the melody of the six syllables, all thoughts the vastness of the great Jnana."

This verse for post-meditation means that during daily life we see all outer forms as Noble Chenrezig. We don't hear sounds of wind, water, machines, cars, etc. in

an ordinary way, but we hear everything as the sound of his mantra. Whatever we think - whether good thoughts or bad thoughts - are all pure concepts and thoughts.

Meditating Noble Chenrezig is the practice to transform our body, speech, and mind. Whatever activity we are engaged in, we feel that we are serving our Lama - Lama Chenrezig. When we walk wherever we are going, we think we are doing 'khor-ba of Chenrezig. When we eat, we think we are offering the meal to Chenrezig. When we talk with others, we think we are supplicating or praying to Chenrezig. Not distracted too much by useless things, we always have mindfulness and awareness. Then everything we do in daily life becomes meaningful. This is how we train. Now the post-meditation section in the Sadhana is fertig ('completed').

5. Dedication

The conclusion of every practice is the dedication prayer. In the Sadhana of Bodhisattva Chenrezig, the short dedication that we recite is:

“Through this virtue, may I quickly achieve the realization of mighty Chenrezig and may I bring every single being to that same state.”

The purpose of dedication is that the benefit of our practice increases.

Translator: “If there is no dedication?”

Lama Sönam: Of course there is a benefit, but the merit doesn't increase and slowly disappears. So there's a difference. It's very important to dedicate the merit of our practice. Take the example of a big ocean and a drop of water falling on its surface. Our dedication is like a drop of water on the ocean, i.e., our practice of dedication for the sake of all sentient beings means that the ocean will never dry up but will grow. We don't think that our dedication is like a drop of water falling on hard ground, sinks into the earth, and eventually dries up. We always dedicate any practice we do, which means that we share any merit we have been able to accrue with all sentient beings. This is practicing great generosity.

There is also The Guru Rinpoche Prayer, The Vajrakilaya Prayer, The Mahakala Prayer, and the long life prayers, followed by the closing dedication prayer above in the Sadhana of Bodhisattva Chenrezig that you have. It's not necessary to do these practices, unless you have the initiation and have committed yourself to do so. After the dedication we can pray The Dewachen Prayer three times. If it is too

much, after the short mantra-prayer you can do the long life prayers and then sing The Dewachen Prayer. If that is too much, you can just recite the mantra and dedicate the merit.

The Guru Rinpoche Prayer that we sing three times is:

“HUNG.

On the northwest border of the country Oddiyana, on the pistil of a lotus flower, endowed with the marvellous attainment, you are renowned as the Lotus-Born, surrounded by a retinue of Dakinis. Emulating you in my practice, I pray that you will come and confer your blessings.

GURU PEMA SIDDHI HUNG. ”

The Short Wishing-Prayer for Rebirth in Dewachen is:

“E-MA-HO! How wonderful!

The wondrous Buddha of Infinite Radiance sits with the great Compassionate Lord to his right and the Bodhisattva of Great Might to his left and is surrounded by countless Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Beyond all reckoning are the happiness, joys, and marvels in his pure land known as Dewachen. As soon as I and others leave this life may we be born there directly, with none of the delay caused by another birth. Once there, may we behold Amitabha’s face. May all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in the ten directions give their blessing that all this may come true without hindrance.

TE-YATA PENTSA TRI-YA AWA BODHA NA-YE SO-HA. ”

The Dedication Prayer for Rebirth in Dewachen that is a Treasure Text found by Tulku Minjur Dorje is:

“All Victorious Ones and your Sons throughout time and space, please think of me.

Rejoicing in the completion of the two accumulations, I offer whatever virtue I have gathered in the three times to the Three Jewels.

I pray that the Buddha’s teachings may spread and dedicate all virtue to all beings that they may achieve Buddhahood.

Uniting all the roots of virtue, may they ripen in our being and may the two obscurations be purified and the accumulations be completed.

May all live long and may our realization increase.

May we achieve the ten Bodhisattva levels in this life and as soon as we pass away, may we take birth in Dewachen.

There, may we be born in an open lotus and achieve Buddhahood in that same body.

After enlightenment, may we emanate to guide all beings.”

Conclusion

Thank you very much. It was a very good time going through the practice of Bodhisattva Chenrezig and sharing the little experience I have while being here with all of you. I wish you the best and thank you very much. I also want to thank Anne for her excellent translation into German. She could understand my broken English.

Anne: “It was very nice for me. Thank you.”

Josef: “Lama Sönam, we would like to give you a small donation on behalf of our group. Thank you very much for coming to Münster, for offering us this wonderful retreat and the precious teachings. Please return to us.

Dedication

May all virtue that is created by accumulating merit and wisdom be dedicated to attaining the two truth bodies that arise from merit and wisdom.

May Bodhichitta, great and precious, arise where it has not arisen. Never weakening where it has arisen, may it grow ever more and more.

May the life of the Glorious Lama remain steadfast and firm.

May peace and happiness fully arise for beings as limitless in number as space is vast in extent.

Having accumulated merit and purified negativities,
may I and all living beings without exception swiftly establish the levels and grounds of Buddhahood

The Sadhana of Avalokiteshvara (Tibetan: Chenrezig),
with commentary by Lama Lodu

Chenrezig Puja

This book contains the recitation for the meditation of the Great Compassionate One called 'For the Benefit of All Beings as Vast as the Skies', Tib. 'Dro.don.Kha.khyab.Ma.'

(Begin with REFUGE.)

Refuge begins with visualization, the object is Avalokiteshvara, four armed Chenrezig. The six, three jewels and three roots, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, Lama, Yidam, and Dharma Protector, these condense into one.

The three jewels: the body is Sangha, speech Dharma, and mind is Buddha. Body, pure, perfect, acting on the path as a Bodhisattva is Sangha. Speech- teaching liberation from the ocean of suffering is Dharma. Stainless, pure mind is Buddha.

The three roots: Avalokiteshvara's body is the Dharma Protectors, speech is Dieties, and mind is Lama. Body is Dharma Protectors, the one who protects from obstacles and preserves the teaching.

Speech is Dieties, pure, perfect energies, appearing according to the needs of sentient beings. Dieties represent pure speech. Speech is a very subtle level of consciousness.

In the word 'Yidam', 'Yi' means mind, and 'dam' tight, holding very tightly. Always keep in mind the perfection of the Dieties, and do not forget. Always remember, instead of feeling fear at any time, always bring Dieties, this view to mind. Avalokiteshvara's speech is the pure energy of Dieties, and Chenrezig's mind represents the Lama, or Guru.

Lama means Buddha. La- means space, sky, above all the world; physically, mentally, nothing above; true wisdom, compassion; wisdom is limitless, compassion, limitless. La expresses all enlightened qualities. Ma, mother in any language, represents compassion, boundless compassion and loving kindness.

He who has these qualities is the mother of all sentient beings. Like the love of a mother for her child, the Lama has this love for all sentient beings. Perfect, stainless and pure wisdom, perfect, measureless.

He would not regret being born one million times to liberate one sentient being. Without discriminating, equal compassion for all, loving kindness for all, without exception, that is Chenrezig, that is the Lama.

Chenrezig represents the Three Jewels and the Three Roots; The Buddha, Dharma, Sangha; the Blessing Root is the Lama, , the Accomplishment Root is the Yidam, and the Activity Root is the Dharma Protector.

Visualize Chenrezig as the one who is capable entirely of protecting sentient beings from suffering.

The Buddhas, past, present and future, are whoever attained enlightenment. They are the 'transcendant and accomplished conquerors'.

'All the Supreme Dharma' is all the Holy, Spiritual Dharma that leads to liberation. Dharma is taught according to our afflictions. It is said that there are 84,000 teachings to meet our needs. Dharma is given by the Buddha to be practiced, and is all the truth spoken by the Enlightened Ones. The Dharma refines our mind, and leads from suffering to liberation.

The Noble Sangha are those who do not do any negative action, and are continuously doing positive action; noble and high beings, perfect and pure, and the ordinary Sangha are those who help and encourage us.

Dakas and Dakinis are male and female Bodhisattvas, also enlightened beings. They are the 'Protectors and Defenders of the Dharma'. When we take refuge sincerely, from the depth of our hearts, they will protect us from any obstacle and any hinderance, and they will guide us on the path of liberation.

Each symbol represents an enlightened quality. Dakas and Dakinis appear out of compassion, like a mother who is kind, gentle, and who loves her child with her whole heart- that mother will give up her own life to save her child, the Buddhas have that much compassion for all beings equally. Sometimes a mother shows anger out of kindness, thinking, 'this may help'. Dieties compassion is so strong to subdue, to protect, and to lead to enlightenment. Sometimes a wrathful appearance is needed.

Whoever possesses the Wisdom Eye through their purity, and have the ability to protect sentient beings, all these are united in Avalokiteshvara. When you are taking refuge you are saying that you are under the protection of all these great beings, and not only you but all sentient beings. Whatever sentient beings are suffering, they are protected and led to the path.

Recite until you feel devotion. Bring in your mind the purity and the activity of enlightened beings. Mind is Buddha, speech, Dharma, and Body, Sangha. Bring to mind their power, compassion and purity. This is a most important practice of the Vajrayana. If you are in refuge, you are 'inside'. 'Inside' also means looking at the true nature of mind.

Think: he can protect me, not only temporarily, not only this lifetime, but until enlightenment. How? Study and practice Dharma. Devotion is how you look at pure, enlightened qualities. Longing and practice, this leads to experience.

From this moment until the Heart of Enlightenment is reached, I and all sentient beings as limitless as the sky
* go for refuge to all the glorious Holy Lamas; we go for refuge to all the Yidams, the Dieties gathered in the Mandalas; we go for refuge to all the Buddhas, those that have conquered and gone beyond; we go for refuge to all the Supreme Dharma; we go for refuge to all the Noble Sangha; we go for refuge to all the Dakas, Dakinis, Protectors and Defenders of Dharma who possess the eye of Transcending Awareness.

(Repeat three times from *.)

(Finishing the Refuge, the recitation for the Chenrezig meditation follows. First, the REFUGE and the Raising of BODHICITTA:)

Next, most important are the Six Perfections (sometimes Ten) We wish to gain enlightenment. Why?- because I want to free all sentient beings from suffering and guide them to enlightenment. This is bodhicitta, altruism. The Six Perfections are: generosity, morality, patience, diligence, concentration, and wisdom.

Generosity takes the form of material giving, giving fearlessness, and giving Dharma. With skillful means we give so that they feel very free and safe. Pure giving knows what will benefit. The best generosity is to give the Dharma, to free them from samsara. The Dharma that you give is forever. When they practice they are liberated from suffering and attain enlightenment and are able to benefit other sentient beings. (Be careful that they are suitable.)

In this case, the generosity is the visualization of Avalokiteshvara, and reciting the mantra of Avalokiteshvara, and resting in the majesty and radiance of the true nature of mind.

Morality is whatever vow you have, especially during this practice, concentrate stage by stage (without anger, desire, jealousy, greed) according to the sadhana, not allowing these different kinds of afflictions.

Patience- summer hot, winter cold, knee hurt, thirsty, hungry- no matter what, I keep it until the end of the sadhana. By concentrating on the sadhana I can dispel impure view of the world and it becomes the Pure Land. So, whatever comes you take it.

Diligence is the opposite of laziness. We know what a great opportunity we have. Use this opportunity. Bring this good fortune to mind. This brings encouragement to go through any obstacles. Diligence is also called joyful striving. This will result in good. A little difficulty is no big deal. Think of the great result.

Concentration- each prayer has its own meaning. Concentrate on the meaning, on the visualization and the mantra.

Wisdom is knowing that what you visualize, mantra, prayer, sentient beings, all together, all this is emptiness, they do not really exist inherently. That is how you look.

With an overview of the practice, you think I will do this practice, then I will have the ability to benefit sentient beings.

Bodhicitta means the heart of enlightenment, altruism, Enlightened Mind. With sincere compassion, wish for others to be free from suffering. We have to experience, have sympathy, and send out compassion, wishing them happiness that lasts forever, and wishing them to be free from suffering forever. Send out this precious thought to others. Compassion and kindness are very important. Keep it always.

Refuge and bodhicitta are a very important part of the tantric sadhana. Refuge distinguishes one as a Buddhist, and bodhicitta distinguishes this as a practice of the vajrayana.

*** To the Buddhas, Dharma, and Supreme Assembly I go for refuge until Enlightenment. May I, through merit gained by gifts and so on, accomplish Buddhahood for the sake of all beings.**

(Repeat three times from *.)

(VISUALIZATION of the DIRTY)

Generating Dieties

Focus on the crown of your head and think: the rest of sentient beings have as I have. There is a lotus and moon seat with the syllable HRI, which is the nature of all Buddhas' compassion. This is sending many rays of light; white, red, blue, green and yellow, like sun rays, purifying all the world, and the world becomes like Dewachen (the Pure Land of Avalokiteshvara). All beings become like Chenrezig.

The rays of light reach to all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and they send their blessing in the form of light which dissolves into the HRI. Then instantly this changes into Avalokiteshvara, Compassionate One. His body is white, crystal clear, luminous. It is radiating five-colored light rays, bright, shining. He has one face, beautiful, charming, and is gazing with compassionate eyes on all sentient beings.

On his forehead there is the syllable OM, at the throat center, the syllable AH, and at the heart the syllable HUNG. Light goes out the the Pure Lands, to the blissful realms, reaching to all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, all the lineage holders, all wrathful and peaceful dieties. They emanate many forms of Chenrezig which dissolve into the crown of my head, like rain into an ocean. 'He is the essence of all sources of refuge'. He is the source of all protection of sentient beings.

On the crown of my head and all sentient beings pervading space, there rests a white lotus and moon seat. From HRI (on the lotus and moon seat) appears Noble All-Seeing One, white, bright, and radiating five-colored light rays, smiling charmingly and gazing with Eyes of Compassion.

He has four arms, the upper two joined together and the lower two holding a white lotus and crystal rosary. He is adorned by precious jewels and silks; a deer skin covers his upper part (left shoulder). The Buddha of Boundless Light adorns his head. He sits in the vajra asana. His back is supported by a stainless moon; he is the essence of all sources of refuge.

With one-pointed devotion, make the wish-fulfilling prayer. You can pray for what you wish to develop, the ability to benefit sentient beings; to pacify, remove obstacles, hinderance, disease; for friend, or relative, when they experience sickness, death; if they are in the bardo. Of all sentient beings, your friend is the example. So think of all sentient beings, praying, 'give to them the effortless accomplishment...'.
(Make the following prayer thinking all beings are making it with you as if in a single voice.)

*** Lord, whose white body is not clothed by fault, whose head is adorned by a Perfect Buddha, who looks upon all beings with Eyes of Compassion, to you Chenrezig I pay homage.**

(Repeat as least three times from *.)

(The SEVEN BRANCH PRAYER)

There is one part for each of seven kinds of afflictions.

Prostration, with all of our bodies, past, living and this body, with one-pointed devotion, is the antidote for pride. With self-cherishing, people think they are important. We become humble seeing the purity of enlightened beings.

To the Sublime One, the Mighty Chenrezig, to the Buddhas and their Sons, who reside in the ten directions and the three times, with complete sincerity I pay homage.

Second, offering, purifies attachment; to material things, house, car, mountain, landscape, flower garden. All of this I see and am attached to, all this I offer. Fill all the world with imaginary offerings, not because he needs them, but because I need to purify my attachment to things, including my speech, mind, and body.

I offer flowers, incense, butter-lamps, perfume, food, music, and other real and imaginary offerings and so on, and beseech the Noble Assembly to accept them.

Third, confession, purifies mainly anger, and other afflictions too. All this we confess: the ten non-virtues of killing, stealing, misconduct, harsh speech, meaningless speech, lies, divisive speech, envy, ill-will, and wrong view; also the five limitless actions, such as causing a split in the Sangha, or between a teacher and student. All these I repent from my heart, and I will not do these any more. We say this in front of Chenrezig, and this purifies any negative actions.

I confess all the unskillful actions caused by the power of conflicting emotions, the ten unvirtuous deeds and the five sins of limitless consequence done from beginningless time until now.

Fourth is rejoicing in the virtues of living beings, which will result in good for them (Hinayana Sravakas, Pratyeka Buddhas, Bodhisattvas). Theirs is fortunate karma. This is the antidote to jealousy, to rejoice in the happiness of others, to rejoice in the virtues of others.

I rejoice in the spiritual merit of whatever virtue Sravakas, Pratyeka Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and ordinary beings gather throughout the three times.

Fifth, to request teachings, purifies ignorance. This is very beneficial. It brings Dharma Wisdom and purifies ignorance for all.

I pray that the Dharma Wheel of the Mahayana, Hinayana, and of the Teachings common to both be turned in accordance with the wishes and aptitudes of beings.

Sixth, asking the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to stay, is the antidote to wrong view. For us to appreciate teachers, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, it helps, it guides us. Without them we are lost. We appreciate them and ask them to look with compassion on all sentient beings and give them teachings.

I beseech the Buddhas not to pass into Nirvana as long as samsara is not emptied, but to look with compassion upon sentient beings who wallow in the ocean of suffering.

Seventh, dedication, is the antidote to doubt. We know this practice to be effective, and we say whatever suffering they have, may they be free from that suffering. This purifies doubt, hesitation.

May whatever merit I have accumulated be the cause for the Enlightenment of Beings; may I quickly become a splendid leader of beings.

Next is the prayer for the benefit of Avalokiteshvara to reach the six different realms. Visualize and pray.

(The Vajra words of prayer to the Excellent Chenrezig composed by the Great Mahasiddha, Tang tong Gyalpo, in his incarnation as Gelong Pena Karpo:)

I pray to you Lama Chenrezig. I pray to you Yidam Chenrezig. I pray to you Perfect Noble Chenrezig. I pray to you Lord Protector Chenrezig. I pray to you Lord of Love Chenrezig.

Great Compassionate Victor, please hold us with your compassion, numberless beings who wander in endless samsara experiencing unbearable suffering. There is no other refuge than you, Protector! Please bestow the blessing to obtain omniscient Buddhahood.

Hell is there because the negative emotion of anger becomes so strong. There is unbearable suffering there. With no anger, hell realms dissappear. Bless us, these beings and ourselves. Empty all the hell realms.

By the power of accumulating negative Karna from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of anger, are born as hell beings and experience the suffering of heat and cold. May they all be born in your presence, Perfect Diety. OM MANI PADME HUNG

Hungry ghosts are there because of greedy mind, greedy emotions. Hunger, thirst torture their mind. Chenrezig removes all this impurity.

By the power of accumulating negative Karna from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of greed, are born in the realms of pretas and experience the suffering of hunger and thirst. May they all be born in your perfect realm, the Potala. OM MANI PADME HUNG

Animal realm comes from stupidity. Animals' suffering and pain is removed and purified, and their realm is turned into a Pure Land.

By the power of accumulating negative Karna from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of stupidity, are born as animals and experience the suffering of dullness and stupidity. May they all be born in your presence, Protector. OM MANI PADME HUNG

In the desire realm, human beings experience suffering because of desire, longing, grasping. Through Chenrezig's compassion, wisdom, all this is purified, this world is purified into the blissful realm.

By the power of accumulating negative Karna from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of desire, are born in the human realm and experience the suffering of excessive activity and constant frustration. May they all be born in the Pure Land of Dewachen. OM MANI PADME HUNG

(This prayer, the vajra words of prayer to the Sublime Chenrezig, was composed by the Mahasiddha, Tang tong Gyalpo, who remembered them from a previous incarnation when he had been the monk Pena Karpo, who addressed this prayer one-pointedly to the Sublime Chenrezig while doing the Nyung Ne practice from his twentieth to his eightieth year.)

The demi-god, or jealous god realm is there because of jealousy. This is our own problem, not somebody else's problem. There the problem is our own mind. Chenrezig's compassion, wisdom, and purity purify this to a Pure Realm.

By the power of accumulating negative Karma from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of jealousy, are born in the realm of the demi-gods and experience the suffering of fighting and quarreling. May they all be born in your realm, the Potala.
OM MANI PADME HUNG

The god realm is the realm of pride. All this is purified.

By the power of accumulating negative Karma from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of pride, are born in the realm of the gods and experience the suffering of change and falling. May they all be born in your realm, the Potala. OM MANI PADME HUNG

The six afflictions are the door to the six realms. Whatever we have, that means we are opening the door to that realm. To purify is to close the door to that realm.

Wherever I am born may my deeds, by equalling Chenrezig's, liberate beings from impure realms and spread the perfect sound of the six syllables in the ten directions. Through the power of praying to you Perfect Noble One, may beings who I am to discipline pay the greatest attention to action and result, and diligently practice virtue and the Dharma for the benefit of beings.

(And then:)

Light goes to the six realms, and beings become Chenrezig.

From Chenrezig, light comes and all this land becomes the Pure Land, soft, gentle, beautiful, luminous. All beings are Bodhisattvas, no anger or afflictions; all sound is Pure Sound, Mantra Sound; all the mind, empty, yet that which appears, vivid and clear.

Through this one-pointed prayer, light radiates from the body of the Sublime One and purifies impure Karma, impure appearances, and the deluded mind. The outer realm is the Pure Land of Dewachen, and the body, speech, and mind of beings therein are the perfect form, sublime speech, and pure mind of Mighty Chenrezig, the indivisible union of appearance, sound, and vivid intelligence with voidness.

With that kind of pure view, recite.

(Meditate like this as you recite the mantra.)

OM MANI PADME HUNG

While reciting, Chenrezig moves from the crown of your head to your heart, and is there as a thumb-sized Chenrezig, on a lotus and moon-seat. Now you are Chenrezig, radiating light, purifying the world.

In his heart, on a lotus moon-disk, there is the mantra OM MANI PADME HUNG. Light fills his body, then your body, then goes to the six realms. All become Chenrezig's form, sound, mantra, and mind, empty luminosity, joy and bliss.

Send light to benefit sentient beings, then to lineage Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, wrathful and peaceful Buddhas, gathering blessings from them that dissolve into your heart. Again send out light, back and forth like that. Then, to particular beings, see their afflictions healed, their physical body healed; beings in the bardo, where there is confusion, send light that dispels suffering and difficulty.

During recitation, you can pause and practice taking and sending, removing the suffering of sentient beings and giving happiness and peace.

Recite as long as you can.

Then, the dissolution stage:

The Pure Realm dissolves into beings; these melt into you, and you into the Chenrezig at your heart; this to the mantra and the mantra into the seed syllable HRI. This is your own mind, shining. This transforms into a small dot, a crystal dot, small, small, then nothingness, nothing whatsoever, yet very sharp awareness, inseparable. Nothing clinging, grasping, just remain, completely empty space, without any kind of artificial thought, without concept, without intellect.

Dissolve everything into the Dharmakaya stage that is empty, also bright, shining, aware; luminosity, vivid, without grasping, without being attached to anything whatsoever.

That is called Introducing the Three Kayas in One Point, the empty, luminous and unimpeded quality of your mind. Without 'I', bright, shining, do not grasp. Unimpeded means don't hold onto that.

That is the way to practice quiet meditation.

This purifies birth and death, creation and dissolution. This is Mahamudra practice.

(Recite as many times as you are able. Finally, let the mind remain absorbed in its own essence without making distinction between subject, object, and act.

Stay like this as long as you want, then immediately appear again as Chenrezig.

This land is a Pure Land, and you are greeted by Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Some of them hold vases containing wisdom nectars, which they pour on you, purifying any remaining traces of defilements or faults of body, speech and mind.

You see yourself as Chenrezig, and all others are Chenrezig, sound, mantra, and everything you see is pure mind, appearing, vivid and clear, yet not inherently existant, empty of this, transparent. All is a manifestation of mind.

Then repeat:)

My body, the bodies of others and all appearances are the perfect form of the Sublime One, all sounds the melody of the Six Syllables, and all thoughts the vastness of the Great Jnana.

Then you make the dedication.

(DEDICATING the MERIT)

Through this virtue, may I quickly achieve the realization of Mighty Chenrezig and may I bring every single being to that same state.

(This text, called 'The Recitation for the Meditation of the Great Compassionate One for the Benefit of Beings as Vast as the Skies', was composed by the Mahasiddha Tang tong Gyalpo and bears the blessing of his speech.)

Through the merit of reciting and meditating may I and every being to whom I am connected, when these imperfect forms are left behind, be miraculously born in Dewachen. May I then immediately cross the ten levels and send out emanations for the benefit of others.

Through this virtue, may all beings perfect the accumulation of spiritual merit and awareness. May they attain the Two Supreme Bodies which arise from merit and awareness.

Bodhicitta is precious; may it arise in those who have not cultivated it. In those who have cultivated it, may it not diminish; may it ever grow and flourish.

The Sadhana of Avalokiteshvara (Tibetan: Chenrezig),
with commentary, by Lama Lodu

Chenrezig Puja

This book contains the recitation for the meditation of the Great Compassionate One called 'For the Benefit of All Beings as Vast as the Skies', Tib. 'Dro.don.Kha.khyab.Ma.'

Preliminary

The first thing, when listening to a teaching, is to have the right motivation, which is to have the wish to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. Then the practice will become deep and profound, and will swiftly accomplish your wishes.

Making the altar

It is very important to keep the altar clean. If it gets dirty, that's disrespectful, it's better not to have an altar, but to just do the meditation mentally.

The shrine becomes a sanctuary. 'This is a place to meditate to clean my body and my mind'.

If you can, place a picture of Avalokiteshvara on the altar. This will make visualization easier. Then place flowers, fruit, candles, incense and water. Think, 'My special diety dwells here', and that place becomes a holy place.

To think, 'With my impure body, speech and mind, I respect that perfect, pure body, speech and mind'- that purifies the body's impurities.

Meditation

Then sit down. Relax your body. Just relax. Don't have any concerns. When you relax your body, your mind relaxes. They are interdependant.

Don't think about the past, future, or present. Bring your mind very present. Relax and untie all the afflictions and dualistic thought.

Mind nature is completely pure and perfect. Try to bring that mind for a few minutes.

(Begin with REFUGE.)

Then, instantly you visualize Avalokiteshvara in space in front of you, vivid and clear. This is the refuge object. You are taking refuge in Avalokiteshvara.

The Three Jewels, the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, are represented by Avalokiteshvara. His mind, stainless, perfect and pure, without dualistic concepts, having the skillful means of compassion, his mind is Buddha. His speech is Dharma, which brings happiness for all sentient beings, from the lower realms to the upper realms. Dharma is all the texts that teach how to get enlightened. Dharma is the word of the Buddha 'he who has attained enlightenment through this method'.

Avalokiteshvara's mind is Buddha, and his speech is Dharma, the skillful means to lead sentient beings to enlightenment.

Avalokiteshvara's body represents the Sangha, perfectly and precisely practicing, showing the path to others. Whoever practices together, doing good things, that's the ordinary Sangha. In this case, the Bodhisattva Sangha are those who are free from suffering, and who are working toward enlightenment. They are the high level Sangha, working to guide sentient beings to enlightenment.

Avalokiteshvara's body represents the Sangha, having perfect good qualities, stainless. Such great beings are good examples for us. They are constantly developing more good qualities, showing the benefit of the practice.

Avalokiteshvara is the Three Jewels; his mind is the Buddha, his speech Dharma, and his body the Sangha. These are the general Buddhist refuge objects.

Avalokiteshvara is also the Three Roots, the tantric refuge objects: the Lama, Yidam, and Dharma Protectors.

'La' means something is very high, nothing higher- like the sky, there is nothing above the sky. 'La'- 'above all'. 'La' here means someone who has reached a high realization of emptiness, through pure, perfect and stainless qualities; someone who has realized high wisdom. What he needs to know, he knows everything.

'Ma' in all languages means mother. Such a great, high being is so loving, so compassionate, he cares for all beings without exception like a mother for her only son. Towards all beings equally and evenly he has loving kindness and compassion.

In such perfect and pure qualities of Chenrezig we take refuge, and he confers full siddhis, blessings. His mind represents the Lama, which is called the Blessing Root.

The Blessing Root is the Lama- from the Buddha to our present Guru, they have received the teaching and transmitted the teaching to us. He is the source of blessing.

Chenrezig's speech represents the Dieties. Speech manifests as Dieties. This means the word that shows us the way to practice. Wind vibrates and produces the word, and then you get the meaning.

The Yidam is the source of accomplishment, and is called the Accomplishment Root. On a very subtle level, it is through the Deity that you accomplish your wish, to become enlightened and benefit other sentient beings.

Avalokiteshvara is also the Activity Root, also known as the Dharma Protectors, that which protects practitioners from hindrances.

Other practice is cause and effect. In fruition practice, the result itself you take as the path.

Tantric practice is very effective. It is so powerful it can stir up karmas, and because there are many karmas ripening, there can be difficulty, doubt, hindrance, all kinds of affliction.

The Activity Root is represented by Chenrezig's body. Having trust and devotion can free you from your obstacle.

Avalokiteshvara's body is the Dharma Protectors, protecting sentient beings from suffering and obstacles. Avalokiteshvara guides you on the path without hindrance.

Avalokiteshvara represents all six refuge objects. All six are one in Avalokiteshvara.

When taking refuge, we think that not only am I taking refuge. We visualize that our mother is on our left, our father is on our right, our enemies are in front of us, family and friends are behind us, and all around are the beings of the six samsaric realms. All of them without exception we include in our taking refuge.

In all the Lamas who have those qualities; in Avalokiteshvara, and all yidams, in this case Avalokiteshvara, White Tara, Green Tara, kriya tantra to non-dual tantra, all represented by Chenrezig's speech, in that we take refuge; in all Buddhas, past, present, future;

Shakyamuni; those who have transcended all suffering, conquered selfishness, ego.

Avalokiteshvara's mind is the Buddha, speech is the Dharma, which is meaningful to liberate all beings from suffering; and body is the Sangha, and male and female protectors, goddesses, bodhisattvas; we go for refuge to all who possess the wisdom eye and know the situation of sentient beings. Lama, Yidam, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, Dharma Protectors, Avalokiteshvara represents all of these. We think, 'I am completely under the protection of Avalokiteshvara, until enlightenment, I and all sentient beings'.

With a sense of devotion and refuge, we recite.

**From this moment until the Heart of Enlightenment is reached, I and all sentient beings as limitless as the sky
* go for refuge to all the glorious Holy Lamas; we go for refuge to all the Yidams, the Dieties gathered in the Mandalas; we go for refuge to all the Buddhas, those that have conquered and gone beyond; we go for refuge to all the Supreme Dharma; we go for refuge to all the Noble Sangha; we go for refuge to all the Dakas, Dakinis, Protectors and Defenders of Dharma who possess the eye of Transcending Awareness.**

(Repeat three times from *.)

(Finishing the Refuge, the recitation for the Chenrezig meditation follows. First, the REFUGE and the Raising of BODHICITTA:)

Bodhicitta is very important. Through this you dedicate your practice for enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. Bring this to mind vividly and clearly.

In this practice the Six Perfections are here: Generosity, Morality, Patience, Diligence, Concentration, and Wisdom.

We practice this sadhana to accomplish Chenrezig for the purpose of freeing other beings from suffering and guiding them to enlightenment. That is Generosity.

Morality; Discipline; Ethics: Being Buddhists, all non-virtues we avoid. That is Morality. During the practice, the mind shouldn't wander through anger, desire, pride or jealousy. Keeping concentration on each section, visualization, mantra, that's Discipline, Morality.

Patience: During the session, if you are hungry, or thirsty, any bodily discomfort you may have, be patient. This is a purification. One hour is not a long time.

Diligence: To keep your mind very sharp, diligent, not lazy, you need effort, determination. By having trust, devotion and confidence in the practice you can develop diligence. That gives encouragement. Through learning and reflection you get confidence.

Concentration: Each section has its own object. One-pointedly focus on that.

Wisdom: The View is the most important of all. Practice becomes profound Vajrayana practice. All of the first five Perfections, all of these things that you visualize and practice, their nature is emptiness. Then everything becomes more profound.

With pure, perfect realization of emptiness and a great sense of loving kindness and compassion, thinking, 'I can't take it that sentient beings suffer', 'I want to free them from suffering and guide them to enlightenment', that attitude you have to generate. It makes the practice very profound.

That's called bodhicitta, the Enlightened Attitude, the Heart of Enlightenment. Try to cultivate this meaning.

*** To the Buddhas, Dharma, and Supreme Assembly I go for refuge until Enlightenment. May I, through merit gained by gifts and so on, accomplish Buddhahood for the sake of all beings.**

(Repeat three times from *.)

Then, Avalokiteshvara, the refuge object, disappears into space, or dissolves into you. (Rest mind.)

That is the preliminary, refuge and bodhicitta. Refuge protects you and places you on the Buddhist path, and bodhicitta makes this the Mahayana and Vajrayana path.

(VISUALIZATION of the DIETY)

Next, in your ordinary body, as you are, we recite:
'On the crown of my head...'

All past, present and future Buddhas' compassion and kindness manifests in the form of HRI. We visualize that HRI radiates five colored light. Light goes to the Pure Lands and gathers all the Buddhas' blessings and compassion, returns and dissolves into the HRI. Light goes out again and purifies all the world, returns and turns into Avalokiteshvara on the crown of your head, completely pure, crystal clear and luminous.

Each ornament is symbolic of perfect, pure qualities, representing that Avalokiteshvara is the completely stainless speech, mind, body, the perfect, pure quality of Buddha.

The four arms represent the Four Immeasurables, of Love, Compassion, Joy, and Equanimity. Avalokiteshvara is loving kindness; he who has love for all sentient beings without exception, without discriminating. He has compassion, rejoicing and equanimity; no aversion, no attachment, no indifference. All beings he wishes to have everlasting happiness. His mind is pervaded with Love, Compassion, Joy, and Equanimity. His four arms show his realization.

His one face shows that the true nature of everything is emptiness.

Wearing jewels and silks represents that he is rich, needing nothing. This is the symbolic, enjoyment body, the Sambogakaya. The meaning is that he enjoys benefitting sentient beings. One million times he would go to hell to help one sentient being, and not be discouraged, he enjoys that. That is his richness.

The deer skin means the following: the deer is so caring, with such compassion, so gentle and peaceful; he can give up his life for other sentient beings. Chenrezig is that kind of being.

The 'Lotus position' represents that he is beyond suffering, yet still in the world. He comes to benefit sentient beings continually.

The lotus is so beautiful. It grows in the mud, yet when it blooms there is no stain on the lotus petals. Wherever there is suffering- that is like the mud, where Chenrezig can go. He wants to help, but he is never stained by that suffering.

The moon-disk represents compassion. Like the moon at night is cool, it cools sentient beings' suffering.

Amitabha on the crown of Avalokiteshvara's head means this: Amitabha is Avalokiteshvara's teacher, his spiritual friend, his guru. He is equal to Amitabha, still he knows that it's through his guru that he attained realization. So he is there as a symbol of respect.

All the purity and perfection of Chenrezig bring to your mind. The more you do that, the more you gain that quality.

Then white light goes out from Chenrezig's forehead, red light from his throat, and blue light from his heart. This light goes out to all enlightened beings, all deities,

manifestations of all the wisdom of the Buddhas. Then the light from them returns in the form of Avalokiteshvara, and this dissolves into the crown of his head.

He becomes the essence of all objects of refuge.

On the crown of my head and all sentient beings pervading space, there rests a white lotus and moon seat. From HRI (on the lotus and moon seat) appears Noble All-Seeing One, white, bright, and radiating five-colored light rays, smiling charmingly and gazing with Eyes of Compassion.

He has four arms, the upper two joined together and the lower two holding a white lotus and crystal rosary. He is adorned by precious jewels and silks; a deer skin covers his upper part (left shoulder). The Buddha of Boundless Light adorns his head. He sits in the vajra asana. His back is supported by a stainless moon; he is the essence of all sources of refuge.

Then we recite the wish-fulfilling prayer.

We pray:

‘You who look with compassion upon all sentient beings, with all the bodies I have ever had, filling all the world, I bow. I pay homage, sincerely, honestly.

‘May I accomplish perfect enlightenment quickly through your blessings.

‘If I have any kindness and compassion, may it not diminish. If I don’t have any, may it develop now.

‘Obstacles, impurity, remove these completely.

‘May I accomplish perfect enlightenment.

‘Whatever conditions I need, may I attain them.’

(Make the following prayer thinking all beings are making it with you as if in a single voice.)

* Lord, whose white body is not clothed by fault, whose head is adorned by a Perfect Buddha, who looks upon all beings with Eyes of Compassion, to you Chenrezig I pay homage.

(Repeat as least three times from *.)

(The SEVEN BRANCH PRAYER)

Next, in the Seven-Branch Prayer, each section is an antidote to one particular affliction.

- Prostration is an antidote to pride.

To the Sublime One, the Mighty Chenrezig, to the Buddhas and their Sons, who reside in the ten directions and the three times, with complete sincerity I pay homage.

- Offering; mountain, car, landscape, house, jewel, to Chenrezig, offering everything beautiful: form, sound, smell, taste, touch- this is an antidote to clinging, attachment. He accepts out of his compassion. This purifies attachment, clinging to material things.

I offer flowers, incense, butter-lamps, perfume, food, music, and other real and imaginary offerings and so on, and beseech the Noble Assembly to accept them.

- Third, confession means repentance- regretting past deeds done due to anger and other afflictions. In front of Chenrezig thinking: 'Through this negativity I will suffer. You who know everything, with deep regret I confess, and I will never do this again. And I ask forgiveness. Forgive me. Please pacify, purify.' Through this, past impurity is dispelled, removed.

I confess all the unskillful actions caused by the power of conflicting emotions, the ten unvirtuous deeds and the five sins of limitless consequence done from beginningless time until now.

- Fourth, rejoicing, is the opposite of jealousy. Jealousy leads to anger, which leads to hell. Thinking: 'I rejoice in any good thing done by others. I rejoice and support them. That good deed, good karma, brings good results.' With rejoicing you gain merit without effort, without hardship. Whatever you rejoice in, you gain that virtue. That is called the short path.

I rejoice in the spiritual merit of whatever virtue Sravakas, Pratyeka Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and ordinary beings gather throughout the three times.

- Fifth, is the prayer for enlightened beings to turn the Wheel of Dharma, according to the needs of sentient beings, according to their faculties and mental abilities. This is the antidote to ignorance. In the future you will not have any difficulty in hearing the teaching.

I pray that the Dharma Wheel of the Mahayana, Hinayana, and of the Teachings common to both be turned in accordance with the wishes and aptitudes of beings.

- Sixth is requesting the teacher to remain until samsara ends, to be a guide and protector of sentient beings. This is the antidote to wrong views, and not understanding how much the teacher helps you. The remedy is requesting the Buddhas and bodhisattvas to remain in the world. Because of learning from teachers we get benefit, and all beings can get free from suffering and get enlightened.

I beseech the Buddhas not to pass into Nirvana as long as samsara is not emptied, but to look with compassion upon sentient beings who wallow in the ocean of suffering.

- Seventh, dedicating the merit, is the antidote to doubt or hesitation. This is something brave. Thinking: 'May this cause all sentient beings to become free from suffering and attain enlightenment'- this is to be without hesitation, without doubt. Thinking: 'By this, may all limitless sentient beings be free from suffering', thinking with confidence, 'Through the blessing of all Buddhas and bodhisattvas, may this wish be fulfilled'- that becomes of true benefit.

May whatever merit I have accumulated be the cause for the Enlightenment of Beings; may I quickly become a splendid leader of beings.

The Six Realm Prayer

This refers to the six poisons. Each realm is produced by our afflictions: anger, greed, ignorance, desire, jealousy and pride.

Each prayer to Chenrezig pacifies and closes the door to that specific realm. That realm is changed into a pure land. 'Pure land' means whatever the mind touches it brings peace and joy.

(The Vajra words of prayer to the Excellent Chenrezig composed by the Great Mahasiddha, Tang tong Gyalpo, in his incarnation as Gelong Pema Karpo:)

I pray to you Lama Chenrezig. I pray to you Yidam Chenrezig. I pray to you Perfect Noble Chenrezig. I pray to you Lord Protector Chenrezig. I pray to you Lord of Love Chenrezig. Great Compassionate Victor, please hold us with your compassion, numberless beings who wander in endless samsara experiencing unbearable suffering. There is no other refuge than you, Protector! Please bestow the blessing to obtain omniscient Buddhahood.

Chenrezig sends light to the hell realms, purifies anger, and the hell realm becomes a perfect pure land.

By the power of accumulating negative karma from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of anger, are born as hell beings and experience the suffering of heat and cold. May they all be born in your presence, Perfect Diety. OM MANI PADME HUNG

Light goes to the hungry ghost realm and purifies and pacifies greedy, stingy emotional feelings. That realm becomes a perfect and pure realm.

By the power of accumulating negative Karma from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of greed, are born in the realms of pretas and experience the suffering of hunger and thirst. May they all be born in your perfect realm, the Potala. OM MANI PADME HUNG

Avalokiteshvara sends light to the animal realm and this purifies ignorance. They wake up, and change into the form of Chenrezig. Their realm becomes a pure realm.

By the power of accumulating negative Karma from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of stupidity, are born as animals and experience the suffering of dullness and stupidity. May they all be born in your presence, Protector. OM MANI PADME HUNG

Light fills up the whole human realm, where desire, attachment is the cause, and this realm becomes the Dewachen realm. (Avalokiteshvara's pure land.)

By the power of accumulating negative Karma from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of desire, are born in the human realm and experience the suffering of excessive activity and constant frustration. May they all be born in the Pure Land of Dewachen. OM MANI PADME HUNG

(This prayer, the vajra words of prayer to the Sublime Chenrezig, was composed by the Mahasiddha, Tang tong Gyalpo, who remembered them from a previous incarnation when he had been the monk Pema Karpo, who addressed this prayer one-pointedly to the Sublime Chenrezig while doing the Nyung Ne practice from his twentieth to his eightieth year.)

The demi-god realm is caused by jealousy. There there are quarrels and fighting non-stop. Light goes to this realm and their land becomes a pure land, their form becomes Chenrezig's form.

By the power of accumulating negative Karma from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of jealousy, are born in the realm of the demi-gods and experience the suffering of fighting and quarreling. May they all be born in your realm, the Potala.
OM MANI PADME HUNG

White light goes to the god realm and purifies pride.

By the power of accumulating negative Karma from beginningless time, sentient beings, through the force of pride, are born in the realm of the gods and experience the suffering of change and falling. May they all be born in your realm, the Potala. OM MANI PADME HUNG

That is how the Six Realm Prayer, for the six afflictions, closes the door to the six realms.

Wherever I am born may my deeds, by equalling Chenrezig's, liberate beings from impure realms and spread the perfect sound of the six syllables in the ten directions. Through the power of praying to you Perfect Noble One, may beings who I am to discipline pay the greatest attention to action and result, and diligently practice virtue and the Dharma for the benefit of beings.

(And then:)

Through this one-pointed prayer, light radiates from the body of the Sublime One and purifies impure Karma, impure appearances, and the deluded mind. The outer realm is the Pure Land of Dewachen, and the body, speech, and mind of beings therein are the perfect form, sublime speech, and pure mind of Mighty Chenrezig, the indivisible union of appearance, sound, and vivid intelligence with voidness.

(Meditate like this as you recite the mantra.)

OM MANI PEME HUNG

Recitation of mantra

Focus your mind on the crown of your head, on Chenrezig, on his transparent body. HRI at his heart center is radiating. Chenrezig's body becomes full of light. Then light reaches your body and immediately this body is transformed into Chenrezig. Light reaches this land and all this land, everything you see and hear brings peace and joy, everything is perfect. At the same time, not grasping and holding, everything you see, vivid and clear, is without inherent existence. All beings are Chenrezig, all sound mantra sound.

Chenrezig moves from the crown of your head to your heart center, as a thumb-sized Chenrezig. Light fills your body and goes out to all the lineage holders, to all Buddhas and bodhisattvas, reaching to all enlightened ones. They are pleased and send back five-colored light to you, transforming all dualistic concepts.

Again light goes out and purifies all the different realms so there is nothing impure, no dualistic concept. That's the way you recite the mantra, OM MANI PEME HUNG.

Completion stage

To conclude, stop reciting, and apply more sharp concentration. From your heart, five-colored light fills your body, and then goes to the pure land. That light dissolves into all beings as Chenrezig. They turn into light, which dissolves into you as Chenrezig. You dissolve into the Chenrezig at your heart. The Chenrezig at your heart melts into the mantra at your heart. This dissolves into the HRI, white and bright, which dissolves stage by stage becoming smaller until it's just a dot. Nothing left except your own mind in the form of a small dot, representing perfect compassion. This too dissolves into space.

Then keep clear. Keep your mind very aware, vivid and clear. Emptiness, completely, without grasping or holding. Completely let go of all dualistic concepts. Not blank emptiness, but very aware, very bright and shining. If you want you can watch your breath.

(Recite as many times as you are able. Finally, let the mind remain absorbed in its own essence without making distinction between subject, object, and act.

Reappearance

From that, immediately reappear, your body as Chenrezig; all form as Chenrezig; all sound mantra sound; all that you see and hear is completely emptiness, without inherent existence.

Then repeat:)

My body, the bodies of others and all appearances are the perfect form of the Sublime One, all sounds the melody of the Six Syllables, and all thoughts the vastness of the Great Jnana.

(DEDICATING the MERIT)

Through this virtue, may I quickly achieve the realization of Mighty Chenrezig and may I bring every single being to that same state.

(This text, called 'The Recitation for the Meditation of the Great Compassionate One for the Benefit of Beings as Vast as the Skies', was composed by the Mahasiddha Tang tong Gyalpo and bears the blessing of his speech.)

Then we pray 'May I be born in Dewachen, the blissful realm, the perfect pure realm of Avalokiteshvara. And may I become a tenth level bodhisattva with the power to manifest many forms to benefit many beings.

Keep your devotion and compassion, devotion to enlightened beings, compassion for sentient beings. Do good things as much as you can, then dedicate to be reborn in a pure realm.

Through the merit of reciting and meditating may I and every being to whom I am connected, when these imperfect forms are left behind, be miraculously born in Dewachen. May I then immediately cross the ten levels and send out emanations for the benefit of others.

Through this virtue, may all beings perfect the accumulation of spiritual merit and awareness. May they attain the Two Supreme Bodies which arise from merit and awareness.

We dedicate to develop bodhicitta, the enlightened attitude. This is so important. 'I want to get enlightened to benefit other sentient beings'.

Bodhicitta is precious; may it arise in those who have not cultivated it. In those who have cultivated it, may it not diminish; may it ever grow and flourish.

When you get up from meditation, take your meditation with you. This is very important. When out of meditation, try to be mindful. Try to cultivate a sense of kindness and compassion. With kindness and compassion you don't have any room for negative things. It might be difficult at first, but gradually you get used to that.

Additional notes:

All sadhanas in general cover the stages of life, death, bardo and rebirth. For example, the lotus and moon represent the mother and father, and the HRI is your consciousness, representing all Buddhas' and bodhisattvas' kindness and compassion. That purifies your conception.

Light goes out and purifies all impure realms, and goes out and makes offerings to all Buddhas and bodhisattvas. This represents the time in the womb, ready to be born.

Then the light returns and instantly Avalokiteshvara appears- that is birth.

Then through making prayers and offerings with oneself as Avalokiteshvara, doing mantra recitation, this purifies daily activities. Mantra is conversation. This all transforms daily activities into divine activity.

Then, the dissolution stage, that is when we die. Before you die, the elements dissolve into emptiness; earth into water, water into fire, fire into wind, wind into ether, and ether into consciousness. To purify that stage we send light to all the pure lands and we visualize that they dissolve into living beings as Chenrezig, which dissolves into ourselves as Chenrezig. Chenrezig then dissolves into the Chenrezig at our heart, which dissolves into the mantra at our heart.

If you are good at that practice you have many chances to become liberated. Try to be conscious, aware of the true nature of mind as empty.

Dissolving the elements, this purifies the death process. Then emptiness meditation, that we practice without wavering and without conceptualizing, this purifies the time right after death.

In the two stages of tantric practice, the first is the creation stage, or development stage, where we are mentally creating the visualization to see the deities clearly, and reciting mantra. The second, the completion stage, that is emptiness practice. This purifies the unconscious.

Then, reappearing again from emptiness, that purifies the bardo. In the bardo the mind is very flexible. It's like iron that is red hot and can be shaped into any shape. When you identify your mind with Chenrezig, hear all sound as mantra sound, see all form as Chenrezig's form, with devotion and compassion, then you are born in the pure land, in the blissful realm. If not, then with your consciousness as HRI, make a prayer to be born into a place where you can practice Dharma.

In the sadhana, purification is there again and again because our concepts come back. We imagine ourselves to be ordinary again, so purification is necessary.

Q: Purifying and protecting the mind and purifying suffering in the world, are they the same?

A: There is group and individual karma, and both are to be purified. Invoking universal kindness and compassion, divine love and compassion, definitely it helps. You can receive this then you can send this out to other beings. It helps us directly, them indirectly.

THE MEDITATION AND MANTRA OF CHENREZIG

Together with some essential visualization phases
and commentaries to assist those starting the practice of Chenrezig Meditation

PRELIMINARIES:

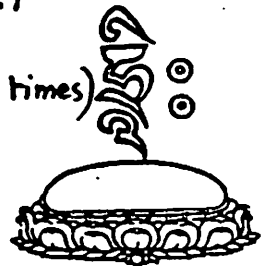
Taking refuge and generating the thought of enlightenment, the Bodhicitta, make our practice vast as an ocean - therefore it is very important to recite the prayer before the Meditation:

*In the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha
I and all sentient beings take refuge until full awakening.
By the beneficial karma of my practicing generosity (etc. . .)
May Buddhahood be realized for the sake of all beings*

Then recite From: Sang gye' chö dang...to... drub par sho (3 times)

BODY OF THE PRACTICE:

Phase of Development: Meditation with form or Visualization



On the crown of my head and heads of all sentient beings spread out through the expanse of the boundless universe, there is a white lotus and on this lotus a full moon is horizontally resting; upon it is standing the luminous seed letter HRI which is the embodiment of Chenrezig's very essence. From HRI rays of light in the five colors of the rainbow (white, blue, green, yellow, and red) radiate to all the ten directions as an offering to all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and to all the Refuges. This offering pleases the Buddhas and in return they radiate clear white light which comes to us as rains of blessing which stream into the seed letter HRI. The light thus emanating from HRI also purifies the universe, oneself and all beings. Then ultimately all the light merges back into the letter HRI which is instantaneously transformed into the exalted body of Chenrezig, sitting on the white lotus and moon on the crown of our heads. (Later these two processes can be condensed into one: the light simultaneously radiating as an offering and purifying, then merging back into the HRI.)

There is also an abridged form with which beginners can start: This is to visualize the HRI immediately transformed into Chenrezig without any of the above visualizations of light emanations.

VISUALIZATION OF CHENREZIG:

HRI and Chenrezig should be visualized like the full moon's reflection in water, insubstantial, yet clear.

Chenrezig has all the qualities and attributes of the Buddha; radiating light rays of the five colors, mostly white. He is adorned with eight jeweled ornaments - beautiful, smiling, he gazes down on all living beings with eyes of compassion. Of his four hands the first pair are folded palm to palm at his heart in deep prayer, holding a jewel. Of the second pair the outer right holds a crystal rosary, and the left a white lotus. He is wearing five beautiful silken robes and ribbons. The skin of a "tri-na-sa-ra" is draped over his left shoulder. (This deer like animal is a very peaceful one, never causing harm to any being, it is found in the God's realm.) Crowning his head like an ornament, is Amitabha, the Buddha of infinite light, red in color - Chenrezig is seated in the Vajra posture, his back resting against an immaculate and brilliant moon disk. He is in essence the union of all the Refuges.

His body is white because it is all pure. There are no mind poisons or habitual thoughts. His single face shows the emptiness of everything; nothing having any self-nature.

His right outer arm represents love, the right inner arm, compassion. His left inner arm represents sympathetic joy, the left outer, equanimity. Just as the lotus is unsullied by the mud from which it arises, so is Chenrezig untouched by the dirt of Samsara. The rosary and the folded hands are a sign that he is praying for all living beings and able to teach them the way to enlightenment.

The silken garments show that he has all riches. He wants nothing, so can only give; they are also a sign of the Samboghakaya. The five jewels in his crown symbolize that the five mind poisons have become the five wisdoms, and the Tri-na-sa-ra skin symbolizes his total non violence, because this animal is completely gentle and peaceful. Amitabha is on his head, because he is Chenrezig's Lama: both in past, present and future they are together. His left leg symbolizes wisdom, and his right leg skillful means and compassion.

Then recite from : dag sog kha khyab ... to ... ngo wor gyur.

PRAYER TO CHENREZIG:

We pray to Chenrezig crowning our heads thinking of him as undifferentiated from our root Lama and being the essence of all aspects of the Refuge:

*O Lord, perfectly pure, of white radiant color.
Your head crowned with the Buddha of Infinite Light,
Gazing upon all beings with eyes of compassion
To you, Chenrezig, we bow in homage.*

(Repeat three times or more)

Then recite from: djo wo kyön gyi...to...chak tsel lo.



MEDITATION CONTINUES:

Having thus prayed mindfully, rays of light in the five colors radiate from Chenrezig's body on the top of our heads, purifying all impure karma, appearances, and delusive understanding throughout the whole universe. By this blessing the outer world, vessel like, becomes the blissful realm of Dewachen. The world's inner contents, beings, in body speech and mind become the body speech and mind of exalted Chenrezig which are undifferentiated from the voidness of all appearances, all sounds, and all awareness.

Then recite from: dé tar gom...to...yer me' gyur.

Ourselves and all beings have been purified through this blessing and should meditate ourselves as being Chenrezig, yet still keeping the real Chenrezig on our head. The form of Chenrezig we meditate upon as being ourselves is called "Dam-Tsig-pa" or imagined one; the real Chenrezig on our head is called "Yeshe-pa," the one of supreme wisdom.

While reciting the six syllable Mantra, the meditation immediately following the prayer to Chenrezig is the root practice to do. However there are also various other practices that one can focus on during the recitation, either one after the other, or concentrating on one only at a time:

- 1) Meditate on one's body being Chenrezig's body with all his attributes
- 2) Concentrate on the seed syllable HRI in Chenrezig's heart
- 3) Concentrate on the six letters (one letter on each of the six petals of the lotus around the HRI in the center - like on the diagram)

- 4) Concentrate just on the sound of the Mantra, buzzing like a swarm
- 5) Visualize five fold light rays radiating from the HRI to all the Buddhas throughout the ten directions who send back blessings of light purifying the outer world and its vivifying contents, beings
- 6) Meditate on compassion
- 7) Meditate on voidness
- 8) Pray

Now we repeat Chenrezig's mantra OM MANI PEME HUNG

Then, the

real Chenrezig on top of our head, the "Yeshe-pa," melts into light and enters our body through the crown of our head reaching to our heart center. Before we were visualizing our own body and the body of all beings as Chenrezig's form or "Dam-Tsig-pa" (the imagined one), and now, having received Chenrezig's blessing and siddhis, we become him the "Yeshe-pa," the real Chenrezig. We now think "I am Chenrezig" with a non-egoistic, pure pride. "Dam-Tsig-pa" and "Yeshe-pa" are one within our heart.

Now we continue repeating the mantra

PHASE OF PERFECTION - FORMLESS MEDITATION:

Everything dissolves into voidness. At this point of the meditation we are Chenrezig, and in our heart, the very heart of Chenrezig himself, there is the seed letter HRI surrounded by the Mantra OM MA NI PAD ME HUNG on the six petaled lotus. From HRI, light emanates which pervades the whole universe, purifying all, whatsoever exists or not. This light dissolves all the outer worlds which are absorbed into oneself - Chenrezig and all beings being also Chenrezig. Then our body and the body of all beings, all these Chenrezig bodies, dissolve into light and are absorbed into one's own Chenrezig body. This body also dissolves into light and is absorbed into the six petaled lotus

around HRI at our heart. The lotus and the letters of the mantra then are absorbed into the HRI which gradually dissolves itself, each part being absorbed upwards into emptiness until only the tiniest dot remains which then completely disappears like a rainbow resolves into the voidness of celestial space:



All this gradual extensive evolving process can be condensed in an abridged form: Everything dissolves altogether at once into light and this light dissolves, like a rainbow into voidness

Everything having been dissolved into radiant voidness, the mind is allowed to remain in its natural state, devoid of any artifice, without constraint, effortless, fully aware and undistracted, yet nothing is, or is to be, meditated, or not meditated upon. If thoughts, sounds or appearances arise they are not to be held, acknowledged or repressed. Devoid of clinging or repulsion towards them, we just stay fully aware in a simple recognition of the essential nature of all phenomena: emptiness, without any self-nature. Meditating like this they spontaneously become self-liberated. In this very state, we remain as long as we are

Then we rest in silence.

"My own body and those of all beings, all appearances, are the
Exalted Body,
All sounds are resounding the six-syllables,
Awareness, thoughts, are the expanse of the supreme primal
knowing (Gnosis)."

Ultimately, everything reappears again, like a rainbow in the sky, like the full moon's reflection on water. All living beings in body speech and mind become the body speech and mind of Exalted Chenrezig. Again,

like in the phase of development, everything becomes Chenrezig's form . . .
Mantra or Mind. This meditation goes on whether we are eating, sleeping,
walking, etc. . . both now and at all time. Again and again, the outer
world becomes the blissful real of Dewachen . . .

This phase of consumation and perfection is like the first Bardo process
where everything dissolves gradually into the void (earth-water-fire-air-
ether-void), and after a period of unconsciousness or deep meditation on the
Mahamudra, we have to recognize the clear light arising from voidness. In
the same way, Chenrezig is reappearing out of emptiness after our meditation
on Shunyata, like a rainbow light that we have to recognize after the clear
light in the Bardo, as the illusory appearances of the next rebirth begin to
shine forth.

IN THIS WAY WHEN WE PRACTICE CHENREZIG MEDITATION, ALL PHENOMENA REAPPEAR
IN OUR MIND BUT ARE IMMEDIATELY TRANSMUTED INTO THE BLISSFUL REAL OF DEWACHEN
CHENREZIG'S FORM, MANTRA AND MIND - LIBERATION IS ACHIEVED.

Then we recite from: dag shen lü . . . to . . . chen poi long

CONCLUSION:

Prayer of sharing the merit.

*By this virtue may I quickly realize the
illumination of Chenrezig
And therewith, not excepting a single being, may
I establish them all in this very state.*

Then we recite from: ge' wa di yi . . . to . . . go par sho

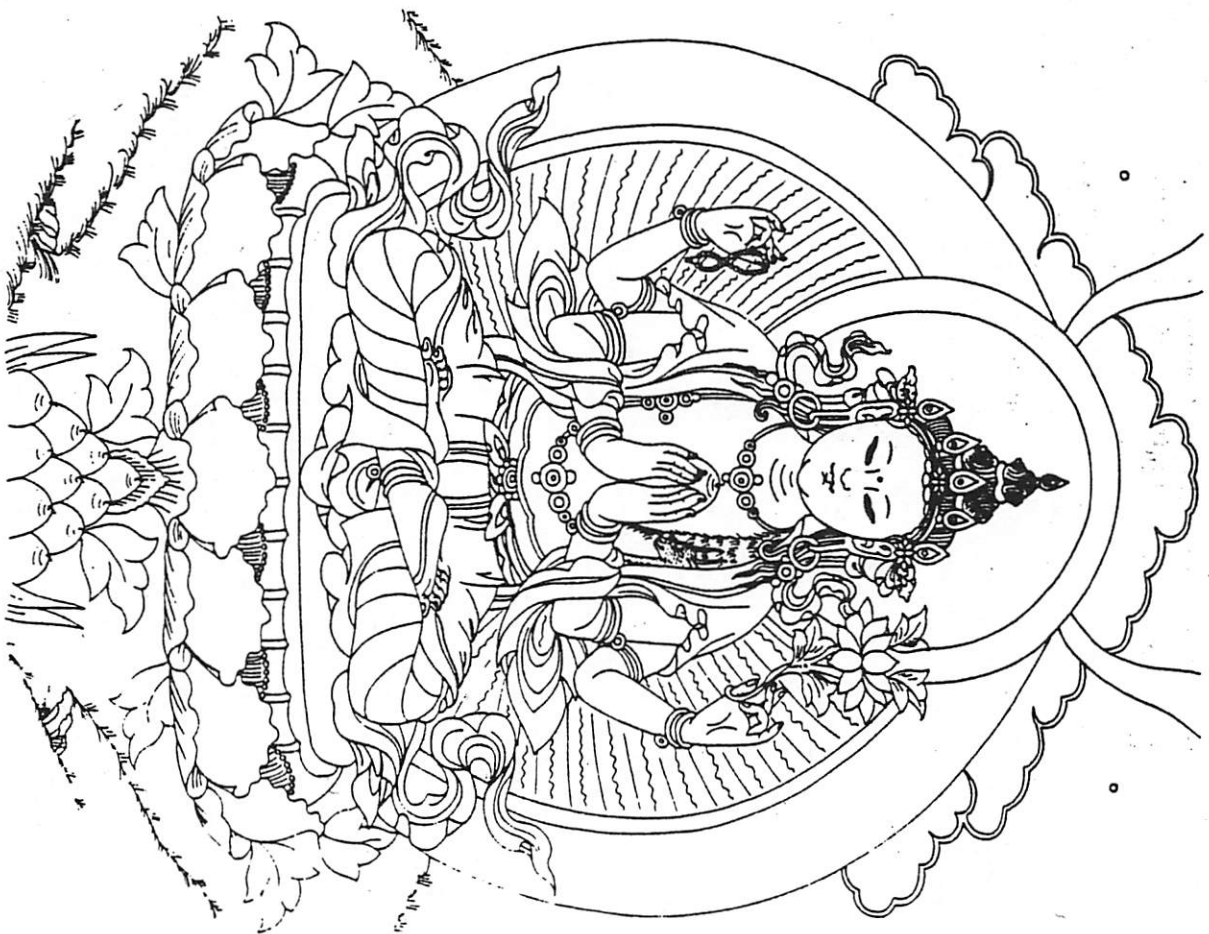
Prayer with the Aspiration to be Reborn in Dewachen.

*By the beneficial karma generated in practicing
this meditation and mantra,
May I and all those having a connection with me,
all beings
As soon as this impure body has been left, may we
Through apparition, be reborn in Dewachen
And as soon as we are, having once traversed the
ten Boddhisattva levels,
May we, through emanations, work in the ten
directions for the benefit of others.*

Then we recite from: di tar gom . . . to dje' par sho.

THE TOTAL FLOWERING OF ACTIVITY
TO HELP OTHERS

This series of prayers and meditations is concerned with mind training and constitutes the basis of the teaching of the patriarchs. These are pith instructions of the transcending awareness dakini, Niguma, and will create conditions such that it is impossible for others not to benefit.



THE ALL-SEEING ONE, CHENRAYZI

Having eight opportunities
And ten blessings in this human form
Is so much better than being a god;
It is just like a pauper's finding a jewel.
For so many reasons — cause, number,
Example and so forth, it is difficult
To find it but for this moment.
It is impermanent too, like a bubble of froth,
Certain to perish soon.
At that time, since nothing but dharma
Is even a hair tip's help,
Meditate on the profound path,
The very heart of the supreme dharma.

The universe, this external world,
Is destroyed by fire and water.
The four seasons are mere moments that come and go.
Everything is impermanent,
Bound in the four ends.
There never is a person born who doesn't die.
Life and breath are like lightning and dew.
It is not even certain which will come first,
Tomorrow or the next world.
If I just think about dharma but don't practice it,
The demons of distraction and laziness
will carry me away.
Since I must go empty handed and naked,
I should practice the supreme dharma without delay.

At death, even the universal monarch
Leaves his power and influence behind.
I'll wander alone in the barid.
The ripening of black and white karma follows
Like a body and its shadow.
Action done is never without result;
But action not done is never met.
Development is part of all action.
The results of virtue and evil
Are happiness and suffering
Inevitably ripening for the doer.
This world is but a moment.
Samsara is long, without end.
So, if I am not to achieve my own destruction
I should as a matter of principle believe
in action and result,
In particular, I should observe
The commitments of ordination.
No fault should stain
My stream of consciousness.

From the pinnacle of existence
Down to the depths of torment,
All the regions of samsara,
From top to bottom,
Are like a trench of fire.
A thickel of razors;
No chance for happiness ever appears.
Up to now, I have wandered in samsara,
Ignorance, bewilderment, and samsara
Are not exhausted.
Now, knowledge of this intolerable unhappiness
And fierce determination arouse my stream of being.
I enter the path to freedom and permanent bliss
And pursue the successes of the patriarchs
To obtain buddhahood in a single lifetime.

First, imagine your guru as Chenrayzi in front of you surrounded by an ocean of sources of refuge.

In the sky in front of me is a jewelled throne.
On this throne is a lotus and moon seat
On which sits my source guru in essence,
In form, the Lord Chenrayzi,
Surrounded by throngs
Of buddhas and bodhisattvas.
Everything becomes so very real.

I and all sentient beings, my mothers,
Go for refuge to the guru, precious buddha.
We go for refuge to the buddha, dharma and sangha.
We go for refuge to the guru, yidams and
Throngs of dakinis and protectors.
We go for refuge to mind itself,
Clear, empty, dharmakaya.

Repeat this refuge prayer three times and rest free of conceptualization.

All sentient beings are to obtain the citadel
Of completely perfected buddhahood.
For this reason, I now enter the stages
Of honest virtuous action.

Repeat this prayer three times.

I appear clearly as the deity:
On a lotus-moon seat on my head,
Sits my root guru
Clear, white, radiant with light,
With a loving expression and
Clothed in jewels and silk.
Light shines from the three letters
At the three points,
Inviting a throng of source and
Transmission gurus, yidams,
Peaceful and wrathful deities,
Buddhas, bodhisattvas, dakinis and protectors
Who all dissolve into him.
He becomes their embodiment.

When your mind is filled with intense devotion in the following prayer, your guru will definitely appear.

To you, my guru, completely pure and
Universal spiritual friend, I pray for blessing.
I pray for the blessings of perfecting love,
Compassion and bodhicitta.

Repeat this three times.

I pray that through you, my guru, precious buddha,
Only the welfare of others will be accomplished
In this and other lives of mine.

Repeat this three times and then meditate on compassion which encompasses all space.

Sentient beings fill all that space fills.
Everyone, without a single exception,
Has been my parent.
Each and every one has helped me in countless lives.
All of them, though wishing happiness,
Accomplish suffering.
Oh pitiable ones,
Wandering endlessly in samsara...
Through the power of immense
Devotion and compassion
My guru is absorbed into me.
Instantly I become in form,
The Great Compassionate One
Who disciplines beings,
And with loving heart
Is mindful of every sentient being.

Imagining yourself to be Chenrayzi, repeat the six syllables OM MANI PADME HUM and meditate on taking and sending. Then:

Alas, my kindly parents,
The six kinds of beings,
In beginningless and endless samsara
Are broken by intolerable suffering.
In this ocean of existence and suffering
Ever wander all sentient beings.
Alas, alas, oh pitiable ones,
All my parents ~~are~~ ^{HAVE} come to this.
How can I forsake and let them fall?
I must, right now, and all the time,
Work diligently for the
Welfare of all beings.

Now pray as follows.

Both in this and other lives,
May this basic virtue of mine
Accomplish only that which benefits others.
May my body mature all sentient beings
And set them free.
May my speech mature all sentient beings
And set them free.
May my mind mature all sentient beings
And set them free.
Until this ocean of suffering is emptied,
May all three,
My body, speech, and mind
Mature all sentient beings
And set them free.

Repeat three times.

May I become not only a lord protector
Of all sentient beings in all situations,
But also, fulfill every wish
Of each and every sentient being.

Repeat three times.

EXPLANATION

The first part of the morning service begins with a contemplation on each of the four thoughts which turn the mind. As you repeat these verses, think about the precious human birth, death and impermanence, karma, and the shortcomings of samsara. In the contemplation of death and impermanence, reference is made to the four ends:

The end of gathering is dispersion

The end of building is ruin

The end of meeting is parting

The end of birth is death.

The second part of the service begins with your imagining the sources of refuge. Your root guru appears in the form of Chenrayzi surrounded by buddhas and bodhisattvas. You go to him for refuge repeating the refuge prayer given here as many times as you wish. Then you imagine yourself in the form of Chenrayzi with your lama sitting above your head on a lotus-moon seat. On his forehead there is a white letter OM ཀྲུཿ, at his throat a red letter AH ཨྲུཿ, and at his heart a blue letter HUM ཧུཿ. From these letters, lights of the respective colours shine, inviting all the source and transmission gurus, the yidams, the buddhas and bodhisattvas, the dakinis and protectors. All of them are absorbed into your root guru so that he embodies all of them. Then pray to your guru for his blessing and inspiration, particularly for his blessing in engendering bodhicitta and being able to work for the welfare of others. This prayer should be repeated as often as possible.



LAMA DEZHUNG RINPOCHE

After this prayer, your guru dissolves into light. As this light is absorbed into you, you are filled with his blessings. Meditate on compassion as you repeat the next section of prayers.

Say Chenrayzi's mantra 100 times or as many more as you wish; then meditate on compassion by thinking of all sentient beings as being your parents, of how they come to suffer, and so forth. With this basis, you can meditate on taking and sending (the instructions are to be found in "Direct Path to Enlightenment"). This meditation involves imagining that all the sufferings of all sentient beings take the form of black light which enters your right nostril as you breathe in. Thus, all sentient beings are free of suffering. When you breathe out, imagine that white light shines from your left nostril distributing your own happiness to all sentient beings. Or, you can meditate on ultimate bodhicitta as described in the text. At the end of a meditation period, repeat the prayers which reflect a compassionate concern for others and conclude with the dedication of merit.

This service is practiced regularly at the Ven. Kahu Rinpoche's monastery in India. During his tour of North America, he gave this service and meditation to a number of his centres, notably Vancouver, San Francisco, and Hawaii. The translation was made by Ken McLeod. This publication was made possible through the kind gift of Thomas Quinn of Vancouver.

ཨོ། རལ་པ་རྒྱུ་འཕྲིད་པ་པུ་ལྷན་པ།

ལྷ་ལས་ཀེས་ལྷན་མི་ཡི་ལུས།

དབུལ་པོས་ནོར་གུ་རྟེན་མཆུངས་པ།

རྒྱ་གར་ས་དཔེ་སྒྲིག་སྒྲི་བྱ་ལས།

ད་རེས་ཚེས་ལས་རྟེན་པར་དགའ།

འདི་ཡང་མི་རྒྱ་རྒྱ་བྱར་པ་ཞིག།

ལྷ་དུ་འཛིག་ས་དེས་དེ་ཡི་ཀེ།

ཀེས་ཤིག་གཞན་ཤིས་སྤྱ་ཚེས་ཡང་།

མག་པ་ཤེད་ཤིང་དམ་པའི་ཀེས།

ལྷན་ཤི་ཡང་སྤྱད་བཤམ་པ་བསྒྲིམ།

། མི་རྒྱ་པ་འམམ་པ་འོ།

སྤྱད་ཤི་འཛིག་རྟེན་ཤི་རྒྱས་འཛིག།

མམ་ཞེ་དུས་པའི་ཡུད་ཚེས་འཁྱུར།

**A CONTINUOUS RAIN
TO BENEFIT BEINGS**

*The Fifteenth Karmapa
Kakhyab Dorje*



TANG-STONG-GYALPO

Translator's note:

Many teachers have written commentaries on Thang.stong.gyal.po's "agro.don.mkhah.khyab.ma." There are also many variations of the meditation based on this text, so that students who have heard or received different interpretations need not be confused. In addition to the actual meditation described here, the text contains information on refuge, Bodhicitta, and on the mantra itself. Thus, this translation may be informative to everyone. Indeed, I sincerely hope that this small work helps to interest more people in the Dharma. My thanks to Lobsang Lhalungpa, Thomas quinn and his wife, Joyce, and to Rick Barron who all helped in preparing the manuscript.

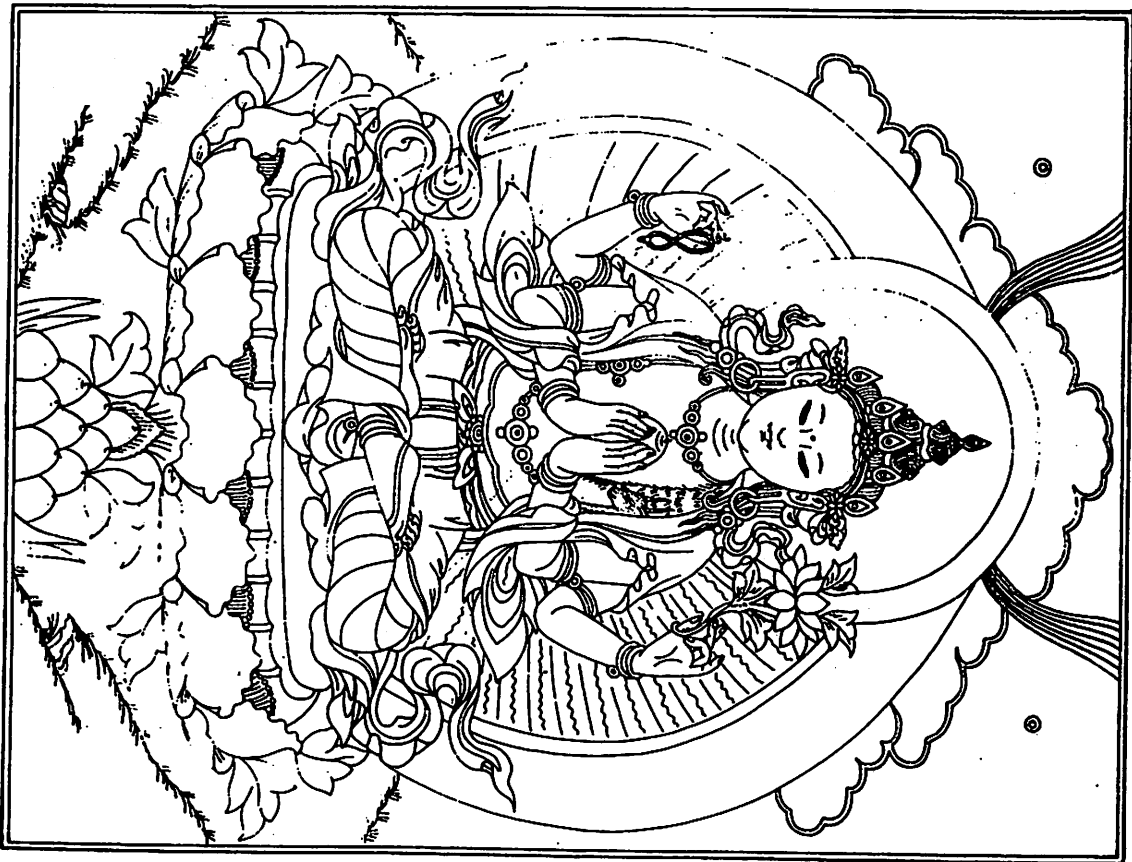
K. McLeod

A CONTINUOUS RAIN TO BENEFIT BEINGS

by

The Fifteenth Karmapa
Kakhyab Dorje

PUBLISHED BY
KAGYU KUNKHAB CHULING
725 West 14th Avenue
VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA
CANADA



THE ALL-SEEING ONE

om ma-ni pay-mae hounḡ hri

Swati: *I bow to the Noble Lord, the All-Seeing One, The expression of all Kings' Great Compassion; Inseparable from the Activity that stirs to the depths of Samsara.*

4

children. From the power of his inspiration, even children would recite quite spontaneously, without any instruction, the six-syllable King of Mantras. In this snow-filled land, no other deity is venerated or respected as much as Supreme Compassion. Thus, all the great incarnate sages that have appeared in the past explained how to venerate the Supreme One in innumerable writings, some brief, some lengthy. Of these, the method of application of the meditation and recitation called "Filling Space to Benefit Beings" is discussed here. This text was written by King of a Thousand Valleys, an actual emanation of the All-Seeing One, who appeared in order to help humans.

This application is discussed under six headings:

1. Preparation: Going for Refuge and the Engendering of the Enlightening Mind.
2. Actual Practice: Meditation on the Deity.
3. Actual Practice: Recitation of the Mantra.
4. Conclusion: Continuing Practice.
5. Conclusion: Dedication of Merit.
6. Explanation of benefits.

Going for Refuge and the Engendering of the Enlightening Mind.

The sky in front of you is filled with magnificent shining clouds, brilliant rainbows, and heavenly flowers. In this effulgence sits your source guru,⁵ identical with the Supreme All-Seeing One, the very actuality of the Three Jewels⁶ in all realms and ages.

Yourself, and all those to whom you are friendly, unfriendly, or indifferent, in short all the six families of sentient beings, are gathered together in a great multitude. Everyone prays in the threefold union of faith, yearning, and belief: the faith impelled by the expectation that your guru, the All-Seeing One, is able to shelter all others and yourself from Samsara, the great sea of sorrow; the yearning to seek this protection; and the belief that refuge is definitely to be obtained.

*I go for refuge 'til Enlightenment
In Buddha, Dharma, and assembled Saints.*

As you go for refuge, recite these lines as many times as you feel are appropriate. Be convinced that all sentient beings and yourself have come under the protection of the All-Seeing One.

Then direct your attention to all the sentient beings that have been previously imagined 'round about, and consider that, "Of all these, there is not one that has not been one of my parents, and thus a

benefactor. All of them desire simply to be happy, and wish only to cease suffering; yet, since they do just that which produces sorrow, they will all be interminably tormented by the tremendous burden of the resulting sufferings of Samsara and the lower existences. At the very least, I should bring all of them to the castle of Insurpassable Perfected Buddhahood, the pinnacle of happiness. Since, at the present, I am incapable of accomplishing that goal, I should apply this profound meditation concerning the Supreme All-Seeing One. When I have achieved the Supreme One's most excellent state, I shall, exactly as he has done, embark on helping beings as long as this cycle exists."

*May I, with meditation's power and force,
Accomplish Buddha for all beings' sake.*

Thus, with sincerity and determination, and in the sight of the guru, the All-Seeing One, take up this resolution, which is termed the production of the Enlightening Mind. Repeat these verses a number of times, so that you are certain and clear as to the purpose of doing this meditation.

From the form of Guru All-Seeing One light shines. As it strikes all the beings who have been imagined, it washes away all their evil actions, obscurations, and suffering, and brings them happiness. The sources of refuge then dissolve into light and

melt into yourself, thus blessing your stream of being.

Meditation on the Deity.

Just as was done when refuge was sought, sit as your ordinary self, surrounded by the six classes of sentient beings, the objects of compassion. On the crown of the head of each rests an eight-petalled white lotus in full bloom, with anthers and stamens. It is surmounted by the silvery pure disc of the moon, and above this stands the word *Hri*,⁷ pearl-white and shining. Meditate that this is the embodiment of the power and the might of all Buddhas. From it shine innumerable rays of moonlight, which render, to the whole multitude of Buddhas in the ten directions, offerings delightful to body, speech, and mind. As the light bathes all others and yourself, all disease, evil, pain, and obscurations are removed; as it fills the six realms with its splendour it dissipates suffering and establishes happiness. The blessings of the assembly of Supreme Ones, in the form of rays of light, converge into the *Hri* on the head of each being, and then the word changes instantly into the Supreme All-Seeing One. His form is brilliantly white, as white as new-fallen snow in sunlight, and radiates an effulgence in five hues.⁸ As this light fills the Buddha-realms, it exhorts all Buddhas to

administer to the welfare of beings; as it fills all the regions of the six families of beings, it eases each one's suffering and fosters everyone's happiness.

With a fine-featured and smiling countenance, the All-Seeing One gazes on all sentient beings; with an engaging smile, He gazes continually on others and on you; with a heart filled with love and kindness, like the love of a mother for her only son, He watches constantly over all beings. He has four hands: the first pair are joined at his heart; the second right holds a crystal rosary; the second left, a white lotus by its stem. He wears a blouse of the finest white silk embroidered with gold, beautiful silk ribbons, and a red silk skirt. His body is graciously adorned with a crown, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, anklets, a belt with tinkling bells, and various other pieces of jewelry, all wrought from gold washed by the waters of the rivers of the Earth, and set with precious gems from heavenly realms. The golden hide of an antelope is draped over his left shoulder. His hair is bound up in a knot, with some falling freely. The Buddha Boundless Light (Amitabha), head of a family of Buddhas,⁹ in Nirmanakaya vestments,¹⁰ crowns his head; his two feet are crossed in vajra position. A full and flawless moon supports his back. He rests as the complete fusion of all the Jewels that afford refuge, all that reside in the ten directions and appear in

the three times.

*Crowning the head of each and every being,
Whose numbers match the boundlessness of
space,
There rests a lotus white and full moon
seat.*

*From Hri appears the great All-Seeing One,
Five-coloured rays shine from his clear
white form,
And kindness in his eyes and smiling face.
Of his four hands, a pair are joined in
prayer;*

*The left a lotus holds, and in the right
A crystal rosary. With silks he is
Adorned, with gems and ornaments of gold,
And o'er his shoulder falls a deer's soft
felt.*

*Immutable he sits, his legs crossed,
Leaning his back against a stainless moon,
And Buddha Boundless Light rests on his
head.*

All refuge deities in essence joined.

As you read each line of the text slowly, imagine clearly the corresponding feature of the deity.

Recitation of the Mantra

There are two parts to this: to enjoin the spirit of the deity through prayer; and to achieve absorption in the three faculties¹¹ of the deity through spreading and collecting.

As to the first: All sentient beings, including yourself, pray in unison, concentrating exclusively on the Supreme All-Seeing One, your teacher, who is

now clearly imagined: "Whatever you do, we pray that you will liberate us, the six classes of beings who completely rely on your understanding, from the vicissitudes of Samsara, and that you will guide us to Omniscience."

*O Lord of whitest form not clothed by fault,
Whose head a perfect Buddha crowns in light,
Whose compassionate eyes see each living
thing:
To you, All-Seeing One, I bow my head.*

You should pray, depending upon ability, a hundred or twenty-one times, until you are definitely moved in your own stream of being, and the deity has become apparent and definite. If you wish, it is additionally beneficial to use any prayers that are full of blessing and inspiration, such as the nun Palmo's 'Po.stod.' or Lopun Dawa's 'sMre.ngag.gis.stod.pa.'.

Secondly, the achievement of absorption in the three faculties of the deity through spreading and collecting: When you have single-mindedly prayed as above, and are steadied by this appeal to the deity, immeasurable light in five hues, but predominantly clear and white, radiates from the form of the Supreme One on your head, and shines on all sentient beings, including yourself. Just as the light of a lamp instantly dispels darkness, so does this light instantly wash away all present moral failings or weaknesses

produced by defilements, and the obscurations and unwholesomeness of unskillful actions accumulated in the streams of being of others and yourself from time without beginning. Unwholesome actions are the five inexpressible actions¹² and the ten specific actions. Of the latter, three are physical: taking life, theft, and perverted sexual behaviour. Four arise through speech: lying, particularly either to your spiritual teacher or in order to bring harm to others; calumny, which creates discord; abuse, which hurts another's feelings; and idle chatter, which is without purpose. The three mental acts are: coveting, wishing another's good fortune were your own; enmity, contemplating injury to another; and harbouring erroneous opinions such as denying the truth of the assertion that evil brings undesirable results. These ten and similar actions are unwholesome.

Obscurations of the path to higher births or freedom arise because religious precepts are broken. More specifically, the way to the happiness of higher realms and freedom is clouded when precepts are broken, or any fault is committed even though it does not violate a precept, or even inadvertent relapses occur because of anger, desire, stupidity, pride, or jealousy.

When one takes an ordination, whether of Individual Liberation, Bodhisattva, or Secret Mantra, and

subsequently fails to preserve it because of either carelessness or irreverence, moral failings result; one will fall, in time, into lower existences. Even though a slight transgression of the precepts does not result in falling into lower existences, it further postpones the attainment of Enlightenment, and this is called a moral fault.

The whole collection of such faults, failings, defilements, obscurations, and so forth is washed completely away.

Since time without beginning, the propensity for bewilderment has both grasped externally at others and clung internally to a self. Now, when the light dispels this obscuration of discursive knowledge and its associated habits, you are blessed with the indivisible dynamics of the physical, verbal, and mental faculties of the All-Seeing One. The form of the Supreme One then becomes very clear and bright, shining yet empty, like a rainbow. As the light pervades all dwelling places of the six classes of beings whose numbers match the vastness of the heavens, the external world, the whole universe, becomes the Buddha Realm of Great Bliss, from which one cannot fall. Here, there are not even the names of earth, stone, mountain, or crag; rather, this realm is naturally resplendent in the effulgence of light from rainbows and jewels. Of its inhabitants, the six

kinds of sentient beings, each and every one now liberated from his particular sufferings, are transformed physically into the clear and bright form of Great Compassion. All sounds and noises reverberate as the hum of the six syllables. With the removal of the bewildered state of mind, (i.e., discursive thought and memory), the mind of the Supreme One, inseparably aware and empty, is definitely present.

Thus, settle into the transcendent, extensive, and vastly encompassing state that is devoid of grasping, and in which all physical appearances of yourself and others are identical with the pure manifestations of the deity and Buddha realm; in which all speech or sound is mantra; and in which each mind is identical with the deity's mind, naked void-awareness.

When I have prayed this way with mindful-

*ness,¹³ shining from the holy form, removes
All impure karma and bewilderment:
The outer realm becomes the Realm of Bliss;
Each living being's body, speech, and mind
To All-Seeing One's three faculties are*

changed.

All knowledge, sound, and all appearing

forms

Become inseparable from emptiness.

As you say these lines, clearly call to mind the images described above. Then, recite the mantra *Oṃ maṇi padme huṅ* ¹³ for the principal part of the meditation session.

This secret six-syllable mantra unites the power of the transcending awarenesses of all Buddhas, and brims with the condensation of the energy of all the compassion and activity of the Supreme All-Seeing One.

*Om*¹⁴ is white. It is the syllable that embodies Qualities,¹⁵ and arises from the dynamics of the five transcending awarenesses.¹⁶ It is the nature of the perfection of mental stability. The defilement pride generally causes suffering, and is responsible particularly for the sorrow of falling from the gods' realms. This syllable removes both pride and the resultant suffering. It is the identity of the form and activity of mighty Indra, the emanation of the Sage in the gods' realms. It is the embodiment of the presence of sameness transcending awareness. It guides the six kinds of beings to the Realm of Splendor in the South, where they attain the form of the Buddha Source of Treasure (Ratnasambhava).

Ma is green. It is the syllable of Activity,¹⁷ and arises from the dynamics of the infinite love that Supreme Compassion has for all beings. Its nature is the perfection of patience. Jealously produces suffering, particularly that of the quarrelling and discord among the titans. *Ma* removes both this defilement and its results. It is the identity of the form and activity of Takzangri, the Sage's emanation among titans. It is the embodiment of the pres-

ence of achievement transcending awareness. It guides the six classes of beings to the Realm of Completed Action in the North, where they attain the form of the Buddha Meaningful Achievement (Amoghah-siddhi).

Wi is yellow. It is the syllable of the immutable transcending awareness which unites Body, Speech, Mind, Qualities, and Activity, and which transforms Samsara on its own ground into the Sphere of Nirvana; it arises from the dynamics of vast, all-pervading, and effortless Supreme Compassion. The perfection of morals and ethics is its nature. Ignorance which induces duality causes the four rivers of sorrow--birth, old age, sickness, and death--in the human realm. *Wi* removes both the cause and its results. It is the identity of the form and activity of Sakyamuni, the Sage's emanation among humans. It is the embodiment of the presence of spontaneous transcending awareness. It guides all beings to the Realm of No Relapse, the Completely Pure Sphere of Phenomena, where they attain the form of the sixth Buddha, Sceptre Holder (Vajradhara).¹⁸

Pad is sky-blue. It is the syllable of Body, and arises from the dynamics of the infinite impartiality of Supreme Compassion. It is the nature of the perfection of diligence. Animals suffer from domestication, simpleness, and dullness, which all stem

from stupidity. This syllable removes both the stupidity and its results. It is the identity of the form and activity of Steadfast Lion, the Sage among creatures. It is the embodiment of the presence of sphere-of-phenomena transcending awareness. It guides the six kinds of beings to the Realm of Solid Design in the Centre, where all attain the form of the Buddha Brilliant Manifestation (Vairocana).

Me is red. It is the syllable of Speech, and arises from the dynamics of the infinite joy that Supreme Compassion has equally in all beings. Its nature is the perfection of generosity. Attachment produces the sufferings of hunger and thirst in the preta¹⁹ realm. *We* removes the defilement and its resultant sufferings. It is the identity of the form and activity of Flaming Mouth, the Sage among pretas. It is the embodiment of the presence of discriminating transcending awareness. It draws all beings to the Realm of Bliss in the West, where they attain the form of the Buddha Limitless Brilliance (Amitabha).

Hung is black. It is the syllable of Mind. It arises from the dynamics of the infinite compassion with which Supreme Compassion regards every being as his own son. It is the nature of the perfection of wisdom. The sufferings of heat and cold in the hells stem from anger that grasps at duality. *Hung* removes these causes and effects. It is the identity of the

form and activity of the Lord of Phenomena, the Sage's emanation among hell-beings. It is the embodiment of the presence of mirror-reflecting transcending awareness. It guides the six classes of beings to the Realm of Real Joy in the East, and there they attain the form of the Buddha Unshakeable (Aksobhya).

These six syllables form the King of Mantras; they constitute the union of all the power and strength of the infinite activity which stirs the six classes of beings from the pit of Samsara. Thus, recite the mantra as much as possible during the main part of a meditation period.

The radiance from the form of the guru on your head has now transformed all existence into deities and Buddha realms. Finally, all these dissolve into light and melt into the Guru, the All-Seeing One; He, too, dissolves into light and merges with you. And as you yourself dissolve into light, rest evenly in your own essence, exactly as it is, the great, encompassing, and pervasive Sphere of Phenomena, the Mind of the Supreme One, free from viewing and viewed, with appearance, sound, knowledge, and emptiness all inseparable. All concepts and intellectual distinctions such as empty or not empty, present or not present, existent or not existent are abandoned. Rest in emptiness and brilliant clarity without concern for subject, object, and activity, all of which

cling to duality, deity, and mantra.

How to Carry This Practice Always in Mind

When you rise from the preceding meditation, continue to contemplate that which appears real to others and yourself (everything, such as earth, rocks, mountains, etc., that is constituted of the five elemental natures) as the divine Body of Supreme Compassion; sound and noise, whether from living beings or inanimate sources, as the melody of the six syllables, the Speech of Supreme Compassion; and all mental activity as having the nature of Dharmakaya, ²⁰ beyond intellectualization, the void-awareness Mind of Supreme Compassion.

*Myself and others are the holy form;
The mantra sings and hums in every sound;
As deep and vast awareness, thoughts arise.*

Whether you are walking, sitting, moving, sleeping, talking or whatever, abandon your discursive concern for the mundane, and hold to the complete whole of this samadhi of these three key points: Appearance as deity, sound as mantra, and mental activity as awareness.

Dedication of the Basis of Virtue

As you pray, think as follows: "I share equally with each and every sentient being the whole store of

virtue which is present in my stream of being because of practising this meditation and recitation. May I, with the unsurpassable store of merit from this act, obtain the unsurpassable state which is equal with the Mighty All-Seeing One, as quickly as possible. Thus, I shall have obtained the power and ability to place each and every being, whose numbers match the sky, in the state of Supreme and Perfect Compassion which is inseparable from Complete and Holy Enlightenment."

*Through virtue of this practice may I now
Quickly achieve All-Seeing One's great
state.
And to this same state may I come to lead
Every being, not one left behind.*

As you pray, be as sincere in this aspiration as you can.

All those who are unable to do all this should first go for refuge and generate the Enlightening Mind in the way described previously. As for the main practice, think that the Supreme and Perfect All-Seeing One is actually present and very evident on your head. As you imagine this, pray several times with full concentration and attention, and think that the Master, the All-Seeing One, knows that you are praying.

Now, *Om* is the letter which epitomizes the five aspects of transcending awareness. ²¹ *Mani* means gem

and *Padme* means lotus: "He who has a gem and a lotus" is an epithet for the Holy All-Seeing One. *Hung* is the sound which is the activity that provides refuge from the sufferings of the six kinds of beings. Therefore, say these six syllables as much as possible while you are immersed in praying: "I beseech the Embodiment of the five forms and five transcending awarenesses, He who bears the Gem and lotus, for protection from the sufferings of the beings of the six realms."

Finally, as Guru All-Seeing One dissolves very joyfully into light and is absorbed into yourself, supreme transcending awareness arises in your stream of being. Think, then, of these things with great yearning and be free from any doubt or skepticism. Afterwards, dedicate the merit with prayer. If you do this, you will definitely obtain the beneficial results and qualities explained below, so practise with both devotion and inclination in every respect.

The Explanation of the Benefits

Here, only an epitome of the incalculable benefits of doing the meditation and recitation of the Supreme All-Seeing One is given.

The beneficial results of mental attention to and meditation on the form are, from "rTsa.rGyud. Padma.Drawa":

*When one meditates on one complete form,
The form of the Lord All-Seeing One,
Every Buddha is included.
Meditation (mindfulness) of this
will remove the evil of even inexpiable
action.*

The beneficial results of reciting the six-syllable King of Mantras, the stainless speech of the victorious and perfected Buddha Sakyamuni, and the farewell message to all inhabitants of Tibet from the Great Guru, the Lotus-born,²² are recounted in the "Dharma-treasure" of Reekdsin Jatsen Nyinpo, an indisputably great treasure-revealing incarnation:²³

"*Om mani padme hung* is the epitome of the collection of the direct knowledge of all Buddhas. The instructions embodied in each of the six syllables, which are the essence of all the Masters of the Secrets of the Five Families of Buddhas, are the source of all qualities and deeper happiness, the root of all beneficial and happy accomplishments, and the great path to higher existences and freedom.

"To hear just once these six syllables of perfect speech, the epitome of all Dharma, will be to obtain the stage of no relapse, and to become a master who liberates beings. Moreover, if any animal, even an ant, should hear the mantra before dying, it would, when freed from that existence, be born in the Realm of Bliss. Just to call to mind even once these six

syllables will, like the sun on new snow, remove all the evil and obscurations of bad actions that have been amassed throughout beginningless time in Samsara, and will bring birth in the Realm of Bliss. Even to touch the letters of the mantra is to obtain initiation from innumerable Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. When it is contemplated even once, since hearing, thinking, and meditating are all used, then, appearances arise as the Body of Phenomena (Dharmakaya),²⁴ and the treasure of Activity for the benefit of beings is opened."

And from the same text: "Oh son of good family,²⁵ one could compute the weight of the King of Mountains; yet one cannot compute the merit of one recitation of these six syllables. Although one should strike a diamond but once a century with fine Benares linen, one could rub it away; yet one cannot compute the merit of even one repetition of these six syllables. One could draw, drop by drop, all the water from the ocean; but one cannot exhaust the merits of one repetition of these six syllables. One could count the number of leaves in a forest of trees, or the number of snowflakes in Tibet; yet one cannot compute the extent of the merit of one repetition of these six syllables. Similarly, one could empty a vast warehouse one hundred miles long filled with sesame seed by throwing out one seed each day; but

one cannot compute the merit of one repetition of these six syllables. One could count the number of raindrops in a year; but one cannot compute the measure of merit of one repetition of these six syllables. Therefore, Oh son of good family, although you do not have to recite the mantra interminably day and night, it is yet the case that the merit of rendering service to ten million Tathagatas such as myself is reckonable;²⁶ but incalculable is the merit of even one repetition of these six syllables. This mantra barricades the gates to birth in the six realms; it establishes the paths and stages of the six perfections; it washes away the stains of karma, defilements, and habits; it fills the Buddha realms associated with the three manifestations of Buddha.²⁷

*Listen well, Oh sons of noble family:
This heart of gathered epitomes
Is, through the blessings of all Buddhas,
The source of benefit and joy,
The root of all accomplishments,
The steps which lead to higher births,
The barrier to lower births,
The ship which crosses Samsara,
The lighted lamp that banishes darkness,
The champion who conquers five poisons,
The flame that burns evil and obscurations,
The hammer that beats down sorrow,
The comrade who subdues savagery,
The fortune of Dharmas in snowy lands;
The precious and distinguished monarch who
is the core*

*That constitutes the essentials of hearing,
thinking, and meditation,
And the essence of many sutras, tantras and
commentaries.
Therefore, recite this six-syllable mantra."*

Such is discussed much more extensively in all Oral Treasures. 28

Since it is definite that to someone who recites these six syllables even once, faithfully and attentively, benefits of these sorts will come, do not imprison yourself in the three ordinary faculties. 29 Vow resolutely to say the mantra from one hundred to ten thousand times every day without interruption, and thus put yourself in harmony with this great tide, this treasure of virtue, which is so effective, yet not so difficult to practise. Then, at the very least, you will be seeking to make this human existence purposeful.

*"I pray, casting my voice to the Potala,
The country of the blissful and free,
For Supreme Compassion's cord to draw
All beings from existence's sea."*

Thus did the Dharma-devotees of good lineage, Kalzang Drolkar and her mother, Tseten Drolkar, entreat me to write this text. A long time passed after their entreaty, but I was taxed by their repeated and earnest supplications for something that an old householder of little intellect could easily comprehend.

Therefore I, Lodro Zi Ji, my name on entering the Dharma, or Kakhyab Dorje, 30 another name, reputedly a bodhisattva in these evil times, have written this commentary because of the nudging of that old woman and her daughter.

*"I, an old householder, offer my devoted
thanks,
Having seen, as the gem of eternal bliss,
these few words of profound import.
This, the "Continual Rain to Benefit Beings,"
the divine instruction,
Was written by the Great Karmapa, the All-
Seeing One in actuality."*

NOTES

1. In this text various names are used for the All-Seeing One (Sk. Avalokitesvara, Tib. sPyan.ras.gzigs.). These other names are: Supreme Compassion, Great Compassion, or Supreme One.
2. The motivations of Buddhas are identical in that they all seek to help sentient beings become free from Samsara. However, they may attain Buddhahood first and then lead beings to freedom, or they may guide beings and follow when all are free from sorrow. The former is called king-like, and the latter shepherd-like motivation. The second (which is attributed to the All-Seeing One) is regarded as superior to the first.
3. Buddha Sakyamuni
4. Tibet
5. A source guru is a guru from whom one receives initiation into a meditation, permission to study the pertinent scriptures, and teaching of the meditation.
6. Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.
7. For the form of the letter, see the illustration at the beginning of this book.
8. Red, green, yellow, blue, and white.
9. Boundless Light is the head of the lotus family of Buddhas.
10. Buddha manifests in two forms: Sambhogakaya and Nirmanakaya. Here Boundless Light is in Nirmanakaya form, and hence is clothed in monk's robes and holds an alms bowl in his hands as he meditates. His body is red.

11. i.e., Body, Speech, and Mind.
12. The five inexpiable actions are: Patricide, matricide, to kill one's spiritual teacher, to injure a Buddha, and to divide the Sangha.
13. The Tibetan pronunciation of the mantra is approximately: *Om*, 'o' as in 'oh'; *Ma*, 'a' as in 'father'; *Mi*, 'i' as in 'knee'; *Pad*, 'a' as in 'pay'; 'd' silent; *Me*, 'e' as in 'knee'; *Hung*, 'u' as in 'who', followed by a nasal 'm'.
14. For the form of the letters of the mantra, see the illustration at the beginning of this book.
15. 'Qualities' means the incomparable magnificent attributes that a fully perfected Buddha has. These include the four grounds of fearlessness, the ten powers, and many others. See Kalu Rinpoche's "Foundations of Buddhist Meditation."
16. Transcending Awareness is often explained by describing five (or six) aspects of it. These are termed "The Five Transcending Awarenesses," but they are all just aspects of transcending awareness itself. A Buddha and a Buddha-realm are associated with each of the five transcending awarenesses. They may all be diagrammed on a mandala, and the relative positions of each Buddha-realm is given in terms of North, South, East, West, and Center.
17. Activity refers to the continual work of the Buddhas in helping sentient beings become free of Samsara.
18. Vajradhara is the embodiment of transcending awareness itself, and his Buddha-realm Sphere of Phenomena embraces all others. He is positioned directly above Vairocana in the Center of the mandala.
19. Pretas are spirit-ghosts who are afflicted with extreme hunger and thirst and must suffer these torments until their karma is exhausted.

20. Dharmakaya is Buddha itself. It is empty, vast, clear, brilliant and is the ultimate nature of all phenomena. It is the formless aspect of Enlightenment and from it arise the form manifestations of Sambhogakaya and Nirmanakaya.
21. See Note 16.
22. Also known as Guru Rinpoche, or Padmasambhava.
23. Guru Padmasambhava hid numerous scriptures throughout the Himalaya to be revealed in later times. Certain masters in Tibet had the power to find these scriptures. Jatsen Nyinpo was one of the most famous of these "treasure finders."
24. See Note 20.
25. This phrase does not necessarily mean that the listener was of noble birth or solid ancestry, but that he was a follower of the "good family" of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who are concerned with relieving the sufferings of all beings.
26. Buddha Sakyamuni is speaking.
27. Buddha has three aspects: Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, and Nirmanakaya. The first is the ultimate nature of all phenomena, and its associated Buddha-realm is the Sphere-of-Phenomena. The Sambhogakaya is the first form manifestation and has many different Buddhas associated with it. These are the five families of Buddhas and each has a Buddha-realm. Since the Sambhogakaya is pure manifestation, only highly advanced beings can come in contact with it. The Nirmanakaya is the second manifestation, and this is Buddha in the world. Sakyamuni Buddha is the most recent such. Again, there are associated Buddha-realms. These three aspects are inseparable and may manifest at any time and any place according to conditions. For more detail, see Kalu Rinpoche's "Foundations of Buddhist Meditation."

28. See Note 23.
29. i.e., your ordinary body, speech, and mind.
30. The fifteenth incarnation of Karmapa. The first incarnation was a disciple of Gampopa, and the sixteenth is now at Rumtek monastery in Sikkim. The Karmapas are the spiritual Heads of the bKa.brgyud school of Buddhism.

The Sadhana of Thousand-Armed Avalokiteshvara,
with commentary by Lama Lodu

To begin, do not contrive anything, just leave your mind in
a natural state.

In the practice of Avalokiteshvara, all six Perfections are
there. Diligence, the opposite of laziness, is sometimes
called 'joyful striving'. Think of what the result will be.

Compassion is wishing all beings to be free from suffering
and the cause of suffering, unconditional compassion, and
loving kindness is the wish that all beings have happiness
and the cause of happiness, and not just temporary
happiness, but ultimate, most lasting happiness.
This feeling includes everyone, it is an unconditional
experience.

Bodhicitta, heart of enlightenment, the wish-fulfilling gem,
comes from loving kindness.

The rite itself starts with the taking of Refuge and the
generation of the Thought of Enlightenment.

I take Refuge, until I obtain Enlightenment, in the Buddha,
the Dharma, and the Sublime Assembly. By the merit that I
have accumulated through generosity and other virtues,
may I obtain Buddhahood for the sake of all beings.

(repeat three times)

Next look at the I. Take off clothes, skin, flesh, bones,
organs, looking with a very sharp wisdom mind, where is
the I?

I is a concept, a subtle level of concept, of intellect.
Now- who is looking? Who has not found anything?
Seeing that, don't look further, just let the mind rest.

The nature of Dharmakaya is compassion. Dharmakaya,
emptiness manifests the form of Avalokiteshvara.

Light appears and goes to lineage holders, from Buddha to
your own Root Guru, yidams, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, Dharma
Protectors.

The light returns and Thousand-Armed Avalokiteshvara
appears.

(He has two hands together at his heart; the second, third and fourth on the right, holds a rosary, the Mudra of Supreme Generosity, and a Wheel of Dharma; the second, third and fourth on the left hold a flowering branch, a flask, and a bow and arrow; the remaining nine hundred and ninety-two hands, each with an eye in the palm, are all in the gesture of giving protection.)

With a thousand arms he can do a thousand things at one time; with a thousand eyes he can see a thousand things at one time..

The ornaments symbolize different enlightened qualities, perfections. The Four-Armed form of Avalokiteshvara has the same benefit.

The Dharmakaya, Ultimate Nature manifests its power by showing this form.

Avalokiteshvara is this radiance, free from impurity. The jewels and silks represent the richness of compassion, endless compassion, boundless compassion. He would go one million times to be born in the hell realms to save one being.

He has a rainbow body, transparent. This is the Samaya Being, the Commitment Being. Invoke from the Pure Land the Wisdom Being. All Buddhas, wrathful, peaceful come in the form of Thousand-Armed Avalokiteshvara. They become one.

Divine Pride as Avalokiteshvara means we *do have* the ability to benefit sentient beings.

The wish-fulfilling gem at the heart means this is not outside, it is *within* our heart, *within* us.

Prayers

You who have no stain, white is your body. The perfect Buddha adorns your head. You look upon all beings with eyes of compassion. I pay deeply felt homage to you.

In our heart there is a thumb-sized Thousand-Armed Avalokiteshvara. Inside his heart, on a lotus and moon disk is the mantra and the seed-syllable HRI. As we recite, light goes to the different realms and removes and dispels all the sufferings, and the beings become Chenrezig.

Beings become Chenrezig, the realm becomes a completely pure, blissful realm, sound, the sound of the mantra, and thought, wisdom mind. One becomes a healer of all beings.

Take blessings from enlightened ones and send out compassion.

During the recitation, the mind keeps this one visualization.

NAMO RATNA TRAYAYA NAMA ARYA JNYANA SAGARA BE ROTSANA
BAYU HARADZAYA TATHAGATAYA ARHATE SAMYAK SAMBUDDHAYA
NAMA SARVA TATHAGATE BHAYA ARHAT BHAYA SAMYAK
SAMBUDDHEBHAYA NAMA ARYA AVALOKITESHVARAYA BODHI SATOYA
MAHA SATOYA MAHA KARUNIKAYA TE YA TA OM DHARA DHARA
DHIRI DHIRI DHURU DHURU ITTE WITTE TSALE TSALE
PRATSALE PRATSALE KUSUME KUSUMA WA RE ILIMILI TSITI
DZO LA MAPANAYA SOHA OM MANI PADME HUNG

(recite the entire Zung once and 108 times the section beginning with TE YA TA ... then say the six-syllable mantra as many times as you can.)

At the end of the recitation, the Pure Lands dissolve into the beings; all dissolve into you; you into the Avalokiteshvara at your heart; this to the mantra, the mantra dissolves to the HRI, and this to a small white dot; then this disappears like a rainbow vanishing into the sky.

Without artificial mind, empty, keep your mind without contriving anything.

When you get calm and clear, look at the essence. Not finding the I, then looking back- who's not finding?

Without pressing too much, keep this as long as you want.

Then appear again as Two-Armed Avalokiteshvara.

Practice Taking and Sending. All beings, including all beings I didn't notice, I take all sufferings and dissolve them into my heart, thinking all beings are completely free from suffering; then breathing out all good attitudes, good deeds, virtues, experience of all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. All beings now experience happiness and the cause of happiness, and this lasts forever, never diminishing. Again bring the emptiness (of the three).

Sitting meditation and post meditation have to go together.

Then make the dedication prayer.

The precious Bodhicitta Thought, in whom it has not been born, may it arise, in whom it has arisen may it not diminish, but grow and flourish.

Having by this virtue realized the state of Chenrezig, the powerful One, may I establish in it all beings without exception.

(The end of the Sadhana.)

Motivations for mantra recitation, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche

From Teachings from the Mani Retreat

Before the recitation of mantra, I want to emphasize that it is very important to again make your bodhicitta motivation very strong. Of course we can think in many different ways to effectively transform our mind into a motivation of bodhicitta, but one way to do it is to think in the following way.

“The numberless hell beings, from whom I receive all my past, present and future happiness, all realizations and enlightenment, are the most precious and most kind ones in my life—I must free them from all their suffering and its causes and bring them to Compassion Buddha’s enlightenment by myself alone.

“The numberless hungry ghosts...

“The numberless animals...

“The numberless human beings...

“The numberless asuras...

“The numberless suras...

“The numberless intermediate state beings, from whom I receive all my past, present and future happiness, all realizations and enlightenment, are the most precious and most kind ones in my life—I must free them from all their suffering and its causes and bring them to Compassion Buddha’s enlightenment by myself alone.

“To do this, I must achieve Compassion Buddha’s enlightenment; therefore, I’m going to do the meditation-recitation of Compassion Buddha.”

Also, you can then specifically think, “Every single mantra that I recite is for every hell being, every hungry ghost, every animal, every human being, every asura being, every sura being, every intermediate state being.

Each mantra that I recite is for the benefit of every single one of my most precious, kind mother sentient beings.”

You can also dedicate each mantra you recite to the fulfillment of the holy wishes of the virtuous friend.

You can dedicate each mantra for the holy wishes of the Compassion Buddha,

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, to succeed immediately, especially His Holiness's important wish for the Tibetan people to have complete freedom in their own country as quickly as possible.

You can dedicate as well for the government of mainland China to invite His Holiness the Dalai Lama to give teachings to all the millions of Chinese people and for there to be total religious freedom in China.

In addition, through the generation of loving kindness and compassion, of the good heart, may all wars and killing, famine, disease and all the other undesirable things that are happening in this world stop right now.

If any of your family members or friends have passed away through cancer, AIDS and so forth, also remember them and dedicate for them to achieve as quickly as possible the ultimate happiness of full enlightenment.

I thought to mention this quite a few times, but it didn't happen. I think it would be good to change what is said before beginning the recitation of mantra. More or less the same thing can be said in each session, but it might be good to place the emphasis a little differently. One time before you begin the mantra recitation you can use the motivation I gave yesterday. At another time you can use the following motivation.

“There are numberless kind and precious hell beings, and each mantra I recite is for every single hell being, for their temporary and ultimate happiness.

“There are numberless kind and precious hungry ghosts...

“There are numberless kind and precious animals...

“There are numberless kind and precious human beings...

“There are numberless kind and precious asura beings...

“There are numberless kind and precious sura beings...

“There are numberless kind and precious intermediate state beings, and each mantra I recite is for every one of them, for their temporary and ultimate happiness.”

From The Joy of Compassion

Now, when you do this sadhana or other practices, even though they begin with bodhicitta motivation, when you come to the mantra recitation, *again*, just before you begin to recite the mantra, dedicate very precisely by thinking,

“Each mantra I recite is for every hell being, each mantra is for every hungry ghost, each mantra is for every animal, each mantra is for every human, each mantra is for every sura, asura and intermediate state being.”

Even though you begin the practice with bodhicitta motivation, make sure that when you come to the actual recitation of the mantra it is directed more to the benefit of others than yourself. Make sure that instead of feeling in your heart that it is “I, me” for whom you are reciting the mantra, you feel that you are doing it for others. Make sure very precisely that each mantra you recite is for others, not yourself. Instead of filling your heart with “I,” fill your heart with others. Begin your mantra recitation like that; during the session, recite the mantra with as much bodhicitta as you can generate; and every now and then, check your motivation to make sure that your attitude is that of more concern for others than yourself. If it’s not, fix it.

From Teachings from the Medicine Buddha Retreat

Think, “Every single mantra I recite is for every single hell being, who is my kind mother, to free them from all their suffering and its causes and bring them to enlightenment.

“Every single mantra I recite is for every single hungry ghost... enlightenment.

“Every single mantra I recite is for every single animal...

“Every single mantra I recite is for every single human being, who is my kind mother and experiencing so much suffering, to free them all their suffering and its causes and bring them to enlightenment.

“Every single mantra I recite is for every single asura, who is my kind mother and has so much suffering, to free them from all their suffering and its causes and bring them to enlightenment.

“Every single mantra I recite is for every single sura...

“Every single mantra I recite is for every single intermediate state being...

Also think that you are reciting every single mantra for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, for world peace and for the success of all FPMT Dharma activities...

At the beginning of the sadhana there should be, of course, the motivation; then just before you begin the mantra recitation also make sure to renew your motivation so that the recitation of mantra becomes Dharma and doesn't become service to the ego, the self-cherishing thought. Make sure the recitation doesn't become work for the ego.

Also, before you recite the mantra, as I mentioned before, to make it most beneficial make sure you dedicate each and every single mantra to every single sentient being. Also dedicate each and every single mantra for His Holiness and your other gurus to have long lives and for all their holy wishes to succeed.

Also dedicate for the success of all the FPMT centers' activities and the FPMT projects...

Also dedicate for world peace. Make sure that you have dedicated for others.

Even knowing that each mantra you recite is for everybody makes you feel very joyful, and you know that what you're doing is very meaningful.

When you recite for everybody in this way, every single mantra is also recited for bin Laden.

When we recite mantras, do dedications or practice tong-len, we make prayers for sentient beings. When you see an insect in the road or flies flying around here, you have already done prayers for them.

Your recitation of mantra and your prayers cover all those beings, all those insects you see on the grass or in the road, all those people who are suffering so much that you see on TV, hear about on the radio or read about in the newspapers. Your recitation of mantra and your prayers cover everybody;

they cover all those different beings in different situations who are experiencing so much suffering.

When you then see an insect or a worm in the road, think, “I’m doing sadhanas and prayers in my daily life for this being.”

Think, “I’m going to recite this mantra for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and of all my other virtuous friends and all other holy beings. May all their wishes succeed immediately.

“I’m going to recite this mantra to quickly free every single hell being from all their suffering and its causes and bring them to full enlightenment.

“I’m going to recite this mantra to free every single hungry ghost... animal... human being... sura... asura...

“I’m going to recite this mantra to free every single intermediate state being from all their suffering and its causes and bring them to enlightenment.

“I’m going to free all sentient beings from all their suffering and its causes and bring them to enlightenment as quickly as possible by myself alone.

“I’m also going to recite this mantra for world peace.”

As I mentioned before, think that you’re reciting each mantra so that nobody experiences war, famine, disease, hunger, poverty, dangers from fire, water, air or earth or any other problem.

Think, “May any problem sentient beings are now experiencing be pacified, and may they never experience any problems in the future.”

Also recite each mantra for the success of all the FPMT projects and centers...

Think, “I am going to recite each mantra for the long life of the Buddha of Compassion, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and of all my other virtuous friends and all the rest of the holy beings. May all their holy wishes succeed immediately.

“And I am going to recite every single mantra for world peace, and for all of us to generate loving kindness, compassion and bodhicitta.

May all the wars, disease, spirit harms, famines, natural disasters and all other problems that are happening now be stopped, and may nobody ever experience such things again. May everybody have perfect peace and happiness.

Think, “I am going to do the recitation of every single mantra for the Buddha of Compassion, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, to have stable life and for all his holy wishes to succeed immediately. As well, may all other virtuous friends and all other holy beings who are working for sentient beings and for the teaching of Buddha, have stable lives, and may all their holy wishes to benefit others succeed immediately.

“Also, I am going to recite every single mantra for world peace, to stop all the wars that are happening, as well as all the terrorist attacks, famines, diseases, poverty and dangers from fire, water, air or earth.”

Think especially of all those in Afghanistan who are having problems; thousands of people have lost or are losing their jobs, as well as facing poverty and disease.

“May all these problems that are happening be stopped, and may sentient beings never ever experience them again.

You can also think of either a particular purpose or a particular person that you want to pray for, perhaps someone who has died or is sick. The mantras can also be dedicated for that.

Benefits of Reciting Om Mani Padme Hum

Lama Zopa Rinpoche

The benefits of reciting OM MANI PADME HUM are like the infinite sky. Depending on how perfectly qualified one's mind is and on one's motivation, even reciting OM MANI PADME HUM one time can purify negative karma. For example, a fully ordained monk who has received all four defeats can completely purify that very heavy negative karma by reciting OM MANI PADME HUM one time. So it is very powerful.

Reciting One Thousand Mantras Each Day

In the teachings it is said the benefits of reciting OM MANI PADME HUM are so many that the explanation will never finish. It is explained that if one recites OM MANI PADME HUM one thousand times every day, then one's children up to seven generations will not be reborn in the lower realms. So if, for example, parents recite one thousand mantras every day then their children, their children's children and so forth up to seven generations will never be reborn in the lower realms. So parents have quite a responsibility! This is one way that parents can benefit their children and grandchildren.

If one recites the OM MANI PADME HUM mantra one thousand times every day, then one's body becomes blessed. So when a person who recites one thousand OM MANI PADME HUM every day goes into water, into a river or ocean for example, that water becomes blessed. Whoever that water touches fish, tiny or big animals, or tiny insects, the negative karma of all those sentient beings is purified and they do not get reborn in the lower realms.

If one recites one thousand OM MANI PADME HUM every day, then at the time of death, when the body is burnt, even the smoke that comes from it purifies the negative karma of whoever it touches or whoever smells it. The negative karma of those sentient beings to be reborn in the lower realms is purified.

Fifteen Major Benefits

There are fifteen major benefits, which are the same for both the long and the short mantra. Actually, there are so many benefits but if one can remember these fifteen, these are the most important, the integrated outlines.

1. In all lifetimes, one will meet with virtuous kings - religious kings like His Holiness the Dalai Lama and other virtuous leaders - and by being in such a place where there is a virtuous king one will have much opportunity to practice Dharma.
2. One will always be reborn in virtuous places where there is a lot of Dharma practice, where there are lots of temples, where one can make lots of offerings, where there a lot of holy objects, statues, stupas and so forth. Being in a place where there are all these holy objects gives one the opportunity to practice Dharma, to create the cause of happiness, to accumulate merit. And being in a place where there are many in the city doing practice inspires oneself to practice Dharma, the cause of happiness.
3. One will always meet with fortunate times and good conditions, which will help your Dharma practice. Having many good things happen it inspires you to practice Dharma, to receive teachings and to meditate.
4. One will always be able to meet with virtuous friends.
5. One will always receive a perfect human body.
6. One's mind will become familiar with the path, with virtue.
7. One will not allow one's vows, one's morality to degenerate.
8. People around you - family, Dharma students, people in the office, and so one - will be kind and harmonious with you.
9. You will always have wealth, the means of living.
10. You will always be protected and served by others.
11. Your wealth will not be stolen or taken away by others.
12. Whatever you wish will succeed.
13. You will always be protected by virtuous nagas and devas.
14. In all lifetimes, you will see Buddha and be able to hear the Dharma.

15. By listening to the pure Dharma, you will be able to actualize the profound meaning, emptiness.

It is said in the teachings that anybody who recites this mantra with compassion - devas or humans - will receive these virtues. In addition, the mantra has the power to heal many diseases and to protect from any harms.

The Compassionate Buddha manifesting in the form of the mantra leads us to enlightenment. In relation to the Holy Body of the Compassionate Buddha we make offerings, accumulate merit, purify and meditate. Then the Compassionate Buddha manifests in the form of the mantra OM MANI PADME HUM. Reciting this mantra unifies our negative karma and causes us to actualize the whole path from guru devotion through renunciation, bodhicitta, and emptiness up to the two stages of tantra. Then we are able to bring all sentient beings to enlightenment. That is how the mantra benefits us. It is the Compassionate Buddha's holy speech manifesting in an external way in order to benefit us.

The Benefits of Chanting OM MANI PADME HUM

by Lama Zopa Rinpoche

The benefits of reciting the Compassion Buddha mantra are infinite, like the limitless sky. Even if you don't have much intellectual understanding of Dharma, even if the only thing you know is om mani padme hum, still the happiest life is one lived with an attitude free of the eight worldly concerns. If you live your life with the pure attitude free of attachment clinging to this life and simply spend your life chanting om mani padme hum—this six-syllable mantra that is the essence of all Dharma—that's the purest Dharma.

It looks very simple, very easy to recite. But if you think of the benefits, it's not at all simple. Here, I'd to mention just the essence of its infinite benefits.

Reciting the Compassion Buddha mantra just once completely purifies the four defeats of breaking the four root vows of self-liberation and the five uninterrupted negative karmas.

It is also mentioned in the tantras that by reciting this mantra you achieve the four qualities of being born in the Amitabha Buddha pure land and other pure lands; at the time of death, seeing Buddha and lights appearing in the sky; the devas making you offerings; and never being reborn in the hell, hungry ghost or animals realms. You will be reborn in the pure land of Buddha or as a happy transmigratory being.

When one who recites ten malas a day goes swimming, whether in a river, an ocean or some other body of water, the water that touches that person's body gets blessed.

It is said that up to seven generations of that person's descendants won't get reborn in the lower realms. The reason for this is that due to the power of mantra, the body is blessed by the person reciting the mantra and visualizing their body in form of the holy body of Chenrezig. Therefore, the body becomes so powerful, so blessed that this affects the consciousness up to seven generations and has the effect that if one dies with a non-virtuous thought, one is not reborn in a lower realm.

Thus, when a person who has recited ten malas of OM MANI PADME HUM a day goes into a river or an ocean, the water that touches the person's body gets blessed,

and this blessed water then purifies all the billions and billions of sentient beings in the water. So it's unbelievably beneficial; this person saves the animals in that water from the most unbelievable suffering of the lower realms.

When such a person walks down a road and the wind touches his or her body and then goes on to touch insects, their negative karma gets purified and causes them to have a good rebirth. Similarly, when such a person does massage or otherwise touches others' bodies, those people's negative karma also gets purified.

Such a person becomes meaningful to behold; being seen and touched becomes a means of liberating other sentient beings. This means that even the person's breath touching the bodies of other sentient beings purifies their negative karma. Anybody who drinks the water in which such a person has swum gets purified.

We are unbelievably fortunate to have met the Dharma and to have the opportunity to do recitation and meditation on the Compassion Buddha. It is an easy way of purifying whatever negative karma we have collected, in not only this life but in many previous lives as well.

Because we have met the Buddhadharma, and especially this method—the practice of Compassion Buddha and recitation of his mantra—it is easy to purify negative karma and collect extensive merit and thus to achieve enlightenment. We are unbelievably fortunate.

Therefore, there is nothing more foolish than not taking advantage of this great opportunity. Normally, we get continuously distracted and waste our lives. Not only that, but all the actions done with ego and with the three poisonous minds of anger, attachment and ignorance create negative karma, the cause of suffering. In all existence, there is nothing more foolish than using this perfect human body to create only suffering.

In places such as Tibet, Nepal, India and Ladakh, there's a well-established tradition of doing the Compassion Buddha retreat and reciting 100 million OM MANI PADME HUM mantras. The one held at Chenrezig Institute was the first such retreat held in the West and the first in the FPMT organization. This is to happen there once each year—only once each year!

If you're feeling guilt in your life, you can overcome this through the purification of attending this retreat.

The retreat is not just chanting mantras with sadhanas, but also includes taking the Eight Mahayana Precepts, if not every day, at least frequently. Whatever merit you collect that day increases 100,000 times. This becomes such an easy and quick way to purify, collect extensive merit, achieve enlightenment and liberate sentient beings from unimaginable suffering and bring them to enlightenment quickly.

Whoever attends a mani retreat is unbelievably fortunate. Even if you can't attend the whole retreat, you can participate for two months, one month or at least a few weeks. You can do even just one week. I especially hope this retreat will also be established in Mongolia, since their main food is meat and so many animals are killed there every day. This practice helps purify that. After our temple in Mongolia has been built, I hope that thousands of people will attend mani retreats there. Gradually too, I would like this retreat to be established in other parts of the West.

This retreat also blesses the country where it is held and brings so much peace, happiness and prosperity.

Even if you know the teachings on how to meditate on bodhicitta, you still need to receive the special blessings of the deity, Compassion Buddha. You receive these by doing the meditation and recitation we practice in the mani retreat. Therefore, recitation of OM MANI PADME HUM is one way to actualize bodhicitta—to transform your mind into bodhicitta and make your meditation on bodhicitta effective.

Generally, according to my experience, in my home of Solu Khumbu in the Himalayas of Nepal, there are people who live their lives chanting OM MANI PADME HUM but have no idea of the three principal aspects of the path—renunciation, bodhicitta and the right view of emptiness—not even the words. Even though they can't read and don't even know the alphabet, they have great devotion to compassion and bodhicitta and live their lives reciting OM MANI PADME HUM. Such people are warm-hearted, very kind, very compassionate. This is proof from my experience that it has the effect of transforming the mind into a good heart and compassion.

Without bodhicitta, you cannot cause all the happiness for all sentient beings. You cannot do perfect work for all sentient beings, and you cannot achieve the complete qualities of the realizations and cessation, even for yourself.

Thus, everyone is most welcome to join the 100 million OM MANI PADME HUM mantra retreat.

An Explanation of the Mantra of Avalokiteshvara

by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey

The mantra Om Mani Pädme Hum is easy to say yet quite powerful, because it contains the essence of the entire teaching. When you say the first syllable Om it is blessed to help you achieve perfection in the practice of generosity, Ma helps perfect the practice of pure ethics, and Ni helps achieve perfection in the practice of tolerance and patience. Päd, the fourth syllable, helps to achieve perfection of perseverance, Me helps achieve perfection in the practice of concentration, and the final sixth syllable Hum helps achieve perfection in the practice of wisdom.

So in this way recitation of the mantra helps achieve perfection in the six practices from generosity to wisdom. The path of these six perfections is the path walked by all the Buddhas of the three times. What could then be more meaningful than to say the mantra and accomplish the six perfections?

The six perfections and the four ways of helping sentient beings are the tools employed by Bodhisattvas to achieve the state of enlightenment. The Buddha himself is quite emphatic about the importance of practising the six perfections when he says that the six perfections are the mother and the father, they are the two legs, and they are the protectors.

When you say the mantra it helps shut the door of rebirth in the six realms of existence and opens the door to be reborn in the pure land of the Buddha Amitabha. Om stops rebirth in the realm of the celestial gods which helps us overcome the suffering of the celestial gods' rebirths in the miserable realms of existence. Ma stops rebirth in the world of demigods which overcomes experience of demigods' suffering of constant strife and conflict with the world of celestial gods. Ni stops rebirth as humans precipitated by actions and delusions. This overcomes the suffering of poverty, the suffering of pain, and all kinds of human miseries.

Humans, like many sentient beings, face many hardships, including the suffering of being born, of sickness of aging and of death. Päd stops rebirth in the preta realm as constantly famished beings and helps overcome their sufferings of constant thirst and hunger. The pretas, or hungry ghosts, suffer excruciating pains of hunger, thirst and fatigue as they travel long distances in search of nourishment. Me helps put an end to rebirth in the world of animals and overcomes their suffering of

being unintelligent in some ways, of being unable to express themselves, of being constantly devoured by each other and of being eaten and mercilessly exploited by humans.

One doesn't have to be reborn there to understand the magnitude of suffering in the hell and preta realms. We can well understand the sufferings of the larger life forms of the two lowest realms. If we are born as animals we will live in constant fear and anxiety. At present we have the choice not to be reborn as animals, which are stupid in that they have no reasoning power to think about what is positive and what is not; about what is dharmic and what is not.

When you say Hum; the sixth syllable of the mantra, this stops rebirth in the hell realms and helps over come their suffering of heat and cold.

So stopping this rebirth within the six realms of worldly existence finally helps those who recite the mantra Om Mani Pädme Hum to be reborn in the blissful pure lands. Avalokiteshvara, the deity of compassion, who is the resident deity of The Blissful Pure Land has been requested by the presiding Buddha of The Amitabha Pure Land; "Initially nurture sentient beings, fulfill their material needs and teach and mature them spiritually; finally bring them to me." Such are the benefits of saying the easy to say mantra Om Mani Pädme Hum.

When you say the mantra it gives you many kinds of spiritual boons of realization. Om gives you the supreme boon of enlightenment. Ma helps you achieve common boons of extra sensory perception and eight kinds of boons. Ni gives you the power to pacify sickness and calm, conquer and tame spirits and so on. Päd gives you the spiritual boon of increasing one's longevity and one's merit. Me gives you the boon of being able to have control over humans and over material possessions like food and so on. Hum gives you the boon of spiritual might to overcome enemies and hindrances.

On Monday night I was counting out the various kinds of delusions called the six root delusions. When you say Om it overcomes the root delusion of ignorance and so on. I won't be able to go into that deeply today.

The benefits of the mantra are explained in sutra. The mantra was originally said by "The Red Buddha". Buddha said that for so long he was unable to find this mantra, and was delighted on hearing this mantra. When the mantra was said by the Buddha the earth shook six times in wonderment.

It is said no one will ever become a Buddha without the guidance given by Manjushri. In the sutra called The Luminous Ornament of Wisdom, Buddha says that all beings who achieve enlightenment must depend on Manjushri. We could say likewise with regard to Avalokiteshvara. That is because you can not be enlightened without wisdom and compassion. Avalokiteshvara is in fact the collective compassion of all Buddhas, assuming a deity form. You can not be enlightened without developing compassion, therefore you must depend on Avalokiteshvara. Likewise with regard to the deity of wisdom; you can not be enlightened without correct wisdom understanding the ultimate nature of reality underlying all things that exist. Because of this Avalokiteshvara and Manjushri are in fact the deity forms of the path of wisdom and method.

On the meaning of: OM MANI PADME HUM

The jewel is in the lotus or praise to the jewel in the lotus

by His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso The Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet

It is very good to recite the mantra OM MANI PADME HUM, but while you are doing it, you should be thinking on its meaning, for the meaning of the six syllables is great and vast.

The first, OM, is composed of three pure letters, A, U, and M. These symbolize the practitioner's impure body, speech, and mind; they also symbolize the pure exalted body, speech and mind of a Buddha.

Can impure body, speech and mind be transformed into pure body, speech and mind, or are they entirely separate? All Buddhas are cases of being who were like ourselves and then in dependence on the path became enlightened; Buddhism does not assert that there is anyone who from the beginning is free from faults and possesses all good qualities. The development of pure body, speech, and mind comes from gradually leaving the impure states and their being transformed into the pure.

How is this done? The path is indicated by the next four syllables. MANI, meaning jewel, symbolizes the factor of method- the altruistic intention to become enlightened, compassion, and love. Just as a jewel is capable of removing poverty, so the altruistic mind of enlightenment is capable of removing the poverty, or difficulties, of cyclic existence and of solitary peace. Similarly, just as a jewel fulfills the wishes of sentient beings, so the altruistic intention to become enlightened fulfills the wishes of sentient beings.

The two syllables, PADME, meaning lotus, symbolize wisdom. Just as a lotus grows forth from mud but is not sullied by the faults of mud, so wisdom is capable of putting you in a situation of non-contradiction where as there would be contradiction if you did not have wisdom.

There is wisdom realizing impermanence, wisdom realizing that persons are empty of self-sufficient or substantial existence, wisdom that realizes the emptiness of duality (that is to say, of difference of entity between subject and object), and wisdom that realizes the emptiness of inherent existence. Though there are many different types of wisdom, the main of all these is the wisdom realizing emptiness.

Purity must be achieved by an indivisible unity of method and wisdom, symbolized by the final syllable, HUM, which indicates indivisibility. According to the sutra system, this indivisibility of method and wisdom refers to one consciousness in which there is a full form of both wisdom affected by method and method affected by wisdom.

In the mantra, or tantra vehicle, it refers to one consciousness in which there is the full form of both wisdom and method as one undifferentiable entity. In terms of the seed syllables of the five conqueror Buddhas, HUM is the seed syllable of Akshobhya- the immovable, the unfluctuating, that which cannot be disturbed by anything.

Thus the six syllables, OM MANI PADME HUM, mean that in dependence on the practice which is in indivisible union of method and wisdom, you can transform your impure body, speech and mind into the pure body, speech, and mind of a Buddha. It is said that you should not seek for Buddhahood outside of yourself; the substances for the achievement of Buddhahood are within. As Maitreya says in his Sublime Continuum of the Great Vehicle, the Uttara Tantra, all beings naturally have the Buddha nature in their own continuum. We have within us the seed of purity, the essence of a One Gone Thus, the Tathagatagarbha, that is to be transformed and fully developed into Buddhahood.

From a lecture given by His Holiness The Dalai Lama of Tibet at the Kalmuck Mongolian Buddhist Center, New Jersey.

Transcribed by Ngawang Tashi Tsawa, Drepung Loseling, MUNGOD, INDIA

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