

**THE UNELABORATE PRACTICE
FOR ACCOMPLISHING
THE SUPERFACTUAL GURU**

**TULKU URGYEN'S GURU YOGA
WITH COMMENTARIES ON THE
PRACTICE AND ON THE NATURE
OF RIGPA BY TSOKNYI RINPOCHE**

**TONY DUFF
PADMA KARPO TRANSLATION COMMITTEE**

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This text is secret and should not be shown to those who have not had the necessary introduction and instructions of the Thorough Cut system of Dzogchen meditation. If you have not had the necessary instructions, reading this text can be harmful to your spiritual health! Seal. Seal. Seal.

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INTRODUCTION

Tulku Urgyen's guru yoga was spoken aloud by Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche and written down by Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche. The text was titled "The Un-elaborate Practice for Accomplishing the Superfactual Guru"¹.

In the spring of 1996, Tsoknyi Rinpoche gave two discourses as commentary on the text of the guru yoga practice. Tsoknyi commanded his translator Tony Duff to produce an English translation of the text together with his commentaries to it. The resulting translations were compiled into this book

¹ The terms "absolute" and "relative", even though they are commonly used, are very badly mistaken translations of the actual terms. The original term for "relative" both in Sanskrit and Tibetan means "fictional" exactly. The original term for "absolute" has no equivalent in English; it refers to that thing which, for spiritually *superior* beings is a *fact* for the mind. Just as the Tibetans invented a term to translate this latter term, I have done the same in English and have coined the term "superfactual" to convey that meaning. These two terms are used throughout the text instead of the mistaken "relative" and "absolute".

which was completed in March, 1996 at Bauddhanath, Kathmandu, Nepal, at the time of Tulku Urgyen's passing.

Tsoknyi Rinpoche is the third in the line of Tsoknyi tulkus. The first Tsoknyi Rinpoche lived in the mid-1800's in Nangchen, Eastern Tibet and was renowned as a particularly diligent meditator who attained to a very high level of realization. That first Tsoknyi Rinpoche and his subsequent incarnation were both mainstays of the East-Tibetan Drukpa Kagyu tradition and were also holders of the Ratnalingpa lineage of the Nyingma tradition. The current Tsoknyi Rinpoche was trained in the Drukpa Kagyu tradition from an early age but, as the son of the great master of the Nyingma Dzogchen tradition, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche, he emphasizes the Dzogchen teachings when teaching. The talks reproduced here contain the profound oral instructions of Dzogchen practice as passed down from the Venerable Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche.

STUDY TOOLS

The Tibetan text is included here to aid to those who are intent on studying the meaning of the texts. The Tibetan was input in the Tibetan Text input office of the Padma Karpo Translation Committee and carefully corrected by us prior to publication.

You will find a variety of other books and translations both for purchase and free on our web-site, whose address is shown on the copyright page of this book.

HEALTH WARNING

The texts here are about subjects that are usually kept secret. Anyone who has had these teachings in person will be able to understand them or at least go to their teacher and ask for an explanation. Anyone who has heard these teachings in person from a qualified teacher, and especially who has had the introduction to the nature of mind² around which the teachings hinge, please use and enjoy the teachings as you will. However, if you have not heard these teachings and if you have not had a proper introduction to the nature of your mind, you would probably be better off not reading this book but seeking out someone who could teach it to you. These days there are both non-Tibetans and Tibetans who can do that for you and who are fairly readily available in many countries across our planet. In short, the contents of this book could be dangerous to your spiritual health if you are not ready for it, so exercise care. I have many times in the last few years run into young men who are extremely confident of their understanding of the meaning of these profound systems but who just spout words that they have read in books. The solidity of their minds is noticeable. Unfortunately, they have read the books and know the words but have not contacted the inner meaning that the books are intended to be merely a pointer towards.

² Introduction to the nature of mind is mostly mis-translated these days as “pointing out” instruction.

For these reasons, this text is available only to those who have been given permission by Tulku Urgyen, Chokling, Chokyi Nyima, Tsoknyi, or Mingyur Rinpoche. If you do not have that permission, it is likely that you should not be reading this book.

Lotsawa Tony Duff
Kathmandu
Nepal
January, 2008

THE UN-ELABORATE PRACTICE FOR FOR ACCOMPLISHING THE SUPERFACTUAL GURU

Preliminaries:

ĀḤ

Primordially liberated rigpa is the superfactual refuge;
Rigpa's liveliness as compassion is the arousing of
bodhichitta.

The obstructing spirits of ignorance, grasping-fixation, and
habit

Are self-liberated; the boundary is set in space.

All is the offering-cloud of complete purity,
Let the wisdom-play pour down great blessings!

Main Part:

ĀḤ

In this mandala of apparent existence structured in ground,
Since essence, nature, and compassionate activity
Spread throughout samsara and nirvana,
There is not even the word for impurity.
Therefore, I, Uddiyana
Have the nature, sugatagarbha.

Whatever I wear, that's how I am;
 Create me in an uncontrived, normal way.
 In the heart centre, Vajrasatva who subsumes all families
 Abides as the essence, the jñānasattva, and
 Samantabhadra is the samādhisattva;
 Un-created yet clear in primordially great completion.

Invitation:

ĀḤ

The superfactual is not subject to coming and going
 Nonetheless, I invite you as mere appearance;
 Please be seated undifferentiably.
 With view of equal-taste I greet you and bow;
 The offering of Samantabhadra's great play I offer to you;
 The two obscurations to be purified I lay aside in space;
 In that which is authentic I rejoice;
 The superfactual dharma wheel which is timeless I ask you
 to turn;
 Remain perpetually without interruption;
 Non-referentially, I dedicate the accumulation of virtue to
 migrators.

Recitation:

ĀḤ

At the heart-centre amidst the great, pervasive blue,
 At the centre of the utterly-pure lamp of the empty drop,
 Rigpa's complexion, the vajra chains, appear as A's.
 Self-settled with rigpa's mindfulness uninterrupted
 Everything becomes a buddhafiield.

ĀḤ ĀḤ ĀḤ

That was the Vajra Recitation. Conclusion:

The liveliness and play of the ground's appearances
Dissolve into space, the alpha-pure ground's expanse.
All roots of virtue of the three times and timelessness
Are dedicated with the three spheres completely purified.
May the spontaneous presence of the pervasive sovereign
Bring the auspiciousness of that-ness.

*Unable to refuse the one who requested it, this was written down
by Uddiyana.*

COMMENTARY ON THE PRACTICE TULKU URGYEN'S GURU YOGA

by Tsoknyi Rinpoche

This practice for accomplishing the guru was composed by Tulku Urgyen at the request of one of his very oldest and closest students, Osel Dorje, Mr. Andreas Kretschmar. It was composed after Osel Dorje made numerous, heartfelt requests to Tulku Urgyen, Osel Dorje served Tulku Urgyen continuously, providing for all of his medical needs until his last breath.

In my way of thinking, this is an extremely sacred text. The style is very much like Longchen Rabjam. Before seeing this, I did not have a sense of Tulku Urgyen's writing style because he did not write much but gave most of his teachings orally. Looking at it, I see that his way of writing is very similar to the way that he taught verbally. I am quite amazed by it.

Generally speaking, there are two kinds of guru: the relative-sign guru and the superfactual-innate guru. In the case of Tulku Urgyen, the fictional-sign guru was the human-like form that he manifested so that he could communicate with us, so that he could teach dharma to us, so that we could see

him and relate to him. His enlightened mind was and is the superfactual-innate guru. When we talk about the enlightened mind³ of a guru, we mean that their mind is the same as the essence of samsaric mind. The purpose then, of this text for accomplishing the guru is to give you a method for making the enlightened, wisdom mind of Tulku Urgyen, the superfactual guru, inseparable with your mind. At this time, the fictional form of Tulku Urgyen has ceased and his enlightened mind of undefiled wisdom has become of oneness that is, has become one-taste, with all dharmas. We have, in our minds, something quite like his enlightened mind. This is called the sugatagarbha and it needs to be connected inseparably with his enlightened mind. If we make that kind of connection, the blessings of the guru will arrive.

The title of this text is “The Un-elaborate Practice for Accomplishing the Superfactual Guru”. “Un-elaborate”⁴ refers to the fact that this is a text which is not extensive, which does not have a lot of visualizations, and which, rather than having a lot of words and details, has only a few. Generally, when we say “elaborate”⁵, we refer to a situation which involves lots of words and details such as are found in the extensive means and methods of the outer level of Mahayoga and the inner level of Anuyoga with all of their mantra methods and various samadhis. This is a text which, in accordance with the secret level of non-elaborate Atiyoga, is made from the point of view which does not involve any of those kinds elaboration at all.

³ Tib. thugs.

⁴ Tib. spros med.

⁵ Tib. spros pa.

However, even though there is “no elaboration” involved, there is an extreme depth of meaning because it is the “superfactual”⁶ way of “practising to accomplish the guru”⁷. From this we understand that this sadhana is a method for accomplishing not the fictional-sign guru but the superfactual-innate guru.

The text has several parts to it, as follows:

- I. The Preliminaries
- II. The Main part
 - A. Invitation
 - B. Recitation
 - C. Vajra recitation
- III. The Conclusion

I. The Preliminaries

This has five parts to it:

- A. Refuge
- B. Arousing bodhicitta
- C. Expelling obstructing spirits
- D. Setting the boundary
- E. Blessing the offerings

ĀḤ

*Primordially liberated rigpa is the superfactual refuge;
Rigpa's liveliness as compassion is the arousing of bodhicitta.*

⁶ Tib. don dam gyi.

⁷ Tib. bla grub.

*The obstructing spirits of ignorance, grasping-fixation, and habit
Are self-liberated; the boundary is set in space.
All is the offering-cloud of complete purity,
Let the wisdom-play pour down great blessings!*

The preliminaries begin with the expression of the primordial sound $\bar{A}\bar{H}$. This syllable shows that all things are birthless and in particular it is the source from which all sounds come. For instance, when we speak, we use various sounds and expressions to communicate and all of these come from the primordial sound $\bar{A}\bar{H}$. There is a lot we could say about this but, to keep it brief, since recitation is needed, begin the practice with the state of emptiness and from that allow one $\bar{A}\bar{H}$ sound to come forth. Then all dharmas appear following on from that.

A. Refuge

The first line is the taking of refuge. There are several ways of taking refuge and there are said to be nine different refuges as follows: the outer refuges are the buddha, dharma, and saṅgha; the inner refuges are the guru, yidam, and ḍākinī; the secret refuges are the empty essence, the clear nature, and un-stopped compassionate activity. Taking refuge in the secret way means taking refuge by relying on the three kayas because the empty essence is the dharmakaya, the clear nature is the sambhogakaya, and the un-stopped compassionate activity is the nirmāṇakāya.

There are not many words here in this first line but the root meanings are all here. “Primordial”⁸ means ‘from the very beginning’ so “primordially liberated”⁹ means liberated without beginning. “Rigpa” means your innate rigpa. This innate rigpa, not covered at all by the afflictions, has the nature of being liberated without beginning. When this rigpa, this knower which is rigpa, recognizes itself just as it is, that is the vajra refuge. Whoever does that is taking vajra refuge.

So how do you take refuge here? In this case, there is nothing else to do except to recognize rigpa. In this case, you have to perform the recognizing of rigpa. This is very, very important. This is not something that needs to be created with rational mind. Let rigpa which is free of concepts shine forth and that is the taking of refuge. This is the vajra taking of refuge; the real taking of refuge. The text says “superfactual refuge”, doesn’t it? This means the taking of refuge in that which is real, that which is actual or factual¹⁰.

Normally, when we take refuge we have a sense of ourselves and the accumulation tree and the idea that we are taking refuge so that we can be liberated; many things are involved. None of that is present here. Here, you recognize and enter rigpa and just by doing exactly that you have already taken refuge. Why? Because there is no samsara, no nirvana, and there is no person taking refuge in a refuge object. So just recognizing is enough; be free from object-subject; just as

⁸ Tib. ye.

⁹ Tib. ye grol.

¹⁰ Tib. don.

Tulku Urgyen taught, let rigpa which is the essence of mind shine forth with its empty essence, clear nature, and un-stopped compassionate activity. That is the ultimate refuge.

B. Arousing bodhichitta

The second line is the arousing of bodhichitta. Tulku Urgyen explained that the essence of rigpa has the primary quality of being empty and that the clarity of rigpa has the qualities called liveliness¹¹ and complexion¹². The Tibetan word “rtsal” literally means the “spunk” or “liveliness” of something and the word “mdangs” means the complexion of something in the sense of the energy that comes from it and radiates from its surface. In this line it is talking not about the emptiness quality of rigpa but about the liveliness of rigpa, the complexion of rigpa.

Now, what has to come out from the liveliness of rigpa? What sort of complexion does the rigpa have to show? Compassion. What is this compassion? In what way does it come forth from rigpa's liveliness? As I explained just prior to Tulku Urgyen's passing away, when looking hither at the essence of mind, because of seeing the sentient beings suffering in samsara, there is a natural sadness of mind or compassionate mind which occurs. This compassion, without the need of the reference points which conceptual mind depends upon, naturally arises as a slight but very clear sadness which has the thought of wanting to cure the problems of all sentient beings. Then, based on the presence of that compas-

¹¹ Tib. rtsal.

¹² Tib. mdangs.

sion, there needs to be the thought, “I need to liberate all sentient beings from the three realms of cyclic existence”. That is the arousing of bodhichitta based on the liveliness of rigpa appearing as compassion.

That is the reasoning involved but how do you practice it? Except for rigpa, there is nothing else to be known. This type of arousing bodhichitta is not done by leaving rigpa and using conceptual ways of thinking to arouse it. This comes within the state. So it is not that you recognize rigpa in the first line and then fall back into a rational way of thinking, “Oh, sentient beings are caught in cyclic existence. Oh! I will practice dharma for them”. It is not like that at all, rather, you maintain the state that you have recognized in the first line and in that state itself, the liveliness of rigpa will occur and that liveliness will bring the compassion that is being talked about in this second line. Another way to say what this compassion is, is to say that, just as we take superfactual refuge in the first line, similarly we arouse superfactual compassion in the second line.

C. Expelling obstructing spirits

The third line is the expelling of obstructing spirits. There are many types of obstructing spirits that cause obstacles—embodied spirits, the māras, and so on—but all of them come from the three things of ignorance, grasping-fixation, and habits. Thus those three things are obstructing spirits, too. Normally, when you do other liturgical procedures, there are all sorts of obstructing spirits to be expelled and they are expelled with music, tormas, and so on. However, here we are not talking about that kind of thing at all because, as I said at the beginning, this is a practice without elaboration. Since

this is non-elaborate practice we will practice the core meaning only and not all of the trappings.

Again, all obstructing spirits—māras, obstacles, and so on—come first from “not being in rigpa”¹³, and then on that basis from grasping-fixation, and then habit. So, what do we have to do with these three things? The next line of the text starts with “self-liberate”¹⁴. Thus, those three things themselves are to be liberated by themselves. For example, the practice of the text up to this point has been to recognize and rest equi-poised in rigpa, then to have the complexion of rigpa shine forth as compassion, and then ... whoops! we got distracted again due to grasping-fixation coming so again, to let the state of rigpa shine forth, we self-liberate it. That is one way to understand the practice and if it happens that way, that's fine.

D. Setting the boundary

The fourth line is setting the boundary. Having expelled the obstructing spirits, we need to set a boundary. Normally we would send the obstructing spirits far away but here we expel them by self-liberating them as it says in the text. Then it says to “set a boundary in space”. Normally we would meditate upon several protective circles—vajra fences, the five wisdom fires, and so on—so that the obstructing spirits, having been expelled, could not return at all. Here, the boundary is set in space. Having self-liberated them, we remain in

¹³ ... which we usually translate into English with the word “ignorance” with the loss of all of this important meaning ...

¹⁴ Tib. rang grol.

the space that occurs and that is the boundary. From the essence of discursive thoughts compassion shines forth; distraction occurs; you stay again in the essence of whatever distraction arose; then, the grasping-fixation having fallen apart, staying right in the state of the essence of that distraction is setting the boundary in space.

This is a text with few words but the root meaning is there! He doesn't add extra at all but the all the root meaning is there!

E. Blessing the offerings

The fifth line is making the offerings and the sixth line is bringing blessings down onto the offering. Normally when we make an offering of some kind in a pūja, we need to perform a special activity to purify the offering substances. In that case, we set out the array of offerings, recite RAM YAM KHAM, and so on, and sprinkle amrita onto the articles of offering in order to bless them into purity. However, in this case we do not need to do that kind of cleansing. Instead, we need to bring to mind that the nature of all the offerings is complete purity from the beginning. In other words, not needing to purify the offering substances, we simply affirm that the offerings have been pure from the start. Moreover, rather than thinking that these things are pure from within a conceptual state of mind, we see these as being the play of wisdom from within the wisdom state, that is, from within the state of rigpa. In the text, when it says, “wisdom-play” it means that they are the liveliness or complexion of rigpa and are seen to be so from within the state of rigpa.

Thus, to do this part of the practice here, from within the state of rigpa we need to affirm that all of samsara and nirvana, which includes everything in our world, is pure from the beginning and is the play of wisdom, the liveliness of rigpa. Doing that blesses everything by pouring blessings onto it. So again, this is not something that you do within rational mind but within the state of rigpa.

II. The Main Part

Again, it starts with $\bar{A}\bar{H}$. What comes forth? The whole mandala described in the next four lines.

$\bar{A}\bar{H}$

*In this mandala of apparent existence structured in ground,
Since essence, nature, and compassionate activity
Spread throughout samsara and nirvana,
There is not even the word for impurity.*

Normally, when doing some liturgical practice, for example, the Kunzang Thuk Thik practice, there is a complete maṇḍala with all sorts of things to be visualized. Here there is none of that. The phrase “apparent existence”¹⁵ means everything, whatever there is. So here, we have again to take the approach that everything, whatever there is, is pure in nature and is without even a whisker of impurity; we have to consider that our whole world, having the nature of a buddha-field, is pure.

¹⁵ Tib. snang srid.

The phrase “structured in ground” in the first line of this section of the text is a little difficult to explain but as you gain more understanding of Dzogchen you will be able to understand it. For now, it is enough to understand that the whole first line of the text is saying that all appearances and existences are the nature of a mandala which is primordially pure right from the beginning. It is this way because, as it says in the next two lines, the three qualities—essence, nature, and compassionate activity—spread throughout the whole of samsara and nirvana. In brief, the three qualities pervade the whole of samsara and nirvana and because of that, as it says in the fourth line, “there is not even the word for impurity”.

This is what the first four lines say: “All appearances and existences are confined as structures of the ground because they are pervaded by essence, nature, and compassionate activity. That being the case, there couldn’t be any impurity there, could there?”

What does the word “impurity” mean here? Previously we talked about the three things, ignorance, grasping-fixation, and habit. Those are impurity. They are not here at all, so there is not even the word for impurity.

*Therefore, I, Uddiyana
Have the nature, sugatagarbha.*

These two lines are saying, “based on the reasoning just presented, I, Udiyana, do possess the nature, sugatagarbha”. Here, “Uddiyana” is the “Urgyen” of Tulku Urgyen’s name. As I said at the beginning of this commentary, the enlightened mind is the essence of samsaric mind and the essence of

samsaric mind, which is called sugatagarbha, has essence, nature, and un-stopped compassionate activity. Thus, Tulku Urgyen, as it says in the text, “has the sugatagarbha”.

*Whatever I wear, that's how I am;
Create me in an uncontrived, normal way.*

These two lines mean that you should meditate on him in whatever way you remember him. Some of you met him when he was wearing a shirt and some of you when he was not; some of you met him when he was wearing a hat and some of you when he was not. So the text is saying to meditate on him as he normally appeared to you, not in some special, made-up way, for instance with special mudrās. You just meditate on him as he was with nothing special made up.

It is not so much that you visualize him; it's just that you bring him to mind. The text does not say that he should be visualized in some particular place, so you could see him in front of you or on your head or you could just be inseparable with him. There are all sorts of principal places for visualizing someone but that sort of thing is not mentioned here. However, if it happens that you find yourself inseparable with the guru, then I think that that would be a good way to meditate.

*In the heart centre, Vajrasattva who subsumes all families
Abides as the essence, the jñānasattva, and
Samantabhadra is the samādhisattva;*

These three lines refer to the three types of sattvas or beings: samayasattva, jñānasattva, and samādhisattva. Tulku

Urgyen's form as a whole is the samayasattva; in his heart centre is Vajrasatva, the jñānasattva; and in Vajrasatva's heart-centre is Samantabhadra, the samādhisattva. The jñānasattva is about one inch high and the samādhisattva is about the size of a mustard seed. The whole thing is very clear and all of the details are present, even in the case of the samādhisattva which is very small yet completely clear and having all of its attributes. It is all right if you meditate with Vajrasatva and Samantabhadra in union with their consorts.

Un-created yet clear in primordially great completion.

This line is saying that this whole appearance of Tulku Urgyen just as he is, together with Vajrasatva and Samantabhadra, is something which is perfectly clear without needing to be created; it is non-dual and doesn't need to be created distinctly because it has the nature of having been complete from the beginning. It is pre-created so to speak.

At any rate, the main thing when doing this meditation on Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche is that you don't need a lot of special discursive thought. It is something that occurs within the state of rigpa. Try to do that. If it just won't come that way, then it is all right to use your rational mind to do it but really you should work to connect with it directly and without conceptual mind.

A. Inviting

Now we have arrived at the section of inviting. Normally, in the other yānas, first we create the appearance of a deity which is the samayasattva then think that the jñānasattvas come down from their realms and dissolve into and conjoin

with the samayasattva. All of this is done with rational mind. Here we don't need to depend on that. Again, from within the state of emptiness, we express $\bar{A}\bar{H}$ and the next three lines of the text.

$\bar{A}\bar{H}$

*The superfactual is not subject to coming and going
Nonetheless, I invite you as mere appearance;
Please be seated undifferentiably.*

The first two lines are saying, "In the superfactual there is no-one to go or come, however, I will make an invitation of the sort which invites you as mere appearance". In actuality there is nothing to be invited and no invitation to be made; since you and Tulku Urgyen are already inseparable primordially there is no need to think about re-inviting him. Then what practice do we need to do in this case? We need to bring this to mind again. We are re-affirming the actuality of Tulku Urgyen being here. This is done within the clarity of rigpa.

The next line is saying, "please be seated without difference". Normally, when I invite someone to come, for instance Tony here, he comes and I offer him a seat. There is no choice but for Tony to be seated separately from me. However, in this practice we are saying, "Please be seated and be seated without being separated from me", that is, undifferentiably from me. "Without difference" means that the guest, having arrived, stays in a way which is undifferentiable from the host. So you make that kind of request.

*With view of equal-taste I greet you and bow;
The offering of Samantabhadra's great play I offer to you;*

*The two obscurations to be purified I lay aside in space;
 In that which is authentic I rejoice;
 The superfactual dharma wheel which is timeless I ask you to turn;
 Remain perpetually without interruption;
 Non-referentially, I dedicate the accumulation of virtue to migrants.*

The next seven lines are about what happens after Tulku Urgyen has taken his seat. The outer practice of these is called the ‘Seven Limbs’ or ‘Seven Branches’. The first line is about paying your respects after he has been seated. For example, if I invite someone high, like Karmapa, and he comes and takes his seat, I will then offer him tea, prostrations, and a white silk scarf. So we will do something similar. However, like before, there are no special prostrations to be made here at all because in essence, samsara, nirvana, the guru, and yourself are all inseparable. This is the view of equal-taste. So again, this is something we do as an affirming. This affirmation is done within the state of the view of equal-taste. So you can also say that it is bringing forth your assurance and doing the prostration with that. This is not one person doing it to someone else but is one person doing it to one person; you prostrate with your assurance.

The next line follows on from that. When the guest has been greeted properly, something is offered to them. The text says, “The offering of Samantabhadra’s great play I offer to you”. In fact there is no offering to be made because the offerings of Samantabhadra’s play are the whole of samsara and nirvana which has the nature of an offering; the understanding itself of the purity of samsara and nirvana is the offering.

The next line is laying aside. This is done to purify whatever mistakes we have made. What we have to purify are the two obscurations: the obscurations of the afflictions and the obscurations to knowing. The afflictions are coarse obscurations; there are many of them such as passion, aggression, delusion, pride, jealousy, and so on. The obscurations to knowing are subtle obscurations; they prevent the omniscience of a buddha. These two obscurations are removed at different points on the path: removing the afflictions brings release from samsara; removing the obscurations to knowing brings complete omniscience. If you get a very clear recognition of rigpa, a thoroughly authentic recognition of rigpa, the two obscurations are gone with that recognition.

The two obscurations are hindrances that we have to set a boundary for and so, as I said earlier with the obstructing spirits, we lay them aside by self-liberating them into space. "Space" means either 'the space of the dharmata' or 'the space of rigpa'. Normally, laying aside involves acknowledging to someone else that you have made a mistake and then laying it aside. However, in this case we don't do that sort of thing. The reasoning involved is that the two obscurations are obstacles of the path and so need to be destroyed; the way to destroy them is to recognize rigpa; and that recognition is the laying aside.

The next line is rejoicing. The Tibetan word for rejoicing is 'rjes su yid rangs'; 'rjes su' means subsequent and 'yid rangs' means to have a glad mind about something. So rejoicing means being glad about something that happened and in particular, it means to have a mind which is taking delight in some virtue that has been done. For example, you are rejoic-

ing when you think, “He is doing a three year retreat, how wonderful!” or “I meditated today, I’m glad!”. However, in this practice, rejoicing is a special state of mind which comes from having recognized rigpa. Following the recognition of rigpa there is a certainty that arises about what you have seen. So in this case the rejoicing is actually the particular kind of confidence that arises due to having recognized rigpa. This confidence is called ‘spob pa’ in Tibetan. This confidence is rejoicing, as the text says, on the basis of “what is authentic”. This kind of rejoicing is a very important point. For example, having meditated and recognized the essence, we have the sequence of thoughts, “Oh! Now I understand the essence of mind. This is really good. Within samsara this is very sacred. This happened because of my guru; how kind he is. I have faith in the guru. The Buddha’s dharma is good. The Buddha’s dharma is really sacred”. The text says that this kind of rejoicing is about what is authentic. You have the confidence that you have seen that which is authentic. You have the confidence of knowing that, since you have seen the essence of mind, it wouldn’t matter whether you were born in a hell or in a buddha-field.

The next line is asking that the wheel of dharma be turned. Normally, we have to ask that the wheel of dharma be turned perpetually but in this case you are asking that the timeless wheel of dharma be turned. This turning of the superfactual wheel of dharma is the turning of the wheel of dharma which has the time of no-time. There are two ways to turn the wheel of dharma. One is that, thinking that there is a difference between you and the turner of the wheel, you ask for the wheel of dharma to be turned perpetually. The other is that there is no difference between you and the turner; in this you

understand that there is no difference between you and timeless time and just exactly that understanding is the wheel of dharma. If you recognize rigpa, just that itself is the dharma, isn't it? So for as long as you stay within rigpa you are turning the wheel of dharma.

The next line is the request that enlightened beings stay with us and not pass into nirvāṇa. Normally, we request enlightened beings to stay with us forever. How should we understand it in this case? This is self-generation which brings the timeless time of rigpa. This is saying, "May the recognition of timeless rigpa continuously stay with me through my being un-distracted from it". It is saying, "May there be no distraction!" because, if you stay permanently within that state, there will be no post-attainment, will there?

The next line is dedication. Normally we express the wish that all sentient beings might obtain our roots of virtue. Here, within the state of rigpa, there is the thought, "All sentient beings will obtain my virtue"—virtue meaning the liveliness of rigpa. So you are expressing the wish from within the state of rigpa that all sentient beings could obtain the same kind of liveliness of rigpa as you have. The expression is done without the reference points¹⁶ which conceptual mind depends on so there is no bias towards one group of sentient beings and no neglect of another group. Why would we give our virtue in this particular way? There is a lot of confusion in cyclic existence, isn't there? Confusion has to be

¹⁶Tib. dmigs pa.

destroyed completely. If all of this confusion is destroyed, sentient beings are naturally benefited by the virtue.

The term “non-referentially”¹⁷ at the beginning of the line means that the virtue is dedicated in a way which is disconnected from conceptual mind. Secondly, it means that the virtue itself is non-conceptual in type. Many people these days ask that, if virtue is something to be given and dedication means that you are actually going to give it, how could somebody get a non-conceptual transference of virtue? There are two points involved in this. Firstly, in this practice, we are not giving anything. We are not thinking, “I am giving all of my virtues to sentient beings”. This is so because, as I just said, this is non-referential and that means that you don’t have mind involved. So, how do we dedicate the virtue? If you stay in rigpa there is no not-rigpa-ing, that is, there is no ignoring, and the natural effect of such a state is that it eliminates to a greater or lesser extent the not-rig-pa-ing occurring in other people’s minds. Thus, a practitioner’s virtue, that is, his rigpa, automatically benefits the other person. So you can say that the practitioner’s virtue has been transferred to the other person. Rinpoches and other people who have experienced rigpa don’t really need to do anything or give anything to help others because, like opening a curtain and allowing light to come into a room, the rigpa of their being automatically wakes up the rigpa in other people.

¹⁷ Tib. dmigs med.

B. The recitation

This seems to be a Direct Crossing¹⁸ rather than a Thorough Cut¹⁹ way of talking.

ĀḤ

*At the heart-centre amidst the great, pervasive blue,
At the centre of the utterly-pure lamp of the empty drop,
Rigpa's complexion, the vajra chains, appear as A's.
Self-settled with rigpa's mindfulness uninterrupted
Everything becomes a buddhafield.*

ĀḤ ĀḤ ĀḤ

ĀḤ again, means coming from within the state of emptiness.

One way to understand the words “At the heart-centre”²⁰ is that you have created an indivisibility between you and the guru already. Then “great, pervasive blue” is a Direct Crossing term. It is a sign of Samantabhadra which is emptiness, which in turn is like an expanse. The blue colour represents the clarity which is the complexion of that expanse. The blue is a sign of the fact that all of the various superficialities do occur and do shine forth as the complexion of empty expanse. There is the Direct Crossing emphasis on all phenomena appearing within this space; the all-appearing quality. This is a bit difficult to talk about. Later, as you request and receive the guidance on Direct Crossing you will slowly come to understand what this is talking about.

¹⁸ Tib. thod rgal.

¹⁹ Tib. khregs chod.

²⁰ Tib. snying dkyil.

Then, in the next line, the lamp of the empty drop is mentioned. In Direct Crossing there are what are called the four lamps and this is one of them. Then it says that the lamp is “utterly pure” meaning that it is completely clear because of having no impurity. In the middle of that lamp, as the next line says, “the vajra chains of the complexion of rigpa appear clearly as letter A’s” (ཨ). When vajra chains appear, they take many different appearances and as you develop with the practice those appearances will come forth in different ways, for instance sometimes they will come forth as the letter A’s, sometimes as other things.

This is Direct Crossing practice in which you progress through the four appearances of direct perception of dharmatā, experience increasing, rigpa reaching its measure; and dharmatā becoming exhausted. There is a very important point here: the appearances of Direct Crossing are not something that you deliberately cultivate, they come of their own accord, therefore you have no control over what will come. As a result, how the vajra chains will appear is not definite. Maybe they will come as letters; maybe they won’t come as letters. And then if they do come as letters, maybe they will come as A (ཨ, not ་ཨ ཨཱ) letters, maybe as something else. Maybe they will come as Sanskrit letters; maybe they will come as Tibetan letters; maybe they will come as ḍākinī code—you don’t know. This reality does not belong to Tibetans; it is not even human.

It looks like there is a great deal to be understood within these words; I am not sure that I see it all.

Then, what do we have to do regarding the next two lines? When doing this kind of practice, we need to be settled in way that the situation of mind is just left to being itself, or “self-settled”²¹. The appearances of Direct Crossing shine forth by being self-settled and without normal mindfulness in operation. Within the state of being self-settled you do need mindfulness but in the state of rigpa the kind of mindfulness that exists is not ordinary mindfulness, it is ‘mindfulness not involved with effort’, also called ‘authentic mindfulness’. When you stay continuously in the self-settled state with rigpa’s effortless mindfulness, “everything”, as it says in the next line of the text, is there “as a buddha-field”.

To say it again, you self-settle into the state but you have to stay there without distraction. It is the rigpa’s mindfulness²², that keeps you un-distractedly in that state. If you have that kind of mindfulness then you will stay in that uninterruptedly and then all things will be a buddha-field.

C. Vajra recitation

This vajra recitation section involves the recitation of the three $\bar{A}\bar{H}$ syllables. Note that there is no visualization to be done with the vajra-recitation. There is no rational thought required. From within the state you can recite the three $\bar{A}\bar{H}$ ’s. It is also all right not to recite them. If you can stay un-distractedly within the state of rigpa and then do the recitation that is good. However, if you have to drop the rigpa practice to do the recitation then that is not so good.

²¹ Tib. rang babs.

²² Tib. dran rig.

There is a way in the Mahāmudrā tradition of using the vajra recitation as a kind of shamatha practice. In that practice the $\bar{A}\dot{H}$ is brought down and held low as the support for the stabilization of mind. However, this practice is far beyond that.

The recitation of $\bar{A}\dot{H}$ in this section requires no visualization of a letter, rather there will be an understanding of it just through reciting it. The actual $\bar{A}\dot{H}$ is not the written letter; the actual $\bar{A}\dot{H}$ occurs even prior to the sound of $\bar{A}\dot{H}$. $\bar{A}\dot{H}$ functions in many different ways. Expressing it can bring you into rigpa. It is a sign of emptiness and of sounds deriving from that. In this practice, you can say $\bar{A}\dot{H}$ or not say $\bar{A}\dot{H}$. If you do recite the $\bar{A}\dot{H}$ there is a long $\bar{A}\dot{H}$ and a short $\bar{A}\dot{H}$ that you can express. Either way, there is a technique for doing this recitation.

Whether you do the recitation or not, this is the point in the practice at which you meditate, so to speak: you can practice it for one hour or for five hours, or whatever. You stay in a state inseparable with Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche. Your body is the same as his enlightened body. In your heart is Vajrasatva. In his heart is Samantabhadra. So you, and Vajrasatva, and Samantabhadra, and Tulku Urgyen are completely inseparable. Thorough Cut becomes the basis for doing this and then within that you cultivate the appearances of Direct Crossing. You can practice the appearances of Direct Crossing, like the great pervasive blue, the lamp of the empty bindu, the vajra chains, and so on according to your level of practice.

As you do the recitation, if you stay in the state of rigpa, the appearances of Direct Crossing can shine forth; the two happen together so that the experience of Thorough Cut is there with the appearances of Direct Crossing and the appearances of Direct Crossing are occurring while the experiential state of Thorough Cut is occurring. Then you are there and Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche is there with Vajrasatva in his heart and Samantabhadra within that and you are all inseparable. Everything is there. It is there but with the same essence. The superficial appearances are all there one by one but are of one taste because of having the same essence. Actually to do this there are two things that you need: you need to have one taste in many and many in one taste. In other words, all things shine forth from the state of one taste and each thing is an expression of one taste. If you try to do this practice with mind putting one thing here and one thing there it will become very weird; the reality of one taste in many and many things in one taste is something that you need.

If you really don't know Direct Crossing practice and you really can't do the Thorough Cut practice, then there is a practice that you can do with conceptual mind. You will visualize a blue sphere of light within your body at the heart region; this is the 'great, pervasive blue'. Then there will be a drop within and at the centre of that, which is the lamp of the empty bindu, and then within that there will be the demonstrator of rigpa, the letter A. You rest self-settled with that visualization, holding it in a continuous way as described in the text but you will be doing it with a conceptual state of mind since you will be using the mindfulness associated with effort rather than rigpa's mindfulness mentioned in the text.

Then you keep your mind on that visualization whilst reciting the triple $\bar{A}\bar{H}$. The best way to do this practice is in the state of rigpa. If you fail at that, then this conceptual method becomes a circumstance by which a good understanding of Direct Crossing can arise later.

III. The Conclusion

This has three parts two it:

- A. Withdrawal stage
- B. Dedication
- C. Expression of auspiciousness

*The liveliness and play of the ground's appearances
Dissolve into space, the alpha-pure ground's expanse.
All roots of virtue of the three times and timelessness
Are dedicated with the three spheres completely purified.
May the spontaneous presence of the pervasive sovereign
Bring the auspiciousness of that-ness.*

A. Withdrawal stage

The next two lines contain the withdrawal step. This talk contained in here is very special Dzogchen talk. The whole Dzogchen ground, path, and fruition is contained in these two lines.

We start by looking at the first line. We as sentient beings are confused. When did this confusion happen? When the

“appearances of the ground”²³ occurred but we did not recognize them as self-appearances coming from us. At that point, we created a distinction between ourselves and the appearances which we saw as separate from us. The ground is indeterminate at first because it has not yet become determined as either a buddha or a sentient being. Then, naturally, a wind arises from the ground and appearances shine forth. The wind is the wind of dharmatā wind. It opens the door to all things coming out of the ground. The appearances of the ground come out as five, coloured lights. Then sentient beings get trapped by confusion over whether the lights are themselves or not. Samantabhadra is someone who recognizes the appearances as his own appearances and knows that they are not different from him. Sentient beings make the mistake of separating themselves from their own appearances and because of that the appearances become more coarse and reach the level of “liveliness”. The lights continue to be coarsened until they become solidified as the five objects. At this point, sentient beings have manifested samsara and they wander within that. When the lights have coarsened into samsara like that, they are referred to as having reached the level of a “play”²⁴.

Now we move onto the second line of the pair. Ground not only has appearances, as we said in the first line but it also has expanse, hence the words “The ground’s expanse”²⁵. This expanse of the ground is pure, therefore there is also the term

²³ Tib. gzhi snang.

²⁴ Tib. rol pa.

²⁵ Tib. gzhi dbyings.

“alpha-pure”²⁶ and with the meaning that the expanse of the ground is alpha-pure. The text also says “dissolve into the space”²⁷. What dissolves into the space? All of the confusion mentioned on the first line dissolves back into the space of the alpha-pure expanse of the ground.

What do we have to do right now? This present confusion of ours has to be dissolved into the state of non-confusion, which is rigpa. From a path perspective, to eliminate our current state of confusion what we need to do is to dissolve all of our confusion into the space of the alpha-pure expanse of the ground. How do we do that? We recognize rigpa. There is no confusion in rigpa. Samsara, the state of being confused, is said to be “seeing things to exist which do not exist”. When we speak of cyclic existence, it is as though we have gone to sleep and have woken up into a dream without knowing that we have done so. The dream has no beginning or end.

B. Dedication

The next two lines are a dedication. “All the roots of virtue” that have been accumulated—both those connected with “time”, which is called defiled, and that which is disconnected from time, which is called undefiled—are dedicated by means of authentic dedication—a dedication done without the three cycles of a dedicator, dedicated, and dedication. “The roots of virtue of the three times” refers to all of the roots of merit created by doing pūjas and so forth with a conceptual state of

²⁶ Tib. ka dag.

²⁷ Tib. klong du thim).

mind and includes anything that you have done, are doing, or will do under the influence of good concepts. The virtue of “timelessness” is the virtue of being in the state of rigpa.

Normally when we do something we are involved with an actor, an acted upon, and the doing of the action. Those are the three cycles. Here we need to make an authentic dedication, meaning a dedication made without the three cycles, just like the dedication that was spoken of earlier in the context of the seven limbs with the words ‘non-referential’.

C. Expression of auspiciousness

The next two lines are an expression of auspiciousness. The term “Pervading sovereign” means a dimension which has no dimensions, which is totally unfurled or encompassing, and which is devoid of impurity. The term “spontaneously present”²⁸ means naturally good, naturally virtuous, naturally excellent, and so on. In the next line “that-ness”²⁹ is that which is authentic. This is an authentic expression of auspiciousness. It is authentic because it is done in the state of that-ness.

Finally, at the very end, it says that I, Uḍḍiyāṇa, was requested to do this and, not being able to refuse the person who requested it, I wrote it down.

In this practice there are several, development-stage-like things. However, you should not overlay them with the

²⁸ Tib. lhun gyis grub pa.

²⁹ Tib. de kho na nyid.

confusion of rational mind. They are development stage things but they should all shine forth from the liveliness of rigpa. Actually there is good liveliness and bad liveliness so what I should say here is that these should appear as the complexion of rigpa. In brief, all of the various parts of this practice should be done within the state of rigpa. If you fall out of rigpa it is not all right, is it? All of this, the taking of refuge, the arousing of compassion, having faith in Tulku Urgyen, and so on, are to be done within the state of rigpa. If I don't say this now, some doubt will arise in you later. You will remember that Tsoknyi Rinpoche said that we should start out in the state of rigpa and then that we should visualize Vajrasatva, and so on. Then you will think "That means I have to do some development stage practice. Now what do I do? How do I put the developing stage together with the rigpa?"

If you can't do it within the rigpa, then do it with conceptual mind. Do the refuge and so on with concepts, then after Tulku Urgyen has dissolved into you, once again remain equipoised in the state of rigpa. However, you should try to do the whole practice in rigpa if you can.

In terms of blessings descending, as with the section on blessing the offerings in the preliminaries, there are two ways to look at it. Firstly, from the guru's perspective, the guru has the capability to zap sentient beings. He can pour his blessings down on you and liberate you totally because of his activity. The blessings in that case are a result of his wisdom play. But here we are doing a practice so how will it be from our perspective? It is similar. We are connecting ourselves with the guru and in doing so, his blessings can come and

strike us and by doing so can open our minds into the timeless state of rigpa like turning on an electric light. So from the first perspective the guru can liberate you totally and then from our perspective as practitioners we can request those blessings and it can have the same effect. Alternatively, you can see the possibility of your blessing the whole environment from your state of rigpa so that it becomes your wisdom play. Understanding your own ground allows you to bless the whole environment and all of the inhabitants into a play of your innate wisdom.

Blessing means making something that wasn't good before good later. For example, beforehand, you have lots of passion, aggression, and so forth but once the guru's blessings have washed over you and you have received them, you find yourself without many afflictions.

Where does this pouring down of blessings come from? It comes from the wisdom-play which is something that both you and the guru can do. Your own pure nature can express purity to the whole of the environment and its inhabitants and also the compassionate activity of the guru can pour blessings down on you and everyone else and the world about them. Blessings are connected with impurity in the sense that blessings turn confusion into wisdom so it becomes the play of wisdom. Blessings come from the play of wisdom.

In this case who is the guru? It is you. And who are you? It is the guru. In this case, through the practice of self-generation, just by remembering the blessings of the guru which are like the liveliness of rigpa and how they have purified your afflictions, the actual blessings of the guru and your mind

become inseparable. So that is how we should understand it in this case. Normally, you think, “due to confusion, I am impure” but here you think “I am not impure, I am the play of Tulku Urgyen’s wisdom”.

The thing is to have faith in the guru. To the extent that you have faith in the guru, that much blessing will come and as much blessing comes that much realization will occur.

COMMENTARY ON THE NATURE OF RIGPA

by Tsoknyi Rinpoche

In reference to the second line of the text in the preliminaries, the line about arousing bodhichitta, I have mentioned a feeling of compassion that is naturally part of rigpa and said that there is no grasping involved with it but it still is present. You might ask whether there is a heart-feeling at the centre of rigpa and, if there is, whether it has the nature of devotion and compassion.

In brief, faith, devotion, compassion, and so on are the liveliness of rigpa. As I explained, there are two things: mind and mind's essence. The essence of mind has three qualities to it: it has an essence which is emptiness; a nature which is clarity; and it has compassionate activity which is not stopped. When you look hither at the essence of mind and enter the state, you find that the experience has the quality of a great emptiness which is completely free from direction—it has no sides, it has no up, no down, no centre, no edge—and this is the essence, emptiness. This sort of empty expanse does not have a first point of birth and, because it is not born, it also does not remain anywhere in an interim nor cease at an ending.

This view is a view to be seen, not to be thought about; the actual experience of this dimension-less expanse is the empty essence.

When this arises as clear experience, there has to be something that knows it. Its presence must be known by something; if it weren't known then it would just be indeterminate experience. The thing that knows its presence is the nature of the essence of mind. What does the nature, clarity, know? What does it understand? It knows the dimension-less emptiness.

The liveliness that I started to talk about is something that comes forth from the nature, clarity. When you are in the state of rigpa, that is to say, when you are in an experience of rigpa without stoppage, faith, devotion, compassion, arousing of bodhichitta, and so on all occur as the liveliness of the clarity.

So how does the compassion arise? The clarity which knows the empty essence sees all sentient beings and sees that, although they all have rigpa in their mind-streams, they are ignoring its presence and because of that a feeling arises for the sentient beings. A very strong compassion arises which is like a slight sadness; it sees clearly and with complete certainty that all the three realms are the confusion of the sentient beings who have created them. This strong certainty arises because of your own direct experience of rigpa and your understanding that rigpa, which is reality, is not confused. That compassion itself then, is the arousing of bodhichitta. What I have just described is the superfactual arousing of bodhichitta. The fictional arousing of bodhichitta is when

you think, with your rational mind, of compassion for sentient beings. Fictional bodhichitta is not a bad thing to have; this is a good thing to have. I am not saying that fictional bodhichitta is something bad or good but am explaining this particular text in accordance with how it was written, which is the higher level of reality.

This kind of compassion, this kind of arousing of bodhichitta, is something that can only come if you have the experience of rigpa. If your experience of rigpa is small, then you are not going to be able to give rise to this kind of compassion.

Some of you have the problem that, in trying to develop the rigpa, you lose the quality of liveliness or never discover it so, instead of having this liveliness and a natural compassion and a natural devotion, somehow your hearts become dead. Your practice becomes mechanical and even trying to do it just creates more habitual patterns. This is an inability to recognize rigpa authentically. There are three qualities to rigpa but, instead of recognizing a rigpa which has all three at once, which would be an authentic recognition of rigpa, students sometimes see the clarity but not the emptiness, sometimes see the emptiness but not the clarity, and sometimes see both clarity and emptiness but what they see is partial and the unstopped quality is not understood.

What does it mean not to understand the emptiness quality authentically? Many Westerners, having heard that emptiness is important, use their eyes to stare into space and, using their eyes, connect with an external kind of space which they take for emptiness. Using their eyes, they rest mind in a vast kind of external space and they sit there without thinking

about anything. In doing this kind of practice there is an appearance which comes up and the practitioners take that appearance for emptiness. The external thing, which is the external spaciousness, reflects back through the eyes into the brain and there is experience of something that is clear like a reflection and of thought being stopped within that appearance. This is not authentic emptiness because the experience is missing the third quality, 'not stopped'. 'Stopped' means that you have gone away from the real experience of emptiness by stopping off in an artificial emptiness. In other words, you have become stuck in this appearance of emptiness and, in doing so, have lost the 'not stopped' quality of authentic rigpa. In particular here, the internal awareness has stopped off at the external appearance of space which it is taking for emptiness. Even though you meditate like this for many years, the liveliness of rigpa just doesn't come and so faith, devotion, compassion, and so on also do not come. In other words, it is the not-stopped quality which is required for the liveliness of rigpa to occur.

Just as much as you can stop off in emptiness you can also stop off in clarity. If you get caught in clarity as an experience, what happens is that you have a moment of experience of the clarity but it is so wonderful that you fixate on it and hold to it as being very special. When you fixate on it you have stopped off in the clarity.

There are the three temporary experiences of bliss, clarity, and no-thought which are all involved with mind, and which come from the clarity factor of mind's essence. Sometimes there is an experience of extreme bliss and, thinking, "This is wonderful, I will meditate on this!" you stop off and get

caught in that experience. Sometimes there is an experience of clarity which is utterly clear and, thinking, “Oh! This is really clear today!” you fixate on that and get caught in that experience. Then sometimes there is no discursive thought at all and, thinking, “Oh! This is utterly pure with limitless understanding!” you fixate on and get caught in that experience. In those ways you waste your time fixating on the clarity.

Then what about the authentic experience of rigpa? In that there is no dwelling anywhere whatsoever, no staying on something. It is totally unsupported; it is dimension-less; it doesn't have a here and there to it at all.

Most practitioners make mistakes. The first mistake that they make is that they send their minds out as I just described. It is easy to see why this comes: your whole way for many years has been to go out and then, when the teacher gives the instructions, he talks about expansiveness so you put your habit together with his instructions and go out. Practising that way for many years, you find ourselves not progressing at all. So then you go in! And you discover the temporary experiences that I mentioned and you nurture those, since they are nice experiences. You make them the most important thing in your meditation. So then, once again, many years pass by with you basically wasting your time. Then, one day, you meet a guru with whom you know you have a karmic connection. It occurs to you that there is nothing to be fixated upon and you take the more subtle approach of neither resting out there nor resting in here but resting in between. In this way, you know not to be out or in but to be resting in that thin slice of experience called ‘the present’. As

you stay in the present, the heavy duality of subject and object has been dropped but subject-object is still there to some extent. You, the meditator, are getting closer to rigpa but are still not there. The reason for this is that you are staying in the present moment whereas rigpa is completely free of the past, present, and future. When you authentically recognize rigpa, external, internal, and in-between are completely eliminated and that experience is the real not-stopped experience.

In that kind of experience, how can you say that space has an up and down to it? In our normal way of experience we do say up and down but in the state of rigpa those conventions don't operate. So there is the not-stopped experience and in that, naturally, there are many qualities. These qualities come forth as the liveliness of rigpa. Once compassion has come forth as one of those qualities, the arousing of bodhichitta is done. Think about it this way: Why do you need bodhichitta? Because you need to arouse compassion for all sentient beings. Accordingly, in this practice, the moment the compassion has occurred, the work of arousing of bodhichitta has finished.

Compassion and devotion that are within rigpa have no location so we cannot say that devotion and faith are heart-feelings. They do not have a centre, they are just in the space. The practice of fictional bodhichitta does require heart-feeling but the practice of real, superfactual devotion is something which is inseparable with rigpa. It is the liveliness of rigpa. Rigpa is not said to have a here and a there to it; rigpa is all-pervasive, isn't it?

Some people have told me how, when they I think of Tulku Urgyen and remember his kindness, they suddenly see how great he is and cry. There is some feeling there and some people might say that that means that there is also some impurity there, too. However, this feeling is good and it is something that you need but you could use it rather than it using you. If it comes, it has an empty essence to it and if you enter the empty essence, then the devotion will come forth from within that instead. You shouldn't stop those heart-feelings—you need them—but when they come you should look at their essence and thus let them shine forth as the liveliness of rigpa.

There are many different kinds of liveliness, for example when we move our bodies around the movement is the result of our liveliness. In the text here, on the second line it says “the liveliness of rigpa” so we are talking in particular about rigpa's liveliness here. So, first you have fictional devotion and it might come quite strongly, then you rest in the state of rigpa and, even though you rest in rigpa, the devotion which you had made up using concepts doesn't get stopped.

Actually there are two ways that liveliness of rigpa can occur. On one hand you can go into the superfactual by depending on the fictional and on the other hand the liveliness can shine forth from within the state of rigpa. For the devotion to shine forth from within the rigpa requires that you stay in the state of rigpa without stoppage. An example of stoppage and non-stoppage is that, if you are in a room and open all of the doors and windows, then there is no restriction on your experience whereas if you lock the doors and windows you have restricted yourself to the experience of the room alone. In the

case of rigpa, if you lock yourself into just one of the experiences of rigpa then all of the qualities of rigpa cannot come.

In the commentary I said that, “All of samsara and nirvana become the pure offerings of Samantabhadra”. Does this mean the offerings not of ordinary Samantabhadra but of dharmakāya Samantabhadra? And I said that when we affirm that all phenomena are Samantabhadra’s offerings that is the point at which rigpa showers down blessings. There might be a question about whether we are going from the fictional experience of blessing to the superfactual experience of blessing? Some might say that the fictional experience starts when we remember the guru’s kindness, and following that we feel his blessing, and recognize and then think that in that recognition, the next level of blessing is when rigpa is blessing all phenomena.

In the text it says, “the clouds of offering of complete purity”—you can also say that this is the offering of Samantabhadra. What does this mean? Having fully entered rigpa, there is no not-rig-pa-ing, that is, there is no ignoring, at all. When you have fully entered a state of being without ignoring, there is no confusion, at all. When there is no confusion, everything is pure. The container—the worlds—and its contents—the sentient beings—are pure. This purity is something that is occurring in your own mind, not in the minds of other beings. Confusion is something that occurred to you so the purification of it is something that you have to do. When, by having entered into rigpa, all impurity has been cleared off, that occurrence of purity itself is offering. Samsara and nirvāṇa having been purified this way, the whole thing is offering; it is the best offering.

Normally, in liturgical practice, we arrange offerings and then purify them by some outer method such as reciting RAM, YAM, KHAM together with the inner method of conceptually thinking that they are pure. That is not what we are doing here. Everything is made pure by the elimination of not-rigpa-ing and that is the blessing. Having removed confusion, the blessing is done. As is said, “Rigpa is the one sufficient conqueror” meaning that rigpa alone is enough and that is exactly what I am explaining here. This rigpa is what serves for taking refuge; for arousing compassion; for eliminating ignorance, grasping-fixation, and habits; for setting a boundary; for blessing the offerings; and for the play of wisdom—the whole thing is explained through rigpa. As is said, “From one rigpa come many qualities.”

What does it mean when the text says, “Following that, that the play of wisdom showers blessings on phenomena?” You have recognized rigpa for your own benefit, haven’t you? Now the compassionate activity of this rigpa naturally sends waves of blessing to the many sentient beings.

How does it do that? This is one of the potentials of being without discursive thought. There are two points involved here. Firstly, by being in rigpa you are staying in emptiness, aren’t you? Since that emptiness is all-pervasive, you are connected to everything: to buddhas, to this cup here, to confusion, to rigpa, and so on. That is the wire, the connector. Secondly, you have aroused within that rigpa the non-referential compassion of wanting to benefit all sentient beings and remove their not-rigpa-ing. The presence of this compassion gives rise to the play of wisdom which becomes blessings. This is the current that passes through the wire. If

you create a stoppage and block the emptiness, you cut the wire and there is no connection. So being without stoppage is required.

How is the liveliness of rigpa involved in this? If you recognize rigpa and, on top of that, have the liveliness of rigpa present as compassion, the two together go out and eliminate other's not-rigpa-ing. For example, when we call an acquaintance on the telephone, if we are happy and they are sad, we can definitely cheer them up by our having a cheerful conversation with them and likewise, from within rigpa, our compassion can result in other's not-being-in-rigpa being cleared off. Dedication also functions in the same way.

Another thing to understand is that the wire is two-way, like a telephone so, just as much as we can bless sentient beings we can also receive blessings. The teaching on connecting with the guru is to make your mind spacious and then let faith arise in that space. If you don't connect with rigpa at all, it will be as though the wire is cut and it will be very hard for real blessings to come. However, if you connect with the state of rigpa, then that provides the wire and blessings will arrive.

Following on from that, it is possible to connect with the blessings of the various great siddhas of the past such as Longchen rabjam and Milarepa. They have passed away but they sealed their blessing and compassionate activity in emptiness so, if we can connect with emptiness, then we can access their blessings. It is as though they put all of their blessings onto a computer hard-disk in space; if you know the

access code for the hard-disk, then all of their blessings become available to you.

It is as though the guru is above you with all of his blessing and sentient beings are below you with all of their ignorance. By relying on emptiness you can connect upwards with the guru so that your mind becomes inseparable with his enlightened mind. Having done that you also make a wire down to the sentient beings and benefit them. Whether we speak of accomplishing the aims of sentient beings; of the blessings of wisdom play; of appearances; or of compassion, this is what we are talking about.

This is ultimate guru yoga! As I explained at the beginning of the commentary, there is the fictional-sign guru and the superfactual-innate guru and this is a practice for accomplishing the superfactual-innate guru.

The main point in this practice is referred to as ‘self-generation’. If you sometimes think, “I am Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche”, that will be alright and if sometimes you think that you are part of Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche who completely pervades all universes that would be fine. Then, in the heart of this self-generation, however you understand it, is Vajrasatva and within that, Samantabhadra. You are inseparable with Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche and Vajrasatva and Samantabhadra within the alpha-pure expanse; rest equipoised in that. This alpha purity is something which you also need and you need it in a non-stopped way, not in a stopped way. If you can stay within non-stopped alpha-purity, then Direct Crossing can arise, and then you need to practice Direct Crossing, as explained in the text:

*At the heart-centre amidst the great, pervasive blue,
At the centre of the utterly-pure lamp of the empty drop,
Rigpa's complexion, the vajra chains, appear as A's.*

Following that is the vajra recitation of the three $\bar{A}\dot{H}$'s and if you do that recitation twenty-one times that will be sufficient. Here, twenty-one times means that you say one set of $\bar{A}\dot{H}$ $\bar{A}\dot{H}$ $\bar{A}\dot{H}$ twenty-one times. In fact, the $\bar{A}\dot{H}$ is not a sound that can be recited; it is a sound that can be known. It is not a sound that is to be known conceptually; it is to be known through rigpa. The $\bar{A}\dot{H}$ has to shine forth from rigpa and rigpa has to shine forth from the $\bar{A}\dot{H}$. Vajra recitation means making prāṇa, mind, and appearance into one. This is not something that very many people know about.

TEXT TRANSLITERATED INTO ENGLISH

Preliminaries:

ĀḤ

ye drol rig pa don gyi kyab
rig tsal nying je'i sem kye do
ma rig zung dzin bag chag geg
rang drol long du tsham chay do
nam par dag pay cho trin kun
ye she rol pay jin chen phob

Main Part:

ĀḤ

nang sri zhir zheng kyil khor dir
ngo wo rang zhin thug je yi
khor day yong la khyab par dal
ma dag pa yi ming may pay
de chir o di ya na dag
de sheg nying po'i rang zhin chan
cha lug ji zhin de zhin du
ma chos lhug pa'i tshul du kye

nying khar rig du dor je sem
 ye she sems pa'i ngo wor zhug
 ting dzin sem pa kun tu zang
 ma kyed ye dzog chen por sal

Invitation:

ĀḤ
 don dam sheg zhug mi nga yang
 namg tshul tsam du chan dren no
 tha day may par zhug su sol
 ro nyam ta way jal chag tsal
 kun zang nam rol cho pay chod
 drib nyi dag tshang long du shag
 yang dag nyid du je yi rang
 du may don dam cho khor kul
 gyun mi chay par tag zhug nay
 mig may ge tshog dro la ngo

Recitation:

ĀḤ
 nying khyil thing ka khyab chen u
 thig le tong dron dang ma'i kyil
 rig dang lug ju a ru sal
 rang wab dran rig june mi chay
 tham chay sang gyay zhing du jur
 ĀḤ ĀḤ ĀḤ

That was the Vajra Recitation. Conclusion:

zhi nang tsal dang rol pa nam
 zhi ying ka dag long du thim
 du sum du may ge tsa kun
 khor sum yong su dag pay ngo

khyab dag lhun gyi drub pa yi
de kho na nyid tra shi shog

*Unable to refuse the one who requested it, this was written down
by Uddiyana.*

TEXT IN TIBETAN

༡༡། སྤྱོད་མེད་དོན་གྱི་སྒྲ་སྒྲུབ་བཞུགས། སྤོན་འགོ། ཡུལ་ གྲོལ་རིག་པ་དོན་གྱི་སྒྲུབས། རིག་ཅུལ་སླིང་མེད་སེམས་བསྐྱེད་དོ། ཁ་
རིག་གཟུང་འཛིན་བག་ཆགས་བགེགས། རང་གྲོལ་གྲོད་དུ་མཆོམས་བཅད་
དོ། རྣམ་པར་དག་པའི་མཆོད་སྤྱིན་ཀུན། ཡེ་ཤེས་རོལ་པས་བྱིན་ཆེན་
པོ་བས། རང་སྤྱོད་གཞིའི། ཡུལ་ སྤྱང་སྤྱིད་གཞིར་བཞེངས་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་
འདིར། རོ་བོ་རང་བཞིན་ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཡིས། འཁོར་འདས་ཡོངས་ལ་བྱབ་
པར་གདལ། ཁ་དག་པ་ཡིས་མིང་མེད་པས། རྟེན་མེད་ཨོ་ཏེ་ཡ་ན་
བདག་ བདེ་གཤེགས་སླིང་པོའི་རང་བཞིན་ཅན། ཆ་ལུགས་ཅི་བཞིན་དེ་
བཞིན་དུ། ཁ་བཙོས་ལུག་པའི་ཚུལ་དུ་བསྐྱེད། སླིང་ཁར་རིགས་འདུས་
རྗེ་རྗེ་སེམས། ཡེ་ཤེས་སེམས་དཔའི་རོ་བོར་བཞུགས། རྟིང་འཛིན་
སེམས་དཔའ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་། ཁ་བསྐྱེད་ཡེ་རྗེ་གས་ཆེན་པོར་གསལ། སྤྱོད་
འཛིན་མི། ཡུལ་དོན་དམ་གཤེགས་བཞུགས་མི་མངའ་ཡང་། སྤྱང་ཚུལ་
ཙམ་དུ་སྤྱོད་འཛིན་ནོ། ཐུང་མེད་པར་བཞུགས་སུ་གསོལ། རོ་མཉམ་
ལྷ་བས་མཇལ་ཐུག་འཆོལ། ཀུན་བཟང་རྣམ་རོལ་མཆོད་པས་མཆོད། །

སྒྲིབ་གཉིས་དག་ཚངས་གྲོང་དུ་བཞགས། །ཡང་དག་ཉིད་དུ་ཐེས་ཡི་
 རངས། །དུས་མེད་དོན་དམ་ཚོས་འཁོར་བསྐྱུལ། །རྒྱུན་མི་ཆད་པར་རྟག་
 བཞུགས་ནས། །དམིགས་མེད་དགོ་ཚོགས་འགོ་ལ་བསྟོ། །འཛེབ་བཞུས།
 ལྷུང་སྒྲིང་དགྲིལ་མཐིང་ཀ་བྱབ་ཆེན་དབུས། །ཐིག་ལེ་སྟོང་སྟོན་དྲངས་མའི་
 དགྲིལ། །རིག་གཤངས་ལུག་རྒྱུད་ཨ་རུ་གསལ། །རང་བབས་བྲན་རིག་
 རྒྱུན་མི་ཆད། །ཐམས་ཅད་སངས་རྒྱས་ཞིང་དུ་གྱུར། །ལྷུང་ལྷུང་ལྷུང་
 རོར་བཞུས་བྲ། ཐེས་སུ། གཞི་སྤང་ཅུལ་དང་རོལ་པ་རྣམས། །གཞི་
 དབྱིངས་ཀ་དག་གྲོང་དུ་ཐིམ། །དུས་གསུམ་དུས་མེད་དགོ་ཅ་ཀུན། །
 འཁོར་གསུམ་ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པས་བསྟོ། །བྱབ་བདག་ལྷན་གྱིས་འབྲུབ་པ་
 ཡིས། །དེ་ཁོན་ཉིད་བཀའ་ཤིས་ཤོག། །བསྐྱུལ་བ་པོ་ཡི་ངོར་མི་བཞོག། །ཨོ་རྩེ་
 ཡ་ནས་སུག་ལས་སོ། །

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Tony Duff has spent a lifetime pursuing the Buddha's teaching and transmitting it to others. In the early 1970's, during his post-graduate studies in molecular biology, he went to Asia and met the Buddhist teachings of various South-east Asian countries. He met Tibetan Buddhism in Nepal and has followed it since. After his trip he abandoned worldly life and was the first monk ordained in his home country of Australia. Together with several others, he founded the monastery called Chenrezig Institute for Wisdom Culture where he studied and practised the Gelugpa teachings for several years under the guidance of Lama Yeshe, Lama Zopa, Geshe Lodan, and Zasep Tulku. After that, he offered back his ordination and left for the USA to study the Kagyu teachings with the incomparable Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche. Tony was very active in the community and went through all possible levels of training that were available during his twelve year stay. He was also a core member of the Nalanda Translation Committee. After Chogyam Trungpa died, Tony went to live in Nepal where he worked as the personal translator for Tsoknyi Rinpoche and also translated for several other well-known teachers. He also founded and directed the largest Tibetan text preservation project in Asia, the Drukpa Kagyu Heritage Project, which he oversaw for eight years. He also established the Padma Karpo Translation Committee which has produced many fine translations and made many resources for translators such as the highly acclaimed *Illuminator Tibetan-English Dictionary*. After the year 2000, Tony focussed primarily on obtaining Dzogchen teachings from the best teachers available, especially within Tibet, and translating and teaching them. He has received much approval from many teachers and has been given the titles "lotsawa" and "lama" and been strongly encouraged by them to teach Westerners. One way he does that is by producing these fine translations.

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