

SIX-SESSION GURU YOGA

Kyabje Gehlek Rimpoche

Six-Session Guru Yoga

with highest yoga tantra initiation only



Jewel Heart Transcript
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Gehlek Rinpoche, *Six-Session Guru Yoga*
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Jewel Heart Transcripts are lightly to moderately edited transcriptions of the teachings of Kyabje Gehlek Rinpoche and others teachers who have taught at Jewel Heart. Their purpose is to provide Rinpoche's students, as well as all others who are interested, with these extremely valuable teachings in a way that gives one the feeling of being present at the teachings.

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These transcribed teachings are to be read only by those who have received an initiation in a highest-yoga tantra and this have a commitment for practicing this.

The transcription of these teachings from tapes was done by the vajrayana mandala in The Netherlands. The drawing of Buddha Vajradhara is by Marian van der Horst.

The manuscript is slightly edited. The format has changed into half size. Possible errors in this transcript are due to my lack of knowledge.

Nijmegen, February 2006

Marianne Soeters

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I

Introduction

Kindly generate the motivation that has been recommended and prescribed in the Lamrim tradition:

For the benefit of all sentient beings I would like to obtain the enlightenment stage, the ultimate stage of buddhahood. For that I would like to listen to this teaching, learn it, practice it and then obtain it.

In other words, in your motivation there should be (a) seeking help for other beings and (b) seeking enlightenment for your self-purpose. A combination of such a mind is known as bodhimind. Whatever understanding you have of that, please generate it. And with that motivation do kindly listen to this teaching.

The teaching you are going to listen to is the Vajrayana practice of the great Mahayana tradition. It is one of the most important teachings in the Ganden Kagyu teaching tradition. On a number of places it is said that this is even more important than the Thirteen Golden Dharmas¹.

This has been very strongly practiced and taught by the great Tibetan lineage masters, for whom guru-devotional practice has been the essence of their practice. It is known as *Six-session Guru yoga* [Tib. *tiin druk*], compiled by and made easy to practice by the First Panchen Lama, Losang Chökyi Gyeltsen, who himself wrote a commentary on it.

Whoever has taken an initiation in either one of the two highest tantras, the yoga tantra or the maha-anu-yoga tantra, should do the

Six-session yoga. *Should*. They are not necessarily doing it, but they should do it. The simple reason is that for both of these classes of tantra you have to take the Vajrayana or tantric vows. These are based on the five Dhyani Buddhas and each one of them has commitments [that you take].

If after taking the initiations, you don't do every day whatever you are supposed to do, *i.e.* you don't follow the negative and positive advices, then every time you get a downfall. There are root downfalls and secondary downfalls, and they are important.

You know, many of us like to go and obtain many initiations, but when we come to the *samayas*, the commitments, we probably try to skip as much as possible. That is really an invitation for the vajra hell, which is deeper, stronger and more painful than the usual eighteen different hells. Though it is a little bit stronger than those, the duration of the life over there might not be that long. So, downfalls are an invitation for the vajra hell. Pabongka emphasizes,

No matter how many non-virtues you commit, even if you do all ten you will not be taken to the vajra hell, but if you take a Vajrayana initiation and you are unable to keep its commitments, you're really invoking the vajra hell.

During the initiation we committed to say this six time a day, that six times a day, do this, do that etc., but if we cannot keep our commitments, it is not very nice. If we can't keep them we get these downfalls, which we call 'thicknesses'.

The First Panchen Lama was the one in the Gelugpa tradition who organized the commitments together and composed some words to say, so that every commitment gets covered. Even if you don't know exactly what they are, even if you can't count them, just saying these words and thinking according to the words, 'I am doing the same thing', will cover all of them. If you can't say many sadhanas, you should at least do this Six-session yoga every day very carefully. In Vajrayana we normally say,

You either get attainments or you are going down.
There is no other door.
You are like a snake in a bamboo trap.

A snake caught in a piece of bamboo either has to go up or to go down, there is no other way. All other practices have means of going in between, but Vajrayana has only two ways: up and down.

What makes you to go up or down, is not so much how many hours you meditate or how much you do, it is the *samayas*, the commitments. How much you can honor your commitments, is really what makes you go up, rather than a lot of learning or even a lot of meditation. In Vajrayana the commitments count; these are the point where you are going to have benefits or downfalls. Even if you don't meditate at all, or don't do anything at all, if you can protect yourself from the downfalls, within sixteen lifetimes you'll become a buddha. That is why the commitments are very important.

Benefits. If on the basis of properly keeping the Vajrayana commitments one practices, then one may be able to achieve the stage of buddhahood within one's lifetime. That is the best category. The second category is achieving buddhahood during the bardo period. The third category is obtaining enlightenment within the next life, or at the least of least within sixteen lifetimes. Those are the Vajrayana benefits.

The benefits are great and the downfalls are great. That means: it is very beneficial and very dangerous, both. We normally say that a person who enters Vajrayana, is somebody who can take tremendous risks: either you make it or you are going to fall. If you make it, you make something great, if you fall, you fall badly. That is the sort of person in Vajrayana: not calculating so much, not planning much, but jumping into it: either make it or go down. That is what it is.

The Six-session yoga makes you to make it. Really. It is the essence of the practice, so it is important. Not only is it important to do it, but to do it six times a day. If you do that, it will also help you tremendously to keep the commitment of the refuge. It reinforces everything. In Asvaghosa's *Fifty Verses of Guru Yoga*² it says:

Three times a day with supreme faith you must show the respect you have for your guru who teaches you [the tantric path] by pressing your palms together, offering a mandala with flowers and prostrating your head to his feet.

All of this is covered by this Six-session yoga. Also the bodhisattva commitments that go with the bodhisattva vow, are covered by this Six-session yoga. The great Tibetan teachers say,

Many Tibetan lamas will claim this or that is a very vast and profound practice, a golden religion,
(*i.e.* a religion which you cannot get without giving gold.)
However, the real essence is the Six-session yoga.

So it is important! Pabongka goes on saying,

There are very few non-Gelugpa lamas
who also emphasize the Six-session yoga.
They really know where the real key lies.

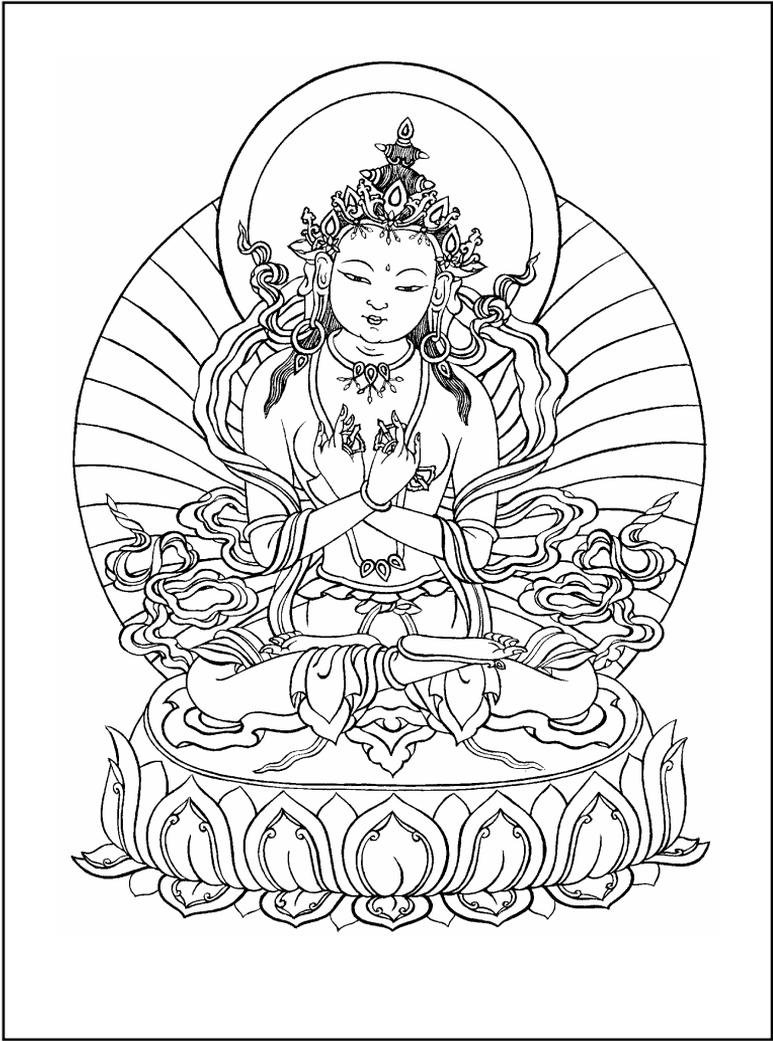
Pabongka is sometimes very sharp and a little controversial to non-Gelugpa traditions, he contradicts them a lot. Here he praises some of them by saying, ‘They seem to know where the real key lies’. I particularly follow Pabongka, who is the teacher of Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche, Kyabje Ling Rinpoche, Song Rinpoche, and all of those. But the points where he raises these controversies, I normally don’t touch much. If you go in detail into every teaching of Pabongka, you find he often says, ‘The Kagyus say this, how wrong they are, because of blah blah blah, the Nyingmas say this, how wrong they are ...’ For example, Pabongka is completely against the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, saying it is a crazy creation of some drunken person. He goes to the extent of saying, ‘Alright, then don’t do anything, just sleep and make sure somebody will read the book to you when you die. And I will watch where you go after death’.

In this commentary Pabongka tells that one of the earlier great Sakyapa lamas, Sakya Pandita, was giving a lot of initiations. Drugpa Kunleg, the founder of the Drugpa Kagyu tradition, a Milarepa-type of person going a little wild in the street, got to know that and said to him, ‘Did you give dharma teachings with all these initiations? Did you fill up the ground with broken commitments? Did you open the great door of the vajra hell?’

Sakya Pandita was one of the top Sakya pandits at that time, a really learned and great scholar, but he was very proud of himself. He came to visit Lhasa and put up big banners in the street, which said, ‘If you go in the upper part, I am the Sakya pandit, if you go down, I am the great learned Sakyapa. Wherever I go there is nobody greater than me, I am the great one, I am..., I am...’ I is *nga* in Tibetan and if you put a *u* underneath that letter it becomes *ngu*, which means ‘to cry’. So Drugpa Kunleg went there and put a *u*

underneath each one of the *nga*. Then it said, "The great Sakya Pandita cries, the great Sakyapa cries."³

In order not to have the danger of filling up the ground with broken commitments and opening the big door of the vajra hells, the practice of the Six-session yoga is there. So it is important.



Buddha Vajradhara

II

The Practice of the Six-session Guru yoga

Homage to Manjugosha

The text begins with what the English translation does not have: bowing to Manjushri. The First Panchen Lama says here in his root text,

Namo guru Manjugoshaya.⁴

By bowing to the feet of my great master,
who is one with the mighty Vajradhara,
I will explain here how to keep the commitments,
according to the tantras and according to
the teaching traditions of the great lamas.

Those who have obtained an initiation in either one of the two higher yoga tantras, must at least once in twenty-four hours review the vows and commitments. Especially the commitments connected with five Buddha-families⁵, taken at the initiation, one has to remember six times a day. If you don't do that, you obtain a downfall of 'thickness' [Tib. *bom po*]. As it says in the *Vajra peak tantra*,

Three times of the day and the night
you have recite, remember and meditate it.
If you don't do it, the yogi will have big 'thickness'.

Therefore, those bodhisattvas who would like to practice Vajrayana, have to follow their practice properly, such as eating food, keeping the commitments and obtaining things in the material world. Their ways and means of doing have to go according to what is given by Buddha Vajradhara. The details you have to learn from other sources, as Je Tsongkhapa's explanation on the *Fifty Verses of Guru Yoga*⁶ with the explanation of the downfalls and

the ways and means to follow [well], and also Khedrup Je's [explanation of the] Six-session yoga. They are all very detailed, so read those and learn from there. Here I will make it very short. We take the essence of it, which make it easy to practice. It is given in poetry form, so that the individual can recite it easily.

You have to keep the nineteen commitments [*samayas*] of the five Dhyani Buddhas. You have to remember them six times a day. If you are short by one [commitment], on every point you are short, you get one of those 'thicknesses'. If you do it five times a day instead of six, you get one thickness, if you did it four times a day instead of six times, you get two thicknesses, etc.

What is happening in the Tibetan tradition these days? It is absolutely true that there is no shortage of practice. The shortage is only in the individuals who would like to practice. There is no shortage of practice. This one is the utmost ultimate peak development of practices, really. It is so rich! There are countless practices. It is only us, the individuals who would like to practice, that are short of time and commitments, and also our willingness is short. The practice was never short. There is an unlimited amount of things. It is unlike in the beginning of the Buddhist era, when you only had a few little things here and there. It is vast, really. So when there is no shortage of practice, you have to make the best choice. The choice here is the Six-session yoga. There is nothing better than that to choose!

The Six-session Guru-yoga has three main outlines: preliminary, actual and conclusion.

PRELIMINARIES

TAKING REFUGE AND GENERATING BODHICITTA

Like in the Lamrim, this has three outlines:

1. To whom you take refuge: that is generating the refuge tree
2. What makes you take refuge: the causes of refuge
3. How to take refuge

To begin with, it is important to generate a refuge tree. You can visualize it like a Lamrim refuge tree⁷; they are similar. The visuali-

zation you need to do only once for the six rounds [if doing them all in one session].

1. Visualization of the Field of Refuge

Right in front of you, you have a great lion throne [with five smaller thrones on it]. In the middle sits your root master, on a throne⁸ with a lotus-, a moon- and a sun cushion. In reality it's your root master, but he is in the form of Buddha Sakyamuni.

He has one face. His two hands are in the usual mudra: the right hand is touching the earth, in the earth-controlling mudra, the left hand is in meditation, carrying a begging bowl filled up with nectar. He wears three saffron robes and sits in the vajra posture (in the west known as lotus posture).

On the throne at the right side of the root master in the Buddha form is Maitreya Buddha, surrounded by the lineage masters of the vast teachings.

At his left side is Manjushri surrounded by the lineage masters of the profound teachings.

At the back is Buddha Vajradhara surrounded by the practice-blessing masters⁹.

In the front of the root master in the Buddha form is your root master in his usual form, surrounded by all other teachers from whom you have taken teachings.

This is known as the five groups of lama's. I'm not sure how you are going to visualize all this. You probably can't zoom in on everyone, but you can visualize it as looking from a distance and seeing the circles [of lama's]. Maybe you think that way.

They are surrounded by the yidams, buddhas, bodhisattvas, arhats, dakas and dakinis, and the dharmapalas.

Of course, all dharmapalas over there are non-samsaric dharmapalas. Non-samsaric dharmapalas are object of refuge and samsaric dharmapalas are not. What you have here is very similar to the Lama Chöpa tree. Basically. But in the Lama Chöpa tree you have Lama Lobsang Tubwang Dorje Chang in the center.

Each one of the lineage masters and Buddha have their own teachings in the form of books that radiate light. That represents the Dharma.

The objects of refuge are very happy with us, very happy. And you have to think they are happy. They are very happy towards all sentient beings and especially towards me. They are happy to see me, they like what I'm doing here, they're very happy.

If you don't think the objects of refuge are happy, if you don't emphasize the happiness and smiling and lightness in the object of refuge, then it becomes too serious, so heavy, and then a lot of problems come: you cannot lighten them up, and then when you get a practice of a wrathful yidam you'll have a lot of difficulties. It all adds up, you know.

2. What makes you take refuge?

Just like in the Lamrim you also have here two causes for taking refuge.

Fear. We are all sentient beings, we have no certainty of the ups and downs of our life and no certainty of our rebirth. There is no guarantee that we will not take rebirth in a lower realm. So there is fear. Unspoken, but it is there. Some people may think that it is some kind of sword that is hanging in the air, ready to come down. Some may think that fear is the good old religious tactics to manipulate people. It is not. These are not threats. It is the true reality. None of us can give any guarantee that our future life is going to be a great one. Forget about a guarantee, we are not even sure whether there *is* something called future life or not. In that situation we are.

Check with your mind. Your mind is absolutely clear to you and to no one else. Honestly. Forget about the dogmas, bring only the Dharma in. And then think. We are not sure there is a future life. Are you sure? As far as our direct knowledge is concerned, it is only a possibility, because we heard it all the time. It is funny; people seem to accept hell, heaven and earth, but if you ask them, they probably will say 'I don't know'. The existence is sort of commonly accepted, but the change is not. We think hell, heaven and earth are there, but we think the people in hell are always in hell, those in

heaven are always in heaven, and we are always on earth. That needs to be questioned by ourselves. I'm not asking you to become philosophers, but this deserves your own analysis, for your own benefit.

We also talk about going to the right side or the wrong side [after death]. Again, that somehow is a commonly accepted fact. But who is going? If there is no future life and we know that we are not going anywhere till we die, then who is going? So, if we talk about going to the right or the wrong side, why not talk about future life? We are talking about the moment after our death; we are talking about continuation. If it is discontinuation, death should have cut everything and there is nothing going beyond. In that case the question of going right or wrong does not rise and the only thing we need is to make ourselves happy here, with whatever we think is happiness within this life.

Even in our own western tradition we have to think about those things. It is amazing that millions of people won't think about it and simply either reject religion or follow it with blind faith. That doesn't seem an educated act to me. That's how I think.

So honestly, we don't know, we don't have direct knowledge on future life. We have indirect knowledge, coming from hearing, reading, lectures and studies. According to those informations though the Judeo-Christian tradition doesn't talk about reincarnation, they do talk about the hell realm. Somebody has got to be there, otherwise there would be no hell.

That sort of fear is not a direct threat to us but it is a good thing to me. It is good to be worried. I know we all don't like fear. Our lives are tormented by fear. The fear tormenting us is the fear of losing, losing love, loved ones, and friends. And the fear of annihilation of myself. And the fear of suffering. These are the fears we don't want. But sometimes it does become reality to people. And I think, a way to deal with this is not to get tormented. In other words, don't think about that all the time. There are a lot of other priorities in life, too. Some fears are unavoidable, but there are ways and means of dealing with it. So it is not a hopeless, helpless situation, as we project it ourselves. We as human beings, with human quality always find a way how to deal with it.

Faith. What to do about the fear of falling into the lower realm? That forces us to seek help. That is, I believe, what it meant by: fear is a cause of taking refuge. You remember, they always give you two causes for taking refuge: fear and trust [or faith]. Unless we look at this very carefully, it could mislead you. A lot of people take advantage of that. That's why we have corruption in the tradition, whether it is the Judeo-Christian or the Hindu-Buddhist tradition. It is up to us not to get caught in those corruptions. So we have got to understand it. We've got to understand is that it is the mind that counts, not the way. Above this, think,

As much as I have the danger of falling into the lower realms and the suffering of samsara, that much danger there is for everybody. Every sentient being, those who are my friends, and my enemies, my loved ones and the ones I hate, everybody has that danger. And each and every one of them has something to do with me, is my closest dearest mother sentient being. And also, if there is a hell, those people who are in the hell realm are constantly continuously suffering. They are suffering, worse than during a 24-hour bombardment like recently in Iraq..

I am worried about that, I am concerned about that. That's why I have you, the object of refuge in front of me. I *rely on* you, I *trust* you. You yourself had the same problem as we all have and you have overcome it. You also have the know-how, you know how to help. And you have the compassion, to all beings equally. And you help everybody, whether they pay you or they don't pay you. Your activities are continuous. You never let people down. That's why I trust you.

These are the causes and the reasons.

3. How to take refuge

While taking *refuge* to the Buddha, you are like a son seeking the support of his parents, while taking refuge to the Dharma you are like a very thirsty person seeking to quench his thirst and while taking refuge to the Sangha you are seeking help from friends.

Taking refuge to Sangha is having a companion. In the west it is not so necessary now, but in good old Tibet there was no good road, no map, a lot of thieves, highway robbers. It's a rough coun-

try when you look back, absolutely lawless. So you need a strong group of people together to protect yourself. (To a certain extent what the Chinese propaganda says is not necessarily completely truthless either. At some times Tibetans really had total freedom: very little police and those who are there you could overpower. It was almost lawless. And when a country is lawless, a lot of warlords come up.) So sangha is necessary. The example worked for good old Tibet. Today the idea of a traveling companion may not work very well. 'If we don't get along very well you take your car and I take mine. I don't have to depend on you'. If I know the road, fine, if I don't know the road I get mad, and I ask somebody else. In America we go to the Triple A; they will mark your map completely with a highlight marker, no matter how far you're going, so you just keep on looking on it and that's it. And now of course we have the GPS system. That doesn't mean in the west we don't need Sangha. More so we do! Because GPS doesn't show you how to go on this road. It is unknown traveling. So you meditate,

I take refuge to you, the *Gurus*, the *Buddhas* and everybody, as a guide. When I don't see, when I don't know the road, I depend on a guide. Likewise I don't see the unknown roads beyond life. So I rely on you for that guidance.

If I am very thirsty I need water. In the same way, here I need to do something. That's what I need. And I rely on the Dharma.

You, the Sangha, have a little more experience than me. So I need your help. When I don't know and I trust you, it means I want to follow your way.

That is relying on. Taking refuge doesn't mean 'I pray, I submit to you'; I don't think so.

On top of this, I dedicate all my positive karma, such as generosity, ethical discipline and all virtues I have accumulated, such as my having been instrumental to people and rejoicing in whatever others did.

By that power may I become fully enlightened quickly.

With all this in mind you recite the refuge formula:

*Sang gye chö dang tsok-kyi chok nam la
 Jang chub bar du dak ni kyab su chi
 Dak gi jin sok gyi pey sö nam kyi
 Dro la pen chir sang gye drub par shok*

**I go for refuge, until I am enlightened,
 To the Buddhas, de Dharma and the Highest Assembly.
 From the virtuous merit that I collect
 By practicing giving and the other perfections
 May I attain the state of a buddha
 To be able to benefit all sentient beings.**

Taking refuge is very profound. Each one of these refuge takings has a complete path in it, from the beginning to the end.

The second to fourth line is generating the *bodhimind*. The bodhimind [Skt. bodhicitta] is a two-pronged mind: (1) Seeking or desiring to fulfill the wishes of others – *benefit all sentient beings*. (2) To fulfill the wishes of oneself – *attain the state of a buddha*.

While saying it, you carefully think about it. Our problem is that many times we don't even protect the commitments that we have taken during the refuge. We just forget about those and we try to do something big. That may be a problem for us. If we try to ground ourselves properly in the Six-session yoga practice, it will *complete the commitment of the refuge* as well.¹⁰

In many prayers you generate the bodhimind in the prayer form. What is different here, is that you not only wish to generate the bodhimind, but you pay for it: 'because of all my virtues, may I develop the bodhimind'. So it becomes a little more powerful than wishing alone. I hate to use the word, but it may suit the American mind, you are 'buying' the bodhimind by paying with generosity *etc.* That works with the American mind, so strictly for local use.

That's what those refuge words mean, that's how you think and then say the words. Until you get used to it, think first and say the words later, and when you get used to it, the moment you say the words the thoughts will pop up in your head; maybe not in detail but in the essence.

Who wrote these refuge words, which are so common now? Actually the words came from Atisha. Some people say Atisha wrote

it, some say he translated it from a traditional Sanskrit text. According to Tsongkhapa Atisha wrote it; we follow that.

Atisha and Lama Serlingpa¹¹ determined the doorways (1) between becoming a Buddhist and being a non-Buddhist and (2) between being a Mahayana practitioner and a non-Mahayana practitioner. The doorways are (1) refuge-taking for being a Buddhist and (2) developing the bodhimind for being a Mahayana practitioner. So having this verse in this practice here builds the base of refuge as a Buddhist as well as of the bodhisattva mind of a Mahayana practitioner.

The First Panchen Lama has often described the vows as being the body and refuge and generating bodhimind as being the head [of the practice]. So if you have vows, but you don't have refuge and bodhimind, you will be a headless body. And if you have the refuge and bodhimind but you don't have the vows, it becomes a bodiless head.

What does this first verse cover? Out of the five Dhyani buddhas' commitments three of *Vairochana* commitments, 'To Buddha, Dharma and Sangha I take refuge three times at day and three times at night.' As it says at the vow taking:

From now on I shall maintain the vows
That come from [the] Buddha [family],
The unsurpassed Three Jewels
Of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

THE FOUR IMMEASURABLES

*Sem chen tam che nye ring chak dang dang
Drel ne kye par pak pey de wa tob
Sö key du ngel gya tso le drel te
Tar pa dam pey de dang drel ma gyur*

**May all sentient beings be parted from aversion and clinging,
feeling close to some and distant from others.**

May they win the bliss that is specially sublime.

May they find release from the ocean of unbearable sorrow

And may they never be parted from freedom's true joy.

The first line plus the first word of the second, *drel*, covers the limitless equanimity.

[*Sem chen tam che* is *all sentient beings*, *nye* is *close to*; *ring* is *distant from*; *chak dang* is *clinging and aversion*; *dang drel ne* is *may be parted from*.] The second line is the limitless love. The third line is the limitless compassion; [*sö key du ngel* is *unbearable sorrow*; *gya tso* is *ocean*]. The fourth line is the limitless joy; [*tar pa dam pey* is *freedom's true joy*].

What are the four immeasurables doing here, why are they necessary here, besides covering of the commitments? The purpose of the four immeasurables is to make your bodhimind grow bigger and faster; it makes your compassion grow stronger. In Tibetan the word for 'generating bodhimind' is *sem keye* which means 'to grow [that mind]'. In other words, you developed the bodhimind, and by the practice of the four immeasurables it is made bigger and much more open. Actually, there are three most important things here:

1. It protects you from violent action,
2. It protects you from falling into the lower-level practice. Mahayana propaganda! I'm joking, but it is true. When you are generating compassion all the time: may all beings be happy, may all beings have the joy that has never known suffering, if you have been thinking that and saying that, how can you hurt? So that's what I mean: protecting ourselves from our narrow self-centered interest and give a concern for all sentient beings, caring for them. That is how it is meant to protect from the lower practice, lower in the sense of self-interest emphasized paths. When we are saying, 'May all beings be free from suffering' we are meditating on love and compassion and that brings a lot of peace and joy and harmony to people. Why do we need to protect ourselves from the lower practice? The *Tenrim* says,

Falling into the lower realms, taking rebirth in the hell realm does not make us not obtain total enlightenment, but falling into the shravakayana and prateykayana paths will hold us back from becoming fully enlightened for a very, very long time. That's why we need to protect ourselves from that.

3. It helps you stabilize your bodhimind. The *Tenrim* gives the example of a mother who has only one child, and if the child dies the mother will never forget it. Likewise these four immeasurables make you to never forget bodhimind.

Each one of those four immeasurables has to have three qualities: wishing, praying, and taking personal responsibility. That's why sometimes [you find in more elaborate texts], 'How wonderful if all beings be in equanimity, I pray they may...' and 'I may be blessed to be able to do it by myself'. So you see the four immeasurables written in a lot of different ways, in which they try to emphasize needed qualities. So equanimity is also immeasurable wishing, immeasurable praying and immeasurable responsibility taking, these three together. One of the Lojong transcripts has quite a detailed teaching on equanimity; you'd better read that.¹²

What does this cover? One of the five Dhyani Buddhas commitments is *Ratnasambhava's* commitment of the four generosityes: generosity of giving the dharma, generosity of giving material gifts, generosity of protecting from fear, generosity of love. This verse covers the last two: *generosity of protection from fear* three times at day and three times at night and also the *limitless love*. So this covers a part of Ratnasambhava's commitment, taken during the initiation:

I shall observe the pleasing commitments
Of the great Ratna family.
Always performing the four types of giving
Six times every day.

ASPIRING BODHICITTA

Dro kün si shi jik pa le dröl chir
Dzok pey jang chub tob par dö pey sem
Deng ne sung te sang gye ma tob par
Sok ki chir yang mi tang sung mar gyi

**From this moment on, until I am a buddha,
May I never give up, though my life be at stake,
The attitude wishing to gain full enlightenment
In order to free from the fears of samsara
And nirvana's complacency all sentient beings.**

This is not just a simple prayer form of generating bodhimind, but a prayer form bodhimind with commitment. The commitment is this,

I, from now on, in order to free all sentient beings, not a single being left out, in order to free them from the threat or fear of samsara and nirvana both, would like to bring them to the level of total enlightenment. I am praying for that. That mind I will never give up.

The commitment of not giving up is called taking bodhimind in prayer form with commitment. That is what is needed here. In one of the commitments it says, ‘I will hold this bodhimind with the ritual six times a day’.¹³ This verse covers that portion.

ACTIVE BODHICITTA AND TAKING THE BODHISATTVA VOW

Meditation on taking the Bodhisattva Vow

In front of the refuge tree, you are sitting in the center and you have your father and all males at your right, and your mother and all females at the left, and the ground is filled up with sentient beings.

You are looking at the refuge assembly and think, ‘As you people have taken action before, just like that I would like to do it.’

Since this is taking the vow, you imagine that you are repeating the vow after Lama Buddha Sakyamuni. Although you are saying it yourself, you think you are repeating the words after the Lama. That way it becomes taking the action bodhimind by ritual.

*La ma gyel wa se che nam
Dak la gong par dze du sol
Ji tar ngön-gyi de shek keyi
Jang chub tuk ni kye pa dang
Jang chub sem pey lab pa la
De dak rim shin ne pa tar
Dak kyang dro la pen dön du
Jang chub sem ni kye gyi shing
Jang chub sem pey lab pa la
Rim pa shin du lab par gyi*

**O buddhas, bodhisattvas and gurus, please listen
To what I now say from the depths of my heart.
Just as all buddhas of the past have developed
The thought of enlightenment, true bodhicitta,**

**Then practiced its stages of graded development
Following the trainings for all buddhas' sons,
So may I too, for the sake of all beings,
Develop bodhicitta and follow the trainings
Exactly as all bodhisattvas have done.**

Not only have you taken the bodhisattva vow in action-form by repeating the ritual, you also think,

I and all beings on the ground here have developed a perfect bodhisattva vow just like Lama Buddha Sakyamuni himself has. Nothing extra, nothing short, exactly the same.

Not only have I taken the exact same vow as Lama Buddha Sakyamuni, I also generate joy of what I have achieved.

I've taken the vow, I am developing the vow, and I am developing joy through rejoicing. How wonderful it has been done.

From Lama Buddha Sakyamuni a duplicate comes and dissolves to me and to each and every one of us. Not only he dissolves to each and every sentient being, but each and every one also becomes Lama Buddha Sakyamuni. And I am convinced that it certainly becomes like that.

This particular part is called *result-oriented bodhimind development*. If you want to know more about it, more details are to be found in the *Lama Chöpa* transcript.

Repeating after the Principal of the refuge field is important. Sometimes people say you can take this refuge vow without repeating the words after the master, just by saying it together. But Pabongka notes here:

In the Sakya tradition the first time it is repeated and the second and third time it is said together. Saying it together will not fulfill the requirements of taking the bodhisattva action vow. And if the requirements of taking the bodhisattva or the Vajrayana vow are not fulfilled, regeneration or rejuvenation of the vows cannot be done.

You have to think that you are repeating them after Lama Buddha Sakyamuni. The reason is, if you don't repeat the words after the Lama it doesn't serve the purpose of taking a new vow, it doesn't

grow it. I think we have to take care of that when you say this portion.

Once or twice, not in a big initiation but in a small little practice, I tried to read it in English together, but probably it will not fulfill the requirements. You know, sometimes people know the words already and don't like to wait; they say it before the person [giving the vow] says it. What does that do? It cuts generating the vow. So you should not do that. Just wait till it can be properly repeated, wait for the person you are repeating after. If you don't do that, not the person who is leading, but the person who is not repeating it properly, is the loser. You have to repeat it three times and at the end of the third time you have to think you have obtained the vow.

GENERATING JOY

*Da ni dak gj chi ne kyang
Rik dang tün pey le tsam te
Kyön me tsün pey rik di la
Nyok par mi gyur de tar ja*

**At this moment my life has become truly fruitful,
For, having attained an endowed human body,
Today I have developed the true buddha essence —
Bodhicitta, and have thus become Buddha's son [heir].**

Here you generate joy by thinking:

Today, having received this beautiful human life, I have made life worthwhile. And I am born in the cast of the Buddhas. I have become the son of the Buddha.

In addition to this, the commentary says,

For a person who has trouble seeing, it is almost impossible to find a valuable thing in a garbage collection. There is maybe one chance in a million. And when you find one how wonderful it is! Just like that I found the bodhimind today, not only for me, but for all.

This is the nectar that saves the lives of all people.
It is the treasure that saves all people from poverty.
It is the medicine that overcomes all illness.

It is the resting place for those that are traveling through suffering.
It is the lift that lifts all people to liberation
(traditionally called 'jumping place').
It is the mind's moonshine which clears the darkness of ego
and its related activities.
It is the sunshine that drives away the mountains of ignorance.
It is the butter churned out of the milk of Dharma.
It is the king that satisfies those that seek joy
but are always tormented by suffering.

Today, in the presence of the Buddhas and the bodhisattvas,
the helpers and protectors of all sentient beings,
I have declared that I myself will receive
every sentient being as my guest
and bring them to the level of enlightenment.
So, samsaric and non-samsaric gods, all be happy from now on.

The joy and happiness that you try to generate here is so much! Don't think of these analogies as though you have to learn them, but think of the value they contain. They give you the value of the mind you developed.

If you want to know more on this, read the transcript of the first chapter of the *Bodhisattvacharyavatara*¹⁴, which is a whole volume on itself. That will give you all this. You may think this little I gave you is blowing the horn, but if you read the *Bodhisattva's Way of Life* this is just a little fragment.

This confirms your life is worthwhile: *At this moment my life has become truly fruitful.* This is how it has become worthwhile. And this slight teaching that I give you today is not meant for you to do every day, it would be difficult. But if you do it occasionally, it makes your life worthwhile. And it protects you from depression, it protects you from hating yourself. Sometimes people hate themselves quite a lot, especially if people are quite strong and serious and pushing.

Buddha's son or Buddha's child or Buddha's heir. With the idea of child we have a little bit of a 'difficulty' here. We often use the word child, for the principle reason that we don't want to use the word son. On the other hand, this verse follows the traditional Indian culture. When you say, 'I become Buddha's child', it may sound like 'I am Buddha's baby'. That is not the idea. Becoming a son of the Buddha means, talking from the traditional Indian cul-

ture, you become the heir, the son takes over the family. So if you think using the word ‘son’ is sexist language and so it should be ‘child’, you have to remember that the idea behind it is becoming Buddha’s heir rather than Buddha’s child. It is the person who inherits everything, like the prince of Wales becomes the king later on. You can say Buddha’s heir; that is right.

CONTEMPLATING CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

*Deng dü dak tse dre bu yö
Mi yi si pa lek par tob
De ring sang gye rik su keye
Sang gye se su da gyur to*

**Applying now any skilled means whatsoever
May I always accord what I do with this essence
And follow the actions of all buddhas’ sons [heirs].
May I never confuse with this pure faultless essence
Any teachings that lack this enlightening thought.**

Now I have become the son of the Buddha, I have to do exactly what is fit to do in my status.

If you are a member of the British royal family and particularly if you are the crown prince, then automatically you have obligations. You are going to be the king and therefore they do expect you to behave in certain ways. You don’t want to see the crown prince down in the red-light area every night. You don’t expect a crown prince joining the gangs. You have social obligations. In other words in the previous verse you make yourself happy, you say what you achieved and with this verse you say that with that happiness you got certain responsibilities.

What does this do? One of our commitments on bodhimind it is remembering the benefits six times a day.¹⁵ That covers that. You can consider the commitments, *i.e.* protecting your vows and commitments, just like your body and refuge like your head. A head without a body doesn’t work, and a body without a head doesn’t work, except in the movies.

DISSOLVING THE FIELD OF REFUGE

At the end of this it is time to dissolve the refuge tree. The dissolving system is as usual; the lower ones dissolve in the ones above.

Visualization on Dissolving the Field of Refuge

The dharmapalas on the bottom line dissolve into the dakas and dakinis, the dakas and dakinis dissolve into the arhats, the arhats into the bodhisattvas, the bodhisattvas into the buddhas, the buddhas into the yidams, the yidams to their group of masters.¹⁶

From the five groups of masters, all masters surrounding their principal, dissolve into their principal master.

Then Maitreya and Manjushri dissolve from the side to Lama Buddha Sakyamuni in the center. Also Buddha Vajradhara from behind and the root master from the front dissolve to or merge together with Lama Buddha Sakyamuni in the center.

Then finally Lama Buddha Sakyamuni dissolves into me through the point at the middle of the forehead, where the eyebrows meet, and which is touching the central channel.¹⁷

There are people who say to dissolve them from the crown or the forehead, but it is wise to dissolve them as I described to you.

ACTUAL GURU YOGA

Now we are reaching to the actual practice of the Six-session yoga.

BENEFITS OF GURU DEVOTION

A great Tibetan teacher, Gyelwa Gosangpa, mentioned,

There are many who meditate on the generation stage,
but there is nothing better than meditating on the lama.
There are many who recite mantras,
but there's nothing better than supplications to the lama.
There are many who meditate on the completion stage,
but there is nothing better than total reliance on the guru.

If you meditate on someone in the form of fully enlightened one with major and minor signs for hundreds of eons,

you would be better off to meditate on the lama for a short period.
The benefits cannot be compared: it is one percent to one million.

So guru devotion is very beneficial. It has tremendous ways of quickly obtaining blessings. It is also one of the best methods to clear obstacles, difficulties, threats and illnesses. There is nothing which is more effective or more beneficial. So it is very beneficial! Many of the great yogis that have come in this or any other lineage tradition, say, 'I have nothing to meditate, nothing to say, except that I pray to my guru'.

Rilbur Rinpoche, one of the very senior lamas, who is still alive, now in his eighties¹⁸, and who is a great Heruka practitioner, tells a lot of stories of about what has happened during his lifetime. If you read Ling Rinpoche's biography, written just now by the Dalai Lama, you find also very clearly mentioned that whenever there is a problem with a spirit or anything non-human, guru-devotion is the best to practice. Ling Rinpoche always referred to my father.

Demo Rinpoche. I'll tell you something about my late father. He was extraordinarily great in Tibet at the time. We are talking about the good old days, the days of Pabongka and Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche. My father didn't really teach in a big way, but everybody considered him as great, outstanding. However, as a kid I found it very difficult to see that. He was fairly short-tempered, and without much hesitation he would hit you; he would hit anybody, for that matter. But one thing I do know: he knew things.

My father was very well-known in Tibet for the 'ghost-buster' type of activities. Regarding any spirits he was the person to be consulted. Sakya, Nyingma, Kagyu, Gelug, everybody would send the people to him. He was very often referred to as 'king' of all those spirits, including protectors. Even the big protectors, when they had a fight among themselves, came to see my father. I was a witness a number of times. Each one of them was scared to death, really. Sometimes he would not let them come in, gave them a hard time; all these funny things he did, so they were really scared.

Nobody could come into trance in his room. They had to fully come into trance outside, where the servants sit. Nobody could go off trance in his room, they had to go out of the room and then get

off the trance. If the medium knew any single word of what was happening during that period, he would be beaten up. So there was no question, they were also scared.

Not only that. When he could not decide something he said, 'Come next time'. Then they would take three steps back, go out and tell their own attendants, 'Find out when the next time can be'. Sometimes he gave a date of three months later. About seven days before that, they came in an automatic trance three or four times, telling the people around them that they *had* to go there on that day. So they were really scared.

I remember, in one of the little colleges of Sera monastery there were two different protectors who did not go along well at all. The fight went on close to three years. They came to see my father and each one of them explained his case. There was one monk that had one kind of trance and one lady had another trance. Finally on that last day my father gave the judgment saying that the monk's trance was totally wrong, making this, this, this mistake. He said [to the spirit], 'From now on you cannot go near to this monastery, I will completely remove you from there, I also inform the monastery people'. He informed the monastery people and one day he went there to do the ceremony. He took an image, which had been laying there for five hundred years, out of the monastery and said to build a small little house outside and feed him with a cup of tea every day. And so he finished it off.

Rilbur Rinpoche told me he asked my father, 'How can you do all this? What do you do?' (I never knew, I did not ask my father or anything.) My father replied, 'Well, I have nothing else to do but just pray to my guru and I say the guru's mantra for a few days'. Rilbur Rinpoche said, 'Well, that is what Demo Rinpoche said, but...'. The essence of this is: whatever you do, meditating on the guru is one of the best things to do.

My father really sort of had a very interesting life. He did many more things, like bringing rainfall when there was a draught, and stopping hailstorms from destroying the crops on the fields. Sometimes he got orders from the government to make sure that the storms didn't fall on the flower garden of the summer palace.

And then, the medical facility at that time in Tibet was not very good at all; it was almost equal to none. So you had a lot of healers.

‘When there is no sunshine the fire flies are very busy’ they say. There was no alternative, so their business was very good. My father was one of them too. He didn’t claim to be a healer at all. Yet hundreds of people lined up near our door every day. Some were very sick (sometimes it was really scary, two, three, four people were holding them) and some were not. Some people were very high-ranking, powerful officers, but most of them were just ordinary, normal everyday persons. He saw them. Sometimes he wouldn’t see them, no matter whether they were powerful or not, weak or healthy or sick, or whatever. If he didn’t want to see them, he didn’t see them. Even if somebody was dying near the door he wouldn’t. Period. It is not that he didn’t have compassion, he was a great master.

Then one day he got an order from the [Thirteenth] Dalai Lama personally. You know my father had a very interesting life. In the late afternoon early evening my father used to play mahjong, a game. My mother would always drink in the evening, and she was much heavier than me. Also she had a group of women around her all the time and they were singing or playing, or something. So the Dalai Lama’s family manager was walking through our courtyard with a very well saddled horse behind him. We saw from the window upstairs that he was coming. We started shouting to his attendants: why, what he wanted. He wanted to see my father. My father was not really ready. He was hesitating. My mother said, ‘You got to because this is from the Dalai Lama, they can punish us’ and do this and that, all that usual old stuff. So he let the guy in. He did three prostrations and gave a scarf and then said, ‘The Dalai Lama’s elder sister is very sick; we asked him what to do and he said to go and see you and invite you.’ So my father had to go. He rode that horse they brought; there was no time to take our horse. Actually it is three and a half minutes walk, two houses behind ours. He rode the horse, the manager was holding the horse and they went. Arriving, he went upstairs and said, ‘Where is the sister that is sick?’ and they took him to the room where she was sleeping. She was almost unconscious, in very strong pain. To the attendant who was there my father asked a handful of rice. Then he sat there for a little while keeping the rice near the mouth. And then finally he threw the rice on her and he called her name. And she

said, 'O yes sir' and she got up. Then he came back to continue his playing.

And then there was another official, almost declared dead. My father went there and did the same thing, and then suddenly he just called him, 'Oh master!' And he got up and he said, 'Yes. Oh, when did you get here?' A couple of times it happened like that. Rilbur Rinpoche, asked my father, 'What ritual did you say?' He said, 'Well I have nothing to say, I just said a few guru mantras and prayers'. He credited it to that.

Because I saw this, [I know] meditating on the lama and reciting [guru mantras] is more important than meditating yidams or reciting their mantras and all of those. So I thought I'll tell you this from the story point of view.

GENERATING THE FIELD OF MERIT: LAMA BUDDHA VAJRADHARA

How to visualize the Lama? After the refuge tree has been dissolved, you generate a new refuge¹⁹, the basis on which you work throughout the Six-session yoga.

*Diin gyi nam kar yi trok rin chen tri
Chu kye nyi da gye pey kyil kor teng
Tsa wey la ma kyab dak dor je chang
Ku dok ngön po shel chik chak nyi keyi
Dor dril sung ne rang dre yum la kyü
Tsen pe si bar rin chen gyen mang dzin
Yi trok bla dze gö-kyi na sa chen
Dren pa tsam gyi dung wa kiin sel ching
Kyab chok ma lü dii pey dak nyi du
Kyil trung tsul gyi shuk pey ne sum du*

**In the sky before me, on a breath-taking throne of jewels,
On a mandala-seat of a lotus, a sun and full moon,
Sits my root guru, the all-pervading Vajradhara,
With a blue-coloured body, one face and two arms,
Holding vajra and bell, and embracing his duplicate consort.
He shines resplendent with all the marks of a buddha,
Adorned with many dazzling jewelled ornaments,
Draped with fine garments of enchanting heavenly scarfs.
Even the mere remembrance of him dispels all my torment.
With a nature encompassing every supreme refuge,**

**He sits crossed-legged in the vajra-position,
The three spots of his body marked with three letters.**

Now the question is: how to meditate on the Lama? There are a number of ways. For example, in the Vajrayogini practice and in the *Lama Chöpa*²⁰ there is a system of all masters sitting around like in a concert-hall. The Vajrayogini lineage also sits in that style. In the Yamantaka practice however, they sit in long lines. A third system is the ‘all in one’ or jewel system, the *kundu norbu lu*, in which you visualize one lama, which is in reality all of them. So we have three systems and in the Six-session yoga we follow the system of collecting all of them in one figure.

Where do you meditate the Lama? The tantra *Abhidhana* says,²¹

Wherever you meditate the kind Lama, in the middle of the palm of your hand, or in the middle of your heart or at your crown or at any other part of your body, the blessings of the thousand buddhas are collected in that individual.

So, wherever you meditate him is fine. However in this practice it suits best to meditate the Lama just in front of you or on your crown. He will go into the heart later anyway.

This verse needs not much explanation; all lines are almost self-explaining. It is the visualization of the object to whom you practice guru-devotion. The short and the long Six-session yoga do not differ much at this point.

The throne. How do you measure where your visualization should be? Visualize the throne at a little distance from you. The space between the throne and you should be the size of your body. The distance is such that if you want to get up and do a long prostration, you should be able to fit. How high or how low should it be? If it is too high there is a danger of losing the control of your mind in mental wandering; if you go too low there is a possibility of getting mental dullness, going to sleep *etc.* So have your visualization not too low and not too high, but more or less at the height of the eyebrows.

Diin gyi nam kar – in the space before me; *yi trok rin chen tri* – on a beautiful throne; *chu kye*, literally ‘water-born’, refers to the lotus, because the lotus is born out of the water; it is not a water lily.

Then *nyin* is *sun*, *da* is *moon* and *gye pey kyil kor teng* means they are mandalas that serve as a base. The short Six-session yoga²² says *diin gyi nam* – in the space before me *tri* – throne, *pä* – lotus, *nyi* – sun, *dä* – moon. What the long one says it in three lines, the short one says in one line.

The three *cushions* on the throne have an ordinary and an extraordinary explanation. On the ordinary level the three cushions represent the three principles of the path.²³ On the extra-ordinary level they symbolize the clear light, the illusion body and the union of clear light and illusion body. That indicates that the three principles of the path or the clear light, illusory body and their combination, are within the body of the Lama. That means the Lama him- or herself does have those spiritual qualities. Also it is the Lama him- or herself's own creation.

The Lama. Before you, on the three cushions sits your root master, who has given you three kindnesses.²⁴ And whether that lama is alive or has passed away, recommended is to visualize them in this Six-session yoga exactly as when you met, when you knew each other. That is what he or she is, yet here in the physical shape of Buddha Vajradhara. It looks like wearing a costume: blue in color, one face, two hands, holding bell and vajra. [That is the *relative lama*.]

You can look in this way: Buddha Vajradhara is in reality your root-guru, your previous life's root guru who has come back here to guide you in this life-time, and also all enlightened beings. Enlightened mind means that all the known, all the preciousness, has been covered by that mind. Wherever the enlightened beings' mind is, their body is. Each one of the hair pores of an enlightened being's body is capable of displaying the twelve principle events in life²⁵, like Buddha Sakyamuni did. Each one of the hair pores of the guru is capable of functioning like that! It is not just one single being functioning, it is also not just functioning here, but that functioning is going on in all the different universes, in all possible places. In certain areas there is the activity of taking rebirth, in certain areas it is giving teachings, in certain areas practicing, in certain areas dying. All these activities are going on. You have to visualize and think in that way.

The consort. The Lama is blue in color and the text says *his duplicate consort*, so according to the words she should be blue, but here she is red. Normally she has a blue color, but here it is recommended to switch the color of the consort to red, because red is the color of attachment. It is the color of *tummo*, the source of the psychic heat which you'll develop within the channels, which will probably be able to melt the source of bliss at the crown, technically referred to as *bodhicitta*. That heat goes up within the central channel, melts the source of bliss from the crown, goes down through the body and finally lands into the vajra. Red is the sexy color, which is the nature of that psychic heat; that is why it is recommended. She is holding skullcup and chopper, like Vajrayogini's hand implements. The chopper is not like an ordinary butcher's chopper, but slightly hooked, with a vajraholder and beautifully designed. Pabongka's explanation here is: the common way is to visualize the consort as a duplicate of Buddha Vajradhara himself and the uncommon way is that the consort shows the color of *tummo*, the nature of desire, red.²⁶

Vajradhara, Dorje Chang. Let me explain the word Vajradhara. Vajra is in Tibetan pronounced as 'benza', which equals the Tibetan word *dorje* – unshakable. It means the ultimate bliss of unshakable wisdom nature. The bell is the understanding of emptiness. The unshakable-wisdom bliss and the true emptiness-observing wisdom are hold together. The hero who is able to hold the unshakable bliss and unshakable emptiness together all the time, is Vajradhara.

Also, the ultimate the true vajra is the wisdom of joy, the true bell is the wisdom itself. So when you are holding that ultimate vajra and that ultimate bell, you are called *Dorje Chang*, 'the one who holds the vajra'. Sometimes he is called *Dorje Sempa*, Vajrasattva. But usually we identify another Buddha with that name.²⁷ It is a sort of synonymous name, not really a name for Buddha Vajradhara. Buddha Vajradhara, Buddha Vajradharma, Lama Dorje Chang, lama, guru, buddha, bodhisattva, all become one.

Tsen pe means all the major and minor qualities and signs of a buddha are there. And also ornaments, like jewel ornaments and *panjalika* dress. People try to translate that as silk, but it is much more than silk. It is natural cloth, made out of natural materials and

if it is wool, it is wool that comes from very special high-mountain goat throats only. It is more than chatush. If you feel chatush, it is hard to find out whether it is silk or wool. Panjalika is even more soft and more smooth.

Your spiritual master here represents enlightened beings, not represents in the sense of substitute, but in the sense of outstanding, the example. In other words, you think:

All the enlightened buddhas have come here before me in the form of a Vajra Guru, so there is no question that this Vajra master of mine *is* all enlightened beings, is the manifestation of all enlightened beings, is the nature of all enlightened beings, is inseparable of all enlightened beings.

That is quite clear, because my guru, who is guiding me, teaching me, is the same guru in different forms. My this-life's guru is my previous-lives' guru, and will be my future-lives' guru as well. That means that my guru is the fully enlightened one. The fully enlightened ones have an unimaginable, endless capacity of manifestation. My guru is the real essence of total existence.

With that mind meditate on the guru. That may be the real essence of guru yoga.

The absolute lama. In the Yamantaka invocation it says:

Jam pel rang zhin chö nam kam zhi ngo...

O Manjushri, your nature the reality of all things,
Abodeless, free of coming and going like space,
Your compassion neither comes nor goes, like time,
Your emanations progress free like mirror images,
Though unaffected by any sign of coming and going,
You are seen wherever one looks, like moon in water.²⁸

It says, 'Manjushri is the real essence of total existence, whether relative or absolute, movable or immovable, animate or inanimate. There is nothing staying, nothing going, nothing coming; it is like space.

There is nothing to go inside for to manifest. That is like the famous Zen example of the *moon* rising from the east, being reflected in every lake.

Another example here is your reflection in the *mirror*. When you stand in front of it and you look at your reflection in the mirror, the reflection appears; you don't have to go inside the mirror and look out, get out of the mirror, look in, and see it. Right? We just look at the mirror and the mirror gives us the reflection. That means, there is nothing going in there, nothing coming out of it, automatically you see yourself as a reflection. So, our projection is there, but unless we have the medium of a mirror we can't see it. Likewise Manjushri; Manjushri is emptiness, so the emptiness is the reality of animate and inanimate objects. There is no separation. When you understand that you are avoiding dualism.

It is the same thing towards the guru. Why? The *absolute guru* is the inseparable bliss-void. We call it 'the wisdom that does not have a separation between the joy, or bliss, and the recognition of emptiness'. And since it is wisdom, it is alert, lucid, not dull. That is the absolute lama. Therefore that one is the absolute basis of all mandalas: pervasive, everywhere, *kyab dak*, the same word you used at the offering of the mandala during the initiation. That one is the creator of the five casts of buddhas – the five Dhyani buddhas – the creator of the hundred casts of the buddhas, the source of the manifestations of all enlightened beings. That is why it says *kyab dak dorje chang – the all-pervading Vajradhara*. Whether the buddhas are divided into hundred casts, five casts, three or one cast, the all-pervading Vajradhara is the creator, the source of all casts. Also when they are collected back, this is this source to go back to. In that manner you look. That is the 'pervasive' business. So you think,

This is the lama who is absolutely an enlightened being, who is all the enlightened beings, who has come over here to help me and who is the manifestation of all enlightened beings. In other words, all enlightened beings are my guru, my guru is all enlightened beings. There is no separation!

This is *the* main point of guru yoga: the recognition of that guru as the manifestation of all enlightened beings. Okay?

Even the mere remembrance of him dispels all my torment. Now the important quality: just remembering him is able to give you relief of all

your sufferings. There are a lot of reasons for that. Sometimes they say,

Whether the blessings of the lama are going to be powerful or not, does not depend on the lama's blessing; it depends on ourselves.

From our point of view just seeing, just hearing, just remembrance, is able to protect ourselves from all our problems, is able to cool the heat from the delusions, is able to guide, so that is the important point for us. In the Tibetan old culture they referred to His Holiness the Dalai Lama as 'Seeing worthwhile'. The reason is: just seeing him, that alone is enough. That's why you see hundreds and thousands of Tibetans go and see the Dalai Lama. So here to make your root master as object of refuge become worthwhile for you just by seeing, remembering, hearing, you have to make up your mind by saying this particular line.

Three fears. There is an extra explanation here on *all torment*. This commentary says we have three types of suffering or fear. (1) We are too tired of the fear of falling into the lower realms. (2) Not only we are too tired of the fear of falling into the lower realms, even when we get out of it we're not immune; samsaric suffering is continuously threatening us. (3) There's also the fear of falling into nirvana, too much peace. Why is it called fears? Because we have no idea what's going on. So, think:

It is you, Master, that tells me and shows me, and you, master, who have told me to meditate on the essence of the Lamrim again and again. That helps me to be protected from those. In addition to that you showed me how to meditate on the generation stage, how to say mantras. All of that helps.

And if I follow your advice exactly, if I can do it exactly right, I have no doubt that I will reach the total enlightenment.

That is what we think at that line: just seeing, hearing him protects us from those sufferings....

There are many people who meditate a lot on the development stage, but the most outstanding meditation is done on the lama.

In short, the one you have visualized before you is not *a* lama but all lamas connected to you, and not only all lamas but also all buddhas, all yidams. In this visualization we don't have all those,

like earlier, in the refuge tree. This field is called the ‘jewel-like collection’ of all of them.

On the crown is a white letter OM representing the bodies of all the buddhas, at the throat a red AH, representing the speech of all enlightened beings, at the heart a blue HUNG, the essence of all vajras, representing the mind of all enlightened beings.

OM is the body vajra, the essence of all bodies of total enlightenment. AH is the speech vajra and the HUNG is the mind vajra.



OM AH HUNG



INVOCATION OF THE WISDOM BEINGS

Yi ge sum tsen hung-gi wö ser gyi
Rang shin ne ne la ma dor je chang
Dza Hung Bam Ho
Nyi su me par gyur

Light beams forth from the HUM (at his heart)
And invokes guru Vajradhara from his actual abode.
DZA HUM BAM HO. They (merge to) become non-dual.

Within the context of the I gave before,²⁹ no invocation is necessary, because it is pervasive. There is nothing really to invite the enlightened beings from a distance to my humble place. In reality, the buddhas are wherever they know. Wherever there mind is, their body is. From the nature of that mind stage, the stage of *dharmadhatu*, they will simply turn into a physical shape. So you just imagine, and they are there.

If you are not so comfortable with that, you can invite them. They are there, so they will come from their natural abode. What is their natural abode? You may think that is some pure land where they are having picnic and we are bringing them in from there. It is not. The true natural abode is wherever and whatever it is. But since our vision and understanding are limited, in our rational mind we think we have to invite them from somewhere, by burning incense, blowing trumpets and banging gongs. That is also fine. Do whatever you want to do, nothing wrong.

One of my teachers was Gen Pema Gyaltzen, the ex-abbot of Loseling³⁰, a very outstanding master (about whose reincarnation a TV-documentary has been made). When I was in Delhi extremely active in the material world, in politics and everything, Gen Pema Gyaltzen came to see me and stayed for two or three weeks. The first day, when we were sitting in the living room and I was very busy with phone calls, all of a sudden he asked me, ‘Where does the bardo of the formless start? I turned my eyes up. He said, ‘You you are looking up in the air. It that where all the buddhas live? No, they are here, they are here, you know they are here!’ That’s what he said and then he walked away.

Visualization of the wisdom being of the guru

Light goes from the mind vajra, the HUNG at the heart of Lama Buddha Vajradhara.

It reaches to the various buddha-fields, like Akanishta [Tib. *Og-min*], the pure land of Naro Kachö³¹, the Western paradise³² etc.

From all ten directions we invite the wisdom being Lama Buddha Vajradhara as the collection of total refuge. [The light then comes back in the form of Lama Buddha Vajradhara.]

When we say DZA HUM BAM HO³³, the wisdom being dissolves into and becomes inseparably one with the Buddha Vajradhara visualized in front.

What you have visualized here, *i.e.* the commitment beings³⁴, and what comes from there, *i.e.* the wisdom-beings³⁵, become one-ness, like water in water, milk in milk.

PROSTRATION

Gang-gi drin gyi de chen nyi
Ke chik nyi la char wa gang
La ma rin chen ta bu yi
Dor je chen shab pe la dui

**I bow at your lotus-feet,
O my jewel-like guru Vajradhara,
Your kindness heralds an instantaneous
Dawn of great bliss.**

This verse covers *Aksobhya's commitment of the vajra-master* six times a day, as said during the vow-taking:

I shall rely upon my spiritual guide.

The prostration is to the Lama in the form of the sambogakaya, telling the quality of the sambogakaya. In the Bodhisattva vows somewhere we have the *commitment of protecting the mind*, so not protecting the mind is a downfall.³⁶ And in the *Fifty Verses of Guru Devotion* it says to *prostrate to the Lama six times a day*.³⁷ By this verse we cover that.

I am going to make a short statement from the commentary, something you can really think of when you say this verse.

If you have unshakable devotion and intelligent faith to the lama
and see the lama as a true buddha,
then even if you don't have any other qualities
or spiritual development or knowledge,
by the power of the devotion and by the blessings
of Lama Buddha Vajradhara [you will make it].

The word blessing means: power to transform.³⁸ Because of that transformation taking place, there will be a time that all our energies will be collected, maintained and dissolved in our central channel. By maintaining all the energies in the central channel, the other airs, flowing through the side channels right and left by the power of delusion and karma, are stopped. This is the true idea of opening the channels and chakras.³⁹ By stopping the wrong airs from flowing through the wrong channels, the central channel opens and joy develops. That is referred as simultaneously-born joy. Whether you call it clear-light simultaneously-born or absolute simultaneously-born joy, this is what it is. And you will be able to develop that in a relatively short time, *i.e.* in not so many lifetimes. That's what is meant by *Your kindness heralds an instantaneous dawn of great bliss*.

This great bliss is not an ordinary bliss, but unshakable bliss, which can be obtained by me instantaneously through the kindness of the Lama. It is said that it is a matter of a second. That doesn't mean a second in our ordinary sense. It means that compared to the lives that we go round and round in, we can get it within the

short period of an ordinary life like ours. Compared to the endless circle of samsaric lives one life-period is like a snap of the fingers.

Because of that it is precious, *rinpoche*, or as in this verse *lama rinchen*. Therefore 'I bow to the jewel lotus part of the body, that's 'to your feet', according to the Indian culture.

Somehow, I think, it is true. I'll tell you some incident from my own experience. When I was a kid of about twelve years old, Kyabje Lhatsun Rinpoche – from whom I took the White Tara initiation – was giving a Vajrayogini initiation in the house of one of those officials. He told me to come with him for the preparation. It was the 29th of the 2nd month in Tibet. At that time in Tibet it is much colder than here and it was a dark, gray day I remember. And there was no electricity in Tibet those days, but these people had some kind of electrical light, battery operated, not a dry battery but like a car battery. 'Join me', he said. I said, 'But I haven't done the retreat and I even never received the initiation of Vajrayogini. How can I join you for the self-initiation preparation?' So he replied, quoting some old text:

If the lama delivers you, you can reach anywhere you want to.
To pay the fee you have profound gratitude and respect.

So I had the self-initiation before I took the initiation. And then he told me to be his attendant during that initiation. I was very proud; there were many senior rinpoches and geshe, about fifty to sixty people. And I was holding the vase. And to everybody's surprise there was a huge thunder. There was never thunder in Tibet in the second month, never ever. So everybody was surprised and shocked. And then Kyabje Rinpoche whispered to me 'I told you'. And suddenly the light went off. And I whispered to him, 'Ya good, but the light went off. He said, 'The light will be back'. And the light came back again. Later on he said, 'I told you.' So I shared my experience. One experience story is much more valuable than a book.

It does work that way; at least to a certain extent. Because of the kindness of the guru, if you receive instructions and if you can follow them, then even if you think you are not going to be liberated you will be liberated. That is the essence of the prostration here. This quoted verse is not composed by someone, it comes from the tantra itself.

EIGHT LINES OF PRAISE

Those who have received one or more mother-tantra initiations⁴⁰ may change the visualization here.

You switch the visualization of Buddha Vajradhara with consort Vajradhatu Ishvari into the form of Lama Heruka with consort Vajrayogini.

Then praise them with sixteen times HUM HUM PHAT. Whether you say the Six-session yoga once a day the six together, twice a day three times or really six times – morning, afternoon, early evening, early part of the night, midnight and early morning – whatever you do, once a day this Heruka praise is good enough, either in Sanskrit, or Tibetan or your own language. OM ... HUM HUM PHAT. (I believe it is the short HUM.) The tantra says,

OM is the first letter and makes sure you have HUM HUM PHAT.⁴¹

Explanation of OM. OM is called the jewel- or essence mantra, because it is the essence of body, speech and mind. Actually it is A-O-M; A is joined with the O, because if there is no A you cannot say anything. The three combined together make OM.

Every practice we do we do has *basis, path* and *result* – *zhi, lam, de*. OM provides the base. Here the base is the body, mind and speech. The path is the three vajras. The result is the three kayas. OM having all three together, tries to tell you they are all one. The result of the three kayas is within us in the form of body, mind and speech, but is not yet accessible for us. The key to open that up is the body as body vajra, the speech as speech vajra and mind as mind vajra. Having them in one OM means that in reality, absolutely, they are one. That's why it is called jewel mantra.

The significance of the letter A is that it is the total life of all sound. Because of A the different sounds make sense. Without the A you could not talk, you could not communicate. Even the babies produce it as their first sound and also the speech therapists use it a lot. It is the real essence of sound and speech. All mantras come from A. There would not be any consonants or vowels without A. In the *Manjushri Namasangiti*, is mentioned:

A is the essence of all syllables, letters or sound.

It is the most important reality of letters, syllables or sound.

It is the internal sound. It has no growth; no death.

The O actually it is A U, but the Tibetan-Sanskrit transferring system of vowels and consonants is that if A joins with U, the U underneath gets wiped out and provides us with O. If you read Tibetan, you're going to see U rather than O. You may think it is a misprint, but it is not. By writing on a slate there is a system of working, that by wiping the A and U, together it somehow will become something else. That is why you have that.⁴²

A second explanation of OM. Then there is another explanation of A-O-M together, looking at the air or energy⁴³. The air that what we breathe in and the energy go together; they're combined together. If you look in the Tibetan completion stage, you will see the energy is divided into many categories: life-sustaining energy, upward-moving energy, downward-voiding energy, [equally-abiding energy and pervading energy as the five main ones and then there are branch energies, too.]⁴⁴

A. Out of the three, A-O-M, the A represents the life-sustaining air, in Tibetan *srog 'dzin kyi rlung* [Skt. prana], The *Vajramala Tantra* says,

'A' remains at the dharma-chakra lotus. Air is pervasive to all chakras. A-influenced air is called 'great air' (life-sustaining air).

What does that mean? From the heart- or dharma-chakra [the seat of this energy], the energy goes up to the level of the eyebrows, where you have another energy center, the crown chakra. From the heart up to there, this energy holds and sustains everything and is therefore called life-sustaining air. This is the traditional thinking: the mind is at the heart level, at the center of it, the heart chakra. That's why it's called life-sustaining.

O. Then when the A goes U, why do you have to wipe that off? This U-energy from the heart level to the crown level, is upholding all the energies up, making them go straight uphill, not drop down, and all those. So this is called upholding [or upward-moving] energy or air. [Tib. *gyen rgyu kyi rlung*].

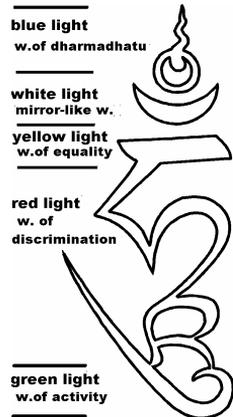
That's why you have to leave it at the U-level rather than immediately going for O. Wiping the U out is a transition done in two, three zigzags. I don't really know how that works. Kyabje Ling Rinpoche was the expert, he always made me to write and do

this and then said, ‘Ah, you don’t know anything.’ But there are some zigzag marks, there are reasons, there is something to say, like ‘this will obtain that and that will obtain this’, and finally you get to the O-level. So the U represents energy sustaining upward [movement]. It is like fire, sun, it upholds the heat. Especially the majestic look, the good look, the complexion of physical appearance, are done by this energy. [It is associated with the throat chakra]

M. The M, represented by the zero on top, is the internal energy of the physical structure, [called pervading energy. Tib. *khyab byed kyi rlung*]. Where does it remain? It is said to remain six inches above [the crown]. But if it’s six inches, it’ll go somewhere around, it won’t be within. Probably the ushnisha is counted in that measurement. So for us it may not be going that high up. (If it were, then when you walk through summer a lot of mosquitoes will fly around it and it will become a mosquito chakra.)

In short, A-O-M actually has the total energy of the heart chakra, the throat chakra, and the crown chakra combined together. Three chakras and three level of the energy, working combined becomes OM. That is why OM is so important. That is true to the body of enlightenment beings and that’s true to ourselves. If you do breathing exercises having [the knowledge and awareness of] them together, then it gives you much more than just simply breathing.

HUM consists of five letters representing the five wisdoms. Having the five of them together is telling us, again, that everything we do today we do on the basis of appearance and perceptions. For example, something appears as a tomato. I look, see it, acknowledge and accept it as a tomato. The same goes for flowers, house, people, automobile, anything. There is nothing existent which is not part of either perceiving or being perceived. No matter how much we perceive, how much we know and how much exists in the world or outside this world, there is nothing beyond the perceiver and the perceived. What does Chakrasamvara or *Khorlo Domba* mean? Every existent thing, every functioning thing, everything to be known, all of it is collected in the wheel of joy. That’s



why it is called Khorlo Domba.⁴⁵ That idea applies to whom? ‘OM To you ... HUM. (That is what I hear when you say it in English or Dutch). The HUM gives you the idea that the *base* on which we function, is perceiver or perceived. And the *path* is inseparable wisdom and method, or as you have to say in Vajrayana: inseparable clear light and illusion body. The ultimate *result* is the relative and the absolute form, *kaya*.

PHAT means cut. What you cut is the wrong perceptions: the perception of inherent existence, *etcetera*. There are a lot of wrong perceptions. That is why you say OM... HUM HUM PHAT⁴⁶.

EIGHT PRAISES TO THE FATHER [YAB]

1. *OM chom den pa wö wang chuk la chag tsel* HUM HUM PHAT

OM I prostrate to the Bhagavan, Lord of the Brave Ones HUM
HUM PHAT

Chom den, short for *Chomdende*, means Bhagavan. *Bagha* refers to fortunate; *van* is ‘the one who has’, so *baghavan* means ‘one who has fortune’. What does that mean? A lot of things. It indicates six qualities: (1) you are rich with quality [of mastery, *wang chuk*], (2) rich with form-quality [*zug zang na*], (3) rich with glorious quality [*pe*], (4) rich with popular quality [*dragpa*], (5) rich with wisdom quality [*yeshe*] and (6) rich with the quality of enthusiasm [*tzon dri*]. When you have these you become a *bhaga-van*: you have control over all environment and inhabitants, you have the power to create and to destroy, or continue or discontinue every existence and also you have a huge majestic radiation which can overpower everybody else.

In *Chomdende* the whole Vajrayana path can be explained, every teaching of the path mentioned in the Heruka tantra. Such a qualified person is called a *panö wangchuk* – great hero and outstanding one, *Lord of the Brave Ones*. [*La chag tsel* means ‘I prostrate to you’.]

Je Tsongkhapa has a shorter way of explaining *wang chuk*. *Wang* means power: ‘one who has overcome, who is free of all obstacles; you have freedom of your own, because you are free from the delusions and their imprints. *Chuk* means ‘you are rich because you are in nobody else’s control’. This is different from the traditional explanation. So, whether you say *bhagavan* or *wangchuk*, you are talking about a fully enlightened one. Who is this great guy you are

talking about? *Khorlo Dampa* [Skt. Chakrasamvara], which refers to Heruka. *Wangchuk* is in Sanskrit Ishvara.

2. *OM kel pa chen pö me dang nyam pey wö HUM HUM PHAT*

OM To you whose brilliance equals the fire that ends a great aeon HUM HUM PHAT

How do we praise or prostrate to *Khorlo Dampa*? We praise him who in absolute reality is simultaneous bliss-and-void combination of all enlightened beings and has taken the physical form of Heruka, whose body radiates such light and power that it *equals the fire that ends a great eon*. *Kel pa chen pö me* refers to the fire that destroys the whole universe at the end of the universal existence.

3. *OM rel pey chö pen mi se pa dang den HUM HUM PHAT*

OM To you who have an inexhaustible crowning top-knot HUM HUM PHAT

Such a body has the hair tied up at the crown in a topknot, *rel pey chö pen*. Along with that he has in his hair a crossed vajra and a crescent moon as well as the dried-skulls decoration; immeasurable ornaments he has.

4. *OM che wa nam par tsik pa jik pey shel HUM HUM PHAT*

OM To you with bared fangs and a wrathful face HUM HUM PHAT

He is the one who also has the fangs, *che wa*, bared, *nam par tsik pa*. His four faces show [each] four of them, indicating that he has overcome the four evil forces: the delusion force, the form force, the death and the son of god, which is referring to attachment and obsession. The name refers to a small-g god who like Cupid will shoot you with the arrow of attachment. The expression ‘son of god’ is from a traditional text. His face is fearful, *jik pey shel*.

5. *OM tong trak chak ni bar wey wö ser chen HUM HUM PHAT*

OM To you whose thousand arms blaze with light HUM HUM PHAT

Although he is shown with twelve hands here, in reality countless arms or hands are available; that’s why the praise says ‘thousand’. Each and every hand is capable of manifesting, generating, dissolving, doing whatever is needed. That’s why the verse says there is a tremendous amount of radiation. Here that doesn’t mean light shining, but capable of manifesting and dissolving.

6. *OM dra ta chak deng dung dang ka twam dzin HUM HUM PHAT*
OM To you who hold an axe, an uplifted noose, a spear, and a skull staff HUM HUM PHAT

This verse refers to the hands implements of Heruka. *Dra ta* is the axe, *chak* is the uplifted noose, the lasso, *dung* the spear or trident, *ka twam* the katanga; *dzin* is holding. Not mentioned here are the bell, vajra, elephant skin, hooked chopper, skull-cup, the head of Brahma *etc.* Four of them are mentioned, the others are understood.

7. *OM tak ki pak pey na sa dzin pa chen HUM HUM PHAT*
OM To you who wear a tiger-skin cloth HUM HUM PHAT

One who wears the tiger skin cloth, because Heruka wears a tiger-skin skirt, [symbol of modesty and mindfulness].

8. *OM ku chen dii ka gek tar dze la dii HUM HUM PHAT*
OM I bow to you whose great smoke-coloured body ends all obstructions HUM HUM PHAT

Ku chen means great body, *dii ka* is referring to smoke-coloured, dark grey. Such a color indicates *gek tar dze* – you have destroyed and can destroy all evil obstacles. *Gek* means obstructions or evil. What is that evil here? It is the dualistic perception and imprints. Such subtle obstacles⁴⁷ are all completely overcome in such a way that they will not be able to rise at all. Not only have you, Heruka, completely overcome that and can they never rise again, but also you are in a position to help others do the same thing, to reach to the stage where you are. That's why you are the hero of hero's. Such a person is *Shri* Heruka, *Glorious* Heruka.

Again, *Shri* has a complete explanation of the total path. In the first of those eight lines I very briefly explained *Chomdende*. In the last line it says 'you Heruka have completed your own purpose, you will be able to help others complete their purpose and you know all the methods of how to help. These are his three extraordinary qualities.

With this in mind you praise Heruka. There is tremendous amount of benefit in saying those.⁴⁸ According to the tantra you should say this Great Hero's mantra seven times. It is not really a mantra, it is a praise, but sometimes you find Heruka's root mantra and this

praise put together. It is said that if you do say this praise seven times, you gain the total benefit of offering to all enlightened beings.

This explanation of the Heruka praise is according to Panchen Lobsang Tenpey Nyima's⁴⁹ explanation.

EIGHT PRAISES TO THE MOTHER [YUM]⁵⁰

I'm taking this part, the praises to the mother, out of Pabongka's commentary on the Vajrayogini teachings. I did a detailed teaching on this during the Vajrayogini teaching winter retreat 2001.⁵¹

1. *OM chom den de ma dor je pag mo la chag tsel HUM HUM PHLAT*
OM I prostrate to the Bhagavati Vajra-varahi HUM HUM PHAT

The beginning of this is *chom den de ma*. Chomdende is Bhaghavan, so Chomdendema becomes Bhagavati, the female Bhaghavan. I explained the word Bhaghavan. I will explain the word *chom* this time differently. In Tibetan *chom* means to destroy or overcome. What have you destroyed? The four evil forces.⁵² So, *Chom* is one who has destroyed four evil forces. *Den* is one who has the six qualities, which we counted before.⁵³ Or as Je Tsongkhapa said,

One who has not fallen in the extremes of samsara or nirvana, yet
is the leader of samsara and nirvana; That is Buddha Vajradhara.

Just like that is *chom den de ma dor je pag mo*. *Ma* indicates it is female. *Dorje* is vajra, indestructible, ultimate. It can stand for *Dorje Chang*, Vajradhara, 'One who holds the vajra'. Now *pag mo*. *Pag*⁵⁴ stands for pig. In the drawing of the Wheel of Existence you find the snake the bird and the pig drawn in the middle. They represent the three poisons: obsession, hatred and what we traditionally call ignorance. Ignorance is the combination of ego, confusion and fear. Such a pig has been destroyed by the indestructible vajra of bliss-void wisdom. *Mo* indicates the female. So *Dorje Pagmo*.

2. *OM pag ma rike mey wang chuk kam sum gyi mi tub HUM HUM PHLAT*
**OM To the queen of the female Arya practitioners,
invincible in the Three Realms HUM HUM PHAT**

You can also explain *pag*⁵⁵ as ‘one who has totally overcome all delusions’ and therefore is an extraordinary person⁵⁶. With *ma* it becomes a special female, *pagma*, she who destroys by the bliss-void wisdom’. One who has bliss-void inseparable wisdom, is called *pagma*. *Wang chuk* we explained at the father praise: one who cannot even be overpowered by all forces of earth, heaven or space and under the earth; those are the three areas – *kam sum*. So, even when all forces of all three areas attack you, even then you cannot be destroyed. Such one is *tub* – muni, like in *Sakya Tubwang*, which means Sakyamuni. *Gyi mi tub* is a negative expression: you cannot be attacked, because you have overcome all negative forces completely, you are indestructible, invincible.

3. *Om jung po jik pa tam cha dor je chen po jom HUM HUM PHAT*
OM To you who destroy all fears of evil spirits with your great diamond-like means HUM HUM PHAT

Jung po jik pa means the fear created by evil forces. This verse has an outer and an inner explanation. The outer explanation: any forces, human and non-human, coming towards you and your practitioners are completely destroyed by your hooked knife, your chopper. Internally, the net of delusions⁵⁷, which destroys the inner life of the individual, has been cut by your chopper. *Dorje chenpo*, big vajra, refers to wisdom.

4. *Om dor jey den shug shen gyi mi tub wang je chen HUM HUM PHAT*
OM To you whose eyes empower those who sit on the Diamond Throne not to be conquered by anyone HUM HUM PHAT

Dor jey den shug – one who sits on the vajra cushion. It does not mean vajra cushion. *Dor je* refers to Heruka’s sex organs, the vajra, *den* refers to Vajrayogini’s sex organs [and *shug* is remain or sit]. So the vajra sits on the lotus. So, you, Vajrayogini are referred to as a seat or *throne* of the example vajra, which refers to the male, which refers to bodhimind and even to illusory body and so on. The lotus or female sex organ refers to wisdom. The combination of wisdom and compassion is the *dor jey den shug*; that’s what actually is referred to. Because of that, Vajradakini herself reached the ultimate level one can reach. Just being looked at by such a person protects the individual from all outer and inner evil forces.

5. *OM tum mo tro mo suke keyi tsang pa kem par dze HUM HUM PHAT*
**OM To you whose wrathful body of psychic heat can desiccate
Brahma HUM HUM PHAT**

You know what *tummo* is: inner fire or psychic heat at the navel level. That *tummo* becomes so huge and fully developed that it appears or is seen as *tro mo suke keyi* – a wrathful body. That’s why the color red is important. And that’s why in this Six-session yoga you have Buddha Vajradhara’s consort red. By such a physical form Brahma, *tsang pa*, is destroyed, *kem*. That does not mean that Heruka *yab yum* attacks that Indian samsaric god Brahma; we are not talking about that one. We are talking about Brahma as the highest point of the body. The highest body [substance] that you have is *bodhicitta*. Remember, during the Heruka initiation we made the water mandala into an ice mandala. That is the highest level, referred to as *tsang pa*. So, you are the ‘one who destroyed the highest-level mandala’. That means there is so much *tummo* heat that the source of joy, the collection of semen, is drawn down. Not only is that essence drawn from the crown, but along with that the joy of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions, is collected and fills your central channel.

6. *OM dü nam trak ching kem pey shen gyi chok le gyel HUM HUM PHAT*
**OM To you who terrify and dry up the demons and thus can
vanquish all other forces HUM HUM PHAT**

Again *dü* refers to the external and internal evil forces. You know, during the dying process you have the whitish, reddish and dark feelings, referring to the three stages known as *nang che tob*⁵⁸. All of them are the result of certain very subtle negativities, called internal evil forces. You, Vajrayogini, have overcome them. Actually there are outer, inner and secret evil forces. The *outer* ones are what we normally call ghosts, or black magic, and even our usual illnesses are considered as outer evil. *Inner* evil forces are the usual delusions up to the level of the subtle delusions. Anything or anyone that blocks us to obtain total enlightenment is the bottom line for what is called *secret* evil force.

Trak ching kem pey means ‘you make them afraid and you destroy them’. You make them afraid to attack anyone as well as if they do so you are capable of destroying their head into thousand pieces;

that is expressed by *kem. Shen gyi chok le gyel* means ‘you have the victory over the other side, *i.e.* the delusions and the imprints of the delusions. You overpower them.

7. *OM muk je reng je mong je kiin le nam par gyel HUM HUM PHAT*
OM To you who triumph over all that can make one ill-tempered, excited, or stupefied⁵⁹ HUM HUM PHAT

Muk je means: whenever we think we want to do some practice, something makes our body heavy; we get tired and even fall asleep. *Reng je* means you cannot speak, you cannot say it; you cannot express yourself. This is normally known as the writer’s block. *Mong je* is the worst. That means, you cannot think anything, nothing comes out in your head. If you want to meditate you cannot do it.

She has overcome all this and she has the power to help others to overcome this. Remember, during the guru-devotional practice at the Lamrim level, when you have that difficulty, Tsongkhapa says, ‘What you have to do at that moment is pray to your guru.’ This is why.

8. *OM dor je pag mo jor chen dö wang ma la dü HUM HUM PHAT*
OM I bow to Vajra-Varahi, the consort who overpowers lust HUM HUM PHAT

Dorje pagmo we explained earlier. *Jor chen* means great yogini. *Dö* stands for our wish, our desire: accomplishment of the ordinary and the extraordinary. You yourself, Vajrayogini, have accomplished all this and you are capable of giving. Such a great female, *ma*, I bow to. *Dü* means prostration, respect, remaining close, all of those.

We roughly covered the sixteen verses. There is tremendous amount of benefit in this. The tantra says to say it seven times. Whenever you see a great holy place you say this praise seven or three times, or even once. In your own mind, not only you have to think that you yourself are the collection of all the dakas and dakinis, but everything you see, the space, the ground, mountains, trees, forest, fire, water, air, houses, animals, cows, tulips, all is the manifestation of Heruka *yab yum*. If you do all this, it has the total benefit of going on pilgrimage to all different holy places. And if you compare this benefit to the benefit gained by someone who is

running all over the place to pilgrimage here and there, I am sure this one is immeasurable. So Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche advises whenever you find some different place, to say this praise. I try to do this. When I went as tourist to Mexico, at those Maya's places I kept on saying this. Also in Italy in the Sistine Chapel and all of those I did it. It's a nice way of doing and it gives you a lot of benefit. If you really like to know the benefits, there is so much I can give you, I can talk about it for ten days. Anything you can think of, it is all there.

We have done this well. You can also find information in Geshe Lobsang Tharchin's book.⁶⁰

OUTER, INNER AND SECRET OFFERING

*Dak pö sung dang ma sung dang
Ngö sham yi keyi trül pa le
Jung wa chi nang sang wa-yi
Na tsok chö trin gya tsö chö*

**All the things I possess and what is not mine,
What is actually placed here and what I mentally create,
I present you an ocean-like cloud of these various offerings:
Outer, inner and secret.**

You visualize yourself in the form of a deity, generate offering deities from your heart and they go and make offerings to Lama Buddha Vajradhara.

You make the offerings without any hesitation, without any attachment, without any hope of return from Lama Buddha Vajradhara.

Your making those offerings causes the great bliss-void wisdom to grow within the mind and body of Lama Vajradhara.

You make outer, inner and secret offerings. It may be necessary to talk a little bit about that.

Outer offerings. That are the offerings that you have laid out, which have no bodily connection with the individual. Like in the *Ganden Lha Gyema* we have flowers, incense *etc.*

Inner offerings. When in the practice of a sadhana you have inner offerings to any of the deities, the offering is based on five meats

and five nectars, which somehow are substances possessed by a living being within his body. Those five meats and five nectars get purified and its purified essence is offered in the form of nectar. When you offer it, there is a sort of inner bodily connection; that is why it is called inner offering.

Secret offerings. That is the activity of offering dakinis, in the form of a consort, for the purpose of bringing bliss to the object to whom you offer. The dakinis are divided into three categories: field-grown, mantra-grown, simultaneously grown, *zhing kye, ngag kye, lhen kye*. Whether male, *daka*, or female, *dakini*, they are of three different categories. A field-grown dakini is probably one who has obtained initiations and has not yet developed anything. Mantra-grown dakas and dakinis are probably those at the generating stage, and simultaneously grown ones are those at the completion stage level⁶¹. So, you manifest dakinis from your heart and make the secret offering.

Suchness offering. There is no suchness offering mentioned here.

Whatever offerings we make, we offer the best we have. The offering you make is whether owned by somebody or not. You offer things actually created and mentally imagined. And since this is Vajrayana, you do make outer, inner and secret offerings, all of them. And as you are offering in the maha-anu-yoga tantra style here, every offering is made out of bliss-void natural wisdom. Everything you offer, every molecule and every atom in it, is of bliss-void wisdom nature. For example, Alfred made this tormo here, made out of Robert's barley flower. The actual offering says, 'I don't want to offer Robert's barley flower, I want to offer its wisdom bliss-void nature.' Bliss-void nature barley flower is not sold in the biological shops. What I mean is: every offering is of bliss-void nature, yet in a shape.

Not only we have laid out offerings, we also mentally created offerings – outer, inner and secret. Most important here is [to think], 'I offer these offerings actually made of bliss-void. By their acceptance may they reenergize their bliss and void within them.' Again, it is not that enlightened beings have to be reminded, it is not that they have something new to gain. It is for our own purpose that we visualize that. We will accumulate merit by it. That is the simple reason. So, the true offering is the bliss-void nature. In

the *Lama Chöpa* it says, ‘Nature pure, offerings appear, arousing bliss-void, filling space.’ It is the natural wisdom appearing as offering and the purpose is arousing bliss-void. Filling space is an additional thing.

Offering to the guru is considered the best offering. It is particularly emphasized in the tantra:

No matter what offerings you make, generosity gifts or whatever,
the outstanding offering is offering to the guru.

Why is it considered the best offering?

The guru is here to represent all enlightened beings, to communicate with them and to bring the blessings and help of all the enlightened beings to me, the individual. So the guru is my connection.

Therefore, when I make offerings to that particular guru of mine, who in reality is all my gurus and all enlightened beings, all the enlightened beings enter into that particular guru’s body and accept my offerings. Though I am making offerings to one guru, I get the benefits of making offerings to all enlightened beings.

Not only that; by my offerings being accepted, I also get the benefit of the offering being accepted by all enlightened beings.

Though I have no power to offer all this, by your great power you may be able to accept this. Please, accept this, because of your compassion for all sentient beings, including myself. I and all sentient beings want to become free from our gross and subtle sufferings. In order to get free, may you kindly accept these offerings by your great compassion. And by accepting them, please bless me, please transform me.

Receiving blessings. I do not know what the word blessing exactly means in English, but the word in Tibetan, *j’in lob* means, ‘By accepting this, by your great kindness, object of refuge to whom I am making these offerings, by your capability, please transform me’.

J’in means power and capability. If you look a little bit into the psychic powers, those lower spirits cannot stand the presence of a powerful enlightened being. Though enlightened beings are not

wrathful or angry or anything, they cannot stand it, they just sort of lose their control because of them being so powerful. *J'in* is that sort of power and capability of the individual.

Lob is transforming, 'May your body, mind and speech transform my body, mind and speech and it may become like yours'. How?

May the blessings of your body enter into my body and purify all impurities in the body, and all sufferings of the body; may all non-virtues and obstacles be cleared and may my ordinary body become a fully enlightened buddha body.

May all non-virtues committed through speech, including their imprints, be purified and become perfect buddha speech.

May all the non-virtues, obstacles, including the imprints, become pure and transform into a mind of a buddha.

That is how you make offerings and pray, 'I seek your blessings.' I gave the example for the outer offerings. You also think this way in accordance to the inner offering, the secret offering and the mandala offering.

MANDALA OFFERING

Dak shen lu ngak yi sum long chö dii sum ge tsok che
Rin chen men del sang po kün sang chö pey tsok che pa
Lo yi lang ne la ma yi dam kön chok sum la büil
Tuk jey wang gi she ne dak la jin gyi lab tu söl
IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM NIRYATAYAMI

**The body, speech and mind of myself and others,
Our wealth as well as our virtues
amassed in the past, the present and the future,
An excellent jewelled mandala
together with a mass of Samanthabhadra offerings
I envision these all and present them to you,
O my Guru, my Yidam and the Three Precious Gems.
Accepting these in your compassion,
bestow on me waves of blessings.**
IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM NIRYATAYAMI.

Mandala means universe. The mandala offering is also called ‘offering of the universe’. The mandala of a deity, a *yidam*, is his own universe, her own existence. We do point out: there is cemetery with a mountain, water and clouds, there a meditator, there is a vajra fence and a wisdom fence; there is an inner protection rim and an outer protection rim, there is the vajra ground, there is the air mandala, the fire mandala, the water mandala and the earth mandala, and there is an incredibly beautiful mansion with the right measurements and the principal deity with its retinue. We try to measure it and point it out, but in reality it is total existence.

Likewise, our own existence is, according to the description of 2500 years ago, a mandala, with Mount Meru in the center, around it the four directional continents and the eight subcontinents with all the best you have in there. For example, the western continent has a cow: the Netherlands have beautiful butter and cheese, coming from the cow! So the mandala is the description of existence.

Offering the mandala is the same like in Lamrim. The only additional thing here is, that when you seek purification here, you seek to purify anything that has gone against your vows: the pratimoksha vows [*i.e.* vows of self-liberation], the bodhisattva vows, or the Vajrayana vows, whatever vows you may have. The major emphasis should be on anything done against the vows.

When you offer *the body..... as well as our virtues amassed in the past, the present and the future*, there is a little problem. The virtue that you accumulated in the past cannot be offered, because you already used it. The present and future you can offer. This is a little complication, but anyway, let it be.

We offer everything in the form of a mandala. From today up to the level we obtain enlightenment, we offer our body, wealth and virtues in the form of a universe or any particular environment, maybe some kind of imagined universe or a pure land. In that the earth, rocks *etc.* are not ordinary earth and ordinary rocks, they are in the form of jewels and precious things, like you sometimes say at the beginning of the *Ganden Lha Gyema*,

May the surface of the earth in every direction
Be pure, without even a pebble,

As smooth as the palm of a child's hand,
Naturally polished as is lapis lazuli.

And may all space be completely filled
With the material offerings of gods and men
Both these set before me and those mentally created
As a peerless cloud of Samantabhadra offerings.

All offerings are multiplied manifold. You offer what is actually laid out and what is mentally created. The translation says 'mentally created', but in Tibetan it literally says 'taken away by mind'. Something which does not belong to me I cannot offer, however mentally I can 'take' it and give it. In other words, you think,

I catch this whole universe by my mind, manifest it mentally in different ways and I offer it to you. I offer it to you, though I am not capable of making that offering. However, you, the object to whom I offer, have tremendous power and capabilities. So, though I have no power to offer all this, by your great power, may you please accept this.

Sometimes we can give something that we really own, but sometimes something which does not belong to you, you can still offer. Even in the *Bodhisattvacharyavatara* you find that⁶². You can offer everything, including your T-shirt or whatever. You can offer everything, good and bad, but don't offer the bad things, offer the good things.

When offering a mandala, using a mandala base and rings and material, we put one heap of rice or whatever in the center; that represents Mount Meru. Then we say: *Sbar lii pak po* – the east. Where do we put the east? It depends: if it is for accumulation of merit and for offering to the Supreme Field of Merit, the east the part that is furthest away from you. When you make a mandala offering for receiving teaching, you also do it like that. When you offer a mandala in order to receive blessings, you put the east on your side. At the end, when you say IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM NIRYATAYAMI you dismantle the mandala accordingly: away from you or towards you. When you are holding the mandala in your hand, neither does the mandala become bigger nor does the universe become smaller. You have to break the law of physics here.

If you have all the time in the world you do a longer mandala offering, the 37-heap mandala⁶³, or if not, the 23-heap mandala offering. If you don't do that, you have this one here. It has the four continents, Mount Meru, the seven precious things⁶⁴ and on top of that you include your body, speech and mind and all virtues you have accumulated in the three times, manifested in the form of a Samantabhadra offering.⁶⁵

No separation. When you say, 'O my Guru, my Yidam and the Three Precious Gems', don't think of separate persons. Probably you may start thinking that my guru is someone, my yidam is someone else and Buddha, Dharma and Sangha is another one. Don't think that. As we emphasized before, it is the 'all in one' system⁶⁶, like the jewel in the Jewel-Heart logo. Lama, yidam, buddhas, bodhisattvas, dakas, dakinis⁶⁷, arhats like pratyeka-buddhas and sravaka-buddhas, and protectors, all in one. It is Vajradhara who *is* the lama, who *is* the yidam, who *is* the three jewels. Particularly in the guru yoga it is very important *not* to think of them as beings separate from one another. This is the point where you are making *no* separation between the lama and the yidam!

Marpa and Naropa. One of the reasons for that is given in Marpa's meeting with Naropa. One day very early in the morning, nearly still in the middle of the night, Naropa woke up Marpa, who was still half asleep, saying, 'Don't sleep, get up, get up! Here in the sky is your deity, your yidam!' Marpa looked up and saw the complete mandala of Hevajra up in the sky. Naropa said, 'Would you like to do a prostration first to me or to the deity?' Marpa thought, 'I can always do prostrations to Naropa, because I see him all the time, but seeing the deity happens only once in a blue moon, so I better do the prostration to the deity'. and he prostrated first to the deity. Naropa said straightaway,

Where there is no lama, there is not even the name of a buddha.
All the thousand buddhas of the fortunate eon came out of lamas.
The deity is a manifestation of the lama.

Then Naropa dissolved the mandala and it disappeared completely. It is stated that this is the reason why afterwards, though a great deal of the Naropa teaching-tradition has been handed onto

Marpa, a lot of important things were not given to Marpa. For example, look into the Naropa tradition of Vajrayogini. In normal circumstances it should have gone from Naropa to Marpa and then it should have been in the Kagyu tradition, but it didn't go that way. The Kagyu tradition doesn't have the Naropa-tradition of Vajrayogini. Instead of that they put up *Dorje Pagmo*⁶⁸ as Vajrayogini. In diplomatic language they say Naropa has not given it to Marpa, but to the Nepalese Pamting brothers. Probably something might have gone wrong there. So, particularly in the Vajrayana practice, it becomes quite important to look in that manner.

If you say these words, say them very slowly instead of just rushing. Say the verse very slowly and think a little bit on the meaning behind it. If you do that, I think it creates a tremendous amount of merit and a lot of purification. The commentary says,

If you can say the words slowly and remember the meaning behind it, it will be of great benefit, it can make a lot of difference. If you can't, just simply say the words. If old people have to get up and walk, they depend on a walking stick. Similarly when with our understanding and meditation we cannot manage the meaning, we need the walking stick of the words.

In other words, if you can move your practice with the words, the words serve the purpose.

Making these offerings covers the *Amoghasiddhi commitment of giving all the offerings*. As you promised during the initiation:

I shall (...) make as many offerings as possible.

Not only that. In the *Fifty Verses of Guru Yoga* it says to *make mandala offerings to the guru six times a day*. That is also covered by this.

PRAYING AND REQUESTING

This is the practice of the guru-devotion. The three verses here cover the three outlines of the guru-devotional practice:

1. The root of all development is generating intelligent faith.
2. Remembering the kindness and developing respect. The first two concern the mental stage.
3. By action relying on and pleasing the guru.

Mental stage of Guru devotion

*Dü sum chok chü de shok ma lü pa
 Gang dul ji shin ngur mik nam röl gyi
 Drang me shing du gyel wey dze pa chen
 La ma rin po che la söl wa deb*

**I humbly beseech you, my precious Guru,
 Just as the buddhas of the three times
 and the ten directions have tamed (sentient beings),
 You too enact the buddhas deeds in countless realms,
 Taking the form of a saffron-robbed monk.**

1. *Generating intelligent faith.* This verse says, ‘Like all the buddhas of the ten directions and the three times you manifest to anyone, in any form, according to whatever they need, including taking on the saffron-colored robe of a Buddhist monk or nun. You carried out the activities of all the buddhas.’

We do not have the fortune of seeing our guru in the form of a buddha, as a real buddha, or seeing him in the form of a bodhisattva or a deity. Suitable for us today is the form of a normal human being, someone we can relate to as human being to human being, someone we can connect with. That is someone who has all three vows, the *pratimoksha* vow, the *bodhisattva* vow, and the *vajrayana* vow. The *pratimoksha* vow is the vow of the monks, so we visualize the guru in the form of a monk who is wearing a saffron colored robe. That is the form in which it is possible for us to connect with, as person to person. The whole idea is: if it goes beyond my capacity, it will not be of that much help. If it is a supernatural being, it is a little outside my scope; I don’t have the fortune to be able to see in that way. Here you reflect on the qualities of the guru.

The best activity of the Buddha is his speech activity; that means teaching. The teaching has been carried on in different forms, different languages and different physical appearances of masters, in whatever form is suitable for the individual. Such a great precious master...! That’s the way you should develop intelligent faith.

Also you have to form your opinion on the reasons of the message. That’s the intelligent way of doing it. Some people will not know or say or do anything about the message, but they have a problem with the messenger. That could be a problem sometimes.

When we look back, with those people in the sixties and seventies all these guru's, like Bhagwan Rajneesh and even our Trungpa Rinpoche, we had scandals. I am not saying that's not a problem. What I am saying is, we hear all the scandals, but we don't see and don't hear about all the benefits. That may be a problem, though nobody points that out as a problem. It is not the messenger, it is the message that counts. Buddha also did not say Buddha is great because he is buddha. Buddha is great because his teaching is great. Buddha is reliable because his teachings are reliable and he gave the people reliable results. That is how the relationship logically or intelligently is established, on the basis of the teachings and not on how he looks like or how she eats.

Intelligent faith is very necessary. Intelligent faith can overcome any obstacle you encounter. People's ideas are so different. Take us here. During two days talking, the fifty people here hear fifty different things, have forty or fifty different opinions. Normally, when you receive teachings, you have profound respect and then when you get the explanations you will gain this and that. Then, when somebody says something, you can develop doubts. Doubt itself is not a problem. But doubt that rises without any valid reason, becomes a problem. But doubt that rises without any valid reason, becomes a problem; not for the master but for us, the practitioners. So it is emphasized to develop intelligent faith.

If you could develop intelligent faith to your vajra master, to your root guru, then that faith becomes a source of your quality. Guru-devotional practice, the root of all development, is referring to this. Devotion with valid reason and intelligent faith is the source of qualities and makes the qualities grow.

Faith is like a mother that gives birth to a child.

It is like a mother who protects and nurtures the child.

One who doesn't have faith

doesn't grow spiritual development at all.

The example given here is: when the seed is burned, the food cannot grow. Seed has the capacity to grow; if the seed doesn't have the capacity to grow, it doesn't become a seed. Nowadays the American companies have genetically modified seeds which are limited to growth only once or twice. That's interference in the natural growth for commercial value. Can you imagine? For gen-

erations farmers have grown and regrown their own seed and suddenly this genetically modified seed comes and grows twice, three times and the fourth year nothing grows at all and you have to buy seed again. That is not fair. Our seed should not be genetically modified. This commentary says,

Intelligent faith makes you overcome the evil forces and also gives you the path and the strength of liberation.

Next a little uncommon quote comes from the Kalachakra tantra:

Even when you make offerings to all enlightened beings
of past, present and future
and you protect, help and nurture the billions of living beings, even then
they are not capable of delivering the Buddha level to you.

But, if you make your great kind master happy with intelligent faith,
you will receive ordinary and extraordinary completions
even within this life.

And to quote from the sutra, Buddha himself says:

In future, in the degenerated age, I will appear as a master.

At that time you should think that it is me and pay your respect.

What does that mean? Honestly, if Buddha would come back to help us, in what form will he appear? If he appeared as a Buddha, I wouldn't have the fortune to be able to see it. Even if I would see him, a different looking person with an ushnisha and all this, I might get scared and run away. Likewise all the wrathful or semi-wrathful yidams; we don't have the fortune to be able to see them 'as it is'. If we would see Yamantaka or Heruka, we would not even be able to breathe; we'd run away. We don't see enlightened beings in their reality form. So we are left with a messenger only. And what message do I need? The message that gives the method to deliver buddhahood.

These are the reasons you can think of. Of course, you don't want to be left out, you don't want to be without Buddha's message. Some people are left out, are without the message. That's why we talk about the preciousness of human life, and give the reasons.

There's a very interesting quotation here, from Ra Lotsawa, the outstanding mahasiddha. What he says here I think is important. He says:

First you have to make it up by your mind, sort of a visualize, imagine, project [the Lama]. All these projections you do with a reason. Then the second step is effortless faith. You don't have to put efforts in, you don't have to visualize anything, it will sort of appear to you. Finally the Lama dissolves to you and you will become one.

So first, middle and conclusion. It are interesting words by Ra Lot-sawa here. Then you gain that realization. Yet sometimes you'll have difficulties. That is bound to happen. It happened before. Even during Buddha's lifetime, there were people, like his own cousin, who saw Buddha like some kind of false potency. Also, remember the famous story of Asanga who saw Maitreya as just a wounded female dog. And Naropa saw Tilopa as just a crazy old fisherman eating live fish: the big ones he roasted alive on a fire and the small ones he just swallowed. So that is important. It continues here with a quote (I read this to you, so you know I'm not making it up):

If you don't have intelligent faith to your masters,
no matter how much you pray to the buddhas,
the yidams and bodhisattvas, nothing will help you.

This you normally hear in the Lamrim too. All of them try to establish that the root of all development is guru-devotional practice and developing intelligent faith. That is what they are aiming at and that is the goal here, too.

*Dor je chang gi lo men sam pey ngor
Rab jam gyel wey kor lo ta dak le
Hlak pey shing-gi dam par lek ngak pey
La ma rin po che la söl wa deb*

**I humbly beseech you, my precious Guru,
Esteemed by Vajradhara, for those of meagre mind,
As a field of merit more holy
Then the endless circle of infinite buddhas.**

2. *Remembering the kindness and developing respect.* In the Lamrim, in the guru-devotional practice, you have the important point that says that the guru is not only kind and great, the kindness of the guru is even more important than the kindness of all buddhas. That point is emphasized by this verse.

Endless circle of infinite buddhas. Circle here does not mean something round, it represents the mandala. Each one of the yidams or deities, like Heruka Chakrasamvara, Yamantaka, Vajrayogini, is based on a tantra. Each tantra is based on a mandala, each one has a mandala. 'Endless' here does not mean an endless circle like the endless knot, but the countless number of deities and their mandalas. We address the guru, whose kindness goes beyond not only the Buddha, but also beyond the deities and their mandalas. Through what is said in this verse, by way of remembering his kindness one develops respect for and reliance on the guru.

How to remember the kindness:

a. *The kindness of the master is even beyond the kindness of all the Buddha's in general.* The lama is more important than Buddha for me. Because I've been able to see him from person to person. I've been able to learn the common and uncommon paths. I've been able to receive the initiations into mandalas. I've been able to meditate yidams and say mantras. And he provided to me the opportunity to become a buddha myself, at least within seven or sixteen lives. So for me personally the lama is more kind even than all the buddhas.

Countless buddhas came, but I was left out, I am such a hard-headed one, a difficult one. And such people like you are giving me the path. Like it says in the *Lama Chöpa*, verse 40:

You precisely teach the good path of the Blissful
To the untamable beings of this degenerate age
Unreformed by the Buddhas of the past.
Oh compassionate Refuge Protector, from my heart I pray!

b. *The kindness of teaching the Dharma.* You give me teachings, make me understand, make me hear it, think, make me meditate, so that I can achieve something.

c. *The kindness of blessing my mindstream.* What Tilopa has done to Naropa, Atisha has done to Drom, Marpa has done to Mila – all of those show how the blessing of the guru makes a difference. The same goes for me:

The first step was building interest in the Dharma.
Then developing intelligent faith to
Guru, Buddha, dharma and sangha.
Then developing the path and the stages within my mind.
Then developing the bodhimind, essence of love-compassion.
Then developing the desire to maintain those.
Then entering into the mandala
[which gives me] the opportunity to meditate
the development stage and even the completion stage.
Even developing some good thoughts and good actions
are coming from that blessing.

d. *The kindness of attracting me into his circle.* You have been helping me, being kind to me and giving gifts. In order to help me to show interest in the spiritual path and particular in this path, you make all adjustments. You don't have to elaborate beside that, you understand.

Now an important quote; I think it is Geshe Potowa who said:

Whether the blessings of the lama are going to be big or small
doesn't depend on the lama, it depends on the receiver.

If you don't have the remembrance of the kindness
and you don't have intelligent faith,
then even if Manjushri and Avalokiteshvara
appear in front of you,
they can do nothing to you. They can do nothing.

But if you have profound respect and intelligent faith,
then even if the master him- or herself is not fully qualified,
you obtain the blessings of the total of enlightened beings.

And then remember the *jin gyi lob*, the blessing. The western understanding of blessing may be different from the Tibetan understanding of blessing. What it really means is that we are asking for a miracle: transforming the individual from ordinary into extraordinary. Whether it concerns the material or the person, that's what we are talking about.⁶⁹

This verse completes the guru-devotional practice through mind. The next verse covers the guru-devotional practice through action. The Six-session yoga is really based on guru devotion!

Action stage of Guru devotion

*Chok dang tün mong ngö drub ma lü kün
Gön kyö tsul shin ten pey je dro war
Tong ne lü dang sok kyang yong tang te
Kyö nye ko na drub par jin gyi lob*

**Every supreme and mundane attainment
Follows upon pure devotion to you, my protector,
Seeing this I forsake my body and even my life.
Bless me to practice what will only please you.**

3. *By action relying on and pleasing the guru.* All my ordinary and extraordinary accomplishments depend on this, development of guru-devotion. May I see this clearly and follow all the advices. From the bottom of my heart I would like to have a perfect guru-devotional practice.

Je Tsongkhapa's *Song of the Stages* says,

The root of all causes producing
Happiness here and hereafter, is the practice
Of relying in thought and action
Upon the sacred friend who reveals the path.
Seeing this, follow him at any cost
And please him with the offering of practice.
I, a yogi, did that myself;
You, O liberation seeker, should do likewise.

[Up to now] I have modified the [teaching on] guru-devotional practice. Sometimes this guru-devotional practice is difficult to talk. Uneasy. I made it as comfortable as possible for me to say. What it really says here, is: treating the guru well through the mind and treating him well through action I will not give up, not even for the sake of my life.

Mind level and action level. The guru-devotional practice has the mind level and the action level. The mind level also has seeing the guru as buddha. In Hinayana it is seeing the guru as *being like* a buddha,

in Mahayana seeing the guru as *being equal* to a buddha, and in Vajrayana seeing the guru *really being* or inseparable from a buddha. So from the mind point of view the three yantras are different in the guru-devotional practice.

From the action point of view, the physical way of showing devotion is giving respect, prostration. For example, when the master is standing, you don't sit. You don't sit on a higher position than the master, you don't even sit on equal chairs. That's the traditional way. All of those are in detail available.⁷⁰ And also making offerings: material, money, service; any offerings. The most important offering is following the advice, follow exactly the practice they told you.

This is guru-devotional practice. Since we talk about the Six-session guru yoga, if I don't mention it to you briefly it is not right, but if I mention it in detail it looks like I am demanding. I am not. That's why I try to read the commentary and relate that, rather than that I say it myself (laughs).

In short, all ordinary or mundane siddhis, like reading the future *etc.*, as well as the extraordinary siddhi, the stage of total enlightenment, all absolutely depend on guru-devotional practice.

When I see this, from the bottom of my heart I pray, 'May I develop a proper devotion to the guru, through mind and action both, and always have guru devotional practice as one of my major practices, like Naropa's devotion to Tilopa, Marpa's devotion to Naropa, Mila's devotion to Marpa and so and forth.'

Maitreya Buddha has said,

Making service to the guru is considered the most important practice.

Three levels of service. Servicing the guru has three categories: the top, the medium and the lowest level. The top level service is learning the teachings through the guru's kindness, practicing them and developing yourself to the lama stage. The medium level of service is following the guru around and accompanying him. The lowest level of service is doing whatever is practically needed to do, for example giving physical help like giving massage, giving food and providing all other needs. Particularly recommended is cleaning the

place, which is said to be the best purification. Then comes following the teacher during the teachings, and of course the top level is the practice!

SINGLE-POINTED REQUEST AND TAKING THE FOUR INITIATIONS IN THE FORM OF BLESSING — OPTIONAL

*Khyö ni la ma khyö ni yi dham
khyö ni kha dro chö khyong te
deng ney zung te jang chup bar du
kyö min kyap zhan me tsöl way
dhi dhang bar do chi me thar yang
thuk je chak kyü zung dzö la
si zhi jik dröl ngö drup kün tsöl
ten gyi droh dzö bar chö sung (3x)*

**You are the Lama, you are the Yidam,
You are the Dakini and Dharma Protector;
From now until I attain enlightenment,
I shall seek no refuge other than you.
In this life, in the bardo, and until enlightenment,
Hold me in the hook of your compassion,
Free me from the fears of samsara and nirvana,
grant all attainments,
Be my constant companion,
and protect me from all obstacles. (3x)**

*De tar lan sum söl wa tap pay thü
la may ku sung thub keyi nay nam lay
dhü tsi ö zer kar mar thing ga sum
rim dang chik char jung ney dhab nyi keyi*

**By the force of making these requests three times,
Light rays and nectars, white, red, and cobalt blue,
Stream forth from the centers of
my Lama's body, speech, and mind.**

*Nay sum rim dhang chik char thim pa lay
drip zhi dag ching nam dhab wang zhi thop
ku zhi thop ching la ma nyi pa zhiik
gye zhin thim pay jin gyi lap par gyur*

**One by one and all together my four obstacles are purified,
I receive the four empowerments
And the seeds of the four Buddha bodies.
A duplicate of my Lama happily dissolves into me,
And I am blessed with inspiration.**

If you take every day the four initiations in blessing form it is very good. It has tremendous benefits. One of the important points in Vajrayana practice is to have a continuation of initiation. If you take the four initiations in blessing form once every day, you get what is called ‘the initiation water did not dry’. Though this practice is *not* part of this Six-session yoga, you can do it in a simple way by bringing in over here these two verses of the *Lama Chöpa*.⁷¹

I have a very special guru yoga, different from what anybody has, based on Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche. I requested Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche to write a guru yoga based on himself. I say that all the time. Also in that he brought these two verses in. That covers ‘the initiation water did not dry’.

If you don’t do it, it does not mean that your Six-session yoga is not complete. It is complete without that. If you do it, it is good.

Audience: Is Cittamani Tara the same?

Rinpoche: No. Cittamani Tara has a little bit of it, probably it may cover this. In the Vajrayogini long sadhana there is a longer one. To do that here is not necessary.

In short, this Six-session yoga has a perfect practice, you don’t need anything else. Due to some commitments you may have to say a sadhana here or there a little bit, but apart from that the Six-session yoga has everything in it. So do the Six-session yoga very carefully! It is definitely worth it. Particularly those of you who have no sadhana commitment, do a nice long Six-session yoga. That will be very useful.

ABSORBING PRACTICE⁷²

*De tar söl wa tab pey la ma chok
Rang gi chi wö tsuk tu – samadza
Lar yang gye shin rang dang ro chik gyur*

**Requested in this way, my supreme Guru
Comes to the crown of my head.
Once more⁷³ he gladly (merges with me)
We become of one taste.**

Now it's the time to dissolve the Lama to ourselves. *De tar* means: with that – with that meditation, with that thought, with that practice, I'm making that supplication. Then *la ma choké*, greatest master, *my supreme Guru*. [*rang gi chi wö tsuk tu* means *to the crown of my head*. Then the Sanskrit *samadṛa* means he draws close and remains atop your head.]

The Lama comes onto your crown and then through your central channel dissolves into yourself at the center of your heart.⁷⁴ At the center of the heart there is what is called the indestructible drop [Tib. *mi shig pei tik lé*]. (There are two kinds of indestructible: indestructible until you die and indestructible until you obtain enlightenment. I am not going to talk about that.)

In your visualization the guru dissolves to your heart level and becomes one with the indestructible drop. The drop is very small, the upper portion is white and the lower portion is red. The drop it tiny like is a sesame seed.

Inside that drop, is in reality our mind: the *me* who comes from previous lives and is going to future lives, the continuation of the discontinuous being. It is very subtle: subtle mind and subtle air inseparable. The air and mind here function on the same frequency. In Tibetan books you read, 'the mind rides on the horse of air.' The air is the horse and the mind is the horseman. It is a very subtle level.

This [inseparable mind and energy] is in the form of a letter HUM, white with a red influence. The rosy color is important in this case. It shows the nature of bliss. We mentioned to you that the consort is also red in color, the color of bliss connected with sexual energy. Even in our ordinary mundane level, during the ordinary sexual period people change their color to slightly reddish, right? That is what it is.

That indestructible drop of very subtle mind and very subtle air, visualized as a letter HUM, is in the nature of bliss and radiates five-colored light.

Visualization – the guru dissolving into me

The great master is invited. The throne, the lotus cushion, moon- and sun disc, all dissolve to the Lama. The dissolving is upwards: the throne dissolves into the lotus, the lotus into the moon, the moon into the sun [and the sun dissolves into the Lama].

Then the Lama comes onto your crown, sits on your crown, without cushions or anything, facing the same way you face. He's very happily sitting on your head.

If you have a practice of the Six yogas of Naropa or the Six yogas of Niguma and you know it, then this is the time to practice that. I'm not teaching you the Six yogas of Naropa or Niguma here. But, if you know it and you are doing the practice, then this is the place you should do it. It is the same place as in the *Lama Chöpa*.⁷⁵

Then the Lama gradually melts into light and goes through your crown, through the central channel and dissolves to your subtle mind and subtle energy in the form of the white letter HUM with a lot of reddish shine [and you become of one taste].

Now the HUM in your heart starts radiating five-colored light, joy-natured, bliss-natured. Focus your mind on that very strongly. You think that the HUM *is* your mind. Focus your mind very strongly on that!

[By practicing thus, the energies gradually get drawn inside, eventually causing the energies in the side-channels to enter the central channel].

Right now, when breathing, our breath from the right and left nostril is never equal. That's because we are breathing separately from the right and left channels. But when we are able to put our energy, or air, in the central channel, the breathing power of both right and left nostril will become equal, the one not stronger or weaker than the other. That is the sign of *entering the air in the central channel*. Then whenever that energy has entered the central channel, you try to *maintain* or *stabilize* it in there. The sign for that is that your abdomen does not move anymore. Then follows the *dissolving* [of the air into the central channel] with the symptoms of the eight stages of the dying process.

Meditation – eight stages of the dying process

1. The light radiating from that letter HUM covers every part of our body completely, upper and lower body, everywhere. Every part of the body we are visualizing, melts into light and dissolves to the letter HUM. This is the beginning of the earth element dissolving into the water element. To conform that your feeling, or even vision in some cases, will be that of a mirage.

2. Next the water element will be dissolving to the fire element. The sign for that is that the whole area is filled up with something like smoke. You either see the smoke or you feel it; a very smoky feeling you have.

3. Next the fire element dissolves into the air element. The sign is flying sparks everywhere, like if you threw the end of a burning cigarette into the air in a dark room. Either you feel that way or you see it literally.

4. Finally the air element or energy itself dissolves into the consciousness. At that time it is like in a big room a candlelight is burning and you see the reflection of the candlelight; you're not looking at the candlelight.

These are what you call the four steps of the outer dissolving system. Now follows the inner dissolving system.

5. When the air has dissolved into the consciousness, you get the *nangwa*⁷⁶. You either see or feel as if you are in a nice moonshine at night: a cold breeze, moonshine, no dust. (Traditionally they give you autumn in Tibet. Tibet is full of dust and in the late summer, when there is a rainfall, the dust settles). Now you think, 'At this time I have accomplished the vajra-body'.

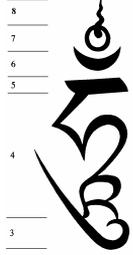
6. Next is *nangwa* dissolving to the *chepa*⁷⁷. This moment is again like a crystal-clear sky where the sun is rising or setting, a sort of yellowish, orange-sunlight covered sky. At that time you think, 'I have achieved the vajra-speech'.

7. Next is the *chepa* dissolving to the *topwa*⁷⁸. That is like pitch-black darkness at late night. Think, 'I have achieved the vajra mind.'

8. Next is the *topma* dissolving into the clear light. You either see it or feel it. It is like an early morning, not completely light, not completely dark, the yellowish sunshine is not there; it is free of all three. Just a nice sky, free of all those. Just natural.

Development-stage practices

Dissolving into emptiness. If you know it, you can meditate here the system of dissolving with the seed syllable: 1) the whole universe dissolves into your body and 2) that into the HUM; 3) the U dissolves into the body of the HUM, 4) which dissolves into its head; 5) that dissolves into the crescent moon, 6) that into the drop, *tigle*, 7) the drop into the flame, *nada*, 8) which dissolves and disappears.⁷⁹ Then whatever understanding of emptiness you have you can concentrate on.



Remembering emptiness. It is important to remember the emptiness here a little bit. Even if you don't have any understanding of emptiness, you should at least think here: every phenomenon is in the nature of emptiness. You can say, 'All phenomena are empty in nature' and hold on that for a little while. It is also not out of place to think here, 'All is empty, everything is pure, naturally pure, that's what I am'⁸⁰. That will cover the eleventh Vajrayana root vow: not remembering the wisdom of absolute reality.

Remembering emptiness by examples. You think, 'All phenomena, all existents are empty. All universe, the environment and the inhabitants, everything is like a magician's show; it is like a dream, like a reflection of the moon in the water. In natural reality it is empty. All I have seen is like a dream'. Don't say it is a dream, it is *like* a dream, it is *like* a reflection of the moon in the water, the universe and its inhabitants are *like* a magician's show; there is no truth in it. It only is a combination and we have given it some label and we are satisfied with that. There is no truth in it, it is only the label put on. Like that it is empty, like that it is space, like that it is full.

The first example is a *magician's show*. Why? Because in reality nothing is manifested. In the old times the magicians had little pebbles, said mantras before the eyes of the people watching and they would see all different kinds of things. Actually there is nothing.

Another example is the *dream*. Whatever dream you have, the dream seems real. At that time you don't know that it is not true, at the time of the dream whatever you dream is reality. It is real to that mind, at that moment, it is not showbiz. The collectors who try to collect money in the dream, seem to be real, you really have to pay. But actually there is no one who is collecting. All phenomena, environments and inhabitants, are like that.

It is also like the *reflection of the moon in the water*. We see something, it looks just like the moon, to a certain extent we acknowledge it is the moon, but, unless you are foolish, you don't go down into the water to get the moon.

Story of the monkeys and the moon. There was a great story during the Buddha's lifetime. A group of monkeys was living in the valley at the mountainside and their leader was not that intelligent. This monkey leader happened to be passing through a lake. Suddenly he saw the moon in the water. He was a little surprised that the moon had landed in the water. But he thought it was a great opportunity for 'monkeykind' to do something great for the total existence, if they could lift the moon up from the water and put it in its own place. The monkey-leader suggested that to the group of monkeys and they all agreed: let's save the moon. They went to the side of the lake, looked from left to right, from the back, everywhere and finally they decided to lift the moon up. They put themselves flat on the tree branch, but couldn't reach the moon down there. So they made the line of monkeys longer. Finally all the monkeys were hanging one onto the other, trying to lift up the moon. So the branch broke and all the monkeys landed in the water. And where was the moon? The moon was gone. That's how the reflection of the moon in the water [can deceive us]. If you are not intelligent enough you could do that, too. That water is free of a moon, yet we see a moon in there. Just like that every phenomenon is empty of inherent existence, is not true, yet we'll acknowledge it because of the name, the label, the conditions. That's how we perceive everything. Nothing is coming out from its nature, but we label it. That is what emptiness is about.

Three-kaya practice. The eight stages of dying joined with the three kaya practice, like you have in the sadhana, you can also bring in over here at this point. Particularly the whitish feeling, the reddish

feeling and the last stage of going through some kind of darkness, are important.

Completion-stage practices

If you want to meditate on the illusion body, clear light and those levels, this is the time you can meditate on that. Remember, in the *Lama Chöpa*, it says in vs 77,

As you place your feet, oh Glorious Protector,
At the very center of my heart's eight petals,
Inspire me to actualize in this very life
The paths of clear light, illusion body, and their union.

Nine mixings. In the mother tantra you find the practice of special mixing in nine rounds⁸¹. Also that you can bring in and practice over here. (I can emphasize much more important points on this, but maybe this much is good enough.)

Inner rising of the illusion body [Tib. *gyu lü nang dang*]. This is an important point. When you rise from the nature of emptiness, you rise within yourself in the illusory-body form. In this practice, even from the beginning, you have the rising in the illusory body inside. It is *inner* rising. It is not an outside change of the body, but internally rising in the illusory body.

When the Lama's mind becomes inseparable with my mind, the subtle air takes the form of the letter HUM, which is generating five-colored light. You focus at your heart level, take the energy in and then radiate it out; both. Like the Jewel Heart logo⁸². Focusing on that jewel at the center of your heart, radiating in and out, is the rising of the illusory body internally. Such a practice of the highest stage, the completion stage of Vajrayana practice, can be brought up here as part of the Six-session yoga practice. If you have an understanding of this, then you utilize it at this level.

That particular practice over there⁸³ and this practice in the Six-session yoga is a common practice, the same practice. It is the idea of inner rising in the illusory body, not changing the outer body but innerly rising up. When you talk about transformation, you may look for transforming outside, like the magic we see in movies. It is not that. It is *inner* rising.⁸⁴ These are very important points!

All this shows how important the Six-session yoga is. It is more important than a sadhana. It is really, really a big thing. The verse says, ‘We become of one taste’. That does not mean a sour taste and a sweet taste become one. The meaning is, dissolving everything and becoming the nature of emptiness. ‘Of one taste’ means that there is no separate perception and perceiving; perceiver and perceived are inseparable. If you can hold that, you got a very important point here.

Audience: According to the words ‘We become of one taste’ it looks like it refers more or less to the guru who dissolves into me and he and I become of one taste.

Rinpoche: That is right. My mind ultimately merges into the guru’s mind. That is what it is. The guru not necessarily as ordinary guru, as a separate being, but *lamalha*, the ultimate buddha mind. I told you what the absolute guru is⁸⁵. Look from that angle and then you’ll see much more value in this same-taste business than by looking from you down here to a guru up there.

RISING AS VAJRASATTVA⁸⁶

Dak nyi dor je sem pey nga gyel gyi
Hlen keye de chen sang wey dor je dang
Rang shin trö drel sang wey ghanta-yi
Tsön je sung ne chom den de mar kyü

With the pride of being Vajrasattva
I embrace (my consort) Bhagavati
While holding a vajra and bell symbolic
Of the secret of Great Bliss simultaneous
With the secret of (Voidness)
free from the mental fabrication of true existence.

From the space-like openness, from the nature of emptiness you visualize yourself in the form of a white Vajradhara with consort, named Vajrasattva here, *Dorje Sempa*. But mind you, this is *not* Vajrasattva of the Vajrasattva recitation⁸⁷. There are a lot of reasons for that, but that does not matter at this moment. This time Vajrasattva is white. The consort is not always red, she is white today.

Suddenly, like a bubble out of the water, my very subtle energy and very subtle mind itself appear as white Vajrasattva, holding

bell and vajra, with the consort holding a hooked chopper and a skullcup, wearing panjalika clothes and jewel ornaments and all of those.

Meditating in such a way covers the downfall of not meditating the guru yoga six times a day.

Mantras. If you want a retreat of the Six-session yoga, at this moment, this is the time. If you want to say a lot of mantras of a specific deity, or if you want to say the mantra OM AH HUNG a number of times, you can do it over here. You can even do an OM AH HUM retreat.⁸⁸

Rising in the form of a yidam. If you don't want to rise in the form of Buddha Vajradhara, or Vajrasattva, then you can rise at this point as Yamantaka, Chakrasamvara, or any yidam you like to rise into. The teaching tradition tells you that, but in the text you say you're in the form of Vajradhara.

Here you rise either as a male deity with consort or a female deity with consort. If you want to rise in the Vajrayogini form, you should have the consort Heruka with you here. You should not just have the *katanga*, but the *katanga* [transformed into] the form of Heruka.

Why? Because of the three commitments of buddha Akshobya: commitment of the body – the vajra commitment [all methods], the commitment of the speech – the bell commitment [wisdom], the commitment of the mind – the mudra commitment, the union, mahamudra, *chak gya*.

Essence of the practice. What you are rising as here, the white Vajrasattva, is the same as during the initiation [at the Vajramaster initiation], remember? There is the vajra commitment: to remember the ultimate true vajra. 'The true vajra is Vajrasattva; remain with this', we said that during the initiation. This is what you are supposed to be remaining with, that is the original.

In order to have the absolute true bell and vajra within us, we hold the relative bell and vajra in the hand and we meditate ourselves in the deity form with the union-mantra: OM YOGA SHUDDO SARWA DHARMA YOGA SHUDDO HAM and focus on the bliss-void combined wisdom very strongly. That might be the real essence of

the development stage. We normally think that the development stage is meditating ourselves into the yidam form, meditating the mandala and all of those, but this may be the real essence.

And this may also be one of the most powerful ways of collecting the energy or air into the central channel. Maybe this is the essence of the *dzog rim* [completion stage] practice as well. This is why the Six-session yoga is so important.

The verse mentions the simultaneously born, great joy, *lben kye dbe chen*. That is the ultimate vajra, the secret vajra, *sang wey dor je*. Then the actual emptiness, the bliss-void clear light, is the secret bell, *sang wey ghanta*. Representing that is holding the relative bell and vajra and the union with the consort. This is definitely the real essence of the development stage and one of the most forceful, powerful ways of collecting the energies into the central channel.

This is fulfilling three commitments of buddha Akshobya, of keeping vajra, bell and mudra, as committed during the initiation

I shall perfectly maintain
The vajra, bell, and mudra
Of the great supreme Vajra family.

Keeping the Vajrayana materials. Bell and vajra are gifts from buddha Vajradhara to us. Buddha Vajradhara says that the ultimate true vajra and bell are the wisdom of bliss and the wisdom of emptiness. To remember that, Buddha Vajradhara has given us, who are following the Vajrayana practice, the symbolic bell and vajra. It is the reminder. Sometimes people wear a ring on their finger to be reminded of something, whether being engaged or having to do something. It is like that. If you meditate yourself in the Yamantaka form or the Chakrasamvara form it is covered, because they have bell and vajra in their hands. But if you meditate any deity without bell and vajra, then you break this commitment. The same goes for [visualizing yourself in the form of a yidam] without consort. That is why to fulfill the commitment of the Vajrayana, at least one is recommended to have a bell and vajra, even if it is in the form of a drawing. That is why we have given you that little piece of paper [with all the different ritual objects]. You should not exhibit that; it is *not* to be shown to other people. You don't have to do the hand-mudra.

Keeping these Vajrayana materials is very important. If you have those, the bell, vajra, damaru, katanga, all head ornaments, necklace and skirt and all of them⁸⁹, if you have all of them collected, the dakas and dakinis will come like ‘black flies on rotten meat’. You don’t have to send invitations, you don’t have to do much, they’ll just come, and even no matter how much you push them round, they will keep coming.

When you become a buddha, within your own buddha-sphere you’ll have the five Dhyani buddhas. Akshobya Buddha is in Tibetan *Mikyö Dorje*, which means ‘not shaking’. Not shaken by what? Not shaken by distance and nearness, which means having the opposite of hatred. Hatred is the impure part and the purity part of it is Akshobya Buddha.

Likewise, of each delusion the purity becomes a certain Dhyani Buddha. If there is one less than five, it would mean that Buddha has not completely cleared the non-virtues. That is how it works.

PRACTICING GENEROSITY

*Dak gi lü dang de shin long chö dang
Dü sum ge tsok pung po chi chi pa
Ma gyur sem chen kün-gyi dön-gyi chir
Deng ne pang pa me par tang war ja*

**From this moment on, without any sense of a loss,
I send forth my body, and likewise my wealth,
And my virtues amassed throughout the three times
In order to help all beings, my mothers.**

Now it is time for generosity. Giving our body. The way we give our body is this: for the need of any sentient being we transform it into whatever they need. And we pray and visualize that it may become whatever is needed.

The six perfect ways of giving:

- It is a perfect base to develop bodhimind.
- The material, whatever you are giving, in whatever form, is perfect material.

- It is a great activity to help sentient beings so it is a perfect action.
- You are giving it by truly knowing (it is) free of true existence, perfectly skillful.
- You dedicate it for total enlightenment, so it is perfect dedication.
- It purifies not only the delusions but even its imprints, that is why it is perfect purity.

And then, you know each paramitas has all six paramitas included. Generosity has also the generosity of ethics, the generosity of patience, the generosity of enthusiasm, the generosity of concentration and the generosity of wisdom. With the influence of the six paramitas every activity you do is a great bodhisattva activity.

Giving your body and wealth is out of the three generositys, the *generosity of material aid*. Giving your virtue is out of the three generositys the *generosity of dharma*. That covers *two of the four Ratnasambhava commitments*⁹⁰:

I shall observe the pleasing commitments
Of the great Ratna family.
Always performing the four types of giving
Six times every day.

Out of the five Dhyani Buddhas where does Ratnasambhava come from? Ordinarily we have stinginess. Right? We don't want to give, we are stingy. This is our delusion. Generosity is the opposite of it. When you clear the delusion of stinginess, when it transforms and becomes pure, that pure part will take the physical form of a buddha, which is, within your buddha sphere at that time, Buddha Ratnasambhava.

KEEPING ALL VOWS AND COMMITMENTS PURELY⁹¹

So tar jang sem dor je tek pa-yi
Nam dak che pey lab pa tra mo le
Mi lam du yang da war mi je par
Gyel wey ka shin dak gi drub par ja

**I shall never transgress, even in my dreams,
the most minor rule of the pure moral trainings**

Of the pratimoksha, bodhicitta and Vajrayana vows.

I shall practice according to the buddhas' words.

Now purifying your vows. *So tar* is self-liberation, *jang sem* is bodhisattva, and then we have the Vajrayana [*dor je tek pa*] vows. Broken vows we have to purify. We won't have time to explain the vows. But in your text the vows are counted, though normally in the long and short Six-session yoga they are not. They are not part of the text, but added up.

There are eighteen root downfall on the bodhisattva vows plus their four binding factors, *kbuntis*. There are fourteen root downfalls of Vajrayana, which also each have the four *kbuntis*. And there are downfalls of the nineteen commitments you have taken of the five buddha families. If there are strong *kbuntis* it becomes a downfall, in case of weak *kbuntis* it is a *bombo*, a transgression.

There are books from which you can to study them⁹². And perhaps another time we may do what is called *the advices on the three vows*. That, along with the *Fifty Verses of Guru Yoga* will be a good thing to do next time, if time permits.

Even when we don't know the downfalls in detail we can say, 'I will try not to have them.' That serves the purpose here.

If you are not a monk, you don't have the pratimoksha vows, you don't need them, but as to the bodhisattva vows and Vajrayana vows, 'all their advices I will follow.' Just remembering that covers *one of Vairochana commitments of the three different moralities: refraining from non-virtues*.

I shall also firmly maintain
The three types of moral discipline:
Training in pure discipline...

This verse covers *Amoghasiddhi's commitment, 'I will hold every commitment'* too.

Concerning the great supreme Karma family,
I shall perfectly maintain individually
All the vows that I have taken

Amoghasiddhi is activity. That is interesting. In our usual practice we have a lot of obstacles. In every daily mundane activity we have a lot of obstacles. Many of the obstacles come from jealousy and

when you are jealous of someone else you can't do anything. Usually when activities do not grow, the obstacle is jealousy. The purity of the jealousy is Amoghasiddhi. Out of the wisdoms it becomes the wisdom of activity; that is the pure part of the jealousy. When jealousy is transformed, that is what it becomes.

UPHOLDING THE DHARMA

*Tek pa sum dang gyü de shi dü pey
Lung dang tok pey dam chö ma lü pa
Gyel wey gong pa ji shin lek sung te
Gang tsam tab keyi dro wa yong su dröl*

**As Buddha intended, I shall uphold
The complete sacred Dharma of insight and scriptures
As gathered together
In the three types of vehicle and the four tantric classes.
I shall liberate all beings
by whichever means is suited to each.**

With the three types of vehicles or *yanas* are not meant Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana, but Sravaka-yana, Pratyekabuddha-yana⁹³ and Mahayana. Those are [traditionally] the three yanas. In Vajrayana you have four classes, divided into the outer yana, i.e. *kriya* and *carya* tantra, and the secret yana, i.e. *yoga* and *maha anu yoga* tantra.

Amitabha's three commitments [to uphold the teachings of sutrayana and both the external and internal classifications of tantrayana] *are covered here.*

Concerning the great pure Padma family
Arisen from the great enlightenment,
I shall maintain individually the sacred Dharmas
Of the outer, the secret, and the three vehicles.

Vairochana has three moralities. Out of these, *Vairochana commitment to hold all the dharmas* [the *sila* of practicing virtuous actions], as well as the activity of *helping all other beings* is covered by this line.

I shall also firmly maintain
The three types of moral discipline:
(...) gathering virtuous Dharmas,
And benefiting other living beings.

That way all the commitments of these five Dhyani buddhas have been completed.

In this verse we say, 'I also hold the three types of yanas and the four classes of tantra. Whatever the intention of the Buddha may be I will hold it as pure and clear as possible.'

Learning, thinking, meditating. Holding the Dharma is doing your own practice. That means: learning, thinking and meditating. Once you have learned, thought about it, experienced, then you have to express that, through teaching, through discussion, and through composition, such as writing poems, writing books etc.²⁴ So the self-practice is learning, thinking and meditating. Expressing is teaching, discussion and writing.

Learning, meditating saying prayers in the group, or as group leaders leading the discussion, expressing your thoughts and starting the discussion, as well as writing articles and books, all of them are holding the Dharma. If you come to the teachings for learning in the manner of going to school, that is also fine, but if you think further you will see there are dharma activities to go with it. So do studygroup leaders. If they think, 'Well it is part of my unpaid job, my responsibility', then it is a job. But if you do it with great enthusiasm, helping other people and helping yourself with the bodhimind motivation, there is no better dharma practice than that. Actually, you people will be better off than some who likes to sit in a cave and meditate and say mantras for three years without seeing any single other human being. You will be better off in the long run. Our mind is such, that if someone wants to go into a three years retreat, we have a natural respect for them, but , if you compare it to the achievements of group leaders who have done a lot of work, I can guarantee you the group leaders are better off.

Atisha and the three disciples. Remember Atisha had three main disciples: Neljor Gombowa, the great meditator, Drom Rinpoche, Atisha's attendant and translator, and Amé Jangchub Rinchen, the cook. The meditator, known as great meditator, sat in his mountain cave and besides attending the teachings he meditated all the time. One day he thought, 'Well, we all had the great opportunity to be associated with Atisha. Drom Rinpoche has a lot more knowledge but never has time to practice or say his prayers properly, so he

may not have achieved so much. And the cook, well, he attends the teachings but I don't know how much he knows. Besides that, he is cooking all the time for everybody, he never has time to practice, so as far as the development is concerned, I must be the best one.' He thought and believed that way. So one day Atisha had all three of them together and all of a sudden he said, 'Let us see which one of you has a better development.' The great meditator thought, 'Of course it is me.' He didn't say it but he pushed himself up a little bit. Atisha had a number of questions for all three of them and at the end they all knew it: forget about Drom Rinpoche, the great meditator could not even catch up with the cook's development.

Work is practice. Many of you do so much work in Jewel Heart. Some are teaching, some are organizing, some are doing administration work, some do planning policy, some are executing, some are looking after the house, doing the cleaning, and some are looking after the shop. You put a lot of time and energy in and some of you may think, 'I didn't do much practice, I worked for Jewel Heart', but then, that *is* your practice! And when you do it with total dedication, no personal agenda, for befitting yourself and your children and the future generations, you'll have a big surprise.

CONCLUSION

DEDICATION

In all future lives may I never be parted
From the perfect lamas or the pure ways of Dharma.
May I gain every experience of the paths and stages
And quickly attain the stage of Vajradhara.

If at the end you say this dedication prayer, out of *The Foundation of All Perfections* or any other, it is very useful.

*Di le wong pey nam kar ge wey tii
Tse rab küin tu dor je chang wang gi
Che pey tsam le nam yang mi da war
Rim nyi lam-gyi rim pa tar chin shok*

**Through the force of white merit from this (virtuous act),
And by the (compassionate) power of Vajradhara
throughout all my lives,**

**May I never transgress any vows I have taken,
May I complete the stages of the twofold path.**

*Dor na di tsön nam kar ge wey tsok
ji nye sake pa de yi nyur du dak
Norbiü bang dzjö shambhalar keye ne
La me lam-gyi rim pa tar chin shok*

**In brief, may I be born in Shambalah,
the Great Jewel Treasury,
And complete there the stages of the peerless path
In as quick a time as the amount of the white merit
I have gathered from this virtuous practice.**

*Kye wa kein tu yang dak la ma dang
Drel me chö-kyi pel la long chö ching
Sa dang lam-gyi yön ten rab dzok ne
Dor je chang-gi go pang nyur tob shok*

**Throughout all my lives
may I never be parted from perfect gurus
By making good use of the glorious Dharma
To fulfil the good features of the stages and paths,
May I quickly achieve Vajradhara-enlightenment.**

Saying the prayer for Shambala⁹⁵ is also considered important. Why? During Buddha Sakyamuni's period the Vajrayana teachings have been divided into two: the earlier and the later period. The earlier period is the period we are in. We are now more or less at the end of it. The later period will be the Shambala period. In case we are unable to complete or do anything effective during the earlier period, we may be able to take a very special life during the later period of Shambala, the period that will be ruled by Rigden Gyalwa Khorlo. Therefore it is considered important.

System of reciting the Six-session yoga. If you can say the Six-session yoga very carefully, it serves the purpose of [keeping one's commitments after] having taken the initiation. This is a very, very important practice, a practice in which all the essence is collected.

If you are saying it three times in one session, there is a system of saying it⁹⁶. When you dissolve the Lama, the first two rounds

you dissolve a duplicate Lama down. In the third round the whole body comes down, nothing left.

There are a number of versions on the Six-session yoga. The very, very short one⁹⁷ is not going to cover at all [what you committed at the initiation]. The covering is very important, because downfalls in Vajrayana is something you certainly don't want. Whether we know exactly what these downfalls are does not matter so much. If you do the Six-session yoga properly, all of them are covered. That is why it is important to do this practice, which is one of Tsongkhapa's extra-ordinary gifts. We should definitely take advantage of it.

There is a system of doing the *Six session guru yoga* and the *Ganden Lha Gyema* together, mixing them up. When you say the Ganden Lha Gyema, the Six-session yoga goes along with it. It is a very easy way of doing it and very useful, but I am not going to explain it now, because of shortage of time. I just like to mention to you that it is there. We may do it one time, *if* somebody asks it.

That is what I wanted to say and I want to thank you. (After that Rinpoche starts reciting the first part of the teaching again.)

III Tantric Vow Discourse

BODHISATTVA VOWS⁹⁸

THE EIGHTEEN ROOT DOWNFALLS

- 1 *Dak tö shen mö*
- 2 *Chö nor mi ter shing*
- 3 *Shak kyang mi nyen*
- 4 *Tek chen pong wa dang*
- 5 *Kön chok kor trok*
- 6 *Chö pong*
- 7 *Ngur mik trok*
- 8 *Tsam me nga dang*
- 9 *Lok ta*
- 10 *Drong sok jom*
- 11 *Ma jang tong nyi ten dang*
- 12 *Dzok jang dok*
- 13 *So tar pong dang*
- 14 *Nyen mö*
- 15 *Sab dzin ma*
- 16 *Chok sum kor len*
- 17 *Trim ngen cha*
- 18 *Sem tong*

1. Praising myself and belittling others;
2. Not sharing my wealth or the Dharma;
3. Not forgiving even if (others) apologize;
4. (Doubting and) denying the mahayana;
5. Taking offerings intended for the Triple Gem;
6. Abandoning the Dharma (through sectarianism);

7. **Disrobing (monks or nuns);**
8. **(Committing) the five heinous crimes;**
9. **(Holding) distorted views;**
10. **Destroying places such as towns;**
11. **Teaching voidness to those untrained;**
12. **Discouraging others from full enlightenment;**
13. **Causing others to break pratimoksha vows;**
14. **Belittling those who follow hinayana;**
15. **Proclaiming false realizations (of voidness)**
16. **Accepting gifts of what has been seized from the Triple Gem;**
17. **Passing false judgement;**
18. **Giving up bodhicitta —**

These are the eighteen root (bodhisattva) downfalls.

1. *Praising myself and belittling others.* Through various ways we habitually think, 'I did everything right, whatever the others do is not right, I am the one who is always right, everybody else, whoever it might be, is wrong'. This thought we very easily have, because in our deeper mind we like somehow to protect ourselves. I do not know why we have to protect ourselves. We have some kind of fear, fear of not making it as an individual, fear of not receiving recognition, fear of losing something. Whatever it is, we try to protect ourselves all the time. If anybody tries to step on our toe, we have the habitual pattern of generating ourselves immediately in the poky form. We do have the *sadhana* of the poky one automatically. Why is this downfall counted first? Because this is very close to us. Because of our habitual patterns, our character, we always have instantaneous self-generation of the poky one along with putting up the armadillo scale.

2. *Not sharing my wealth or the Dharma.* You know that point. There is an exception here, if you are not sharing the Dharma with those who are not fit to, it has no downfall at all! On the contrary, if you share the Dharma with those who are not fit to, you get a downfall. Particularly in Vajrayana, you easily get the downfall of sharing what is not fit to be shared, of sharing something to a person who is not qualified to be shared it with. When we take an initiation, there is commitment after commitment of preserving the secrecy

of it. Remember? But if the person is fit to and then you don't share it, you get this downfall.

3. *Not forgiving even if others apologize.* We do that a lot. Right? If we get hurt, even if the people apologize it is very hard to forgive them. We like to keep it somewhere at the corner of our mind and wait for the time to come and teach the other one a lesson. That is totally against the bodhisattva rule. If they seek forgiveness you should definitely give it. Once a person apologizes, you are expected to forgive him. However, if it is for the benefit of that individual being, you may sometimes have to act differently. Normally in the old Tibetan system they sometimes beat the students a lot. If it is for the benefit of that student, then giving him a hard time is no downfall. On the contrary, if you don't, you'll have a problem. Otherwise, basically, if someone apologizes you should listen to it, accept the apology, and forgive from your heart.

4. *Doubting and denying the mahayana.* If you doubt emptiness, if you doubt Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, you also have problems in the basic refuge vow. Similarly in Mahayana, doubting or giving up Mahayana, is a downfall. Is Mahayana genuine or not genuine? Does it really deliver or not? You can have those thoughts as a question; that is different. You can definitely have a question whether it is really that or not, but once you are taking the vow of it, then the vow demands that you do accept it, especially the path itself, the Mahayana path of method and wisdom.

6. *Holding sectarian views.* That is especially dangerous for us, who follow the Gelugpa tradition. The Tsongkhapa tradition, which I follow, is in Tibet the most important and most popular one of the great traditions. Because the Gelugpa tradition is the outstanding one in the Tibetan tradition, we have more danger of having this downfall.

Je Tsongkhapa. Tsongkhapa in particular has collected the essence of all the best traditions and purified them. The Tsongkhapa tradition is, as we say, 'the essence of the gold of gold'. You know, Buddhism is general is like gold and Tsongkhapa's tradition is the essence, the complete pure part of it. We have an amount of tech-

niques, which have been never used in other traditions. They were given to Tsongkhapa, a/o by Manjushri in a teaching from man to man. Traditionally in Tibet we said, 'The teachings have been passed on ear to ear with the breath of Manjushri still warm'.

Tsongkhapa has a tremendous amount of teaching quality, especially on the difficult points. For the development of guru devotion there is a special technique used by Tsongkhapa. For developing impermanence, the nine round death meditation is Tsongkhapa's special quality for opening up people. On the common with the medium level of Lamrim, Tsongkhapa has a special way of seeing the samsaric development and reversing it. For developing the bodhimind Tsongkhapa gave the eleven stages. For emptiness this tradition is considered outstanding! Tsongkhapa's way of introducing emptiness is very different from the ways of many others. Self-lessness or other-lessness is where the difference lies. I just mention it briefly.

Then the techniques in Vajrayana. They are fantastically different. Really there are a lot of extra-ordinary qualities. Since everybody has received the initiation, I can say that the instantaneous self-generation in the form of the deity even at the beginning of the sadhana, is Tsongkhapa's special technique. It later has been picked up by other traditions also. Tsongkhapa gave very strong reasons why it is necessary. Because in ordinary form you cannot bless anything. If you are in ordinary form, how can you bless extra-ordinary things? That is Tsongkhapa's reason. For every practice he has given a tremendous amount of special techniques that are very effective to the individual.

Not only that. Each one of those techniques and benefits are not only totally based on Manjushri's words, but Tsongkhapa and his disciples have personally developed and experienced them, so everything is based on their experience.

Not only that. They also told us, 'Shut your mouth, don't show anything, act like dumb and work like a buzzard, the very intelligent and aggressive bird. It does not mean trying to be mean, but do things quick and forcefully. You don't sit there and talk, but you *do* it.

So we, Gelugpas in Tibet, have very much a danger of looking down on any other sect, because we say that what we got is extra-

ordinary, is even more than a fortunate eon. The third Panchen Lama was given a tremendous amount of gifts by a Mongolian Chinese war-lord, who said, 'I want the assurance from you, Panchen Rinpoche, that I will have a future rebirth in a human form'. The Panchen Lama said, 'No question, you will have it'. Then he said, 'I also want the assurance to meet the teachings of the Buddha'. 'No question, you will have it'. 'I also want the assurance of meeting the pure teachings of the Buddha'. 'No problem'. 'I also want the assurance to meet the teachings of Lama Tsongkhapa'. Then the Panchen Lama said, 'I cannot guarantee that, you don't have enough fortune'.

The Gelugpas in Tibet are very proud of being Gelugpas. Really, really we are. We don't talk it in the West, because we are supposed to keep our mouth shut. Incidentally, the Chinese made a survey and found that 92% of the population of Tibet is Gelugpa, following Tsongkhapa's teaching. That much people would not follow that for five hundred years unless there is some quality in it. So we are very proud. We do have a danger of looking down on the others. They are all Buddha's teachings. They may lack certain techniques and certain experiences, however it is pure Buddha's teaching and pure tradition so we can't look down. In the West you don't have that danger that much yet.

On the other hand, if you talk about the qualities and special techniques of your own tradition, qualities that others do not have, just talking about the qualities that you have does not mean looking down on others. Even Chandrakirti has said,

In presenting your own qualities and view, heard by others,
there is no fault.

I sort of give the Gelugpa as an example, because I follow that tradition. If we look down on other traditions, there is downfall on this. And vice versa, if any other tradition does that it also has the same problem. Also the Hinayana-Mahayana business falls under this category. 'We are Mahayana, great-vehicle people, and you are Hinayana, narrow-vehicle people' or 'We are Vajrayana, indestructible, and you have lack of Vajrayana techniques, poor you'; these are looking down on the other, so have these problems.

11. Teaching voidness to those untrained

That is important. Everybody likes to talk about emptiness. If you do not understand the emptiness, it is very hard to talk about it. Even if you do understand something, but the persons at the other side have no idea about it, then most likely you will [make them] build up some kind of wrong view on it. If you do so, not only you are doing a disservice to that person, but also you do a disservice to you yourself. So this point is very important.

15. Passing false judgment. That is another one we get very easy. You cannot judge whether someone else is a bad guy or a good guy. Don't make judgment on other beings at all, unless you really know. Buddha has said, 'A person like me will judge the other beings'.

All other vows you can just read and I don't think there will be much problem in it.

THE FOUR PARTS OF A COMPLETE DOWNFALL

*Nye mik mi ta
Chö dö ma lok dang
Ga gu
Ngo tsa trel me kün tri shi
Tsang gö chu druk mi gö lok ta dang
Sem dor nyi che tsa tung cho gye sung*

**Not regarding these as detrimental,
Not forsaking the wish to repeat such behaviour,
Delighting and taking pleasure in them,
And having no shame or consideration,
Are the four binding factors which must all be present
For sixteen of these to be complete.
But for the other two,
holding distorted views and giving up bodhicitta,
These (four) are not needed.
I shall guard myself (from all these downfalls).**

Breaking the [bodhisattva] vows has to have four *kunthis*.

1. Not regard what you have done as being a mistake.
2. Carelessness. Even you know it is not right, you like to just do it.
3. You like to do it, you enjoy doing it.

4. Shamelessness. You have no hesitation of doing it, using yourself as a reason. Having hesitation with your self as reason is, 'If I do this, even if nobody will hear it, I will be ashamed of myself'. This here is ignoring yourself, in Tibetan called *ngotha*, shamelessness. Then there is also inconsideration for others. You have no hesitation of doing it, using others as a reason. Having a hesitation of doing wrong things, using others as reason is, 'Well, if I keep on doing this and other people come to know it, how disgraceful it is?'. This point here is ignoring others, in Tibetan called *tel*, inconsideration for others.

If you have all these four 'qualities' on a certain vow, it becomes a big thing a big, powerful, completely broken vow. By missing one or more of them, the downfall becomes lesser and lesser. These points are not like non-virtues of the self-liberating vows, which by nature of the action can be big or small. The downfalls of the bodhisattva vows are basically determined by these four.

TANTRIC VOWS⁹⁹

THE FOURTEEN ROOT DOWNFALLS

- 1 *La mar nye mö*
 - 2 *Lab jar kye sö je*
 - 3 *Pün la kyön jö*
 - 4 *Dro la jam pa pong*
 - 5 *Mön juk sem tong*
 - 6 *Do ngak chö la mö*
 - 7 *Ma min sang drok*
 - 8 *Rang-gi pung por nye*
 - 9 *Tong pa nyi pong*
 - 10 *Duk chen dzä wor ten*
 - 11 *Ta wa ma dren*
 - 12 *De den sem süin jin*
 - 13 *Dam tsik mi ten*
 - 14 *Bü me mö pa te*
- Tsa tung chu shi sok dang dö te sung*

1. **Despising or belittling my Guru;**
2. **Disregarding any practice;**

3. **Speaking badly of my vajra brothers and sisters**
4. **Abandoning love for any being;**
5. **Giving up wishing and entering bodhicitta;**
6. **Scorning the teachings of sutra or tantra;**
7. **Revealing secrets to those who are unripe;**
8. **Abusing my own aggregates;**
9. **Denying (or doubting) voidness;**
10. **Remaining close to malevolent people;**
11. **Not recollecting the view (of voidness);**
12. **Causing someone to lose his faith;**
13. **Not upholding my word of honour;**
14. **Despising women**

These are the fourteen root (tantric) downfalls.

I shall protect myself from them at the cost of my life.

THE DOWNFALLS OF THE FOURTEEN ROOT TANTRIC VOWS

1. *Despising or belittling my Guru:* insulting your own Vajra Master.
2. *Disregarding any practice:* breaking Buddha's words.
3. *Speaking badly of my vajra brothers and sisters.* Through the influence of anger, insulting your vajra brothers and sisters, pointing out their faults, not for the purpose of correction but for the purpose of insult. One has to be very careful with that. A lot of people will under the guise of thinking, 'I'm helping,' in reality hurt the person by pointing out their faults. A good motivation alone is not enough, you need a wise method. You have to point it out in such a way that people may acknowledge rather than reject it.
4. *Abandoning love for any being.* One should never give up love and compassion for all sentient beings.
5. *Giving up wishing and entering Bodhicitta.* One should never give up bodhimind.
6. *Scorning the teachings of sutra and tantra.* Never insult another's dharma practice. Formerly, in Tibet, our teaching tradition would say we were extremely fortunate, more fortunate than any other dharma practitioners, because, 'We have heard, met and encountered the great Tsongkhapa, who taught the perfectly pure dharma, pure as faultless gold, and that is so rare and fortunate.' People had a lot of pride also, a lot of them would

say, 'Yeah, we are the followers of Tsongkhapa, the others, well.....' They would look down on the other traditions, like Sakya, or Kagyu, or Nyingma. You cannot look down on those traditions, because they are also perfect traditions. If you do so, it is a fault. And so is saying Vajrayana is best and insulting the sutra Mahayana, and vice-versa, as well as saying, 'I'm a Mahayanist and Hinayana is only.....' This is insulting the Dharma of other practitioners and is a fault against this point.

7. *Revealing secrets to those who are unripe.* Vajrayana things cannot be shared with people who are not qualified to hear it. As I said before, the reason is not that there is anything to be kept secret, but if somehow a misconception develops, we get into problems. Probably not only misunderstanding of Vajrayana. 'Take Nixon. The communist Chinese told Nixon, 'We have to take over Tibet, because they are worshippers of evil: look here,' and they showed him a Yamantaka picture, and Nixon said, 'Okay, go ahead.' Probably that's misunderstanding.
8. *Abusing my own aggregates.* You cannot look down on your body, because it is a precious body. Not looking after yourself, after your physical body's need, is a downfall in Vajrayana. Especially being destructive to your own body, is a big downfall. And if you commit suicide, not only you have a downfall of killing a human being, but you also have a downfall of killing a deity. This is a very important point. The value of this particular life and the basis of the life, the body, is very, very important to preserve. Anything harmful to this particular body, in whatever way, is a downfall in Vajrayana.
9. *Denying or doubting voidness.*
10. *Remaining close to malevolent people.* You cannot make a judgment that this Guru is good, that one is bad; this is a good dharma, that is a bad dharma, because we don't know. People who have difficulties with it, are strongly recommended to keep away from them, in the beginning. Because if you do not and those people have problems, you are bound to fall into those problems too. Even in the sutra Lamrim teachings we talk about non-virtuous friends. They are, of course, sentient beings, human beings, you definitely have to be kind and compassionate towards them, however when you cannot protect yourself and

you try to help others just because you think 'I am a bodhisattva', there will be a double problem. Not only you can't help the other one, also you have the danger of falling down. Therefore it is recommended to keep away from them. In Vajrayana sometimes even wrathful actions are recommended, if the person is qualified. That does not go against the non-violence principle.

11. *Not recollecting the view of voidness.* You're supposed to remember emptiness six times a day. I think it refers to what is covered in your *Six-Session Yoga*.
12. *Causing someone to lose his faith.* People who come with total faith to you must never be cheated; if you cheat them, you have a downfall.
13. *Not upholding my word of honor.* You have to keep your commitments always.
14. *Despising women.* You cannot look down on the female; it is the wisdom nature. You have to keep total respect. You cannot insult a woman at all. If you want to obtain ultimate enlightenment within your lifetime, it is absolutely necessary to have a male or female partner. When I say male or female partner, I am not talking about homo- or heterosexual. If you are a male you have to have a female, and if you are a female you have to have a male partner. That is absolutely necessary if you want to obtain enlightenment within one lifetime. Without it you cannot. The consort is the very, very important source of all bliss, and represents the wisdom. The traditional Indian culture has a way of looking down on women, and Vajrayana was totally forbidding that in that culture at that period. It was emphasized, because the Brahmin tradition as well as certain Indian systems looked down on females, which of course you find very much in the Eastern part of the world everywhere, including Tibet. So this point has been emphasized because the culture carried looking down on women.

ADDITIONAL PLEDGES

*Yen lak tsa shi chang dang ja min pong
Dam pey gön ten drok la nyen kur ja ge chu kyong shing
Tek chen le dok gyu nye dang gom pang dam tsik ma lü sung*

I shall abandon the four basic non-virtues,
 as well as liquor and misbehaviour;
 Devote myself to a holy, protecting guru;
 Treat my dharma friends with respect;
 Cultivate the ten virtuous actions;
 Never withdraw from the mahayana;
 Avoid walking over or showing disrespect
 (to a sacred object)
 All these (additional) pledges I shall honour.

SECONDARY TANTRIC TRANSGRESSIONS

1 *Tsen nyi mi den chak gyar ten dang*
 2 *Du she sum drel nyom juk je*
 3 *Nö mi rung la sang dze tön dang*
 4 *Tsok kor dü su tab tsö je*
 5 *De pey dri la len lok deb dang*
 6 *Nyen tö nang du shak diin ne*
 7 *Yang dak min kyang nel jor par lom*
 8 *De pa me la dam chö tön*
 9 *Nyen sok ma dak kyil kor le juk*
 10 *Gö me so jang lab le de*
La ma nga chü kab dang gel wey
bom po nam kyang tsul shin sung

1. Relying upon an unqualified consort;
2. Sitting in union without the three recognitions;
3. Showing secret substances to an unsuitable vessel;
4. Fighting or arguing at an offering ceremony;
5. Giving false answers to sincerely asked questions;
6. Staying more than a week in the home of a sravaka;
7. Boasting that I am a yogi, although I am not;
8. Teaching the sacred Dharma to those with no faith;
9. Conferring mandala-rites without full preparation;
10. Needlessly breaking the pratimoksha or bodhicitta vows;
11. Acting in contradiction to the teachings of
 The Fifty Verses of Guru-devotion —

These are the secondary tantric transgressions. I shall guard myself from them in accordance with the rules.

Sitting in union without the three recognitions. What are the three recognitions? Remember, during the initiation you heard you have to have

three recognitions: the body in the form of the deity, the sound as mantra, the mind as dharma. That does not mean you have to think, ‘My body is the deity’s body’; that can create a lot of problems. Nor you have to think, ‘My sound is mantra’ nor you have to think, ‘My mind is dharma.’ What happens is this. 1) You generate your body into the deity’s body as you do when you go through the ritual; that is called the body in the form of a deity. 2) You have all these romantic mantras hugging each other in certain positions; the essence mantra of the male in the female’s heart and the essence-mantra of the female in the male’s heart and also going through the compromised position. That is called speech as mantra. 3) And all is of bliss-void nature. When the bliss is recognized to be of void nature it is called recognition of the mind as dharma.

Fighting or arguing at an offering ceremony. This downfall is the reason I try to keep everybody’s mouth shut during the *tsob*. But people don’t listen, they keep on talking all the time. Unnecessary chit-chat during the *tsob* period is a downfall. During the *tsob* you have to shut your mouth, because it is unnecessary to speak.

Teaching the sacred Dharma to those with no faith. That is a total downfall.

UNCOMMON COMMITMENTS OF MOTHER TANTRA

- 1 *Yön pei kün chö nyi nye chö*
- 2 *Tsen den min la nyom juk pang*
- 3 *Jor tse ta dang drel mi ja*
- 4 *Chak lam la mö gyur me ja*
- 5 *Chak gya nam nyi dor mi ja*
- 6 *Chi nang tab la tso wor be*
- 7 *Kun da mi jin tsang chö ten*
- 8 *Jang sem len tse kyuk tro pang*

- 1 **I shall perform all actions (first) with my left;
make offerings (to women) and never abuse them;**
- 2 **Reject sitting in union with an unqualified (consort);**
- 3 **While in union, never be parted from the view
(of voidness);**
- 4 **Relentlessly aspire to the path of
(transforming) attachment;**
- 5 **Never forsake the two kinds of mudra;**

- 6 **Strive mainly for the outer and inner methods;**
- 7 **Never release seminal fluid;**
- 8 **Remain chaste in my behaviour;
and abandon repulsion when tasting bodhicitta.**

1. *I shall perform all actions first with my left*¹⁰⁰. What does that mean? This is about three offering things: the tsoh offerings of the beginning, the tsoh offering of the end and making the hand-offerings. There is a hand-offering which I never introduced to any of you, which I would like to do soon.
7. *Never release seminal fluid*. Our ordinary sexual love affair might not really be considered as a union in the Vajrayana sense. Normally the teachings on these sorts of subjects are not talked openly, nor have the texts been written very openly. I asked Song Rinpoche once, 'If you lose the bodhicitta it is considered a downfall, right? How is that? Song Rinpoche told me, 'When we normally have sex, the semen that you get, doesn't come from the crown, so it is no question'. The Vajrayana union you are talking about I think is extra-ordinary sex. Through the power of *tummo* one will melt the *bodhicitta*¹⁰¹ from the crown. You notice that in the practice of Heruka there is a little extra moon [on the crown]; that moon is the indication of preserving the source of bliss, which is the male semen at the crown. The female 'drop' is the blood. We call those red and white bodhicitta. You draw the white bodhicitta from the crown through the central channel, through which never even ordinary air has passed, the most sensitive psychic channel which has no circulation inside at all (!) because of the knots that have been tied by the right and left channels. When those loosen the knots and the bodhicitta goes within the central channel, the extra-ordinary feeling that you experience is beyond imagination! So, normal sexual union is probably not what is referred to in Vajrayana. Using that as a reason, this line might not refer to mundane, ordinary sex. Might not. I don't think I am the authority here to say yes or no, but I sort of give you something on the basis of Song Rinpoche's answer.

CONCLUSION

It is very easy to take the initiations, but it is very difficult to follow the vows, particularly the Vajrayana vows and especially the mother tantra vows. Mother tantra is very important, more than any other tantra; particularly the Heruka male and female tantra! The Heruka female tantra is the Vajrayogini tantra¹⁰². Both of them are very important. They are particularly more effective in the today's degenerated age.

Normally, when Buddha had generated the mandala of a yidam and taught the tantra, the mandala of all the deities was dissolved by Buddha, except for the mandala of the Heruka tantra. That mandala was not closed, is still open, and, moreover, is looking in the direction of this universe! And the more the age degenerates, the more powerful and effective it becomes.

Of all other deity practices, when the time degenerates, when people become bad, the tantric power loses and gets more at a distance. But the Heruka tantra works in the opposite direction. When the people become more degenerated and more influenced by delusions, the Heruka tantra gets closer and becomes more effective. As I mentioned to you during the initiation, this particular Heruka initiation has the commitment of Heruka and Vajrayogini itself for seven generations.

IV

Compact Explanation of the Six-session Guru yoga

The root of the Six-session Guru yoga is the commitment of six times this and six times that, according to the vows you have taken to all five buddha families during the initiation. [They can be counted as nineteen commitments.]

INTRODUCTION

In the *Vajra Peak Tantra* it says there are fourteen root downfalls. In Tibetan they use the word *pampa*, meaning ‘the one who loses’. For anyone of those fourteen root downfalls we get a *pampa*. For monks there are only four *pampa*’s: stealing, killing a human being, sexual misconduct and lying. Once a monk loses one, he is no longer a monk. In Vajrayana there are fourteen of them, so that is more difficult. Actually Vajrayana people are more celibacy-persons than monks and nuns. That does not mean you cannot have sex, don’t worry. Vajrayana is much more open, but also much more strict. It is funny. If a person cannot review the Six-session Guru yoga three times a day and three times a night, he or she does not become *pampa*, or lost, but becomes ‘heavy’, in Tibetan *bompo*, big, huge. What you as a practitioner are expected to do is to see every day whether you have committed one of those downfalls, and if you have: purify them. If you don’t have them, be happy about it. Always think: I would like to have my vows pure. That is the recommended thing to do.

If you cannot say the Six-session yoga six times, if you miss it once, then when twenty four hours pass you are going to get six

bompo's, five for the buddha families and the one for the one you have missed. If you miss two days you get twelve, in three days it becomes eighteen, and so on. This is how it works.

Actually, we are all Vajrayana sanghas and that is more difficult than being a monk. Truly. And it is far better than being monks.

The Six-session yoga is a real commitment and much more serious than saying sadhanas. Sadhanas you may miss here and there sometimes, but the Six-session yoga you should never miss. If you cannot say the long one or the middle one, at least repeat the four-lines one six times. Do it the moment you get up, even while you take a shower or while you are sitting on the toilet or brushing your teeth. If you understand the words and the meaning, perfect, it is the icing on the cake. If you don't understand it well, just the words alone cover. The masters made this Six-session yoga, they put the words together, and it is an excellent gift for us, really.

Benefits. For great teachers like Tsongkhapa, the Six-session yoga was the essence practice. And perhaps this also benefits us. If you don't miss it, if you do it regularly, and if you take initiation [from time to time], it sort of insures you not to fall into the lower realms in your future lives. It also ensures you to meet with Vajrayana in every life, and within a short time you will be able reach buddhahood. Furthermore, it helps to clear obstacles as well as to develop luck and fortune. It even helps you to impress other people, to make people like you, without making any effort.

Morality. By keeping your commitments you will have perfect morality. Whether you are homosexual or straight, it does not matter, you will have perfect morality. In Vajrayana your sexual reality is not an issue for your morality. However, if you tell that to the non-Vajrayana people they might tell you: this is an immoral religion... (It is wonderful that in the Netherlands homosexuals can marry). Morality is based on your commitment. You can also find that in Tsongkhapa's *Foundation of All Perfections*,

The foundation of what then produces the two powers,
Is the guarding of the pledges and commitments of tantric initiation.
Bless me so that I may have uncontrived knowledge of this
And guard my discipline as I do my very life.

This is the basis on which your morality can go right or wrong in Vajrayana. To keep that morality right, is a very difficult Vajrayana vow, more difficult than the liberation vows of nuns and monks. Some liberation vows are physical: you have to do this, you can eat then, you cannot have this... Vajrayana vows are all mental. That is the difference. Physically you can do what you want. If you want to eat meat, you eat meat, if you want to smoke you can smoke. Mental [commitment] is very difficult. Number one: you have to get it together and number two: your mind is involved with it, which is much more difficult.

The Six-session yoga is the *actual* antidote to the negative emotions, though the wisdom is the *real* antidote. Wisdom is based on concentration; concentration is based on morality. These are the Three Higher Trainings. All three of them depend of awareness. And that awareness you bring in three times a day, three times a night. This is how it works and it is so helpful! Tsongkhapa says,

There are a few people who say that in order to develop wisdom you need concentration, but there is not a single person who says that to develop concentration you need morality.'

It is brief, but clear I hope. The fundamental basis on which we work is the morality. On top of the morality we build concentration. On top of concentration we build wisdom. Morality keeps your vows in tact. When we say commitment, people normally hear 'commitment to say the sadhana'. We are *not* talking about that commitment. The commitment here regards the vows we have taken during the three-hour initiation. *That* is the fundamental bases of your morality.

HOW DOES THE SIX-SESSION GURU-YOGA WORK?

First you have to *take refuge and generate bodhimind*. That helps you to keep the positive and negative advices of refuge. You think, 'I will never give up my decision to become a buddha for the benefit of all sentient beings, even not for the sake of my life.' So, by saying the refuge-verse you do not only keep the refuge vow in tact, you also keep your bodhisattva vow in tact.

In Vajrayana there is *Buddha Vairochana's* commitment to take refuge to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and that is also hereby covered.

Long Six-session Guru yoga

I go for refuge, until I am enlightened,
To the Buddhas, de Dharma
and the Highest Assembly.

From the virtuous merit
that I collect
By practicing giving and the other
perfections
May I attain the state of a buddha
To be able to benefit all sentient
beings.

May all sentient beings
be parted from aversion and clinging,
feeling close to some and distant from others.
May they win the bliss that is specially sublime.
May they find release from the ocean of unbearable sorrow
And may they never be parted from freedom's true joy.

In the long Six-session yoga the *Four Immeasurables* follow. By that you keep the immeasurables maintained. These particular verses have the immeasurable of equanimity, the immeasurable of love, the immeasurable of compassion, the immeasurable of joy, all four of them. That helps to cover two of *Buddha Ratnasambhava's* commitment of the four generosityes: the generosity of love and also the generosity of no fear. Why is this last one covered? Because equanimity is equalizing the enemy and the friend. If there is no enemy, who can frighten you?

Then there is a verse:

From this moment on, until I am a buddha,
May I never give up, though my life be at stake,
The attitude wishing to gain
full enlightenment
In order to free from the fears of samsara
And nirvana's complacency all sentient beings.

Short Six-session Guru yoga

In my heart I turn to
the Three Jewels of Refuge.

May I free suffering beings
and place them in bliss.
May the compassionate spirit
of love grow within me
That I may complete the
enlightening path.

In the bodhisattva practice there are four white and four black practices.¹⁰³ These are all covered by this verse. The next goes:

O buddhas, bodhisattvas and gurus,
please listen
To what I now say
from the depths of my heart.
Just as all buddhas of the past have developed
The thought of enlightenment, true bodhicitta,
Then practiced its stages
of graded development
Following the trainings for all buddhas' sons,
So may I too, for the sake of all beings,
Develop bodhicitta and follow the trainings
Exactly as all bodhisattvas have done.

This particular verse will rejuvenate the bodhisattva vow every day. The downfalls here are the eighteen root downfalls to the bodhisattva vow. After that you have two verses:

At this moment my life has become truly fruitful,
For, having attained an endowed human body,
Today I have developed the true buddha essence —
Bodhicitta, and have thus become Buddha's son [heir].

Applying now any skilled means whatsoever
May I always accord what I do with this essence
And follow the actions of all buddhas' sons [heirs].
May I never confuse with
this pure faultless essence
Any teachings that lack this enlightening thought.

That verse tells you not only to purify the bodhisattva vows but also keep the bodhisattva action vow continuously active. That is what we do with this verse.

Next is generating the Guru in the form of Buddha Vajradhara.

In the sky before me,
on a breath-taking throne of jewels,
On a mandala-seat of a lotus,
a sun and full moon,
Sits my root guru, the all-pervading
Vajradhara,
With a blue-coloured body,
one face and two arms,

In the sky,
on a lotus, sun and moon seat,
I see my Lama as Dorje Chang¹⁰⁴;
Blue in color,
holding dorje and bell,
Experiencing great bliss
with his consort Ying Chukma.¹⁰⁵

Holding vajra and bell,
embracing his duplicate consort.
He shines resplendent
with all the marks of a buddha,
Adorned with
many dazzling jewelled ornaments,
Draped with fine garments
of enchanting heavenly scarfs.
Even the mere remembrance of him
dispels all my torment.
With a nature
encompassing every supreme refuge,
He sits crossed-legged
in the vajra-position,
The three spots of his body
marked with three letters.

At his brow a white OM;
at this throat a red AH;
From the blue HUM at his heart,
many colors shine,
Calling forth the Awakened
from the ten directions,
Inviting them to him
to melt into one.

Gyelwa Ensapa generally recommends to generate the Guru in a white Vajrasattva form. Why use the word Vajrasattva here? It is Vajradhara, I did not make a mistake. The purpose for using it is hiding, to give you the wrong name, the wrong address, the wrong telephone number. Even in the Ganden Lha Gyema you can generate Buddha Vajradhara in the heart of Je Tsongkhapa. I think it is in the *Ganden Lha Gyema* transcript. This is probably combined with the Six-session yoga. If you really go down in the Ganden Lha Gyema it is not so much different from the Six-session yoga. There is the seven limb offering, mandala offering and actually it is rejuvenating your vows. It does not matter, but for us it is easier to do the Six-session yoga, because there is this four-line form, which is very simple. You may not develop anything by saying the four lines, but it makes you covered, and that itself is a great achievement.

Sometimes in the Six-session yoga Yamantaka is at the heart level of buddha Vajradhara, or maybe sometimes Heruka. It changes here and there. It does not really matter. Important is that you realize, 'This is my root master'. Whoever it might be, it represents all the spiritual masters from whom you have received teachings, even a simple word. All of them are in one person. That person is not only the collection of all your spiritual masters, but also the collection of

the lineage masters, all the yidams, and the sangha. It is a total collection of the objects of refuge.

Not only that; even each single hair pore is a complete ever-existing mandala. So even though you are looking at one single lama, each and every part of the body has all different complete mandalas in it. It is very difficult to understand, but with the help of the computer you can understand how much information you can collect from one little chip, so now you can understand.

Then comes in the *Long Six-session yoga* making a total *prostration*.

I bow at your lotus-feet,
O my jewel-like guru Vajradhara,
Your kindness heralds an instantaneous
Dawn of great bliss.

All the things I possess and what is not mine,
What is actually placed here
and what I mentally create,
I present you an ocean-like cloud
of these various offerings:
Outer, inner and secret.

The body, speech and mind
of myself and others,
Our wealth as well as our virtues amassed
in the past, the present and the future,
An excellent jewelled mandala
together with
a mass of Samantabhadra offerings
I envision these all and present them to you,
O my Guru, my Yidam
and the Three Precious Gems.
Accepting these in your compassion,
bestow on me waves of blessings.
IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM
NIRYATAYAMI.

To your blue feet I bow,
Dorje Chang,

With oceans of clouds
I make triple offerings.

The land, jewelled vase,
the sun and the moon,
And all precious offerings
I present unto you.

Whether you do the long or the short practice, most important is to realize that: 'This figure I have in front of me, is the total collection of all enlightened ones. And I am very grateful. I appreciate your kindness. You can lead me to total enlightenment within a second. That is why I offer my respect, like in the Indian tradition: touching the lowest part of the guru's body with the highest part of my body.' If you have time, opportunity and interest you can say here: OM

GURU VAJRADHARA SAPARIWARA ARGHAM, PADYAM, PHUSPE...etc. You can make all these offerings too, outer, inner, secret and suchness offerings. This is the extra icing.

Then the *mandala offering*. We offer body, speech and mind from ourselves and anybody and all that is virtuous. Sometimes the teachings will tell you to offer the past, the present and the future virtues also, but you cannot offer past virtues. Probably most teaching and texts will not tell you that, but you have to remember: the past is past. Offer all your virtues and food and everything, made into the form of a beautiful landscape, environment and limitless space. The mandala is the centre of the universe. There are no toxics, it is a 'tax and toxic free' universe. This is the essence of the mandala offering.

The mandala offering is a practice for purification and accumulating merit. The more expensive the mandala material is, the better it is for you to purify and to accumulate merit. If you cannot afford it, do not worry about it. You can even use a plate, or a piece of wood. But if you can get it, for instance by skipping two lunches or not seeing a movie and save your money for a good mandala, it is worthwhile. Actually, what you are really doing is, you offer your positive karma in the form of the beautiful landscape. There is no limit to our mind. You can build this beautiful landscape out of precious jewels. This helps you to build your own pure life. And you see all the heaps of offerings you make in the mandala as Samantabhadra offerings. So you say, 'My mind is picking it up, I am giving it to you, Guru, Yidam, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. By your kindness accept it and bless me.'

Why do you say 'by your kindness' and not 'kindly accept it'? Because, 'I create, imagine it, but I do not have the capability to give it to you. But you, in your perfection of compassion, are able to do everything. I have no power to give you, but you have the power to take it, so please accept it.' That is what it means. And, 'Not only accept it, but please give me your blessing'.

The word blessing in Tibetan is two words: *jin lab*. *Jin* refers to the object of refuge, wonderful, majestic, with the power of capability. The second word, *lab*, means 'transform'. In other words, by offering your body and receiving the blessing your body becomes a pure kaya. I am using the Sanskrit word *kaya*, because in English

they have no other word for body. So you request, 'May my ordinary body be transformed into the extraordinary body of a buddha. Likewise may my sound be transformed into the speech of a buddha and my mind be transformed into the total knowledge mind of a buddha.'

So even when you make inner, outer, secret or suchness offerings, what you really ask for is transformation. Every time when you do this request it is important you think that it has actually materialized and is pure, at least for a second or a minute.

What does that do? If you say the words, think about the meaning and remember the advice, it will cover the downfalls as well as *Buddha Amogasiddhi's* commitment of making as much offerings as possible. Also it covers the commitment to prostrate to the Guru's feet six times a day, the bodhisattva-vow commitment to offer to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and the commitment to take refuge to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, make offerings and to follow the advises. All these commitments are covered.

By whatever offerings you make to your master, even if he is just a simple person, you will have the benefit of offering to all the enlightened beings. Why? Because the buddhas have committed to all sentient beings that, while offering to any spiritual master who teaches and guides you, all the buddhas will enter in the body of that very master and will accept your offerings, whatever you offer: flowers, food, incense, money, cloth or whatever. But the most important offer is to make your master happy. On this level there is a link with the Lamrim: the eight benefits of having a guru and the eight disadvantages of not properly treating the guru, the disadvantages of having a wrong view, letting doubts rise and all those. Here you must remember that and you have to think that, for the sake of your future lives, you will make your guru happy. Do also remember the qualities of the master and develop profound faith.

The following three verses in the long Six-session yoga

I humbly beseech you, my precious Guru,
Just as the buddhas of the three times and the
ten directions have tamed (sentient beings),
You too enact the buddhas deeds
in countless realms,

Powers supreme

Taking the form of a saffron-robed monk.

I humbly beseech you, my precious Guru,
Esteemed by Vajradhara,
for those of meagre mind,
As a field of merit more holy
Then the endless circle of infinite buddhas.,

Every supreme and mundane attainment
Follows upon pure devotion to you,
my protector,
Seeing this I forsake my body and even my life.
Bless me to practice what will only please you.

and powers mundane
Follow upon pure devotion to you.
Thus my body, life, and wealth
I forsake
And ask for your aid
to only please you.

These are the guru-devotional practices of mental devotion and action devotion. The root of all development is the development of profound faith, remembering the guru's kindness and paying him respect. All of this is covered by these verses. One of the verses even says that Buddha Vajradhara appeared as a human being [in order to help and guide us].

Then, it is not compulsory, you can let light and liquid coming from the Guru's body, purifying all negativity in general and particularly any negativity that goes against guru-devotional practice. All becomes purified, washed away in the three types of visualizations: pushing from up to bottom, from the bottom up and like a lightening in a dark room.

Then, in the second part,

Requested in this way,
my supreme Guru
Comes to the crown of my head
Once more¹⁰⁶
he gladly (merges with me)
We become of one taste.

Now my Lama as requested
comes to the top of my head
And dissolves until we both are
one.

[When the Lama has merged with you] you meditate that all environment and inhabitants are just like a magician's performance, like a reflection of a moon – empty by nature. In true reality things do not exist; it is only labeled, I point it out and I perceive. It is like a bubble in the water, it pops up and goes. So in true reality it does not exist. However, because of causes and conditions things are materialized. Just like that 'me' is also empty and from the emptiness I can pop up like a Vajrasattva.

With the pride of being Vajrasattva
I embrace (my consort) Bhagavati
While holding a vajra and bell symbolic
Of the secret of Great Bliss simultaneous
With the secret of (Voidness) free from the
mental fabrication of true existence.

And I as Dorje Sempa
unite with Chom Denma,
Holding dorje and bell and
experiencing great bliss.

Remember that you rise in the form of Vajrasattva, Vajrasattva in the sense of a white Vajradhara. That is the mudra commitment. You have bell and vajra. Whether you actually hold a bell and a vajra or have the drawings, this fulfills the vajramaster commitment during the initiation. There are three commitments: the vajra commitment, the bell commitment, and the mudra commitment [It is also covering *Buddha Akshobya's* commitment].

Then you have the practice of generosity.

From this moment on,
without any sense of a loss,
I send forth my body,
and likewise my wealth,
And my virtues amassed
throughout the three times
In order to help all beings, my mothers.

Land, body, wealth,
and all virtues collected,

For the sake of all mother
sentient beings I gladly release;

Body, mind and speech and all the virtues that I can give, they are all within the Six-session yoga, even if not in that order. That covers the commitment of *Buddha Ratnasambhava*.

Then again,

I shall never transgress, even in my dreams,
the most minor rule
of the pure moral trainings
Of the pratimoksha, bodhicitta
and vajrayana vows.
I shall practice
according to the buddhas' words.

And I vow to protect
all the vows I have taken,
Nor transgress even one
for the sake of my life.

Though we cannot protect ourselves completely from the downfalls, keep in mind that 'I will be alert not to fall into those downfalls, I pray, I request you, Lamalha, to bless me to do that. Maintaining that awareness covers the downfall of morality in *Buddha Vairochana's* commitment.

Then *Buddha Amitabha's* commitment of practicing the three yantras and four tantras.

As Buddha intended, I shall uphold
The complete sacred Dharma
of insight and scriptures
As gathered together
In the three types of vehicle and the
four tantric classes.
I shall liberate all beings
by whichever means is suited to each.

By means of holding
both sutra and tantra,
May I liberate all living beings
completely.
May the virtues collected
flow on towards the Dharma,
Preserve it and nourish
the prayers of the Masters.

This verse covers this commitment. At the end of the Vajrayana vows you are promising 'I take all vows that there are to take'. Do you remember? This particular verse will cover all of those, all five buddha commitments. Then the question rises: If you say that last verse, does that cover everything? If so, do you have to do the others? Well, nobody says yes and neither anybody says no either. But then, we have that four lined verse!

Then there is the dedication. The way I talked today is slightly different from before. I tried to give you a different approach today. Any questions?

Audience: You said that it is not advised to dedicate the virtues of the past, why? Has not everyone created virtues in the past which are not active already?

Rimpoche: It is gone already, you used it already. Even if it looks like new, it is second hand.

Audience: What do you do when someone forgets to recite the Six-session yoga for one day, because the person is ill for instance? What should you do the next day?

Rimpoche: Then you might come in trouble. But that does not mean that there is no way out. Since you have this very short one, why not do it three times six times? One time six substitutes and one times six for 'interest'. Nobody is collecting the interest, but anyway... And then, if there are actually downfalls, you can purify it by initiation only. That is why Six-session yoga is very important, don't miss it!

Why don't you build the habit of saying this shortest one the moment you wake up six times. In this way you are not going to have downfalls at all. And when you do practice, you spent more time to think about it and do it three times or one time. Whenever there is an opportunity, Sundays for instance. Why don't you do that? It might be useful, because the downfalls are protected and that simply seems the worst. Find out yourself how it suits you.

Normal teachings will tell you to do three in the morning and three in the evening, but then, the evening will grow later and later. And then it grows three in the morning and you are falling asleep... That is what I do. Sitting in front of the TV and hoping that I wake up. And that does not work. So find your way, find out how it suits you. It is important.

It is different from the sadhanas. The sadhanas are equally important, but this is real business. In traditions where they don't have a sadhana commitment, they are still very serious about this Six-session Guru-yoga.

Audience: I remember you saying some time ago that the four-lined version did not really cover everything.

Rimpoche: That is what Pabongka said, but it is better than nothing. It is on a very high level, that the great Pabongka Rinpoche mentioned this. We are way from that. At least it is something.

Audience: Is there a special reason to rise as white Vajradhara or Vajrasattva?

Rimpoche: They are all the same. Let the scholars worry about that. For us it is all about the practice, it does not matter whether it is Vajrasattva or Vajradhara. Actually what you generate is Vajradhara because that is the creator of all mandalas. Vajrasattva [in the sense of the kriya tantra Vajrasattva] is more for purification.

Terminology in Buddhism is not always clear. Here you have a 'creator'. Buddha Vajradhara is the creator of all the different mandalas: Hevajra, Guhyasamaja, Kalachakra Tara *etc.* In Vajrayana things it is important to be sensitive, don't follow the normal western system of black or white. Why not allow a little grey.

Audience: You said that forgetting to do your sadhana is not that serious as Six-session yoga, what if you do forget it?

Rimpoche: Double it. Particularly the mantra: triple it. And than: soon take an initiation, either self or from someone. Traditional teaching say about this double-up mantra business: you have to go up from that time onwards and that becomes very difficult. These days I do not insist on that. Perhaps I do not have the authority to not insist, but it is practically not possible, because some people may have to say one thousand mantras afterwards. Even if you are interested, devoted and committed, after a little while it becomes impossible if you have one to double up and then another one to double up and another one. It is better to have something than to forget about it.

And why is the Six-session yoga more serious? Because most of the sadhana commitments come from the Lama who gave the initiation saying: you took this initiation for your practice, so do it every day. This Six-session yoga however is connected to the commitments in the initiation, where we took the vajra nectars and the four nectars, putting the vase and the vajra on the head, and this and that. I am not saying: breaking sadhanas is okay, but to me Six-session yoga is much more serious.

Audience: Why is it so strict? Is it to build up a perfect morality, or strength or discipline. I cannot image that someone counts how many mantras you do. If the intention is good, if you are really involved.....

Rimpoche: It is, really. I am sure somebody is really counting the mantras. I am positively sure. Perhaps who counts is yourself. From the point of purification, from the point of merit. This is serious mind training business, because the aim is a very high state.

Okay, this may have been short, but sweet. Good luck.

Short Six-session Guru yogas

THE SHORT SIX-SESSION YOGA¹⁰⁷

*kön chog sum la nying nä kyab su chi
dro kün dung dräl tän der gö par ja
de'i lä dsog jang tob chir jang chub sem
kye nä gyäl sä chö la lab par gyi*

**In my heart I turn to the Three Jewels of Refuge.
May I free suffering beings and place them in bliss.
May the compassionate spirit of love grow within me
That I may complete the enlightening path.**

*diin gyi nam kar tri pä nyi däi teng
tsa wäi la ma kyab dag dor je chang
ku dog ngön po dor dril sung nä ni
ying chug mar kyü lhän kye de wä röi*

**In the sky, on a lotus, sun and moon seat,
I see my Lama as Dorje Chang¹⁰⁸;
Blue in color, holding dorje and bell,
Experiencing great bliss with his consort Ying Chukma.¹⁰⁹**

*nä sum yi ge sum tsän HUNG ö kyi
ye she pa nam chän drang ro chig gyur*

**At his brow a white OM; at this throat a red AH;
From the blue HUM at his heart, many colors shine,
Calling forth the Awakened from the ten directions,
Inviting them to him to melt into one.**

*dor je chän zhab pämor chag tsäl lo
chi nang sang wäi chö trin gya tsö chö
ri ling rin chen ter bum nyi da sog
la me kün tu sang pöi chö pa büi*

To your blue feet I bow, Dorje Chang,
 With oceans of clouds I make triple offerings.
 The land, jewelled vase, the sun and the moon,
 And all precious offerings I present unto you.

*chog dang tün mong ngö drub ma lü kün
 gön kyö tsül zhin ten päi je dro war
 tong nä lü dang sog kyang yong tang te
 kyö nye ko na drub par jin gyi lob*

Powers supreme and powers mundane
 Follow upon pure devotion to you.
 Thus my body, life, and wealth I forsake
 And ask for your aid to only please you.

*de tar söl tab la ma chi wor jön
 rang la tim pä yer me ro chig gyur
 dag nyi dor je sem pa chom dän mar
 dor dril zung kyü lhän keye de wä röl*

Now my Lama as requested comes to the top of my head
 And dissolves until we both are one,
 And I as Dorje Sempa¹¹⁰ unite with Chom Denma¹¹¹,
 Holding dorje and bell and experiencing great bliss.

*nä lü long chö dü sum ge tsog nam
 ma nam dön du pang me tang war ja
 so tar jang sem sang ngag nam sum gyi
 chä tsam sog gi chir yang dor mi ja*

Land¹¹², body, wealth, and all virtues collected,
 For the sake of all mother sentient beings I gladly release;
 And I vow to protect all the vows I have taken,
 Nor transgress even one for the sake of my life.

*teg sum gyü de zhi dü lung tog chö
 leg sung tab keyi dro wa yong su dröl
 ge di dü sum de sheg sä chä keyi
 dzä mön drub dang dam chö dzin chir ngo*

By means of holding both sutra and tantra,
 May I liberate all living beings completely.
 May the virtues collected flow on towards the Dharma,
 Preserve it and nourish the prayers of the Masters.

chog sum jin lab ten drel mi lüi thü
leg mön drub nä sang gyä nyur thob shog

**May the profound blessings of the Precious Three Jewels,
And the unerring truth of dependent arising,
Fulfil all the prayers that now I set forth
And lead me across to enlightenment's shore.**

The short Six-session yoga, that you have been given, does not have everything in it. It almost has. It pretty much covers everything, it is almost the same, it is almost as good as the long one. Almost. You may not be taking the bodhisattva vows and Vajrayana vows in there. You simply say you generate the bodhimind and follow the activities of the bodhisattvas. That might not be taking [or renewing] the vow.

But, the shorter version also covers completely all the nineteen commitments to the five buddha families. Pabongka made these things in detail; before there was only the four lines short one, what we call now the shortest Six-session yoga. Pabongka said that was not enough because it did not include all that is to be included here.

THE SHORTEST SIX-SESSION GURU YOGA – FOUR LINES

Lama kon chog sum la kyab chu chi
Rang ngi lbar sel dor dril sung ney cho
Dor ngang cho sung nye cho tha dag dom
Gye cho kun du jin shie dro don che

**To the Guru and the Three Jewels I go for refuge.
Visualizing myself as the deity, holding vajra and bell,
I present offerings.
I will uphold all the dharmas of sutra and tantra,
restrain from all misconduct,
gather all virtuous dharmas
and with the four ways of giving liberate all beings.**

This shortest one does *not* cover the commitments.

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THE FIVE BUDDHA FAMILIES¹¹³

Buddha	AKSHOBYA <i>Mikjö Dorje</i> Immovable Vajra	VAIROCHANA <i>Nampar Namdqe</i> <i>Namdqe Dorje</i> Illuminating Vajra	RAVINASAMBHAVA <i>Rinchen Yuden</i> <i>Rinchen Dorje</i> Jewel Vajra	AMITHABA <i>Öpame</i> <i>Pema Dorje</i> Lotus Vajra	AMOGHASIDDHI <i>Dön Yö Driipa</i> <i>Dön Yö Dorje</i> Accomplishing Vajra
Direction ¹¹⁴	Center	East	South	West	North
Family	Vajra	Buddha	Ratna	Padma	Karma
Attribute	vajra	wheel	jewel	lotus	double vajra or sword
Seed-syllable	HUM 	OM 	TRAM 	HIRIH 	AH 
Gesture Skt <i>mudra</i>	earth touching	teaching	giving	meditation	fearlessness or protection
Color	blue	white	yellow	red	green

Element	space	water ¹⁵	earth	fire	air
Aggregate Skt. <i>skandha</i> ¹¹⁶	consciousness Skt. <i>vijñāna</i> Tib. <i>rnam shes</i>	form Skt. <i>rūpa</i> Tib. <i>gyugs</i>	feelings Skt. <i>vedanā</i> Tib. <i>tsolorba</i>	perception/ discrimination Skt. <i>samjñā</i> Tib. <i>tha shes</i>	compositional factors, or volition Skt. <i>samskāra</i> Tib. <i>tha byed</i>
Delusion	anger/hatred	ignorance/stu- pidity/rigidity	pride/ miserliness	attachment/ desire	jealousy
Wisdom	Suchness / all- encompassing Skt <i>dharmaśāstra</i> ,	mirror-like	equality / equanimity	discriminating	all- accomplishing
Commitments Skt. <i>samaya</i>	-keep vajra -keep bell -keep mudra -keep close bond with guru	-refuge to Buddha -to Dharma, -to Sangha <i>three moralities</i> : -restrain from nonvirtues -practice virtues -benefit others	<i>four generosity</i> : -give material aid -give Dharma -give protection -give love	-uphold sutra -uphold lower classes of tantra -uphold higher classes of tantra	-make offerings -uphold all other commitments

THE FIVE BUDDHAS in sambhogakaya form



Amithaba



Ratnasambhava



Akshobhya



Amoghasiddhi



Vairochana

Visualizing in Tantra

OUR SELF-IMAGE

We are here to talk about visualization, the usage of it in Buddhism and how to actually do it. I suppose a lot of us find visualization may be a little bit strange in the beginning. But actually we should not be confused by that word visualization, because what it is actually talking about is the usage of *imagination*. And our imagination we're using all the time, particularly in making projections.

In fact we project all the time. For example, we see a spider and instead of just seeing the spider we project some sort of 'yak' onto the spider and we react, 'Huh! This horrible thing!' Then we don't actually react to this little thing is minding his own business on the wall, but we react to our projection or our visualization. Right? That visualization might not be something concrete, we really don't see the spider with fangs things like that, but it is a general feeling that we have about the spider.

So we have a lot of projections about things and particularly about situations, about other people and about ourselves. And this is what is involved very much with what is known in the West as *self-image*. Right? The self-image might not necessarily be very visual, but it is a certain feeling, an idea that we have about ourselves. Now the self-image that we have of ourselves, is something which is quite important. It plays a large role in our lives, because it deals with our idea who we are, what our identity is.

This is something which can get us in a lot of difficulties, because often we'll have a negative self-image of ourselves. Right? We can imagine that, 'I am short, fat and ugly and nobody loves me' for example, and based on that we can feel sorry for ourselves, be very

shy and so on. If we feel, 'I am no good, I don't deserve to be loved' -which a lot of people do feel and which is maybe due to the influence of a misunderstanding of original sin- then based on that we can have a lot of difficulties in our relationship with others. Right? We feel very insecure and feel, 'I am not loved by my partner' and then we are always demanding the other person, 'Why didn't you say you loved me?' And even if they did say that they love us, we don't really believe them and we say, 'You're only saying it, you don't mean it.' Right? That is because self-images tend to be very fixed and we think that we are always this way.

Like to somebody whose self-image is 'I am fat', it doesn't matter how much weight you loose, that persons still feel they're fat, - don't they ? It is the same thing if your image is 'Nobody loves me'. It doesn't matter how many times other people say 'I love you'; it doesn't count.

Now we get into a lot of trouble with these type of images, because if we are always demanding our partner, saying, 'Love me.' and, 'Where did you go last night?' and, 'Why didn't you call?', the partner will feel very claustrophobic and say, 'Give me room', which makes us feel even more insecure. So we grasp even more, 'Why didn't you call ?' And eventually it gets so difficult that the relationship breaks up. Then we get into a new relationship and again the same self-image, the same insecurity, is there. Right? The same demands come up and again the relationship gets into trouble and breaks up. This is what is known as an *uncontrollably recurring situation of problems*. In Sanskrit it is known as *samsara*. It is a situation that is always repeating over and over again with a lot of difficulty and we have no control over it.

So we try to look: what is the cause of this? Because we can see how, when we have this sort of self-image, we feel very compelled to defending, or we feel threatened and so on. If our image is in connection with our work in an office with certain duties that we have, then if somebody else comes into the office and starts to do something which we thought was our job, we act very much like a dog: we bark when somebody comes into our yard. Or if our image is in terms of being a cook: you know how very, very upset we get if somebody comes into our kitchen and starts to add things into

what we are cooking or tells us how to do things, this is our territory!

The reason why we have this trouble is first of all that we really don't know who we are, what is really going on in the world. Because we don't understand this, we don't understand who everybody else is, and how reality is functioning, and then we feel very insecure. And being insecure is like somebody that is thrown into the water and grasps for anything he can get to get some security.

What *we* think will give us security is some sort of identity. Which is a self-image. And what we tend to do is this: we have a big black crayon and we draw a big black line around some part of ourselves and then we grasp to it and say, 'This is me. This is how I really am'. And unfortunately it goes to the next step, 'This is how I always will be'. This can either be a real aspect of ourselves or some imagined one. Usually it is just one small part of ourselves and we ignore everything else.

So we can identify with having a strong body, and then as we get older we have troubles because of that, because we can't stand that we have gray hair or we're getting older. It doesn't fit with our self-image. So we have to color our hair and put on make-up and so on. And then we have to play sports and jog with young people to prove we are still young. Even if it gives us a heart-attack we still have to do that. And we want to have an affair with a younger person to prove that we are young and attractive. That obviously can cause us a lot of anxiety, can't it? So we grasp for an identity like this and we feel insecure about it. We ignore everything else about ourselves; our mind, our family, all these things don't count, it is just how young we are, that is the important thing. We ignore all that and the only thing that is important is how we look. Or somebody can identify with being an intellectual and then everything else is unimportant. Or we can identify with being vegetarian. And that is it! And everything else is also unimportant. Then we feel threatened about that, so we have to come on very heavy to other people: 'Ho, you eat this? You eat that?'. Or some people even identify with the football team and if the other football team wins, they're almost ready to kill. In America things like that happen.

What happens with these self-images, these identities ? What happens is that we get a sort of what is called *disturbing attitudes*. These disturbing attitudes are mechanisms that we use to try to make this identity secure. So for example we can have what you call *attraction* or infatuation. Infatuation is what a teenager has towards a pop-star. You become infatuated with things like let's say -if your identity is as an intellectual- with books. We have to have all the books! So everybody who walks into our house will see, 'Ah, this is an intellectual person'. It doesn't matter we haven't ever read any of them. Right? Or our self-image can be of a young fashionable dresser, so we are infatuated with the latest fashion, we always have to have them. Or we are infatuated with these 3 words 'I love you' and we have to have it repeated to us constantly.

Another mechanism that we use, would be for example to try to get things away from us, this is with anger and with *repulsion* get away anything that threatens our identity. For example we can have the identity of being a very good house-keeper -neutral word- and so any time that any dirt comes into our house, it is war. It really threatens us; we have to get that dirt out. I am sure we all know fanatic house-cleaners who are like that. Always at alert, like right alert in war, the rag in one hand and a can of spray in another with a broom. This is easy to visualize. And this is a disturbing attitude. Right? Such a person is not at ease, not comfortable.

We can also have this attitude towards to get rid of people who have different opinions from what we have, or different religions, races, colors and so on. And if we can just get rid of all of them, then we'll feel secure. It threatens us. Also another mechanism we can use, is build walls around us if we feel threatened. This is called closed-mindedness, *close-minded ignorance*. Let's say we're having difficulties with our family or problems at work and it is just too threatening, it is too difficult, so we just close it out and put on the television. And very often, I think, a lot of people just want to escape facing anything that is threatening and will do a lot of things like watching TV or drinking.

Also you can have someone with the self-image that 'I am from a good and proper family'. Then when your child comes with a drug-problem or an alcohol-problem or pregnancy, 'Our family does not do things like that!'. And so, very often, the parents will

just close their hearts and really do not want to handle that situation and will not be listening to a child who is in trouble.

Another mechanism we can use is *arrogance* and pride. An example would be a professor who specializes in a tiny, tiny little area, the history of one particular city between 1620 and 1630. Then, because they feel threatened by that, they come on very strong. 'What, you don't know what happened in those 10 years? Stupid'. This is obviously to make our identity secure as an expert. These experts try to explain things in the most complicated way so that they won't be challenged and remain the expert. Also we can have what is called *indecisive wavering*, can never make up our mind. So our identity, the self-image is that we are a good dresser and we spend fifteen minutes in the morning deciding, 'Shall I wear a red shirt or a blue shirt?' Or, 'I am a good cook, what shall I make for supper?' and we're stuck for fifteen minutes: what shall I make? This is because of feeling very insecure about this image, so we're preoccupied with it that we can't make up our mind.

Now, when we have these disturbing attitudes, the next thing that will happen is various impulses come to our mind, this is what **karma** is talking about. Karma is not talking about fate or something like that, but rather is talking about the impulses that come to our head, for example to yell at somebody or to go out and buy a new book or something like that, or the impulse to change our mind back and forward and back and forward. When these impulses come up, we act them out, we act impulsively because we don't realize we always have a choice of what we do. You don't have to say everything that comes to your head. A lot of people, just anything that comes to their head, they say and they do and that can cause a lot of trouble. So, we don't realize this and we just act impulsively and this gives us problems. Insecure we feel threatened, we get hostile, yell, get problems.

So, getting back to these self-images, what we have to realize ultimately, at the deepest level, is that these are *fantasized ways of existing*. Right? We don't exist with big black lines around us as, 'Ugly, nobody loves me'. Rather the situation is open. The way that we are is in terms of *cause and effect*. If we are in certain types of relationship with others, it is because of various causes: we acted this way, the

other person was acting this way and so on. And if our personality is a certain way, it is also because of certain causes and we are not condemned to always be in the same way. We can change it. This is what voidness is talking about. *Voidness* is a total absence of these fantasized ways of existing. They are not referring to anything real. We can imagine that for example this room is filled with pink elephants; that causes a lot of fear. Or, 'I am a shy, terrible person and nobody loves me'; that also can cause us feel very depressed, can't it? When you look you see there are no pink elephants in this room, it doesn't exist that way. There is an absence of it, it is not there. The room doesn't exist that way. What does that mean? It doesn't mean that the room doesn't exist, but rather it means that now there is an open space in the room to be able to use it in whatever way it is beneficial, without fear.

The same thing happens in terms of ourselves or our potentials. If we put a big black line around a little part of it and grasp to that we get a lot of fear, a lot of difficulties. If we stop drawing these black lines, then we see that all possibilities are open and we can use our potentials in a more beneficial way, without fear, the same way as we could use the room without fear of being haunted.

Motivation. The motivation for this is initially to get out of problems ourselves. Not just to get out of our problem today, to get out of our problem on a long term basis. And not only for a long period of time, but to get out of it completely. Because we are tired of these problems.

You know, when you have different types of problems and things, to get over it you could try to apply discipline and so you could say, 'I am not going to get angry or I am going to stop doing this'. You do that with discipline, and maybe it works for some people, but often we get pinned up, everything is repressed inside and may be we'll explode.

So, what often will happen is this. Maybe we try to stop a negative habit -like always yelling at our partner or smoking cigarettes- as we could see that it is detrimental. But it causes difficulties and we find that, 'Although I know better I still do it' and we get angry with ourselves. In a state of being angry with ourselves it is very hard to change. And anger with ourselves very easily generates into the next step, which is to feel guilty. Guilt is a strong identification

with being a naughty child, 'I still smoke the cigarette behind the barn and mammy and daddy are going to yell at me and not like me.' Guilt, classic form.

Also in a state of guilt we never change. Right? Because we put this big black line around the 'naughty child'. It is our image of ourselves and the more guilty we feel the more we identify with being this child and the more we identify, the more difficult it is to stop identifying ourselves, to get out of it.

So, what happens is that we go to the next step after guilt, and the next step after guilt is boredom. We're just bored of always making a scene and yelling with our family. We're always struggling with the smoking problem, and we say, 'Enough already.'

It is in this state of mind in which we're just bored with the problem, that actually we will take the steps to stop. Right? 'I am bored, tired of getting into bad relationships with other people, I really have to get out of this!' Right? That is different. It is not that I am angry with myself about it, it is not that I feel guilty about it, I am tired of it already.

This is what usually is referred to as *renunciation*, which is a very bad choice of translation terms. Because the meaning of the word renunciation is to give up everything and live in a cave and it doesn't mean that at all! What it means is *a strong determination to be free of our problems*, based on being just tired of them, enough already. So, this can be the motivation, this is a stronger motivation to try to get out of our negative self-image.

And even stronger is thinking about how it really causes a lot of trouble for others, when I feel this way about myself. If our image is that we are a very angersome person and always have to have our way, then if we take some consideration of others, we'll see, 'Well, this is really causing problems in my family and on my friends!' That is a stronger motivation to change.

And even stronger is to see that others need our help, and that if we have this negative self-image, it is limiting us from being able to help them. So we see that if we really want to benefit others - family, friends and so on- we really need to go out of this negative self-image. Now, this is getting us in the discussion of *bodhicitta*, which means *our heart is expanding out to all others*.

In Buddhism when you speak about mind, it is not just the intellect, it is both about the mind and the heart. There is no difference in the word in these oriental languages, both are covered by the same thing. So, our heart is expanding out to all others, everybody is concerned, to everyone we are opening out. And our heart is opening out or expanding out to overcoming our limitations and realizing all our potentials in order to be able to benefit everyone. This is what *enlightenment* means, to become a Buddha. With this sort of motivation we really can have sufficient energy to really change ourselves. Right?

We have (1) the determination to be free, (2) our heart expanding out, opening out to all others and to enlightenment -this is what *bodhicitta* means- and we have this (3) understanding of absence of fantasized ways of existing, the voidness, which gives us the open space to actually make that change in our self-image.

This is all within the context of what is usually called *refuge*, which is also a misleading word, because it is a very passive word in our western languages, that, 'Oh Buddha, I go for refuge' and Buddha puts his hand on your head and you're saved. It is not that. It is rather something very active. It is looking at what the Buddha has accomplished. He has overcome the limitations, all his limitations, his or her limitations -Buddha can either be a man or a woman- and realized all her potentials.

If we find that our life has no direction or meaning, especially if each day is a repeat of the next one, -we get up each morning, go to work, home, watch television, drink beer, go to sleep, and each day is a repeat of that- that is not very fulfilling, people find it doesn't have any meaning, it can go into a more negative direction of being very depressed about it and become alcoholic.

What we do is, we say, 'Well, no, life doesn't have to be like that, we can put a direction in our life, a positive direction, which would be to become like a Buddha, overcome our limitations and realize our potentials by means of taking preventive measures, which is like preventive medicine. If you want to avoid a problem you do something beforehand.

This is Dharma. Dharma is *preventive measures*. If we want to get rid of the problems that having a negative self-image brings us, then we take the preventive measure of getting rid of that negative

self-image, changing it. And also we take the direction from the community of those who are also doing this; the sangha. It is within this whole context that we start to work with self-image, with visualization.

WHAT DO WE DO IN TANTRA?

What you are doing in *tantra* is something like mental judo. Which is that *if* the tendency of the mind is to project a self-image, why project a negative one? Seeing the open space in terms of this absence of fantasized ways of existing, then within the state of voidness, within the state of this absence, flip it, change it. Instead of projecting a negative image, project a positive one. That is what is involved in imagining that we are these various buddha-forms.

What we are doing is this: we want to bring about our attainment of enlightenment, and quickly. What will be the quickest is to do something like dress-rehearsal, final rehearsal. Right? If we want to perform in a ballet, obviously we have to learn how to dance, but what really is going to bring us to the performance is this final rehearsal. And so this what we are doing in tantra, is like a rehearsal.

1. *We imagine that we are already like a buddha.* So, we imagine that our body and self-image is like that of a buddha. It would be like to imagine that since I have a body made out of light and energy, which can go anywhere and do anything, that I have this self-image of someone like the buddha-form Chenrezig or Avalokiteshvara. Rather than the self-image of 'Nobody-loves-me, I-am-shy-and-a-terrible-person', to feel that 'I-am-a-very war-kind, giving, loving-person'.

Each of these buddha-forms, although they represent the totality of a buddha, of enlightenment, has a certain taste, a certain specialty within that. Chenrezig is being sympathetic, kind, warm-hearted, loving. Manjushri would be to have a clear mind and understand everything. Because, you know, if we have this self-image, 'Well, I-am-stupid-and-I-can't-understand-anything' then we don't even try to understand.

Especially, when you can remember back to when you were in school, if you feel that 'I am stupid and I can't pass the exami-

nation' you get very nervous and of course you will do badly. But if your self-image is 'No, my mind is clear and I can understand things', then we have self-confidence to be able to do much better. Right? So it is very helpful, these self-images of these buddha-forms.

2. In addition we rehearse to *imagine that our surroundings are like that of a buddha*. You can think, 'Oh, I am in a terrible place -well, Holland is not such a terrible place- there is this smell of a fertilizer, this is really a very, smelly, terrible place', and you can have a very negative image of that and be very upset by that, all this smell of the manure in the fields here. People who are not used to that can think very badly of that, you know. Or you can change the image of that and think of it in terms of, 'This is a healthy place where everything is growing organic and natural'. And your attitude will change, the whole way you react is very different.

If you walk through a city-street and it smelled like your fields do, you'd think very badly of it, wouldn't you? So you could see that the attitude can change very much in terms of how you view things. There are some cities in this world that do smell like in some countries, you know, there is very bad chemical factories and things like that, with a lot of pollution and so forth. In some countries they have no pollution control whatsoever, like in Eastern Europe, and you can get very depressed by that. Or you can change it, flip it, and use it as an opportunity to develop compassion and sympathy for the people who have to live there, who have to work in this type of environment.

In this sense it becomes a buddha-field. That doesn't mean that you see it as a paradise with winged angels, but rather that everything is conducive there for developing all the buddha-qualities like compassion and so on. So we should not have very simple-minded ideas of what it means to see things as a pure land.

3. Another thing that we rehearse, *imagine, is that we are able to enjoy things the way a buddha does*, which is without any confusion. The way that we enjoy things is often with confusion. We see pretty flowers and if you have allergies, then you worry they will make you sneeze. Or we listen to music and we can't just enjoy purely, because we are worried that our neighbor has better stereo-equipment then we

have. We can't enjoy our food, because we worry that it is going to make us fat or that it costs too much or has too much salt. All these worries and constant criticism prevent us from enjoying things purely. This is one of the reasons we do so many offerings in tantra. We imagine that we are able to offer all these things to the buddhas and they enjoy it without any confusion. And we imagine that we ourselves enjoy these offerings without confusion. It is very helpful.

4. Another thing that we *imagine is that we are able to act like a buddha*. Mind you, all of this is often just referred to as visualization. I am describing it as 'imagine', because you imagine that you smell nice perfume and you don't sneeze. You don't visualize that, you imagine it. So we imagine that we are able to act like a buddha acts, which is to exert an enlightening influence on everyone around us.

You know, we can see examples of great realized beings, like for example the Dalai Lama and other high Rinpoches. And I see that they don't have to do very much; just their whole way of being is very, very moving, very inspiring. For example one thing they are able to do, is calm everyone around them. There is one lama in Dharamsala who is called the 'baby-lama', because if the people have a problem of the baby always crying, they bring it to him and just being in his presence the babies calm down. Likewise we imagine that we are able to calm down and quiet everybody's problems.

They also can stimulate others. If you are in their presence then you are very stimulated to think more clearly, to act more kindly and so on. So we imagine that we are able to stimulate everybody around us with enthusiasm. Also they are able to influence others into a positive direction. They are also able to stop dangerous situations, when it is necessary in a forceful way, a forceful influence.

For example, once I was present at an initiation that His Holiness the Dalai Lama was giving in South-India. A swarm of hornets flew into the temple, and everybody became quite upset. His Holiness stopped the ceremony and he started doing something else inside and the hornets turned around and flew right out of the temple. I saw it with my own eyes. Like this we imagine that we are also able to stop dangerous situations with forceful means. This is why some of these buddha-forms have flames around them, to indi-

cate that. It is not that they are angry or something like that. It is just that certain situations require a lot of strong energy.

This is some of the usages that we put the imagination to, or visualization, in terms of self-image, our image of the environment around us, our image of how we enjoy things and our image or idea of what we can do.

INSTRUCTIONS ON THE PRACTICE OF
THE THOUSAND-ARMED AVALOKITESHVARA [TIB. *CHENREZIG*]

Now for the actual technique of how to do it, how to visualize. I think the first thing to keep in mind about it, is that it doesn't have to be so terrible visible. That is much more a refinement of it, it is a more advanced level when you can see things clearly. The beginning step is to have just a sort of feeling about it, a certain awareness.

There are two things, which I discuss. One is clarity and the other is what is called the 'pride of the deity', which is more the self-dignity, which is what I have been referring to as the self-image.

Let's start with the actual clarity of oneself as a deity. What is involved here is a sort of being aware of having all the different parts of the body. We can be aware of the fact that we have a face on the front of our head. Now it might be quite difficult to actually imagine what our face looks like, especially from the point of view of being inside, with this face being outside of our head. But we can have a feeling that 'I have two eyes, a nose and a mouth in front of my head'. Try that.

Try to be aware of your face. You can be aware of that, can't you?

Now try to be aware of the two sides of your head.

Now just as you have a face in front of your head, imagine that you have two more faces on either side. It is not so difficult.

We can even imagine that we have a back on our head, you can be aware of the back of your head too.

Now be aware of all four sides of the head. Again just as you have a face in the front, you can imagine you have a face on all four sides.

This is how we start to think in terms of multiple faces. You have had the initiation of the eleven-headed Chenrezig, now that is not the easiest thing in the world to start with, eleven heads, so you should not try to get it all at once if you had never visualized multiple heads. But we can be aware of one face on our head, then we can be aware of three faces on the two sides and:

To go on from there you would imagine like when you have a hat on top of your head. You can imagine you have a hat on your head, can't you? A big tall hat. Likewise there are three faces around the front and the two sides.

And you continue like that, putting on more hats. Get another layer of three faces and then a little one on top of that and then a little one on top of that.

As I say it is not that easy to do, but it is also not absolutely impossible. You start building it up gradually. But with the eleven-headed Chenrezig you can start off with just visualizing an one-headed Chenrezig. Let's go back to the one-headed one, it's much easier. Now we are aware of having a face on our head, aren't we?

Now try to be aware of having two arms. Be aware of your arms, be aware of the trunk of your body and your two legs. You can be aware of those, can't you? Even of your fingers and toes.

Now, even if you don't go further than that it is very beneficial. Meditation, by the way, means to build up a beneficial habit. And so just to be aware of having an entire body is very helpful. Because very often we sort of forget about parts of our body or even about having a body and we just identify only with our mind or our feelings or our emotions. Now what we are practicing in tantra, one of the things that we are supposed to be doing, is visualizing ourselves as a buddha-form all the time, and if we are doing that what we are aware of then - I mean even if we can't see it clearly- is an entire body, a fully integrated whole body. And so all of a sudden we are starting to become a whole, body and mind, which is very beneficial for -obviously in the long term- to become a buddha. Because we want to develop body and mind of a buddha si-

multaneously. But also just in temporary level, ordinary level, of being more integrated with our body and our mind. So we can have that awareness of our arms, legs, body, head, can't we?

Now in terms of having a lot of arms it is like a time-exposure photo, in which you take for example a picture with arms above, the next one the arms are a little more down, the next one they are a little more down, etcetera. Imagine it is all super-imposed. So try to imagine you have arms like that, like a super-imposed time-exposure. So when it is like that it really is not so much of a problem how it is coming out of the shoulders, just sort of super-imposed.

So you would begin just with the two arms, holding a jewel in front if you are doing the thousand-arms Chenrezig.

And if you don't want to try to build up the thousand arms, which as I said is not what a beginner would do, just stay with the two arms holding the jewel.

And if you want to build up, then you have four arms on each side, so eight arms.

In the next row we have sixteen on each side, like a super-imposed photo, from up downwards.

Then we have five more rows of arms, where each of the sixteen arms are. the first row you have four arms in each of the sixteen, so:

In the first row after sixteen times four arms.

The next row is sixteen times five arms.

The next time sixteen times six arms.

The next row sixteen times seven arms.

The next row sixteen times eight arms.

If you work out the mathematics, both sides that comes to a thousand. You should not think it is just arbitrary and vague, it is specific.

Now imagine your hand, be aware of your hand, let's try both hands.

Now can you be aware of the palm of your hand? Yes, you can.

Imagine there is an eye there. It is not so difficult.

Likewise we would imagine there is an eye on all these hands.

That is the general way if you start to work with building up this picture. The main thing though is to just start with one face, two arms, two legs, simple.

And we can be aware of the fact that we are wearing clothes, can't we?

So you are wearing nice clothes, silk clothes.

Those of you who are wearing jewelry, try to be aware of the jewelry that you wear. Some of you are wearing rings, some are wearing ear-rings, some are wearing necklaces. You can be aware that you are wearing them, can't you? Like that you would be aware of the fact that you are wearing jewelry, as Chenrezig.

So, you see, it doesn't have to be so specifically visual. It is more just the feeling, the awareness of having all these things. This is how you start to visualize. And even if you are sitting, you can imagine standing; it is not so difficult. Because you know what it feels like to stand.

You know, if you are visualizing yourself as a buddha-form all day, that does not mean that you become a stiff robot, that Chenrezig can never sit down, or something like that and can't walk because his legs are together so he can still maybe jump. It is not like that. As a buddha-form, you are imagining yourself like all day long, you can do anything. It is because they are alive. It is just an awareness that you have of having all this complexity of things.

And also it is helpful for being aware of many things at the same time. It is hard for us to be aware of eleven things abstractly, but it might not be so difficult to be aware of eleven faces or a certain number of arms and by trying to be aware of a lot of details, it increases our ability to remember, to be aware of a lot of things at the same time.

What we want to do is become a buddha, so we want to have our mind omniscient like a Buddha's mind, so it is like opening the lens of a camera. By imagining these complicated buddha-forms, what we are doing is opening the lens of our mind to be aware of more and more things at the same time. Which is much easier to do in a graphical form than in a factual form.

In western science we are talking now a lot about the right side of the brain and the left side of the brain and the left side of the brain is associated with verbal thinking and analysis and the right side is dealing with images and imagination, with graphics and intuition, all these sort of things.

It is really quite amazing, because in Buddhism what we are trying to do is realizing all our potentials and so particularly here in tantra on the one side you want to train the analytical verbal side of the mind. So you have all these emphasis on debating and analysis and so on, and in traditional ways of studying memorizing a lot of texts and pujas. And on the other side we also train the other side of the mind with all these visualizations. So, from a western point of view we are also trying to really harness all the aspects of all the mind's potentials. And to be aware of a lot of things at the same time, is not so easy to do with the side of the mind that is only dealing with verbal facts. It is maybe a little bit easier to do it in a pictorial form.

Did you ever play this children's game, played in America of 'I took a trip around the world and this is what I took'. And the trick for winning that game is to be able to picture all the things in your mind and then you could remember them. So, like that, these techniques that are used in tantra really are very sophisticated, I mean if you look at it from a Western scientific point of view. To be able to allow your mind to expand and to use all the different aspects that we have.

Now in addition to having this sort of general awareness of the form of our body, which is as I said very helpful to keep us in contact with the body, not in an ordinary way but rather in terms of having a body like a buddha,

We have a feeling of being made of clear light and transparent and tremendous energy.

Because, you know, we do have that potential. We can see that in terms of how with a certain motivation it can come out. Say we are very, very tired and we lie down in bed and feel terribly heavy and sleepy, but then our baby falls out of the crib and is lying on the floor screaming and crying. We don't just say to the baby, 'Well, sorry baby, I am really too tired, I'll pick you up in the morning', but we find that no matter how tired we are, we do have the energy

to get up and take care of the baby. Like that we have this potential to have more energy to be like that and to be able to go anywhere to be of help. That is this feeling that we have in this body, this awareness of all parts of the body.

PRIDE OF ONESELF AS A DEITY

The next thing is the pride of the deity, which is the self-image and this self-image of let's say, Chenrezig, is one of being very compassionate, kind and so on. We do have various self-images of ourselves, like you know what it feels like to be, a man or a woman. Try that. Or what it feels like to be Dutch, when it means anything to you, I don't know, in some countries it means a lot. Like that, try what it feels like to be a kind person, a warm person. This is what we do in terms of having this self-image of Chenrezig within the awareness of his body. (Not that we think that we are Dutch while we're imagining ourselves as Chenrezig, I was just using that as an example).

Try this self-image of Chenrezig, this feeling of being kind, warmhearted, compassionate and so on.

This is what is involved in the visualization-process. Also when you do a mantra, that is like a mental judo. Ordinarily our mind has a lot of verbal energy. So often we are singing songs all day long in our head or we are commenting on everything we see, 'Oh, this is good, this is no good'. Like this verbal energy is sometimes really quite disturbing. If the tendency is to have verbal energy then let's flip it. Instead of having very uneven energy, have the energy of the mantra. So that this keeps us mindful, let's say if we are always saying '*Om mani padme hung*' it is mindful of the self-image of Chenrezig and so of being warm and compassionate. It also sets a certain type of vibration.

Again in the West we talk about brain-waves and alpha-vibration and all this sort of business. Now you can't really say that saying '*Om mani padme hum*' is generating the alpha-wave, I am not saying that, but it does generate a certain type of vibration which does affect the way that you feel, the way that you are.

If one wants to do further practice of Chenrezig, there are a lot of formal practices that you can do, like these various *sadhanas* and so forth one can get, which is almost like an opera of visualization, in which not only we are imagining that we have this type of body and this self-image, but also:

We imagine the environment around us is being very pure with a lot of offerings. We imagine we are able to enjoy things purely without confusion.

And we imagine we also say the mantra in that.

While we are saying mantras we imagine that we are actually sending out these vibrations to others and influencing them in an enlightening way like how a buddha acts: being able to quiet down and pacify others' difficulties and problems.

As you are saying Om mani padme hum you are imagining yourself as Chenrezig with this self-image, then you imagine that waves of light just shine out from you in all directions and are able to quiet down, pacify everybody's problems.

Likewise we are able to send lights out and stimulate others to grow and influence them to go a positive direction and forcefully stop them from causing harm, stop harmful situations.

There are lots of types of visualizations we can do like that and whatever is needed in a situation you imagine you are just able to do. When somebody you know is having a problem then you imagine that light goes out to them as you are saying 'Om mani padme hum' and they are able to get over that problem, the problem leaves them. Some people may be involved in healing practices and so on, you adapt it to that.

As I said, there are various formal practices you can do like this, but also we can just try to do something like this all day long. Always try to have some awareness of our body is helpful, of a whole body, and to have a more positive self-image of ourselves. Not to feel sorry for ourselves 'I am no good' and all these sort of things, but rather an image of being kind, compassionate and so on 'I can help others, I do have something to offer to others, not this poor helpless person that has nothing to give'. We can try to have all that and also to have 'Om mani padme hum' go through our mind.

Instead of having very disorganized energy you have this constant smooth wave. Especially it is useful when you find your mind starting to just 'blah blah blah' to change that into 'Om mani padme hum', especially when you are starting to worry, be nervous. We all know the type of verbal trips we go on when we start to worry, 'Ah, this can happen, that can happen' and we just talk on and on and get ourselves upset. So just do a mental judo, just change that verbal energy and instead of making all sorts of worrying thoughts just say 'Om mani padme hum'. This way it can be very beneficial.

And likewise we can imagine that we are full of light, white light, and energy, and this is just pouring out of the pores of our body in all directions, good positive energy that goes out to everybody, not just directed at this one or that one because this one is good-looking so we like this one. Not just that, but rather just shine like the sun, to everyone. Then imagine that anyone who enters into this field, that everything is quieted, stimulated and so on.

Of course you have to do this in a relaxed way. Because, very often in the beginning a lot of people will go through the stage of feeling that we are very holy. And so if somebody is having a problem we sit there in the corner 'OM MANI PADME HUM, OM MANI PADME HUM' and looking very holy. And it gets the other person so angry they want to hit us. We have to get over that stage. I mean, what we have to do is in any situation you have to act, you have to be with the people, do something. But in terms of acting with others what we have going on in our mind is *Om mani padme hum* and this self-image.

Tantra is always called secret. One of the meanings of that is it should be private. It is your own business, it is not something you need to tell of it. If you told others you have eleven heads and thousand arms, they think you are crazy and lock you up. So it is not necessary to tell anybody and as I said, in any case it is much better to start with one face and two arms, much easier.

In any case we use these hidden measures – hidden because we keep it to ourselves – as a way to enable us to really be able to benefit others much more easily, in a way in which we can work quickly to overcome our limitations and our hesitations by putting

everything into it: our body, our verbal energy, our feeling about ourselves, in general our feelings and everything. This is the way that we can reach enlightenment more quickly to benefit everyone.

a lecture by Alex Berzin for Jewel Heart, sept. 25th 1986.

At the time of death, what will happen and what can you do?

I. HOW TO HELP YOURSELF AT THE TIME OF DEATH¹⁷

A. Cheating death

You know, Vajrayana Buddhism has a tremendous thing to offer. Basically, they try to completely overpower ordinary death. And ordinary death they probably try to substitute by an extraordinary condition, so that the person will become fully enlightened by taking the best opportunity. It will be cheating death and the person will become fully enlightened. That is the method the Tibetan Buddhist dharma, or Vajrayana dharma, offers. This is what we call: impure, ordinary death gets transformed into a pure, enlightened state. That is the best way. It is like.... you may think you are dying, but the state of dying will become an extra-ordinary state, and when you rise from it, when you wake up from it, you will be fully enlightened. That is the best way you can help.

You know, this is like the example I was giving you, if you meditate on compassion, the best achievement is that all the weapons become flowers. This one is just like that.

B. Rise in a proper physical form

If the first possibility is not possible, what can you achieve as secondary level? Those of the people who have obtained initiations and who have been doing a regular practice, who have been saying their mantras and *sadhanas* what can they attain? In your *sadhanas* you build up three stages everyday: the stage of death, the stage of *bardo*, and the stage of rebirth. And even if you do not have the ca-

pability of mixing death, sleep and [waking with their] results, even if you cannot do that, at least at that time you should as most important point avoid attraction, attachment. You should spend every single important, valuable thing on some kind of positive work; your body, your relations, friends, family members, work, wealth, etc. Try to have as little attachment as possible, try to purify all your negativities as much as you can, you dedicate all your positive karma to the benefit of all beings, particularly to obtain the state of buddhahood for the benefit of others.

Then, at the time of death, you mentally generate yourself in the form of whatever *yidam* you practiced, in that physical form. And you make a strong motivation, 'This ordinary death which I am going to experience, I am going to transform into the wisdom *dharma-dhatu*, -a sort of joyful wisdom state of mind- and then rise again in a proper physical form.' Is it clear up to here?

Audience: Do you transform just after death, or within.....

Rinpoche: Before you die you are visualizing in that way.

Then prepare yourself for going, which is in the physical form of the *yidam* with consort. Light emanates from your body. That light is not ordinary light, but light of a joyful nature. It fills up all universe and all its inhabitants. When I say universe, I mean all environment.

Dissolving stages, its internal signs and visualizations

1. Then you receive the sign of the *earth element* dissolving in the water element. I use the words 'earth element dissolving', but actually it means that the earth element is no longer functioning, which means that bones and flesh are not working. Internally you observe a lot of *mirage*, and at that time you visualize that the whole universe, the whole environment and the inhabitants are dissolving into your body.

2. Next the *water element* will quit. The sign that the water element quits is that the individual will experience a lot of smoke type of thing, a *feeling of smoke*. And that time, you visualize yourself, in the form of *yidam*, dissolving from the top part of your body and the low part of the body. The example given here by the traditional masters, is that if you blow against a mirror, and you get some

condense on it, gradually the condense will disappear from the outside. Just like that you dissolve from the upper and from the lower part. And finally you dissolve into the letter HUNG at your heart level.

3. And the next stage is that in the smoky type of experience, you begin to see *fire sparks*, which is the sign that the *fire element* is quitting. That is the time that the lower part of the HUNG, the UNG is dissolving to body of the letter H.

4. Next is the *air element* dissolving to the consciousness. And the signal you get internally is that at that time you probably will be seeing some kind of *reflection of light*. It is not that you are looking at light, but when there is light in the room you get some kind of light-reflection. And that is the sign. You know, out of the smoke, out of the sparks, you suddenly see a little light-reflection. That is the last element, the air element, dissolving into the consciousness. At that time you should visualize the body of the letter H dissolving into the upper part, the head, of the H. At this point the external, the gross elements have dissolved.

5. Then, within the air, subliminally, the internal elements start dissolving, the internal, subtle elements. You get some kind of light, a *whitish feeling*, like the effect of moonlight at night. We normally call that the whitish feeling'. [The head of the H dissolves into the moon-crescent.]

6. The next sign is the *reddish feeling*, sort of reddish light like from the evening sky. [The moon crescent dissolves into the drop].

7. This is followed by darkness, you experience *dark light*. [The drop dissolves into the squiggle]. This is the last stage of the so-called this life.

8. When the darkness goes [and the squiggle dissolves], there is no sign of either whitish, reddish, or even darkness left. It is almost like an early morning autumn days' moonlight reflection, which we call the *clear light of death*. At that time you think there is nothing left. Everything is completely dissolved into the nature of emptiness. Acknowledging that is the ultimate result level. Acknowledging that is the actual wisdom level.

This is how one should go. It is easy for us to say it say, but difficult for you to do. That is why you, those who have initiations, say your *sadhana* everyday. That is the training. Okay? When you keep

on training yourself day after day you can make a difference when this happens.

C. Phowa practice

And even if you can't do this second possibility -you see how Vajrayana offers tremendous possibilities- a third possibility is the *phowa* practice. *Phowa* means transferring your consciousness. It is very simple, it is done just immediately before death. You do not let death come in; just a minute or two before death, you lift your consciousness and it is sort of 'ejected' into the mind of your spiritual master. Whether from the practice point of view it is in the form of Amitabha Buddha, or in the form of Vajra Yogini, in reality, this is done through the medium of the consciousness of your spiritual master. If there would be time I would like to talk to you a little bit more about the *phowa*, but the essence of it is this; through your spiritual master, whether in the form of buddha Amitabha or whatever, through the medium of your guru it goes. Actually, the way it goes is this; red light comes out of the lama's heart and picks you up. For those who watch Startrek: energize! In that manner it goes, but you do not go with the body, you go without the body.

D. Five mindfulnesses

And when you cannot do even that, then there is this option.

1. Remember emptiness
2. Remember kindness and compassion
3. Convince yourself that the human nature is a pure nature.
4. No attachment to place, body, wealth, friends, retinue, whatever, no attachment at all.
5. Buddha nature [Skt. *Tathagatagarbha*]. Think, 'Buddha nature is within me and therefore there is no need to search for enlightenment outside. It is within me'.

Actually, I think these five will do. For mindfulness, you know, if one mindfulness is impossible than how can you have a lot of mindfulnesses at the time of death? It is very difficult, and five is manageable. Basically, if you get your mind used to these very often, it makes it much easier to think of them at the time of death. This is according to a sutra.

E. Eleven mindfulnesses

Do you want to go through the eleven mindfulnesses, or don't you need them? You can't do even one mindfulness, and you have to go at eleven mindfulnesses at the time of death. [laughs]. Alright, let us do it.

1. No attachment to anyone.
2. Love to all.
3. No hatred to anybody.
4. Purify your broken vows in the presence of the Lama and the Buddha.
5. When you are purified, think that you are pure.
6. Regret your negativities, and look upon them as small. Do not look at them as big obstacles. Regard the negativities you have as small, nothing big; regret that you have made some small mistakes.
7. Look at all your positive works, your virtues, as if they were big, even if they were small.
8. Have no fear of going across to the next life.
9. Mindfulness of impermanence.
10. Mindfulness of emptiness.
11. Mindfulness of looking at *nirvana* as peace.

Now there is also the practice of eight mindfulnesses, but I do not want to go through them. You got a lot of options now.

F. Lojong phowa

This is not really a phowa of *bik* and *phat*, it is called the *mahayana lojong phowa*. That is a phowa of **five powers**. In the guru puja called *Lama Chöpa* you pray:

If my death should come before I enter the Path,
Bless me to reach a Pure Land
Through applying the instructions on the five powers
The supremely forceful method of transference to buddhahood.

What are the five powers?

1. *The power of the white seed*. You know, it is very important to be generous. So whatever you have, all your belongings, you should give away. That is how the monks make money, for they say, 'Give it to monasteries'. So we say, 'Give it to Jewel Heart!'

That is joking, do not take it seriously. By giving it away you cut your attachment, it is no longer yours. So cutting the attachment and give your belongings to causes you believe in, is called: the power of the white seed.

2. *The power of prayer.* Then you decide you are going to a pure land. Wherever you want to go, like to the Western Paradise of Buddha Amitabha, or Tushita, or Vajra Yogini Pure Land, focus on one, try to focus on that one. That is called: the power of prayer.
3. *The power of renunciation.* Then renounce self-cherishing or ego-grasping thoughts. Renouncing them is called the power of renunciation. What you renounce are self-cherishing thoughts and ego-grasping thoughts.
4. *The power of motivation.* And then at the time of death, no matter how difficult it may be on physical or mental pains, I resolve no to separate from the above mentioned thoughts. No matter how difficult it may be, do not separate from them. That is called the power of motivation.
5. *The power of habit.* And then keep on thinking this repeatedly, very often. That is called: the power of habit.

If you die with these powers, you are not going to fall into the lower realms after death, no matter how heavy negativities you have.

G. Think of your spiritual master

Even if you cannot have that, at least think that your own spiritual master, inseparable of Buddha, or of Je Tsongkhapa, Manjushri, Avalokiteshvara, Tara, -whomever among them is most convenient to you- is in front of you. And you pray, 'I have no other protection to seek besides you. Please, help me though the narrow passage of death and bardo.' Keep on thinking this for a long time. Finally your object of refuge shrinks and becomes small, about the size of a marble. Your object of refuge resolves through your crown and becomes inseparable from your mind, your consciousness. Because of that your consciousness becomes of joyful nature. If you could die within that, it is one of the best ways to go.

H. Remember your object of refuge

And if you cannot do even that, at least remember your object of refuge, your spiritual master inseparable of the Buddha, or whatever your spiritual practice is. Just remembering that when you die, will serve the purpose.

Those options will help. And there is much more.

2. HOW TO HELP OTHERS AT THE TIME OF DEATH

When you are the first person and you are helping a second person who is helping a third person who is dying, or when you are the first person and you are helping a second person who is dying, what you have to do is observing whether the person is a practitioner.

If the person is a practitioner then you observe when he is going, and you look for the signals of the elements dissolving. There are external signals to be seen. Observe them and tell the person he or she will now probably have this and this kind of visions.

In other words, you tell the person, 'Now you are seeing a *mirage*. And do not worry about it, it is the sign of your earth element dissolving'. Probably, the person loses his control of movements by that time.

The next is that the person will see a smoky color, a *smoke feeling*. The lips will probably be dry, the waters and all that are gone. Something happens on your teeth, I don't know, the doctor should know, some kind of cover comes on the teeth. These are the signs that the water element is no longer there. And you tell the person, 'Now you are probably feeling a lot of smoke, do not worry about it, there is no fire, it is the sign of the water element dissolving.'

And then you keep on talking to the person, 'Now you will see the *fire sparking* in your smoke, do not worry about it, there is no fire, it is the following element, the fire element, that is going.'

Then you say, 'Now, you begin to see a *reflection of light*. This is not a light, it is the air element that is going.'

After this you do not have many external signs, so you have to sort of carefully operate. And then you say, 'Probably you will be seeing *whitish* now, like a moonlight type of thing; do not worry about it, it

is the sign of the internal element dissolving. Then you will see a *reddish* color, and again it is the sign of the internal system dissolving, do not worry about it. And you will probably get caught into the *darkness* now, do not get frustrated or suffocated, it is a natural process.'

But remember, whatever practice they have, Buddha, Jesus Christ or whatever. Buddha is new to people here, but Jesus Christ, or Compassion or whatever the person can comprehend, remind them of it; remind them of anything positive in that manner.

At least, according to the last option that we have given, try to make a connection, for yourself.

If you let the person go that way, it will probably be the best way in which you can contribute to the other person. I am telling you this, because this is what you can do for your friends and family who need it. You don't do this as a health-care professional because you will get into trouble, which you don't want. Some people may say, 'I know how to do that, so I have to do it', but you cannot do it.

So these are the options. There is much more, but at least you have now about eight options available. It is a Vajrayana special, take advantage of it! For we all have to go, there is no time!

VII Notes

- ¹ Highly important and secret teachings in the Sakya tradition. See Gelek Rinpoche, *Vajrayogini Teachings*.
- ² Verse 3. Text and commentary, Tsongkhapa, *The Fulfillment of All Hopes*. Text with short commentary by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey in: The Ninth Karmapa Wang Ch'ug Dorje, (ed. A. Berzin) *The mahamudra eliminating the darkness of ignorance*.
- ³ See: Keith Dowman, *The Divine Madman*, Chapter 3.
- ⁴ 'I prostrate to my Lama who is one with Manjughosha [i.e. Manjushri]'. For the full root text, see Sermey Khensur Lobsang Tharchin, *Six-Session Guru Yoga*, pg. 206-241.
- ⁵ Also called Five Dhyani Buddhas.
- ⁶ See note 2
- ⁷ See Pabongka Rinpoche, *Liberation in Our Hands*, vol. I, pg. 142-148, Pabongka Rinpoche, *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*, pg. 157-161.
- ⁸ Of the five thrones on the great lion throne, the Lama's throne is slightly bigger than the surrounding four.
- ⁹ Tib. *nyam len jin lab gyu*, also translated as 'divinely inspired lineage'.
- ¹⁰ Literature on the refuge commitments or advices: Gelek Rinpoche, *Lam Rim Teachings*, Chapter XI; Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *The Bodhisattva Vow*, pg. 114
- ¹¹ Atisha's teacher on bodhimind.
- ¹² Gelek Rinpoche, *Ljjong, Training of the Mind in Seven Points*.
- ¹³ One of the precepts of aspiring bodhicitta. Ref. Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *The Bodhisattva Vow*, pg. 115.
- ¹⁴ Gehlek Rinpoche, *Sbanti-deva's Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life, an Oral Explanation of Chapter One*. Each chapter is a volume. Up to now five volumes are completed.
- ¹⁵ See note 13
- ¹⁶ For more details see Gelek Rinpoche, *Guru Devotion; How to Integrate the Primordial Enlightened Mind*
- ¹⁷ Also see Sermey Khensur Lobsang Tharchin, *Six-Session Guru Yoga*, p. 24.
- ¹⁸ Rilbur Rinpoche passed away January 2006.

- ¹⁹ Usually called the Merit tree or Merit Field, though the words merit and refuge are often interchanged.
- ²⁰ For the Lama Chöpa Merit Field see Gelek Rinpoche, *Guru Devotion, How to Integrate the Primordial Enlightened Mind*, ch. III; Dalai Lama XIV, *Union of Bliss and Emptiness*. Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Great Treasury of Merit*.
- ²¹ Skt. *Sri Vajramala Abhidhana Mahayoga Tantra*. Tib. *Che gyu dorje trengva*
- ²² For the root text of the short one, see pg. 117
- ²³ Seeking freedom; the altruistic mind [bodhicitta], the wisdom of emptiness.
- ²⁴ The three kindnesses are counted a little differently in sutra and tantra. In the sutra way, 'lama of the three kindnesses' refers to one from whom you have received 1) vows; 2) oral transmissions; 3) explanations. According to tantra, it is receiving: 1) initiations; 2) oral transmissions; 3) explanations on tantra.
- ²⁵ The twelve principle events, also called the twelve enlightening deeds of an enlightened one: 1. Descending from a joyful realm after having transferred his throne to the next complete leader for the eon; 2. entering his mother's womb; 3. taking birth; 4. becoming skilled and learned in the arts; 5. delighting in the company of his wife; 6. taking the robes of a spiritual seeker who has renounced family life with the determination to be free of all problems; 7. undergoing difficult ascetic practices; 8. proceeding to a tree of purified growth; 9. overcoming all demonic forces; 10. manifesting the high state of purified growth; 11. setting flow rounds of transmission of preventive measures [dharma]; 12. demonstrating final release from all troubles by passing away. Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, *An Anthology of Well-spoken Advice*, pg. 292.
- ²⁶ Rinpoche makes a remark on not be saying mantras while listening to a teaching like this.
- ²⁷ Usually when we mention Vajrasattva, in Tibetan *Dorje Sempa*, it is referring to the kriya tantra purification deity.
- ²⁸ JH Self-initiation sadhana of Yamantaka, pg.130.
- ²⁹ Pg. 37f.
- ³⁰ Loseling faculty of the Drepung monastic university.
- ³¹ Vajrayogini of the Naropa tradition
- ³² The pure land of Buddha Amitabha.
- ³³ DZA: Invoking or drawing forth the wisdom beings; HUM: their absorption into the commitment being; BAM: binding, which means merging or dissolving; HOH: being pleased, which means becoming joyously inseparable. Dalai Lama, *The Union of Bliss and Emptiness*, pg. 90.
- ³⁴ Skt. *samayasattva*; Tib. *dam tsig sem pa*.
- ³⁵ Skt. *jñanasattva*; Tib. *ye she sem pa*.
- ³⁶ For the precepts of aspiring bodhicitta and the secondary downfalls of the bodhisattva vow, see Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *The Bodhisattva Vow*, p.115-116.
- ³⁷ Verse 3.
- ³⁸ See pg. 56

- ³⁹ Rinpoche remarks: Nowadays some massage therapies say they are opening your heart chakra and so on, and I am sure they are opening some physical channels on the outside, but the true opening of the channels isn't there.
- ⁴⁰ The main mother tantra is Chakrasamvara: Heruka and Vajrayogini. The chief father tantra is Guhyasamaja. A father tantra that includes all the important aspects of mother- and father tantras, is Yamantaka.
- ⁴¹ The seed-syllable HUM is a HA with an U underneath and a MA in the form of a circle on top, see pg. 40 or 47, but the pronunciation needs to be HUNG.
- ⁴² A = ཨ; the sign underneath turns it into a U: ཨུ; the sign above turns an A into an O: ཨོ; then ཨོཾ is OM.
- ⁴³ In the literature also called 'wind'. Tib. *lung*.
- ⁴⁴ Literature: Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss*, 25; Lati Rinpoche, *Death Intermediate State and Rebirth*, pg. 14
- ⁴⁵ From the Vajrayogini transcript: 'The wheel of noble objects has been bound into a single knowledge.' That means that all noble things throughout the universe have been bound into the reality of being bliss-void indivisible wisdom. (...) This is what the famous Chakrasamvara means. In Tibetan it is *Khorlo Domba*, the wheel, [*Khorlo*] of what is to be known, which is all phenomena. All of them are bound, that is *dom*, by the bliss and void.
- ⁴⁶ For explanation on HUM HUM PHAT also see Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Guide to Dakiniland*, pg. 147. The letter HUM may need a check with Rinpoche; this one is taken from the explanation in the *Lama Chöpa* teachings.
- ⁴⁷ *ta mel gyi nang wa* and *ta mel gyi shen pa*, obstacles of ordinary appearance and apprehension. Ref. Sermey Khensur Losbsang Tharchin, *Six-session guru yoga*, pg. 42.
- ⁴⁸ Geshe Lobsang Tharchin, *Six-Session Guru Yoga*, pg. 42, pg. 50-51.
- ⁴⁹ Fourth Panchen Lama, 1781-1859.
- ⁵⁰ Also see Gehlek Rinpoche, *Vajrayogini Teachings*, 3rd edition, Ch. VIII.
- ⁵¹ Gehlek Rinpoche, *Vajrayogini Teachings*, 3rd edition.
- ⁵² See pg. 48.
- ⁵³ See pg. 47.
- ⁵⁴ Transliteration *phag*
- ⁵⁵ Transliteration *phags*.
- ⁵⁶ Skt. Arya.
- ⁵⁷ Not only the commonly known delusions, but especially the Vajrayana delusions, ordinary perception and conception [*ta mel gyi nang shen*]. Ref. Geshe Lobsang Tharchin, *Six-Session Guru Yoga*, pg. 47.
- ⁵⁸ See page 74.
- ⁵⁹ Newer translation of this line by the same translator: 'To you who triumph over all that can make us dull, excited and confused' Ref. Lati Rinpoche, *Heruka Body Mandala* pg. 45.
- ⁶⁰ Geshe Lobsang Tharchin, *Six-Session Guru Yoga*, pg. 36-49 and *Sublime Path to*

Kecharu Paradise, [for Vajrayogini part only], pg. 209-215

- ⁶¹ There are different explanations possible. Also see Gelek Rinpoche, *Guru Devotion, How to Integrate the Primordial Enlightened Mind*, Ch. IV ; Dalai Lama, *The Union of Bliss and Emptiness*, pg. 107; Gelek Rinpoche, *Vajrayogini Teachings*, Ch. VIII.
- ⁶² Gehlek Rinpoche, *Shantideva's Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life, an oral explanation of Chapter Two*: vers 2-5.
- ⁶³ See Gelek Rinpoche, *Guru Devotion; How to Integrate the Primordial Enlightened Mind*.
- ⁶⁴ Precious wheel, precious jewel, precious queen, precious minister, precious elephant, precious horse, precious general. Literature: Dagyab Rinpoche, *Buddhist Symbols in Tibetan Culture*.
- ⁶⁵ For the 23-heap mandala and for the Samantabhadra offering, see Gelek Rinpoche, *Guru Devotion*, Ch. IV, st. 25; Geshe Lobsang Tharchin, *Six-Session Guru Yoga*, pg. 57-58.
- ⁶⁶ See page 34.
- ⁶⁷ Dakas and dakinis are the sangha of Vajrayana.
- ⁶⁸ Vajravarahi.
- ⁶⁹ Also see pg. 56.
- ⁷⁰ Tsongkhapa, *The Fulfillment of All Hopes*. A list of downfalls on the basis of the *Fifty Verses of Guru-devotion* is to be found in Geshe Lobsang Tharchin, *Six-Session Guru Yoga*, pg. 247-249.
- ⁷¹ Also see Gelek Rinpoche, *Guru Devotion* Ch VI; Gelek Rinpoche, *Ganden Lha Gyema*; Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso, *The union of bliss and emptiness*, pg. 131-137.
- ⁷² Literature: Dagyab Kyabgön Rinpoche, *Das Sechsfache Guru-yoga*, pg. 69-74. Geshe Lobsang Tharchin, *Six-Session Guru Yoga*, pg. 69-73.
- ⁷³ During the first round this means 'And then' and in all next rounds it means 'Once more'.
- ⁷⁴ The merging system here is the same as in the *Ganden Lha Gyema*. In case you do one session separately, Lama Buddha Vajradhara remains no longer in front of you. In case you do this practice three times in one meditation period, in the first two rounds you keep Lama Buddha Vajradhara on your crown and dissolve a duplicate.
- ⁷⁵ See p. 77.
- ⁷⁶ mind of white appearance, *nang wa kar lam pa*
- ⁷⁷ mind of red increase, *che pa mar lam pa*
- ⁷⁸ mind of black near-attainment, *nye top nak lam pa*
- ⁷⁹ Literature: Dagyab Rinpoche, *Das Sechsfache Guru-Yoga*, pg. 69-74.
- ⁸⁰ Allen Ginsberg's translation of OM SVABHAVA SHUDDHA SARVA DHARMA SVABHAVA SHUDDHO HAM
- ⁸¹ See: Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss*; pg. 100-123.
- ⁸² Rinpoche refers to the three-fold jewel inside the logo. When you look at it you see a movement inwards and a movement outwards.

- 83 From the Guhyasamaja tradition.
- 84 For the difference between ‘inner rising’ and ‘rising as Vajrasattva’, see Geshe Lobsang Tharching, *Six-Session Guru Yoga*, pg. 75-76.
- 85 See pg. 38.
- 86 Vajrasattva means literally ‘indestructible being’ and refers here to one’s result-stage Vajradhara. Sometimes Vajrasattva is called the causal Vajradhara and Vajradhara the result-Vajradhara. For the difference with ‘inner rising’ see note 84.
- 87 Vajrasattva of the Vajrasattva recitation is a kriya tantra deity.
- 88 In doing an OMAH HUM retreat within the Six-session yoga, this is the place where you accumulate the mantras.
- 89 There is a printed sheet with all of them in the prayer book.
- 90 The other two are covered at the four immeasurables.
- 91 For the listing of the vows and some commentary on it, see next chapter.
- 92 Geshe Lobsang Tharchin, *Six-Session Guru Yoga*; Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *The Bodhisattva Vow*.
- 93 Sravaka-yana [the vehicle of the Hearers] and Pratyekabuddha-yana [the vehicle of the self-made buddhas] are two sub-classes of Hinayana.
- 94 See *Ganden Lha Gyema*: May the wisdom which follows learning, thinking and meditation, increase. And may the wisdom of teaching, debate and composing increase.
- 95 Lit. Geshe Lhundub Sopa, *The Wheel of Time; the Kalachakra in context*, pg. 54-58. Michael Henss, *Kalachakra; Ein tibetisches Einnübungsritual*, pg. 15-22
- 96 The system of reciting when you do two sittings a day of three sessions each: 1) Part one. The first time round recite all of part one. Then the second round you recite part one without [the praise and] the visualization part, while you keep the visualization in front of you. The third round is done as the second round. 2.) Then go to part two. Recite that a first round up to the dedication. In this round a duplicate of Buddha Vajradhara dissolves into you and you keep the visualization in front of you. The second round is as the first round. In the third round you dissolve Lama, nothing left. 3.) Finish with the dedication part once. This system is also applicable to the Short six-session guru yoga.
- 97 The one in four lines.
- 98 Literature: Sermey Khensur Lobsang Tharchin, *Six-Session Guru yoga*, pg. 85-102; Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *The Bodhisattva vow*.
- 99 Literature: Sermey Khensur Lobsang Tharchin, *Six-Session Guru yoga*, pg. 103-142; Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Tantric grounds and paths* pg. 63-74
- 100 Also see Geshe Lobsang Tharchin, *Six-Session Guru Yoga*, pg. 137; Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Guide to Dakini land*, pg. 198.
- 101 ‘In this context, bodhicitta [tib. *chang sem*] implies the essence of the pure mind and is not to be confused with the compassion generated for the benefit of all beings, expressed by the same term. It appears as a *bindu* or ‘point of light.’ Lama Lodö, *Bardo Teachings*, Ithaca, Snow Lion 1982, pg. 5. It is a

technical name for the white and red 'drops' from the father and the mother situated at the crown and at the navel.

- ¹⁰² For a six-session guru yoga in connection with Vajrayogini, see: Geshe Kel-sang Gyatso, *Guide to Dakiniland*.
- ¹⁰³ Rinpoche refers to the *Bodhisattvacharyavatara*. Not yet found.
- ¹⁰⁴ Vajradhara.
- ¹⁰⁵ Ook wel geschreven *Yingchogma*. Skt. Vajradhatu Ishvara.
- ¹⁰⁶ During the first round this means 'And then' and in all next rounds 'Once more'.
- ¹⁰⁷ Commentary in Gelek Rinpoche, *Three main short Vajrayana practices*.
- ¹⁰⁸ Vajradhara.
- ¹⁰⁹ Ook wel geschreven *Yingchogma*. Skt. Vajradhatu Ishvara.
- ¹¹⁰ Skt. Vajrasattva.
- ¹¹¹ Skt. Bhagavati.
- ¹¹² Giving up attachment to home and family - 'my home is my castle' - and becoming a spiritual wanderer.
- ¹¹³ Literature on the five buddha families, also called the five Dhyani Buddhas or the five meditation buddhas, and the connected wisdoms: Chögyam Trungpa, *Journey without Goal*, pg. 77-85. John Landaw and Andy Weber, *Images of Enlightenment*, pg. 69-78, 233-234. Lama Anagarika Govinda, *De mystiek van het Tibetaans boeddhisme*, pg. 122vv. Erik Bruyn, *Tantra, yoga en meditatie*, De-venter, pg. 79-94. John Blofeld, *Het Diamanten Voertuig*, blz. 104-110.
- ¹¹⁴ The directions do differ according to what tantra is involved in the practice. As in most maha-annutara-yoga tantras that we may encounter buddha Akshobhya is in the center, that division is followed here. Robert Thurman, *Wisdom and Compassion; the Sacred Art of Tibet*, Pg. 345, 'Akshobhya is one of the five transcendent buddhas, the group of cosmic buddhas (sometimes referred to as dhyani buddhas). When represented in a mandala of a deity who is related to his clan, he is shown in the center. However, in the Action-[skr. kriya], Performance [skr. charya] and Yoga tantra mandalas where the five Tathagatas first appear, most often he is represented in the eastern quarter, with Vairocana in the center.
- ¹¹⁵ In the death stage meditation you find the earth element dissolving with the aggregate of the form and the water element with the aggregate of the feelings. Also Tarab Tulku sometimes gives exercises with the element earth corresponding to the aggregate of the form and the water element corresponding to the feelings. This shows that the systems of correspondences are not overall consistent. Tarab Tulku made clear that one should not take the schemes too tight: things are not fixed like that, the correspondences vary according to the context in which they are used.
- ¹¹⁶ Literature: Erik Bruyn, *Tantra, yoga en meditatie*, pg. 73-78.
- ¹¹⁷ A short teaching by Rinpoche in Nijmegen.

VIII Glossary

Akshobya (Tib. *Mikṣyōpa*) The manifestation of the aggregate of consciousness of all buddhas. He is one of the five Tathagatas or Dhyani buddhas. He has a blue-colored body. He holds the commitments of vajra, bell, mudra and reliance upon the guru.

Amithaba (Tib. *Öpame*) The manifestation of the aggregate of discrimination of all buddhas. He has a red-colored body. He is one of the five Tathagatas or Dhyani buddhas. He is 'the buddha of infinite light' who presides over the Western Paradise, Sukhavati. He is associated with infinite compassion and is the teacher of Arya Avalokiteshvara. He holds the commitments of relying upon the teachings of the sutra and of the lower and higher tantras.

Amoghasiddhi (Tib. *Dönyo drüpa*) The manifestation of the aggregate of compositional factors or volition of all buddhas. He has a green-colored body. He is one of the five Tathagatas or Dhyani buddhas. He holds the commitment of making offerings to the guru and maintaining purely all vows.

Arhat (Skt; Tib. *drachompa*) 'Enemy destroyer' or 'foe destroyer'. One who has overcome the forces of karma and delusion and attained liberation from cyclic existence and thus has obtained arhatship, the spiritual ideal of hinayana buddhism. It is the culmination of the four stages of perfection: in succession one becomes stream-enterer, once-returner, non-returner, arhat. The arhat has achieved nirvana, but not buddhahood, because he does not return out of compassion to teach others as the mahayana bodhisattva does.

Arya (Skt; Tib. *paḥpa*) Title meaning 'noble one'. It indicates one who has attained the third of the five paths, the path of insight/seeing (Tib. *tong lam*) and so through an understanding of emptiness, has gone above the world.

Atisha Dipamkara Sri Jnana. Also called Jowo Palden Atisha [982-1055] (Tib. *Marme dzé*) A great Indian pandit, perhaps the last of the universally acclaimed masters of Indian Buddhism. He spent the last seventeen years of his life in Tibet, bringing many important teachings. Well-known is his short treatise *Light on the Path to Enlightenment* (Skt. *Bodhipathapradīpa*; Tib. *Lam drön*) which points out in a concise manner the path to enlightenment. This work

- became the foundation for what was to become the *Lamrim* literature. The followers of Atisha became known as the Kadampa school.
- Avalokiteshvara (Tib. *Chenrezig*) The great bodhisattva of compassion, chief disciple of Amithaba. The Dalai Lama is considered to be an incarnation of Avalokiteshvara. In China he is (in combination with his female counterpart Tara) known in female form as Kwan Yin.
- Bardo* (Tib; Skt. *anubhava*) Intermediate state. The state of consciousness between death and rebirth. It begins the moment the consciousness leaves the body and ceases the moment the consciousness enters the body of the next life. One remains in that state anywhere from a moment to forty-nine days.
- Bardo* A being in the bardo.
- Blessing (Tib. *jin lab*) The transformation of our mind from a negative state to a positive state, from an unhappy state to a happy state, or from a state of weakness to a state of strength through the inspiration of holy beings such as our spiritual guide, buddhas, and bodhisattvas.
- Bliss (Tib. *dena*) An extremely pleasurable feeling; in *maha-annu-tara yoga* tantra the very subtle clear light mind experiencing great bliss is focused on emptiness.
- Bodhicitta Zie bodhimind
- Bodhimind (Skt. *bodhicitta*; Tib. *jangchub-kyi sem*) ‘The awakened mind’, ‘the awakening mind’ or ‘mind of enlightenment’. Bodhimind or bodhicitta is the altruistic motivation of a bodhisattva: a mind that is directed towards the attainment of buddhahood, for the sake of all living beings; the fully open and dedicated heart. Once one has generated the bodhi-mind, one enters the first of the bodhisattva paths, the accumulation path. The bodhimind is of two main types: relative or conventional and absolute or ultimate. The former is also of two types: that which aspires to highest enlightenment as a means of benefiting the world, and that which engages in the practice leading to enlightenment. Ultimate bodhimind is the latter of these placed within an understanding of emptiness. In *maha-annu-yoga* tantra bodhimind is of two types: the red *bodhicitta*, which symbolizes female energy; and the white *bodhicitta* which symbolizes male energy. These are represented by ovum and sperm respectively. In this context buddhahood is the unification of these two forces placed within realization of mahamudra.
- Bodhisattva (Skt; Tib. *jangchub sempa*) Also referred to as ‘child of the Buddha’, ‘spiritual hero’, or ‘fortunate one’. A bodhisattva is a living being who has produced the spirit of enlightenment in himself and whose constant dedication, lifetime after lifetime, is to attain the unexcelled, perfect enlightenment of buddhahood for the sake of all living beings. The term bodhisattva refers to those at many levels: from those who have generated aspiration to enlightenment for the first time to those who have actually entered the bodhisattva path, which is developed through the ten stages (Skt. *bhumis*) and culminates in enlightenment, the attainment of buddhahood. Those who have embarked on the path but have not yet gained direct per-

- ception of the meaning of emptiness are called ordinary bodhisattvas; those who have attained the path of seeing and can in meditation directly perceive emptiness are called extra-ordinary or superior bodhisattvas or *arya* bodhisattvas.
- Buddha nature** Our potential to attain full enlightenment. Specifically, it is the ultimate nature of the mind. Every living being has buddha nature. Buddha nature and buddha seed are synonyms.
- Buddha Sakyamuni** ‘Sage of the Sakyas’, name of the buddha of our era, who lived in India 563-483 BC. He was a prince from the Sakya clan. He taught the *sutra* and *tantra* path to liberation; founder of what came to be known as Buddhism. His mundane name was Siddharta Gautama. Buddha Sakyamuni is the fourth of one thousand buddhas that are to appear in this world age. Also see: Buddha.
- Buddha** (Tib. *sang-gye*) Lit. ‘awakened one’. Title of one who has attained the highest attainment for a living being. It refers to one who has completely purified (*sang*) all the defilements, the two obscurations, and completely expanded (*gye*) or perfected his mind to encompass all excellences and knowledges. A fully enlightened being is perfect in omniscience and compassion. Every being has the potential to become a completely enlightened buddha. There are countless buddhas.
- Buddha’s bodies** (Skt. *kaya*; Tib. *ku*) There are several divisions. If three kayas: (1) *dharmakaya* or truth-body or ultimate body, (2) *sambogakaya* or enjoyment-body or beatific body, (3) *nirmanakaya* or emanation-body or incarnation-body. The last two ones together are called form-body or *rupa-kaya*. If two kayas: (1) truth-body or *dharmakaya* and (2) form-body or *rupakaya*. If four kayas: truth-body divided into (1) *svabhanikakaya* or nature-body and (2) *jnanakaya* or wisdom-body; the form-body divided into (3) *sambogakaya* or enjoyment-body and (4) *nirmanakaya* or emanation-body.
- Buddhadharma** Buddha’s teachings and the inner realizations attained by practicing them.
- Chakra** (Skt; Tib. *tsa kor*) Energy-wheel; a focal point of energy along the central channel upon which one’s concentration is directed, especially during the completion stage of *mana-anu-yoga tantra*. Meditating on these points can cause the inner winds to enter the central channel.
- Channels** (Skt. *nadi* Tib. *tse*) A constituent of the vajra body through which energy-winds and drops flow. In the body there are three main channels: the central channel (Skt. *avadhuti*, *shushumma*; Tib. *uma*), the major energy channel of the vajra body; the right channel (Tib. *roma*) and the left channel (Tib. *kyangma*). From the tip of the sex organ up to the top of the head it is very straight, but from there it bends down in an arch and terminates between the two eyebrows. It is located exactly midway between the right and left halves of the body but it is closer to the back than to the front. It is visualized greenish-bluish from the outside, more reddish from the inside.

- Immediately to either side of the central channel are the right and left channels. The right channel is visualized red and the left one white.
- Clarity** Generally, any clear appearance of an object of meditation to the concentration focused on it. More specifically, a Vajrayana practice whereby the practitioner, having generated himself or herself as a deity and the environment as the deity's mandala, tries to attain clear appearance of the whole object to his or her concentration. It is the antidote to ordinary appearance.
- Clear light** (Tib. *ösel*) The subtlest state of mind, which becomes manifest only when all the gross minds have ceased their active functions. This state is experienced by ordinary beings naturally at the time of death, though it may not be and cannot be recognized by those not trained to do so. With the mind of clear light -and the pure illusory body- the full awakening of buddhahood can be achieved. The clear light is potentially with everyone; its full development in order to sustain the spiritual path is aimed at in highest tantra yoga practice.
- Commitment being** (Skt. *samaya sattva* Tib. *damtsik sempa*) A visualized buddha or ourselves visualized as a buddha. Also called symbolic being.
- Commitments** (Skt. *samaya*, Tib. *dam tsik*) Promises and pledges taken when engaging in certain spiritual practices.
- Completion stage** (Tib. *dzok rim*) Highest yoga tantra realizations that are attained through completing a special method that causes the winds to enter, abide, and dissolve within the central channel.
- Concentration being** (Skt. *samadhisattva*; Tib. *tingdzin sempa*) A symbol of Buddha's Truth Body, usually visualized as a seedletter at the heart of a commitment being or a wisdom being. It is so called because it is generated through concentration.
- Concentration** (Skt. *samadhi*; Tib. *ting dzin*) The ability to focus the mind single-pointedly on any chosen object of meditation and keep it there. Concentration meditation is one of the two main forms of meditation, the other one being analytical meditation. Also see *Samadi*.
- Dakas and dakinis** (Skt.; Tib. *kandro* and *kandroma*) Literally 'sky-goers'; Male and female beings who help arouse blissful energy in a qualified tantric practitioner.
- Dakini Land** Usually refers to the Pure Land of Vajrayogini. (Skt. *Kechara*; Tib. *Dakpa Khachö*). *Uddhiyana*, the 'place' where the tantras come from, is also called a dakini land.
- Deity** See *yidam*
- Delusion** (Skt. *kleśha*, Tib. *nyong mongs*) A thought, emotion or impulse that is pervaded by ignorance, disturbs the mind and initiates actions (karma) which keep one bound within cyclic existence. That which makes the mind impure. Delusions are mental factors. The three root delusions or the three poisons: ignorance, attachment and hatred; from these many others arise.
- Dependent existence or interdependent origination or dependent arising or inderdependent relationship.** (*pratityasamutpada*) Any phenomenon that ex-

- ists in dependence upon other phenomena is a dependent-related phenomenon. All phenomena are dependent-related because all phenomena depend upon their parts. Sometimes dependent-related is distinguished from dependent-arising with the latter meaning arising in dependence upon causes and conditions. However, the two terms are often used interchangeably.
- Desire Can be either negative, like in the meaning of attachment to worldly pleasures, or positive, in the meaning of striving for enlightenment.
- Development stage (Tib. *kye rim*) Also called generation stage. The first of the two main stages of *maha-anu-yoga-tantra* during which one cultivates the clear appearance and divine pride of one's chosen meditational deity. The second stage is called the completion stage.
- Dharma Protectors (Skt. *dharmapalas*; Tib. *chö kyong*) Manifestations of buddhas or bodhisattvas whose main function is to eliminate obstacles and to gather all necessary conditions for pure dharma practitioners.
- Dharma (Skt., Tib. *chö*) Buddha's teachings and the realizations that are attained in dependence on them. One's spiritual development. 'That which holds one back from suffering'. Also, any object of knowledge.
- Dharmadhatu* (Skt.; Tib. *chöying*) Realm of true reality. The ultimate reality underlying phenomena; that is, their non-existence as intrinsic natures, or emptiness. The wisdom of *dharmadhatu* is one of the five wisdoms.
- Dharmakaya* (Skt.; Tib. *chö ku*) Truth Body. The mind of a fully enlightened being, free of all coverings, remaining meditatively absorbed in the direct perception of emptiness while simultaneously cognizing all phenomena.
- Dhyani Buddhas* See Five buddhas.
- Divine pride (Tib. *bla-yi-nga-gyel*) A non-deluded pride that regards oneself as a deity and one's environments and enjoyments as those of the Deity. It is the antidote to ordinary conceptions.
- Dorje Chang* (Tib.) See Vajradhara
- Dorje* (Tib.) See Vajra
- Drops (Skt. *bindu*; Tib. *tikle*) A constituent of the vajra body used in the generation of great bliss; of two types, the red drops are received from one's mother and the white drops from one's father at conception. Also see Indestructible drop.
- Dualistic appearance The appearance to mind of an object together with the inherent existence of that object.
- Emptiness (Skt. *shunyata*, Tib. *tongpa nyi*) The absence of all false ideas about how things exist; specifically the lack of apparent independent self-existence of phenomena.
- Enlightenment (Tib. *jangchub*) Full awakening, buddhahood. The ultimate goal of buddhist practice, attained when all limitations have been removed from the mind and all one's positive potential has been realized; a state characterized by unlimited compassion, skill and wisdom.

Eon (Skt. *kalpa*) A large period of time, described as the time it takes a dove to exhaust a mountain of grain the size of the Mount Everest by removing one grain every thousand years.

Field of Merit (Tib. *tsok ching*) In general a field of merit is any basis on which one can collect merit, like a field of earth is the basis on which you can grow crops, the crops depending on the field. A supreme field for accumulating merit are the holy beings, to which we can offer the seven limbs of our practice, the holy beings acting as a field in which we plant and nourish our seeds of virtue.

Five buddhas There are five main buddha families or castes, the families of Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, Amithaba, Amoghasiddhi and Akshobya. They are also called the five Dhyani buddhas or the five Tathagatas. They represent the five purified aggregates or skandhas, the aggregate of form, feeling, discrimination, formative elements or volition and consciousness respectively. And the five exalted wisdoms: the mirror-like wisdom, wisdom of equality, wisdom of individuality or discrimination, wisdom of accomplishing activities, wisdom of *dharmadhatu* (Skt.) or true nature. respectively.

Five *skandhas*. (Skr; Tib. *pungpo*) Aggregates. Literally meaning 'pile' or 'heap' which has the connotation of an utter lack of internal structure. The body-mind organism is made up of innumerable elementary constituents, called 'dharma's', which are grouped into five. The five compulsive aggregates are the five basic constituents of psycho-physical existence, of great importance as a scheme for introspective meditation in the abhidharma. They are: (1) matter or form (Skt. *rūpa*), (2) feeling or sensation (Skt. *vedana*), (3) perception or discernment or discrimination or intellect -the sense of verbal, conceptual intelligence (Skt. *samjñā*), (4) volition, motivation, habits, compositional factors, formative elements or conditioned activities (Skt. *samskāra*) and (5) consciousness or primary mind or pure awareness (Skt. *vijñāna*). Associated together they make up most living beings.

Five wisdoms The five wisdoms of a Buddha: the mirror-like wisdom, the wisdom of equality, the wisdom of individual analysis, the wisdom of accomplishing activities, and the wisdom of *dharmadhatu*, i.e. the wisdom of the dharma sphere.

Four levels of tantra Successively *Kriya* tantra (Skt.; Tib. *dya gyū*) which uses many external rituals such as washing etc.; *charya* tantra (Skt.; Tib. *chö gyū*) which balances outer methods with inner ones; *yoga* tantra (Skt.; Tib. *neljor gyū*) which emphasizes internal methods; *maha-anu-yoga* tantra (Skt.; Tib. *lama me gyū*), which exclusively relies upon internal methods.

Ganden Lha Gyema 'The hundreds of deities of the Land of Joy' A short guru-yoga practice.

Gelugpa The tradition of tibetan Buddhism established by Je Tsongkhapa as a fusion of older sects, sometimes named Ganden Kagyu, also known as the New Kadam, The name Gelug means: wholesome way or: virtuous tradition. The three great Gelug monasteries are Ganden, Drepung and Sera.

- The other main traditions of Tibetan Buddhism are the Nyingma who go back to Guru Padmasambhava, Sakya going back to Sakya Pandita, and the Kagyu going back to Marpa-Milarepa-Gampopa.
- Generation Stage See Development stage
- Guhyasamaja (Tib. *Sangwa dupa*) One of the three major Gelugpa yidams, the other two being Heruka and Yamantaka.
- Guru (Skt; Tib. *lama*) See Spiritual master
- Guru Yoga (Skt.) The fundamental tantric practice whereby one's guru is seen as (a) identical with the buddhas, (b) one's personal meditational deity and (c) the essential nature of one's own mind.
- Highest yoga tantra (skr. *maha-anu-yoga tantra*) The fourth and supreme division of tantric practice, consisting of generation and completion stages, capable of leading the practitioner to full enlightenment within one lifetime.
- Hinayana. Sanskrit term for 'Lesser Vehicle'. The Hinayana goal is to attain merely one's own liberation from suffering by completely abandoning delusions.
- I or self or ego (skr. *atman*, Tib. *nga*) Buddhism does not accept the existence of an independent, self-existent, unchanging ego or self, because if such were to exist, a person would be unchanging and would be unable to purify himself of fettering passions and attain buddhahood. Rinpoche often refers to this one as 'I rinpoche', 'the Big Boss inside', the 'Queen Bee' or 'Dictator I'. There is acceptance of a relative, impermanent, changeable, conscious entity, which is the continuation of life, linking one's former life to this life, and this life to future lives.
- Ignorance (skr. *avidya* Tib. *marikpa*) The root cause of cyclic existence; not knowing the way things actually are and misconstruing them to be permanent, satisfactory and inherently existent. The delusions that gives rise to all other delusions and the karma they motivate. Ignorance can be eradicated by the wisdom of emptiness.
- Illusion body or illusory body (skr. *maya-kaya* Tib. *gyu lu*) A subtle bodily form generated through the practice of the completion stage of highest yoga tantra. When a practitioner of highest yoga tantra rises from the meditation of the isolated mind of ultimate example clear light he or she attains a body that is not the same as his or her ordinary physical body. This new body is the illusory body. It has the same appearance as the body of the personal yidam of generation stage, except that it is white in color. It can be perceived only by those who have already attained an illusory body.
- Indestructible drop The most subtle drop, formed from the very subtle red and white drops received from the parents at conception and located at the heart *chakra*. At death the red and white drops separate and the very subtle mind and its mounting wind or most subtle energy are freed to travel to the next life.
- Inherent Existence The illusion that people and things exist by virtue of their own essential characteristics alone, independently of any conditioning fac-

tors. Ignorantly assenting to this illusion is the basis for cyclic existence; wisely dispelling it, the basis for enlightenment and liberation. Inherently existent, truly existent, existence from its own side or existent from its own true nature are interchangeable terms. Also see: Self-existence. Also see: Emptiness

Initiation (Skt. *abhisheka*; Tib. *wang*).

Karma (Skt.; Tib. *le*) Deeds. Term referring to actions and their effects. Through the force of intention we perform actions with our body, speech, and mind, and all of these actions produce effects. The effect of virtuous actions is happiness and the effect of negative actions is suffering

Katanga (Tib.) Ritual object.

Kaya see Buddha's bodies

Lam Rim (Tib.) Stages on the spiritual path to enlightenment in sutrayana. In tantrayana the stages of the path are called *Nag Rim*.

Lama Chöpa (Tib.) A tantric guru-yoga practice.

Liberation (Skt. *moksha*, Tib. *tharpa*) Release from the bondage of *samsara*, cyclic existence. Freedom from compulsive karmic patterns and the mental and para-mental obscurations.

Maha-anu-yoga tantra (Skt) See Highest yoga tantra

Mahamudra (Skt) The great seal; a profound system of meditation upon the mind and the ultimate nature of reality.

Mala (Tib.) Rosary.

Mandala (Skt.) A circular diagram symbolic of the entire universe. The abode of a meditational deity, understood as the emanation of the wisdom of that deity. Figuratively, one's personal surroundings seen as a reflection of one's state of mind.

Manjushri (Tib. *Jampehyang*) Male meditational deity. The eternally youthful crown prince, the embodiment of the wisdom of all enlightened beings. From Manjushri the lineage of the profound view of emptiness was handed down to Nagarjuna. Manjushri incarnated in human form is called Manjunatha (*Jam mgon*), an epithet for Tsongkhapa.

Mantra (Skt.; Tib. *ngak*) Literally, 'mind protection'. Sanskrit syllables recited in conjunction with the practice of a particular meditational deity and embodying the qualities of that deity. Mantra protects the mind from ordinary appearances and conceptions. *Mantrayana* is a synonym for Vajrayana.

Meditation (Skt. *bhavana*, Tib. *gom*) Literally 'getting used to'. The process of controlling, training and transforming the mind that leads one to liberation and enlightenment. The process of becoming thoroughly familiar with beneficial states of mind through both analytical investigation and single-pointed concentration.

Merit The wholesome tendencies implanted in the mind as a result of committing skillful actions. That positive wholesome tendencies or energy has the power to create happiness and good qualities.

Method Any spiritual path that functions to ripen our buddha seed, i.e. our growing buddha nature. Training in renunciation, compassion, and bodhi-citta are examples of method practices.

Migtsema (Tib.) Originally a hymn on Rendawa made by Tsongkhapa. Rendawa (1349-1412), one of the most important teachers of Tsongkhapa, who belonged to the Sakya school. Rendawa reversed the praise into a hymn on Tsongkhapa.

Mind That which is clarity and cognizes.

Mudra (Skt.; Tib. *chakgya*) Generally, the Sanskrit word for 'seal', as in Mahamudra, the 'Great seal'. More specifically, 'mudra' is used to refer to a consort, as in 'action mudra' or 'wisdom mudra', and to hand gestures used in Tantric rituals.

Nada Squiggle; last part of a seed-syllable that dissolves.

Nadis See: Channels

Naropa Eleventh century Indian *mahasiddha* who transmitted many profound tantric lineages, including those of Heruka Chakrasamvara and Vajrayogini. Disciple of Tilopa and guru of Marpa.

Nectar (Skt. *amrita*; Tib. *dütsi*) Transcendental substance emanated by enlightened deities, which confers such benefits as purification, realizations, long life etc. according to the type.

Nirmanakaya (Skt.; Tib. *tul ku*) Emanation body. Form in which the enlightened mind appears in order to benefit ordinary beings.

Non-virtue Action that results in suffering

Phowa See Transference of consciousness

Preliminaries. Preliminary practices (Tib. *ngondro*); the meditations designed to remove hindrances and accumulate a store of meritorious energy so that a disciple will have success in the practice. Several tibetan traditions practice four *ngondros* for the *Vajrayana* practice: 100,000 prostrations, 100,000 Vajrasattva purifications, 100,000 mandala offerings, 100,000 guru-yoga practices. In the tradition of Tsongkhapa the foremost *ngondro* for the practice of *Vajrayana* is the study and practice of the *Lam Rim*. As special *ngondro* one does the 100,000 guru-yoga practices, i.e. the 100,000 *Migtsemas* within the context of the *Ganden Lha Gyema*.

Pride See Divine pride.

Protectors There are Dharma protectors (Skt. *dharmapalas* Tib. *chö kyong*) and worldly protectors, also called guardians of the world (Skt. *lokapalas*; Tib. *jikten kyongwa*).

Psychic heat (Tib. *tummo*) Inner fire. An inner heat located at the center of the navel channel wheel.

Puja A ceremony in which offerings and other acts of devotion are performed in front of holy beings.

Pure Land An environment free from true sufferings which appears to a pure mind. A state of existence outside *samsara* in which all conditions are favorable for becoming fully enlightened. Examples include: Tushita or Joy-

- ful land, the pure land of Maitreya; Sukhavati, the pure land of Amithaba; Dakiniland, the pure land of Heruka and Vajrayogini.
- Ratnasambhava (Tib. *Rinchen jungne*) The manifestation of the feeling aggregate of all Buddhas. He is one of the five Tathagatas or Dhyani buddhas. He has a yellow-colored body. He holds the commitments of the four generosity.
- Reality source (Tib. *chojung*) Also called phenomena source. Emptiness, the source of all phenomena, symbolized as a single or double tetrahedron.
- Rebirth The entrance of consciousness into a new state of existence after death and the intermediate state.
- Rupakaya* (Skt.) See Buddha's bodies.
- Sadhana* (Skt.) Method of accomplishment. The step by step instructions in Vajrayana for practicing the meditations related to a particular meditational deity. A method for attainment associated with a Tantric Deity
- Samadhi* (Skt.) A state of deep meditative absorption; single-pointed concentration on the actual nature of things, free from discursive thought and dualistic conceptions.
- Samantabhadra (Tib. *Kuntu zangpo*) A bodhisattva known for his heroic aspiration and extensive offerings.
- Sambogakaya* (Skt.; Tib. *long ka*) Enjoyment body. One of the form-bodies of a buddha. The body of Buddha as it exists in the Buddha fields or paradises and upper realms; form in which the enlightened mind teaches the highly realized bodhisattvas who are at that stage. This body is fully adorned with the unique physical characteristics of a buddha. It can only be seen by those who have attained the highly realized stage of an arya.
- Samsara* Cyclic existence; the recurring cycle of death and rebirth under the control of ignorance and fraught with suffering.
- Sangha (Skt.) As object of refuge it is the community of *arya* beings or saints, those who have achieved spiritual aims -have attained a direct realization of emptiness- and are able to help. According to the *vinaya* any community of four or more fully ordained monks is also a sangha. Any being, lay or ordained, who has taken bodhisattva vows is also a sangha. In daily life we regard the community of those on the spiritual path as a sangha.
- Seed-syllable In tantric visualizations, a Sanskrit syllable arising out of emptiness and out of which the meditational deity in turn arises. Also called sacred syllable.
- Self See: I
- Self-existence The mistaken conception that things exist independently from their own side rather than being dependent upon causes, conditions, parts and the process of conceptual imputation; the wisdom of emptiness is the understanding that all things lack, or are empty of, even an atom of such self-existence.
- Selflessness (Tib. *dak mepa*) Two selflessnesses: personal selflessness and phenomenal selflessness, both being descriptions of the ultimate reality,

- which is the absence of the two 'selves', the realization of what is called 'transcendental wisdom' or *prajnaparamita*
- Sentient Being (skr. *sattva*, Tib. *semchen*) Any being who possesses a mind that is contaminated by delusions or their imprints. Both 'sentient being' and 'living being' are terms used to distinguish beings whose minds are contaminated by any of the two obstructions from Buddhas, whose minds are completely free from these obstructions.
- Sbunyata* See: Emptiness
- Siddha* Accomplished practitioner.
- Siddhi* Achievement, attainment. These are of two types: common attainments and supreme attainments.
- Sindhu* or *sindhura* - vermilion powder, that dakinis wear on their forehead.
- Six root delusions (*kleśhas*) Attachment, anger, pride, ignorance, doubt, wrong view.
- Spiritual master (skr. *guru*, Tib. *lama*) A spiritual guide or teacher. One who shows a disciple the path to liberation and enlightenment. A direct guru is any spiritual guide from whom we have received teachings in this life, a lineage guru is any spiritual guide who has passed on the lineage of teaching received by our own direct gurus. One's principal spiritual guide is also known as one's root guru (Tib. *tsewei lama*). In tantra, one's teacher is seen as inseparable from the meditational deity and the essential nature of one's mind.
- Sutra (Skt.; Tib. *dō*) The teachings of Buddha that are open to everyone to practice. This pre-tantric division of buddhist teachings stresses the cultivation of bodhicitta and the practices of the six perfections.
- Sutrayana The pre-tantric vehicle or path of Buddhism, leading to the attainment of full enlightenment over three countless eons through the practice of the six perfections; hence also called the perfection vehicle (*paramitayana*)
- Tantra (skr., Tib. *gyu*) Literally 'thread' or 'steam' or 'continuity', the 'stream' or 'tread' of innate wisdom embracing all experience. Another name is: secret mantra. The texts of the secret-mantra teachings of buddhism. The esoteric teaching of Buddha. The essential practice of tantra that distinguishes it from sutra is bringing the result into the path. The practice involves identification of oneself with a fully enlightened deity. The tantric stages of the path are called *nag rim*. Also see Four classes of tantra
- Tantrayana The post-sutra vehicle of Buddhism, capable of leading to the attainment of full enlightenment within one lifetime. Also called 'the diamond vehicle', i.e. *Vajrayana*, or *mantrayana*.
- Tathagata* An epithet of Buddha 'One who has thus gone'.
- Ten directions The four cardinal directions, the four intermediate directions, and the directions above and below. As a conventional formula it means 'all directions'.
- Thangka* A traditional painting of a Buddha.

Theravada 'Vehicle of the Elders'. Tradition of buddhism following its earlier style of practice and understanding of scripture. Sometimes called *hinayana*. Its final goal is *arhatship*.

Three Principles of the path 1. Determination to be free, 2. *bodhicitta*, 3. emptiness.

Three realms The three levels within samsara: the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm.

Three times Past, present, and future.

Tigle See drops.

Torma offering A special food offering made according to either sutric or tantric rituals.

Transference of consciousness A practice for transferring the consciousness to a pure land at the time of death.

Trijang Rinpoche Yongdzin Trijang Dorje Chang [1901-1981], Losang Yeshe. Was the junior tutor to His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and holder of the many lineages in sutra and secret mantra. Disciple of Pabongka Rinpoche. The senior tutor to the Dalai Lama was Yongdzin Ling Dorje-Chang (1903-c.1984), Thubten Lungtog, ninety-seventh holder of the throne of Ganden. Both Trijang Rinpoche and Ling Rinpoche were teachers of Gehlek Rinpoche.

Tsongkhapa (1357-1419) Lit. 'The man from the union land (Tsong)'. Je Tsongkhapa was a great fourteenth-century scholar and teacher who reforming the Kadampa tradition restored the purity of buddhadharma in Tibet, thus founding the Gelug tradition. His many treatises finalized the work begun by Atisha of clarification and synthesis of the vast body of Indian scriptures and schools of practice into a unified exposition of sutrayana and tantrayana paths. He wrote several lamrim, the most well-known one is Great exposition on the Stages of the Path, *Lam rim chen mo*. On the stages in tantra he wrote the Great exposition of secret mantra, *sNgags rim chen mo*. He is regarded a full enlightened being and along with Longchen Rabjampa (1308-1363) and the Sakya Pandita (1182-1251 an emanation of Manjushri. That is why he is called *Jamgon*, 'gentle lord', indicating that he and the deity Manjughosa -form of Manjushri- are of one essence. He is regarded as the synthesis of Manjushri, Avalokiteshvara and Vajrapani and therefore regarded as the embodiment of the wisdom, compassion and power of all the buddhas.

Tulku, See Nirmanakaya.

Tummo See psychic heat

Union, state of ultimate (Skt. *yuganaddha*. Tib. *zung juke*). Tantric term for buddhahood.

Vairochana (Tib. *Nampar namdze*) The manifestation of the form aggregate of all Buddhas. He is one of the five Tathagatas or Dhyani buddhas. He has a white-colored body. He holds the commitments of refuge to Buddha, to Dharma, to Sangha, refrain from non-virtue, practice virtue, help others.

Vajra Bhairava See Yamantaka

Vajra (Skt.; Tib. *dorje*) Diamond scepter. Generally the Sanskrit word 'vajra' means indestructible like a diamond and powerful like a thunderbolt. In the context of tantra it means the indivisibility of method and wisdom.

Vajra Zombini (Skt. Vajra Vetali; Tib. *Dorje Rolangma*) Consort of Yamantaka.

Vajradhara (Skt; Tib. *Dorje Chang*) 'Holder of the diamond scepter'. Conqueror Vajradhara is the source of all secret mantra. He is the same nature as buddha Sakyamuni but displays a different aspect. Buddha Sakyamuni appears in the aspect of an emanation body, *nirmanakaya*, and Conqueror Vajradhara appears in the aspect of an enjoyment body, *sambogakaya*. He symbolizes the attainment of enlightenment through the union of simultaneous great bliss and emptiness.

Vajra-master Teacher who is qualified to perform the task of a tantric guru.

Vajrasattva (Tib. *Dorje Sempa*) Diamond Being. Male meditational deity; a major tantric purification practice for removing obstacles created by negative *karma* and the breaking of one's vows.

Vajrayana (Skt.) Secret mantra vehicle. The advanced means to quickly achieve buddhahood -within one lifetime- for the sake of all sentient beings. Its method is bringing the result into the path. It is also called: *tantrayana*. It is part of the mahayana, which is divided into *sutrayana* and *tantrayana*

Vajrayogini (Tib. *Dorje Neljorma*) Female meditational deity of the *maha anu yoga tantra*, who is the embodiment of indivisible bliss and emptiness. She is the same nature as Heruka Chakrasamvara. It is a mother tantra.

Vinaya (Skt.) The first of the three major collections of scriptures or 'baskets' of the buddhist canon, the *Tripitaka*. It contains the narratives of how the Buddha established the monastic life and rules. It also refers to the code of behavior contained in this vinaya basket, followed by those who have taken the vows of the buddhist order. *Vinaya Sutras* are sutras in which Buddha principally explained the practice of moral discipline, and in particular the Pratimoksha moral discipline.

Visualization The use of creative imagination in meditation. Despite the term used it is not limited to vision, but involves the full creative sphere of one's imaging abilities

Void or Voidness See: Emptiness

Vows Promises to refrain from certain actions. The three sets of vows are the Pratimoksha vows of individual liberation, the Bodhisattva vows, and the Secret Mantra vows.

Wisdom being (skr. *jnana-sattva*; Tib. *yeshe sempa*) An actual Buddha, especially one who is invited to unite with a visualized commitment being.

Wisdom (skr. *prajna*, Tib. *sherab*) The sixth of the six transcendences or *paramitas*. The unmistakable understanding of things; specifically the insight into emptiness: the actual way in which things exist; Wisdom is the antidote to ignorance. It is symbolized by Manjushri

Yab yum yab is father (male buddha); *yum* is mother (female buddha)

Yama (Tib. *Shinje*) The Lord of Death. Personification of uncontrolled death. Although he is not actually a sentient being he is depicted as a being and known as a lord because death has dominion over our lives. In the diagram of the wheel of life he is depicted clutching the six realms of cyclic existence.

Yamantaka A *vidam*; in *maha anu tara yoga tantra* a wrathful manifestation of Manjushri, to overcome hindrances; it is a father-tantra. Many names refer to him: First of all ‘Terminator of Death’ in sanskrit Yamantaka (Yamantaka) in tibetan *Shinje She*; Then ‘Vajra Terrifier’, in sanskrit Vajra Bhairava, in Tibetan *Dorje Jigje*. He is also referred to as ‘King of the Yamas’, in sanskrit Yama Raja, in tibetan *Shinje Gyalpo*. There are many forms of Yamantaka. The Yamantaka referred to in this teaching is the ‘Solitary Hero Yamantaka’, in sanskrit Yamantaka Ekavira, in Tibetan referred to as *Dorje Jigje Pawo chikpa*

Yidam (Tib.) Also called meditational deity. A male or female figure embodying a particular aspect of the fully enlightened experience and used as the focus of concentration and identification in tantra. The word literally means: what binds, *dam*, the mind, *yi*.

Yoga (Skt.; Tib. *neljor*) A term used for various spiritual practices that entail maintaining a special view, such as Guru yoga and the yogas of eating, sleeping, dreaming, and waking. ‘Yoga’ also refers to union, such as the union of tranquil abiding and superior seeing.

Yogi, Yogini (Skt.; Tib. *neljorpa*) Male resp. female practitioner.

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About Gehlek Rimpoche



Born in Lhasa, Tibet, Kyabje Gehlek Rimpoche was recognized as an incarnate lama at the age of four. Carefully tutored by Tibet's greatest living masters, he received specialized individual teaching at Drepung Monastery, the nation's largest monastery.

In 1959, Gehlek Rimpoche was among those forced into exile, fleeing the Communist Chinese who had occupied Tibet since 1951. While in India, Rimpoche as a member of a group of sixteen monks, was chosen to continue specific studies with the great masters who had escaped Tibet, including the Dalai Lama's personal tutors.

At the age of twenty-five, Rimpoche gave up monastic life. In the mid-70's, Gehlek Rimpoche was encouraged by his teachers to begin teaching in English. Since that time he has gained a large following throughout the world. Coming to the U.S. in the mid-80's, Rimpoche later moved to Ann Arbor, MI and in 1987 founded Jewel Heart, an organization dedicated to the preservation of Tibetan culture and Buddhism. Today, Jewel Heart has chapters throughout the U.S. and in Malaysia, Singapore and the Netherlands.

A member of the last generation of lamas to be born and fully educated in Tibet, Gehlek Rimpoche is particularly distinguished for his understanding of contemporary society and his skill as a teacher of Buddhism in the West. He is now an American citizen. Gehlek Rimpoche's first book, the national bestseller, *Good Life, Good Death*, was published in 2001.

About Jewel Heart

 *Jewel Heart is an educational and cultural center whose doors are open to all. Its purpose is to transmit the essence of Tibetan Buddhism in an authentic and accessible form. Jewel Heart provides guidance and practical methods to anyone interested in spiritual development, as well as to those who wish to follow the traditional Buddhist path.*



The name Jewel Heart was chosen to represent the organization because the heart is the essence of the human being, and the jewel something of great value – considered precious. Through embracing the preciousness of our life and developing our qualities, inner peace will grow, and our actions will be influenced by compassionate concern for others. It is to this end that Jewel Heart dedicated its efforts.

The Jewel Heart logo contains three graphic elements: the spinning jewel wheel, the lotus, and the flame. The central wheel symbolizes the three jewels of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. The Buddha represents our potential for enlightenment. The Dharma is the spiritual development within each individual. The Sangha is the community of those individuals, who have developed wisdom, act as guides.

In nature, the lotus rises from the mud, yet remains pure. Similarly, we are capable of rising above ordinary conceptions and putting love and compassion into action in daily life. The flame that surrounds the jewel wheel represents the fire of wisdom, consuming all obstacles and bringing insight.

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