

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a sunset. A bright, glowing sun is positioned in the upper right quadrant, casting a long, shimmering reflection of red and orange light down the center of the water. In the lower left foreground, a small, dark boat with several people inside is visible. The sky is a pale, hazy pink, and the distant shoreline is visible as a dark, silhouetted line. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

A Dew Drop,
Dream,
A Water-Moon

বৈশ্বাশ্রয়ী যক্ষা কুণ্ডলিনী
বিশ্বাশ্রয়ী যক্ষা কুণ্ডলিনী

Buddhist
Meditations
and Translations
by Tenzin Jesse

A DEW DROP, DREAM, A WATER MOON

A DEW DROP, DREAM, A WATER MOON

BUDDHIST MEDITATIONS AND TRANSLATIONS FROM TIBETAN

TENZIN JESSE

BodhiHeart Sangha

Seattle



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Cover: The Ganges, a short walk from Sarnath where Shakyamuni Buddha first taught. Cover Design and photo by Tenzin Jesse.

Thanks to Katie Egart for the use of two photos in the Metta and Lineage Recitations sections; and to Joy Scott for use of the author photo. All other photos by Tenzin Jesse unless otherwise indicated.

Dedication

*For Joyce McGarvey, my first teacher,
and all my mothers, past, present and yet to come.*



*Twenty-one Taras at Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo's Dongyu Gatsal Ling Nunnery,
Himachal Pradesh, India.*

Epigraph

Dharma is a wisdom path. The greater the breadth and depth of our insight,
the greater our well-being—and the less we'll suffer. —*Tenzin Jesse*



Tibetan monks debating in Sarnath, India, where Shakyamuni Buddha first taught.

Contents

Foreword	xv
Introduction	xvii
Part I. Creating A Dharma World	
1. A Simple Daily Practice	3
2. A Pilgrimage in Photos	5
Part II. Aspirations	
3. The Teaching of Shakyamuni	13
4. The Twelve Aspirations of the Medicine Buddha	15
5. Metta Sutra	19
6. Gathas from the Avatamsaka Sutra	21
Part III. Lam Rim Glance Meditations	
7. 1st Scope: Cause and Effect	29
8. 2nd Scope: Four Noble Truths	33
9. 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta	35
Part IV. Mind Training or "Lojong"	
10. Eight Verses for Transforming the Heart	39
11. Thirty-Seven Practices of a Bodhisattva	43
12. Transforming Problems and Pleasures on the Path	51
13. Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life, "Patience"	71
14. A Bodhisattva's Garland of Jewels	89

Part V. Wisdom Meditations

15. Heart Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom	97
16. Nagarjuna's Fundamental Wisdom	101
17. Selection From the Prajnaparmita in 8,000 Lines	117

Part VI. Refuge Commitments

18. Refuge Recitation	121
19. The Five Precepts	123
20. Purification	125

Part VII. Ritual and Recitation

21. The Practice of Prostration	129
22. The Sutra Calling to Mind The Three Jewels	131
23. Homages From the Five Great Indian Texts	137
24. Homage to Manjushri	141
25. Recitations Before Meditation and Teachings	143
26. Food Offering	149
27. Children's Prayers	151
28. The Bodhicitta Rituals	155

Part VIII. Lineage Invocations by H. H. the Dalai Lama

29. The Harmonious Song of the Sages' Truth	159
30. To the Seventeen Great Panditas of Glorious Nalanda	165

Part IX. Sadhana

31. Medicine Buddha Sadhana	173
32. Chenresig Sadhana by H.H. Dalai Lama	177
33. Sadhana of Prajnaparamita the Great Mother	187

Part X. Dedication

34. The Extraordinary Aspiration of Samantabhadra	197
35. Shantideva's Dedication	207

Part XI. Lam Rim by Numbers – A Dharma Study Aid

36. An Overview of the Path	211
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37. Preliminaries	215
38. The 1st Scope: A Wish for Ordinary Happiness	219
39. The 2nd Scope: A Wish to Be Free of Samsara	227
40. The 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta	237
41. Dharma by Numbers Index	247
42. 3 Scopes, 3 Aspects, 4 Seals, 4 Truths	253

Part XII. Reference

43. Sanskrit/Tibetan Terms	257
Acknowledgements	263
About the Author	265
Gompa Builders' Dedications	267

Foreword



THE DALAI LAMA

I am pleased to see that BodhiHeart Sangha in Seattle, Washington, has published this collection of Buddhist texts to recite and reflect on, which Tenzin Jesse has translated into clear, accessible English.

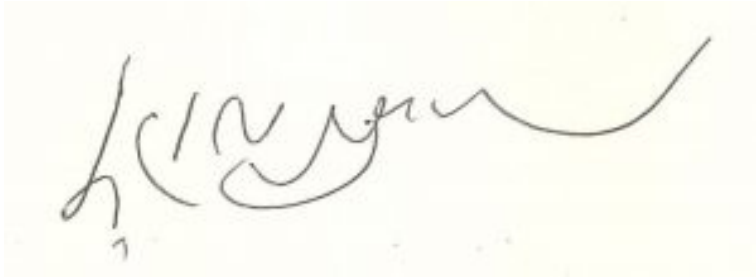
When the great Bodhisattva Abbot, Shantarakshita, established Buddhism in Tibet in the 8th century, he encouraged King Trisong Deutsen to instigate a project to translate Buddhist literature primarily from Sanskrit into Tibetan, which he did. As a consequence, Tibetans have not only been able to study and reflect on the teachings of the Buddha and his followers in their own language, but were able to enrich that language and refine the accuracy of its expression.

Mere recitation of prayers and scripture by itself, whether in Sanskrit, Tibetan or English, is of limited benefit. Far more important is for those reading or reciting such texts to be able to reflect on and penetrate the meaning they convey. Translating them into English makes it so much easier for interested English readers to do that.

xvi A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Several texts included here are part of my own daily practice. I am pleased too to see that there are also substantial extracts from Shantideva's 'Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life' and Nagarjuna's 'Fundamental Wisdom', both key works from the Nalanda Tradition.

I offer my congratulations to Tenzin Jesse and to everyone else belonging to the BodhiHeart Sangha who contributed to the compilation of this useful work. May its benefits spread far and wide.

A handwritten signature in dark ink on a light yellow background. The signature is fluid and cursive, starting with a large 'h' and ending with a long, sweeping flourish.

January 31, 2020

Introduction



This is a handbook for Dharma practitioners, a collection of meditations for students of Buddhism and for those who simply aspire to live a life of wisdom and compassion. They are practical contemplations that can help readers work with their minds and mental states in daily life—at work, with their families, and in their communities. These meditations will also be of interest to those who do not

identify as Buddhist but who admire the Dharma and wish to wander through the teachings to taste their sweet nectar, like bees in a field of clover.

The works in this collection include reflections on all the main insights of the Buddhist path, over 2,500 years of distilled wisdom about the way to live a meaningful and beautiful life. They offer practices to enhance optimism, patience, and even-mindedness in the face of habitual tendencies toward frustration and dissatisfaction. They minister to our deeply entrenched biases toward negativity and prescribe immediate remedies for painful emotions. Like a mother, they hold our self-defeating thoughts and behaviors with honesty and compassion. This book is a toolbox of antidotes for dysfunctional thoughts and feelings, packed with skillful strategies to work with any experience, pleasant or unpleasant, in order to bring it into the healing presence of wisdom and compassion.

Some of these texts are very pithy, concise frameworks for reflection, touchstones meant to bring to mind teachings that a student has received previously in more depth. Most of these texts, however, will have something to say to any reader. Leave aside, for now, passages that do not resonate with you, and look instead for a sentence that speaks to you, that makes you stop

and think. If something isn't clear, be patient. Most Buddhist scriptures and recitations, especially traditional ones, are meant to supplement and consolidate more extensive oral teachings.

If the language is sometimes a little foreign, if it carries within it something ancient and archaic, enjoy the presence in that strangeness of thousands of practitioners who have come before you with the same problems and aspirations as yourself. When you read those words, you join an unbroken lineage of human beings who have practiced the teachings for thousands of years. There is so much hope in that for us all.

Meeting the Dharma—Aspiration and Dedication

The book begins with aspiration and ends with dedication. Aspiration and dedication are the “bookends” of every activity in Buddhist practice. *Why* we are doing what we are doing is more significant in the long run than *what* we are doing. This is a key aspect of the technologies of mind training and karma. The book begins with practices that cultivate mindfulness of motivation, and ends with a selection of dedications that reconfirm our reasons for whatever we do.

The Origin of These Texts

Except for the three *lam rim* glance meditations and a few quotations, these teachings are the words of Shakyamuni Buddha and of the great Indian and Tibetan yogis who followed him. We receive extraordinary nourishment, a special sense of belonging and connection to a great human continuity of aspiration, when we hear the Dharma in the very words of practitioners who have carried them forward to us in a wave through space and time. These teachings have been tested, lived, and realized by thousands of men and women over long centuries and vast geography. Now they are ours to pass on.

The Indian Sutras and Commentaries

Some of these texts, such as the *Heart Sutra*, the *King of Prayers*, the *Metta Sutta*, and the *gathas* from the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, are considered to be the words of Shakyamuni Buddha and are found in the Tibetan *Kangyur*, the canon of works attributed to the Buddha. Such scriptures are referred to as sutras.

Other texts are commentaries on the Buddha's teachings, written in India by classical masters such as Shantideva and Atisha. These works are part of the

Tibetan Tengyur, the collection of Indian commentaries on the sutras. This category includes Atisha’s *Bodhisattva’s Jewel Garland*, Nagarjuna’s *Fundamental Wisdom*, and the “Patience” chapter from Shantideva’s *Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life*. I’ve also included the opening offerings of homage from the five great commentaries that are intensively studied in Tibetan monasteries. His Holiness the Dalai Lama often emphasizes the importance of these five commentaries and asks us to become familiar with them.

The scriptures within the Kangyur and Tengyur were written in India, in Sanskrit, and later translated into Tibetan beginning in the 600’s AD. The vast majority of the original Sanskrit works were lost when Buddhism was eradicated in India by the Muslim invasion beginning in the 10th century, and many now exist only in their Tibetan translations.

Tibetan Lojong—Mind Training

Several texts in this collection are native Tibetan works, including three in the *lo jong*, “mind training,” genre by Geshe Chekawa, Jigme Nyima, and Thogme Sangpo. These are based on Shantideva’s *Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life*, an important Indian text in the commentarial tradition. Because of their beauty, power, and ease of memorization, I have translated and embedded some of the relevant verses of Shantideva’s famous *Guide* within Jigme Nyima’s *Transforming Problems and Pleasures on the Path*.

I have included the Tibetan titles of most of the native Tibetan works, and in a couple shorter pieces have added the entire original Tibetan—in order to honor the language and lineage of transmission, and because the script is beautiful. For the same reasons, you will find herein the Sanskrit Devanagari as well as the translation of the Heart Sutra.

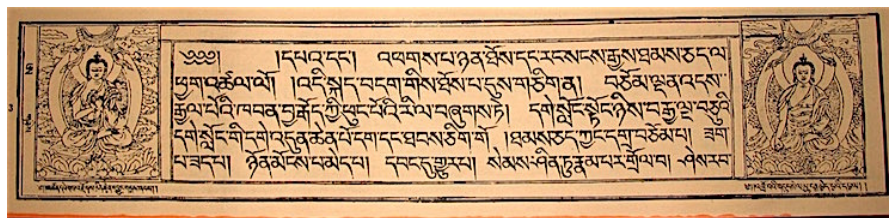
Tibetan Lam Rim—The Gradual Path

The *lam rim*, or “gradual path,” is a uniquely Tibetan organization of all the teachings of the sutras, organized into three ‘fields’ or ‘scopes’ of practice. It is a hands-on, user-friendly presentation of the topics of meditation and their application in daily life. The developmental presentation of the *lam rim* is organized according to the gradual deepening of a student’s motivation, and helps us see how the various insights connect and build on each other. Part XI of the *Dewdrop* contains an outline of the *lam rim* following the traditional numbered lists of Dharma topics. The numbered lists are a pedagogical tool that

xx A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

can help students make sense of it all when receiving teachings on any of the lam rim topics. The *lam rim* outline will also serve as a basis for contemplative meditation on those topics once a student has received teachings on them. I have also included, in Part III, my own set of three glance meditations on the *lam rim*, written specifically with Western students in mind. These glance meditations touch briefly on all the insights of the Dharma.

Sanskrit, Pali, and Tibetan



Sprinkled through these translations are a few terms and phrases from three of the most important and foundational Dharma languages: Sanskrit, Pali, and Tibetan. These terms are listed in a brief appendix with their diacritic marks. Some of these words, such as karma and mantra, have been assimilated into English; others lose too much of their Dharma meaning when translated into English and so they have been retained in their original language. These languages have safely brought the Buddhist tradition to us. They are the cultivated field from which we may collect the seeds of Dharma to plant the teachings here in the West. Familiarizing ourselves with such terms and concepts will create a karmic connection with these languages and the great tradition from which Buddhism arises.

Two Invocations by His Holiness the Dalai Lama

While my intent for this collection is to make it accessible to anyone who may pick it up, I have also translated two challenging invocations to the historical lineage of Buddhist teachers of the various “schools” of Indian and Tibetan Buddhism that were composed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. They refer to many of the great teachers of the Buddhist lineage, most of whom will be unfamiliar to Western practitioners, and they reference practices and terms that will also be new to most of us. It is important to cultivate some connection with the tradition of Buddhism in its transmitted continuity so that we don’t lose the wholeness, the *gestalt*, of the path. By including these invocations I am casting seeds of karmic connection with the lineage and with His Holiness, in order to

evoke a sense of gratitude to those who have handed down the practice to us, itself an essential realization of the path.

Ritual and Recitation

For the same reasons I have included a few ritual texts in this collection toward the back of the book. They follow the longer texts that have a more psychological approach. I have included three visualization practices, or, *sadhanas*. These are very complex practices, and need explanation and a good understanding of Buddhism. I have included the *sadhanas* of the Medicine Buddha, which is the practice of healing, and Chenresig, which is the practice of compassion. These are generally familiar in Dharma centers. I have included the *sadhana* of Prajnaparamita, which is the practice of wisdom, because the practice has been nearly lost for centuries, and now is a good time for us to be reminded that wisdom is personified, in the Buddhist tradition, as female. The practice is a treasure to be revived, perhaps, and I include it mainly to create a future karmic connection.

The section on ritual also contains some of the traditional recitations and chants that practitioners recite before meditation or before teachings. Please note that although I have given approximate translations of the mantras, any English translation is extremely limited because of the ability of Sanskrit to carry many simultaneous layers of interpretation, and the fact that the sound itself of the Sanskrit syllables is an aspect of their meaning.

Ritual and recitation are not a mandatory part of Buddhist practice. His Holiness frequently expresses the wish that we emphasize the teachings rather than ritual. If ritual does not resonate for you, it is fine to completely set it aside. Across the vast landscape of Buddhism throughout the world there is remarkable agreement on its basic tenets—the four noble truths—even as the various methods used to embody and integrate those insights are a colorful, cultural smorgasbord. The variety is gorgeous, but the only indispensable Dharma is the insight of the four noble truths.

Nevertheless, many first generation Dharma students do develop a feeling for chants, recitation, and other devotional practices after some time exploring Buddhism. Ritual and recitation are an important part of Buddhist practice, a skillful method of integrating insights and working with the mind. As we progress along the Dharma path, we may find that our hearts are warmed by ritual, and it becomes useful and even transformative. Ritual will certainly help

us build our practice communities. Ritual and devotional practices are especially meaningful for us in life's most painful and exultant moments.

Some of these recitations might be called “prayers” in English; in the *Dewdrop* they are referred to as chants. The Tibetan word *mon lam* better captures the sense of what we are doing when we engage in ritual practice. *Mon* means “aspiration” and *lam* means “path” or “state of consciousness,” so the term *mon lam* means “aspiring mind.” When we practice the various Buddhist *mon lam* we give rise to states of consciousness enriched with the aspiration for wisdom and compassion. Such practices are part of the Buddhist technology for creating the beautiful states of mind to which we aspire: perseverance, resilience, patience, ease, loving-kindness, compassion, insight, generosity, peace of mind, forgiveness, courage, equanimity, and so on.

As His Holiness the Dalai Lama says, it is your birthright to be happy. The practice of Dharma is the skillful way to become happy.

Please enjoy.

Tenzin Jesse

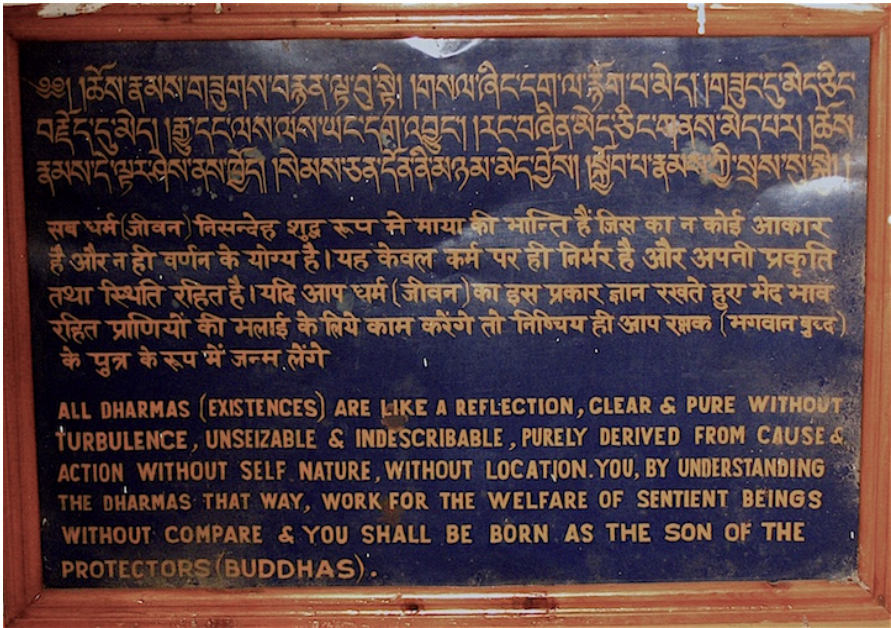
Capitol Hill, Seattle, Washington

PART I

Creating A Dharma World

All phenomenon (existences) are like a reflection, clear & pure without turbulence, unseizable & indescribable, derived entirely from causes & actions, without self nature, without location. You, by understanding phenomenon that way, will benefit sentient beings without compare & you shall be born as the child of the protectors (buddhas). —*From the entrance to the main temple in*

Dharamsala, India





Wheel of life mural from Lumbini, Nepal, where the prince, Shakyamuni, was born.

A Simple Daily Practice

In the Morning

- Set your motivation for the day.
- Recite the preliminary aspirations, experiencing for a few moments your potential for the beautiful consciousness of wisdom and compassion.
- Do a few minutes of meditation focusing on the breath.

During the Day

- Live your day with generosity, ethics, patience, joyous bravery, mindfulness and wisdom, viewing all experiences as opportunities for reflection and insight.

In the Evening

- Spend a few minutes contemplating/reading a passage in one of the texts in this book.
- Review your day using the healing and forgiving practice (purification) of the four opponent powers.
- Choose and recite one of the dedications at the end of this book, bringing to mind your positive actions and motivations of the day.

At Night

- Rest peacefully with a contented heart.

A Pilgrimage in Photos



The Himalayan Mountains rising from the Indian Plateau. Beyond lies Tibet.

6 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Cover – The river Ganges at Varanasi, near Sarnath, where the Buddha first taught after his awakening, and set in motion the wheel of Dharma.

Dedication – Twenty-one Taras from Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo's Dongyu Gatsal Ling Nunnery in Himachal Pradesh, India.

Foreword – Prayer flags, Tso Pema, India.

Tibetan text, 'pecha' page from *The Prajnaparamita in Eight Thousand Verses*.

Epigraph – Tibetan monks debating, Sarnath, India, where Shakyamuni Buddha first taught the Dharma.

Creating A Dharma World – Sign at the entrance to the main temple in Dharamsala, India, where His Holiness has taught for many decades.

(1) Wheel of life mural from Lumbini, Nepal, where the prince, Shakyamuni, was born.

(2) The Himalayan Mountains rising from the Indian Plateau. Beyond lies Tibet.

Aspirations – Shakyamuni with flower offerings, Bodhiheart retreat altar, Camano Island, Washington.

(3) The BodhiHeart Sangha Shakyamuni thangka with Venerable Sariputta, Maha Mogallana, Mt. Rainier, the Olympics, and the Salish Sea. Commissioned by Chad Kellogg in Kathmandu enroute to Mt. Everest, 2012.

(4) The BodhiHeart Sangha Medicine Buddha thangka, Capitol Hill, Seattle.

(5) At the ruins of Nalanda Monastery, India. Photo by Katie Egart.

Lam Rim Glance Meditations – Terraced hillside in the Himalayan foothills on the way up to McLeod Ganj, Dharamsala, home of H. H. the Dalai Lama.

(7) Snow lion and the eight auspicious symbols, Dharamsala, India.

(7) Right-turning conch, one of the eight auspicious symbols, Sera Monastery, South India.

(8) Dharma wheel, one of the eight auspicious symbols, Sera Monastery, South India.

Lo Jong – Buddha, in the BodhiHeart Sangha spring garden, Capitol Hill, Seattle.

(10) Tibetan script of *Eight Verses*.

(11) 1000-armed Chenresig, the gender shifting Avalokiteshvara who appears in thirty-three different forms including the female Kwan-yin.

(12) Prayer wheels at Swayambhunath Stupa, Kathmandu, Nepal.

(13) At Namu Buddha, where the bodhisattva gave himself to the hungry mother tiger.

(13) Snake charmer, Bodh Gaya, India, place of Shakyamuni's awakening.

(14) Tara mural, Lumbini, Nepal.

Wisdom – Buddha, in the BodhiHeart Sangha winter garden.

(15) Sanskrit Devanagari text of *The Heart Sutra*.

(16) A naga princess gives Nagarjuna the prajnaparamita texts, mural, Lumbini Nepal.

Refuge – Stupa, mural, Lumbini, Nepal.

(18) Western nun in meditation beneath a banyon tree, South India.

(19) Wheel of life detail, Sera Monastery, South India.

(20) Vajrasattva, Buddha of Purification.

Ritual and Recitation – Prayer wheels, Boudanath, Nepal.

(21) Korwa (path of circumambulation) and prostrations at a stupa, mural, Lumbini, Nepal.

8 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

- (22) Boudanath stupa, mural, Lumbini, Nepal.
- (22) Ancient pecha, Delhi, India.
- (22) Monastic robes and alms bowl.
- (23) Pandits debate, mural, Lumbini, Nepal.
- (24) Tibetan text of *The Homage to Manjushri*.
- (24) Manjushri, the bodhisattva of wisdom.
- (25) The BodhiHeart Altar.
- (26) Offerings at Sarnath, India, where the Buddha first taught.
- (26) Tiger, mural, Lumbini, Nepal.
- (27) The Bodhiheart Sangha Green Tara.

Lineage Invocations by His Holiness the Dalai Lama – Ananda mourns at Kushinagar, place of Buddha's parinirvana. Photo by Katie Egart.

- (28) H. H. the Dalai Lama teaching at his residence in Dharamsala, India.
- (29) The tree at Lumbini where Shakyamuni was born.

Sadhana – Tibetan text and puja table.

- (30) The BodhiHeart Sangha Medicine Buddha thangka.
- (31) H. H. the Dalai Lama in Louisville, Kentucky.
- (31) Mani mantra stone along the korwa around the Dalai Lama's residence, Dharmasala, India.
- (32) Detail of the Java Prajnaparamita from *The Art of Indian Asia* by Heinrich Zimmer, completed and edited by Joseph Campbell, 1960 Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey.
- (32) The Goddess Prajnaparamita. Photo credit unknown.

Dedication – Mani stones on the korwa around H.H. the Dalai Lama's residence in Dharmasala, India.

(33) Buddhas at the Ganden Monastery Temple, Mundgod, South India.

(34) The River Ganges at Varanasi.

Lam Rim by Numbers – Buddha, Borobudur, Indonesia.

(35) The path of calm abiding.

(36) Doors at Sera Monastery in South India.

(38) Tsa-tsas and mani stone along the korwa around His Holiness the Dalai Lama's residence in Dharmasala, India.

(39) Two-thousand-year-old stupa, Boudanath, Nepal.

(40) Pandit and texts, mural at Lumbini, Nepal.

Reference – Sign on the wall of immigration control at Delhi airport, India.

(42) Sanskrit Devanagari festival letters, North India.

Back Matter

Acknowledgements – Tara mantra stone on the korwa around His Holiness the Dalai Lama's residence in Dharmasala, India.

Gompa Builders Dedications – Venerable Dhammadinna and Tenzin Jesse.

PART II

Aspirations

Developing great compassion, kindness and the wish to benefit others is a matter of caring about one's own well-being. —*Tenzin Jesse*



Shakyamuni with flower offerings, BodhiHeart retreat altar, Camano Island, Washington.



The BodhiHeart thangka with Sariputta, Maha Mogallana, Mt. Rainier, the Olympics, and the Salish Sea. Commissioned by Chad Kellogg in Nepal enroute to Mt. Everest.

The Teaching of Shakyamuni

This is the teaching of the Buddha:
 Avoid any harmful action,
 Cultivate the beauty of goodness,
 And bring your own mind under control.

All things, you must know, are like a dream,
 A mirage, or a candle flame,
 A dewdrop, bubble, or a magic show,
 A star, a cloud, or a lightning bolt.

Aspire to overcome the legion of faults with your worthy deeds,
 To achieve an understanding of all things,
 And to free those adrift in samsara from this ocean of craving,
 Churned by the waves of old age, sickness, and death.

Translation by Tenzin Jesse, Rajpur, India, 2005



The BodhiHeart Sangha Medicine Buddha thangka, Capitol Hill, Seattle.

The Twelve Aspirations of the Medicine Buddha

1. In some future time when I have attained enlightenment, full awakening, may my presence radiate brilliant light, illuminating and stabilizing the infinite realms of the universe, and may all who see me be immediately awakened and possess such a body.
2. In some future time when I have attained enlightenment, full awakening, may I be agile, skillful and capable in every moment, my presence blazing like precious lapis lazuli, and may anyone who sees me be happy and content, having understood the causes of happiness and realized what to abandon and what to practice, and may they be inspired to engage in auspicious activities.
3. In some future time when I have attained enlightenment, full awakening, may everyone be showered with wealth and relieved of poverty through my wisdom and skillful means. May beings be free of the feeling that they need more, the feeling of deprivation. May they be free of the constant struggle to secure themselves and to amass greater and greater wealth.
4. In some future time when I have attained enlightenment, full awakening, may I manifest the highest path and most meaningful way of life. May I lead others away from self-defeating lifestyles and guide them toward beneficial activities such as learning Dharma, doing humanitarian work, and going on pilgrimage to sacred places. May I point those who seek freedom only from their own suffering toward bodhicitta, the aspiration for the well-being of all.
5. In some future time when I have attained enlightenment, full awakening, may I inspire conduct that is physically, verbally and mentally kind and does no harm to myself or others. May I free beings from a state of conflict and denial if they have acted unwisely. May I remind them of their good deeds recalled with great joy.

6. In some future time when I have attained enlightenment, full awakening, if someone who is injured, blind, deaf, unable to walk, or mentally ill should simply hear my name, may their faculties become whole and their limbs healed. May those struck with virulent disease, cancer, heart problems, and other threatening illness immediately be well.

7. In some future time when I have attained enlightenment, full awakening, may the suffering of those who are ill and have no medicine, no help or resources, no friends, relatives, or advocates be alleviated simply through hearing my name. May they be free of all illness as well as the poverty that reinforces illness. May they never again be ill or suffer harm in any future state.

8. In some future time when I have attained enlightenment, full awakening, may everyone be free of all types of social discrimination or ostracism due to class, race, religion, or gender. May they be free of abusive relationships, of persecution, and of hate crimes. If they see an image of Medicine Buddha or hear the name Medicine Buddha, may they generate confidence in their humanity, the knowledge that they are equal to their oppressors. May they be free of discrimination and injustice in all future lives.

9. In some future time when I have attained enlightenment, full awakening, may everyone be free from mistaken views of reality and of the causes of happiness. May they be free from doubt and misunderstanding regarding correct teachings. May they be free of fanaticism, religious conflict, and other ideas that are not rooted in compassion and wisdom. May I lead them to a bodhisattva's resolve, which holds alleviating suffering and developing a kind heart as the highest good.

10. In some future time when I have attained enlightenment, full awakening, may the power of my merit liberate everyone from persecution by governments, from imprisonment, torture, death sentences, and all situations in which the powerful harm the powerless. May those who are disadvantaged, those who have failed, and all those whose body, speech, and mind are afflicted with suffering find a safe haven. May all beings be protected from fear of harm and danger.

11. In some future time when I have attained enlightenment, full awakening, may I first satisfy everyone's hunger and thirst with delicious food and drink

and free them from the constant struggle to survive. Then may I bring them the blissful taste of Dharma.

12. In some future time when I have attained enlightenment, full awakening, may I provide everyone with whatever they need to be comfortable—proper clothing for those who are hot or cold and protection from the elements, as well as everything enjoyable in life—beautiful things, music, pleasing environments, art, whatever they wish for and can enjoy. May I satiate their craving so they can then become satisfied and relaxed in the fulfilling presence of the Dharma.

Translated and adapted from the Medicine Buddha Sutra, based on the commentary of Thrangu Rinpoche, by Tenzin Jesse, Elysium House, Dharamsala, India, July 2005.

Metta Sutra



At the ruins of Nalanda Monastery, India. Photo: Katie Egart.

If you're skilled in the art of well-being
 And seek the state of peace,
 Be reliable and upright,
 Straightforward and not proud,
 Be gentle-hearted,
 Approachable,
 Put everyone at ease.
 Live lightly in simplicity, easily content—
 For those whose needs are few,
 Unburdened,
 Satisfied,
 Are spared unending busyness.
 Be thoughtful, undemanding,
 Free of craving something ever new,
 Foreswear those acts that disappoint
 The wise ones you admire.

20 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Think:

May all who live be well, at ease, happy, and secure.
Those weak or strong, those great or small,
Those tall or short, seen or unseen,
Whether near or far, born or not,
May they all have happy minds.

Take care not to deceive,
Nor look down on anyone.
Nor, in a moment's hurt or fear,
Wish affliction on someone.

Just as a mother would risk her life
To protect her only child,
Offer such quick and willing love
To all the world over.
Send kindness through the universe,
Overflowing from your heart,
Into the skies,
Down to the depths,
Across this planet's fetch,
Unlimited by judgments,
Ungrudging, unrestrained.

When you stand or when you sit,
When you walk, when you recline,
Stay mindful, undistracted;
This is the noble way, they say,
The present, here and now.

Those unconfined by narrow views,
Pure-hearted and insightful,
Free from fixation, pacified,
Obsessions overcome,
On samsara's wheel of misery,
Will surely not be spun.

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Capitol Hill, Seattle, 2007

Gathas from the Avatamsaka Sutra

Mindful Dedication Verses for Everyday Life

When I'm at home—
May all of us realize that the nature of "home" is empty,
And so be freed of its pressures.

When I care for my parents—
May everyone serve the Buddhas,
Through protecting and nourishing all mother beings.

When I'm with my partner or children—
May we all appreciate others impartially,
Free of exaggerated expectations.

When I reach a goal—
May every being pull out the arrows of obsession,
And realize the most profound peacefulness.

When I celebrate with others—
May each revel in truth,
And realize the illusion of amusements.

When I see fabulous wealth and power—
May everyone be ennobled
By discarding meaningless goals.

When I put on beautiful clothes—
May we all look beyond superficial decoration,
And enjoy what is real.

When I climb stairs—

22 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

May each of us ascend the tower of truth,
And see through deception.

When I give something—
May everyone be able to let go,
With hearts free of clinging.

When I'm in a gathering or crowd—
May all of us see complex things from every perspective
And let go of simplistic views.

When I'm in danger and difficulty—
May each be free,
Without obstacles in the way.

When I go to a teacher—
May we all be grateful to our mentors,
And be aware of unrealistic projections.

When I take refuge in the Buddha—
May everyone carry on the legacy of the Buddha,
And give rise to the extraordinary aspiration.

When I take refuge in the Dharma—
May each of us dive into the teachings,
And give rise to ocean-deep wisdom.

When I take refuge in the Sangha—
May all beings gather harmoniously,
Free of chaos.

When I practice meditation—
May we all see reality as it is,
And so be free of strife and contention.

When I lift my foot—
May everyone climb out of cyclic existence,
And give rise to uplifted states of mind.

When I place my foot down—
May we all rest our minds peacefully
And let emotional turbulence settle.

When I set out on the road—
May each of us go where the Buddhas go,
A realm unpaved by conditioning.

When I follow an uphill road—
May all of us rise above the trivial,
And be strong-minded.

When I walk down hill—
May we all engage in beneficial activities,
With a heart of humility.

When I'm on a winding road—
May each avoid dead-end paths,
And not be detoured by misleading ideas.

When I keep to a straight road—
May everyone be upright and true
Without deceit or insincerity.

When I see a large tree—
May all beings avoid small-minded conflict,
And be free of anger and resentment.

When I see a high mountain—
May everyone's wonderful qualities stand out,
Our virtues towering over the world.

When I see a flower blossom—
May everyone's wisdom and compassion
Bloom brilliantly.

When I see a mighty river—
May we all enter the stream of Dharma
That empties into the ocean of wisdom.

When I cross over a bridge—
May each of us become a bridge to freedom
For those who wander in samsara.

When I enjoy a cultivated garden—

24 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

May everyone in the garden of sense desire
Pull out the weeds of craving.

When I meet people who are obsessed with pleasure—
May we all love truth,
And delight in genuine understanding.

When I meet people who are undemanding of life—
May all live without a care in our hearts
For fabricated things.

When I meet happy people—
May everyone be peaceful and happy,
Surrounded by Buddhas.

When I meet unhappy people—
May each of us have radiant insight
That heals depression.

When I meet healthy people—
May all beings enjoy wisdom,
And never suffer from illness or affliction.

When I meet unwell people—
May we all understand that the body is empty, like an illusion,
And be free of aversion and conflict.

When I meet grateful people—
May all of us recognize the inspiration
Of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas.

When I meet ungrateful people—
May everyone give up retribution
Toward those who do harm.

When I meet someone with right livelihood—
May each of us be successful in suitable work
That does not hurt others.

When I see soldiers—
May all don the armor of kindness
And advance toward the state of genuine freedom.

When I see people argue—
May we all be able to refute
Our own mistaken ideas about the world.

When I hear someone praise another—
May everyone fully appreciate the remarkable qualities
Of awakened beings.

When the day is blistering hot—
May we all burn up our disturbing emotions,
Leaving no trace behind.

When the heat subsides and begins to cool—
May each of us experience truth
And feel the refreshing coolness of awakening.

When I walk through a door—
May we all easily find our way into
The myriad methods of Dharma.

When I hold an empty bowl—
May everyone's heart be transparent
And empty of anger, craving, and confusion.

When I hold a full bowl—
May everyone's mind overflow
With goodhearted thoughts.

When I eat—
May all beings feast on the sweetness of meditation,
And be nourished by delight in truth.

When I finish a meal—
May we each complete our life's work,
Accomplishing our highest Dharma aspirations.

When I soak in a bath—
May everyone's understanding pervade reality,
Knowing that past, present, and future are equal.

When I go to sleep at night—

26 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

May we beings enjoy physical well-being
And an untroubled mind.

When I awaken from sleep—
May we all awaken from illusion,
And perceive the universe.

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Capitol Hill, Seattle, 2003

PART III

Lam Rim Glance Meditations

No matter how beautiful it is at the top of the mountain, at the end of the day,
you want to come down. —*Geshe Yeshe Tobten, oral teachings, Seattle,*
Washington, November, 1997



*Terraced hillside in the Himalayan foothills on the way up to McLeod Ganj,
Dharamsala, home of H. H. the Dalai Lama.*



1st Scope: Cause and Effect

By Tenzin Jesse

In every moment may I see the beauty and grace of my precious life, this rare chance for meaning, this vast opening for growth.

May I fully appreciate that I have food and shelter for my body, the capacity to learn and understand, a sensitivity for truth, and time for the Dharma. May I not take for granted that I have read the words of a Buddha, heard the teachings, and stood in the presence of great beings.

May I hold every situation, every encounter, every activity of my life as rich with the potential to be meaningful through practicing the Dharma and transforming my mind.

May trivial distractions not consume this one-in-a-million life. May I not spend my days gathering possessions like a pack rat hoarding shiny objects, seeking ephemeral sense pleasures like a moth mesmerized by flame, leaping for praise like a stray dog longing for a kind word from any stranger, scheming for fame like a prisoner cultivating their reputation among inmates.

May the deep awareness of impermanence and of my own death help me fend off absorption in what is fleeting, showing me what is truly important and what is not. May the uncertainty of the day of my death protect me from procrastination. May I live as if I might die tomorrow, without wasting a minute in negativity.

With a strong mind, may I look at the great pain and grief in which some beings drown. May I understand that such keen suffering is ordinary and predictable on the wheel of existence and in my own past lives. May I create the

30 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

causes of good future lives and scan the shorelines of this ocean of samsara for a safe harbor for all beings.

As though trying to quench my thirst with salt water, the obsessive distractions in which I have taken refuge—money, approval, food, sex, drugs, travel, status, and myriad other things—have left me even more dissatisfied, anxious, and confused. May I now entrust my happiness to that which won't deceive or disappoint me, and will protect me from every fear.

May I take heartfelt refuge in my future awakening and in the Buddha who achieved what I aspire to: a mind of unlimited wisdom and the body of unlimited compassion.

May I take heartfelt refuge in the Dharma: the realization of the ultimate and conventional nature of the universe, the interdependency of all beings, and the teachings that oppose affliction and illusion.

May I take heartfelt refuge in the Sangha, to whom I can look for guidance and inspiration on the path ahead.

Having set my mind upon reality, may I gain confidence in cause and effect. May I understand that every thought and action sets in motion its result: harm creates future suffering, benefit creates happiness. May I stand firmly in my responsibility and control, knowing that I alone create my future and myself.

May I never kill, take what is not given, or use sexuality to harm. May I avoid misleading others, cease harsh speech, refuse divisive talk, quiet meaningless gossip. May I quell obsessive wanting, stop malicious thoughts, and subdue cynicism and intellectual arrogance.

May I protect beings, give what I can, respect others' feelings, be truthful, point out the good qualities of others, speak gently and thoughtfully, rejoice in everyone's good fortune, think kindly of all, and cultivate realistic wisdom.

May I regret my mistakes with compassion for my past ignorance. May I repair my relationships with those I have harmed, and restore my own weakened aspiration. May I create positive actions that oppose the harm I've done. May I resolve to learn from my mistakes so as not to repeat them.

Thus may I make this life inconceivably significant by realizing the truth of my blessings, of my death, of suffering, of cause and effect, and of refuge. May

I bring safety and trust to all beings through my conduct. May my life be an example of living to learn and grow rather than to struggle for momentary diversions.

Written by Tenzin Jesse at the request of her lam rim students, Seattle, 2002



Right-turning conch, one of the eight auspicious symbols, Sera Monastery, South India.



The Dharma Wheel, one of the eight auspicious symbols, Sera Monastery, South India.

2nd Scope: Four Noble Truths

By Tenzin Jesse

May I realize the true suffering of spinning in a cyclic state of mind. The elation of getting what I want is soon ruined by disappointment, boredom, or the desire for more, and I grow dissatisfied with what I have.

With compassion for myself, may I see how pleasures turn to irritation. Worrisome problems solved are soon followed by new concerns. Security and stability lie always just beyond my reach, like a mirage of water in the desert. All carefully collected things are lost, one by one or all at once, and people brought together will part. Over and over I find I can't control the things I think will bring me joy.

May I realize the true causes of this cycle of up and down. Without the tools of insight, on a journey of a thousand changes I turn for comfort to things that lack the power of peace.

Over and over, like an addict, I run to all that's falsely promised. Though I've no control over such external things, I pin my hopes on them. My habits create an ache that I mistake for happiness. Such is attachment. May I see its futility.

I use all my strength to fight the things that seem to threaten me—and the world responds with its own aversion toward me as well. Yanked into the past by brooding, dragged into the future by anxiety, the beauty of my present life passes by. Such is anger. May I see its falsity.

May I know that “yes” and “no” are rooted in the false view that things are truly as I see them: stable, good or bad, with an abiding essence of fixed identity. As much as I mistake the true nature of reality, in equal measure my presence will

34 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

be diminished, my enjoyments polluted, and my peace of mind destroyed. Such is ignorance. May I take it, like a child, gently in hand.

May I cultivate true paths, the antidotes to suffering, the causes of nirvana.

For the sake of my well-being may I practice non-harm in daily life and ease my need to rationalize and justify.

For the sake of my well-being, may I develop mindfulness and concentration, witness my experience, track my patterns of reaction, and get to know the afflictions that write my scripts.

For the sake of my well-being, may I cultivate the understanding that I am a continuity of changing mind and body, arising newly upon each moment's cause. Indeed, I am none of the fabricated things I say I am. My story has misled me: my problems were created by interpretations I've laid down upon the world.

For the sake of my well-being, may I not fall for appearances.

May I realize the truth of cessation: this mind can awaken. Painful emotions need not overwhelm me, and the openness of equanimity is a blissful dance with every fresh and living moment.

At home in a shifting, infinitely interdependent universe, may I wisely interact with beings and situations that lack a fixed identity. May I embrace unknowing and uncertainty so that new understanding might arise. May I rend the curtain of narrow views and nurture the inclusive, expansive view. May I see all sides and the entire matrix of facets. May my field of vision grow ever wider.

Delighting in the creativity of emptiness, may I be skilled in the art of nourishing myself without the need to control the uncontrollable. May I have the compassion to care for and befriend myself.

May I find what is meaningful, beautiful, and inspiring in every situation, and realize the perfection in every flawed thing. May I see the universal and love the particular in all. May the buddha nature in others and myself be a lightning rod for my joy.

Written by Tenzin Jesse, Seattle, 2002

3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

By Tenzin Jesse

When I meet the close one, the difficult one, or the one I do not know, may I always understand that these are ever-shifting labels: tomorrow an enemy becomes a stranger, my friend a stranger, the stranger my friend.

May I remember that all these beings have been dear to me from time to time as we've traveled this universe side by side, through infinite lifetimes: mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, lovers, teachers, and friends.

May I see the radiant kindness of all these dear ones in every morsel of food I eat, every road I travel, every book I read, every word I speak, every Dharma thought I think, and in every single experience of enjoyment and comfort.

May I be filled with joy at the chance to repay their incomprehensible kindness.

May I look closely enough to see in each being's eyes that they are just like me, wishing desperately not to suffer and longing to be happy.

May my mind be vast enough to see our interdependence, for my happiness depends on every single one.

May my wisdom be sharp enough to realize that "self" and "other" are just two different views of self-interest, from hills on the opposite sides of the very same valley.

When I am self-obsessed, when I ignore kind friends of the present, past, and future, when I feel hatred toward them, when I'm jealous, when I'm arrogant, when I'm competitive—may I understand that future pain and unhappiness will

36 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

grow from such a mind, that here in my own heart lie the seeds of war and conflict, poverty and ungraciousness, in the world.

May I imagine how rich and beautiful life would be if, with simple affection, I saw the potential, beauty, and uniqueness of all beings. May I see how happy and at ease I would be if I were delighted by every being I met, no longer at odds with the universe and beings, able to make every moment meaningful.

May every living being be joyful, their thoughts beautiful. May they be well, their lives long and peaceful. May they awaken from confusion. May every good I've ever known flow out into the world with my every breath.

May every living being, every bird, fish and insect, every human being in every country on every continent, may all be free of injury and illness, fear and grief, loneliness and hatred. May I see the vulnerability, anxiety, and confusion in the eyes of those I mistrust, and behold the infinite sea of strangers who in some past life I have loved. May I never waste a moment of closeness with those I love in this present life. May I hold myself with forgiving compassion.

May I myself come to the aid of all these beings throughout space and time. Though at present I lack much skill, hindered by anger and craving, may I trust my ability to grow and respect the progress I have already made.

And thus to free all beings and myself, may I raise up great love and understanding. Though eons pass, may I never give up, for there is nothing greater I could ever achieve. May I be always brave of heart.

Written by Tenzin Jesse, Seattle, 2002

PART IV

Mind Training or "Lojong"

The mind is like a fast car, responsive, powerful; but we drive with the gas pedal to the floor, without holding on to the steering wheel, having no idea where we're going, or why, watching the scenery race by perilously.

—Tenzin Jesse



Buddha in the BodhiHeart Sangha spring garden, Capitol Hill, Seattle.

Eight Verses for Transforming the Heart

By the Kadam Geshe, Langri Tangpa Dorje Senge

༄༅། །བཀའ་གདམས་པའི་དགེ་བཤེས་ལྔ་རི་ཐང་པ་དོན་སེང་གེས་མཛད་པའི་ཐོས་ཆོག་བརྒྱུད་མ་ཞུགས་སོ།

With the aim to live for the greatest purpose,
The well-being of myself and others,
Who are more precious than wish-fulfilling jewels,
I will constantly practice holding them dear.

༡ །༄༅། །བདག་ནི་སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ། ཡིད་བཞིན་ནོར་བུ་ལས་ལྷག་པའི་དོན་མཆོག་སྦྱབ་པའི་བསམ་པ་ཡིས།
རྟག་ཏུ་གཅེས་པར་འཛིན་པར་ཤོག།

Whoever I'm with, wherever we are,
I will lessen my self-obsession;
From the depths of my heart, with simple esteem,
I will think first of the other.

༢ །གང་དུ་སྤྱད་པ་འགྲོགས་པའི་ཆོ། བདག་ནི་དུ་ཀླན་ལས་དམན་བཟླ་ཞིང་། གཞན་ལ་བསམ་པ་ཐག་པ་ཡིས། མཆོག་ཏུ་
གཅེས་པར་འཛིན་པར་ཤོག།

In daily life I will watch my mind,
And the moment negativity flares,
I will firmly and quickly sever such thoughts,
Since they endanger myself and others.

༣ ལྷོད་ལམ་ཀུན་ཏུ་རང་གྱུད་ལ། རྟོག་ཅིང་ཉོན་མོངས་སྒྲེས་མ་ཐག །བདག་གཞན་མ་རུངས་བྱེད་པས་ན། བཅོན་ཐབས་
གཏོང་ནས་བསྐྱོག་པར་ཤོག།

Whenever I meet someone of bad temper
Tortured by bitterness, faults, or mistakes,
I will cherish this one so rarely found,
Like a precious, fabulous treasure.

༤ །རང་བཞིན་ངན་པའི་སེམས་ཅན་ནི། སྤྲིག་སྤྱུག་བྲག་པོས་ནོན་མཐོང་ཆོ། རིན་ཆེན་གཏེར་དང་འཕྲད་པ་བཞིན། རྟེན་པར་
དཀའ་བས་གཅེས་འཛིན་ཤོག།

When those who are jealous,
Speak badly of me, criticize, or slander,
I will practice accepting even unfair defeat
And offer the last word to them.

༥ །བདག་ལ་གཞན་གྱིས་ཐུག་དོག་གིས། གཤེ་སྤྱར་ལ་སོགས་ མི་རིགས་པའི། རྩོང་ཁ་ རང་གིས་ལེན་པ་དང་། རྒྱལ་ཁ་
གཞན་ལ་འབྲུལ་བར་ཤོག།

When I turn with great hope to someone I've helped,
Who senselessly hurts me instead,
I will practice the view that this person is
My greatest spiritual teacher.

༦ །གང་ལ་བདག་གིས་ཐན་བཏགས་པའི། རེ་བ་ཆེ་བ་གང་ཞིག་གིས་ཤིན་ཏུ་མི་རིགས་གཏོང་བྱེད་ནའང་། བཤེས་གཉེན་དམ་
པར་བསྟར་བར་ཤོག།

In short, I will give to all my mothers, directly or indirectly,
Every worldly good and higher joy,
And secretly take upon myself
All their harmful acts and sorrow.

༧ །མདོར་ན་དངོས་དང་བརྒྱུད་པ་ཡིས། ཐན་བདེ་མ་རྣམས་ཀུན་ལ་འབྲུལ། མ་ཡི་གཏོང་དང་སྤྱུག་བསྐྱུལ་ཀུན། གསང་བས་
བདག་ལ་ལེན་པར་ཤོག།

May I practice this without compromise,
Viewing all things as illusory,
Unmoved by the world's seductions,
And free from the chains of greed.

༥ ། རྟོག་ཀླན་ཀྱང་ཚོས་བརྒྱད་ཀྱི། རྟོག་པའི་བྱི་མས་མ་སྦྱགས་པར། ཚོས་རྣམས་སྦྱ་མར་གེས་བ་ཡིས། ཞེན་པའི་འཆིང་བ་
ལས་བྲོལ་ཤོག ༥

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Capitol Hill, Seattle, 2016, having recieved the oral transimission of the text from His Holiness the Dalai Lama.



1000-armed Chenresig, the gender shifting Avalokiteshvara who appears in 33 different forms including the female Kwan-yin.

Thirty-Seven Practices of a Bodhisattva

༄༅། རྒྱལ་སྤྱི་ལག་ལན་སོ་བདུན་མ་བཞུགས་སོ།།

by Thogme Zangpo

Homage

You see that things neither come nor go,
Yet pour yourself into the support of beings;
Always to you, great guru, and my protector Chenresig,
I bow sincerely with body, speech, and mind.

Perfectly awakened buddhas, wellspring of benefit and joy,
Are produced through integrating the Dharma;
Because integration depends on knowing how to practice,
I will explain the practice of the bodhisattvas.

The First Practice

Right now you have a seaworthy ship, with rare freedom and resources.
If you wish to steer yourself and others across the sea of samsara,
Then, day and night, holding your course,
Study, reflect, and meditate,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Second Practice

Where you are tossed on the waves of obsession with friends and family,
Scorched by the blaze of aversion for those who disagree with you,
Benighted by forgetfulness of what to avoid and what to cultivate,

44 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Flee that familiar place,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Third Practice

Away from a toxic environment your disturbing emotions will gradually fade;
Without distractions your wholesome activities will naturally increase;
When the mind becomes clear your confidence in Dharma will grow;
Retreat to quiet solitude,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Fourth Practice

Longtime friends and relatives must someday go their separate ways;
Possessions won with so much work will soon be left behind;
The guest, your consciousness, will leave the guesthouse of the body;
Turn down your focus on conventional concerns,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Fifth Practice

In the company of some friends your anger and craving increase,
Meditation, reflection, and study cease,
Compassion and kindness disappear;
Keep your distance from such people,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Sixth Practice

Under the guidance of an inspiring friend
Good qualities grow like a waxing moon,
And shortcomings fade away;
Cherish that teacher, more precious than life,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Seventh Practice

How could things that the world prizes offer you protection,
If they themselves are bound in the sad cycle of suffering?
Take refuge, instead, in the Three Rare Treasures
That will never let you down,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Eighth Practice

The suffering in lower rebirths is very hard to bear,

And is the result of unwise action, says the Sage;
Mindful of this, foreswear all negativity,
Even at the risk of your life,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Ninth Practice

Like dewdrops on a blade of grass at dawn,
Mundane pleasures melt suddenly away;
Seek instead the highest freedom,
Happiness that endures and never fades,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Tenth Practice

Throughout beginningless time your many mothers loved you.
What good is your happiness if they still live in pain?
Therefore aim for great awakening,
With the wish to free all beings,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Eleventh Practice

All distress arises from seeking only our own happiness;
Awakening arises from concern for others' good.
So replace your self-absorption unreservedly
With the urgent mindfulness of others' needs,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Twelfth Practice

If someone driven by ravenous greed
Steals all that you have or helps others swindle you,
Dedicate to that thief your life and your joys,
And all the good you've done or ever will.
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Thirteenth Practice

Even were they to execute you,
Though you've done nothing wrong at all,
Take their immoral deeds upon yourself,
Through the power of your great compassion,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

46 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

The Fourteenth Practice

If someone broadcasts to the world
Malicious slander about you,
Praise their good qualities in return,
With an open, caring heart,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Fifteenth Practice

If someone reveals your faults to the world
And ridicules you,
Think of this person as your teacher,
And bow to them with respect,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Sixteenth Practice

Even if someone you've cared for like your own child
Turns on you with vehement hate,
Lavish them with loving attention,
As a mother would care for her ailing child,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Seventeenth Practice

If you're belittled by a peer or junior
To make themselves look good,
Humbly give them an honored seat,
As if they were your teacher,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Eighteenth Practice

If you find yourself destitute, ostracized,
Ill in body or mind,
Bravely accept this suffering with the thought:
"Thus, may no other being suffer their misdeeds' fruit,"
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Nineteenth Practice

If you become famous, lionized,
Powerful and rich,
Know that success is empty—not what it seems,

And be wary of your arrogance,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Twentieth Practice

If you don't subdue anger, your inner foe,
The harder you fight, the faster your outer foes multiply.
Better to conquer your own mind
With the armies of love and compassion,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Twenty-first Practice

The more you enjoy sense pleasures,
Like drinking salt water, the greater your thirst;
From things that spark powerful craving
Turn away quickly, turn boldly away,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Twenty-second Practice

The mind is without a fixed nature,
Though our concepts, projected, give rise to appearance;
If you realize this you'll not be misled,
By the illusory split between subject and object,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Twenty-third Practice

When you find something that you enjoy,
Beautiful, it seems, like a rainbow in summer.
Clinging relaxes when you don't believe
The illusion of such appearances.
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Twenty-fourth Practice

It's exhausting to believe in deceptive appearance—
When facing adversity or unwanted things,
See them all as mere illusions,
Like a dream in which a child dies,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Twenty-fifth Practice

If bodhisattvas relinquish concern for their own bodies,

48 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Need more be said about letting go of mundane material things?
Give freely with an open hand; don't look for some result,
Don't expect repayment; don't think of a reward,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Twenty-sixth Practice

If you sabotage your own well-being with unwise behavior,
It's nonsense to think you'll do good for others.
Cultivate integrity uncompromised
By short-sighted focus on personal gain,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Twenty-seventh Practice

Bodhisattvas who dream of the riches of love,
See even someone who harms them as a priceless diamond mine;
Cultivate patient acceptance of all beings,
Taking no offense, bearing no ill-will,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Twenty-eighth Practice

Hearers and those who mainly seek their own welfare,
Practice as if their hair's on fire;
So too, practice with all your heart for the welfare of all living beings,
Since ardor produces great qualities.
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Twenty-ninth Practice

Knowing that destructive emotions subside
When insight is joined with *shamatha*,
Cultivate single-pointed calm abiding,
Not just an ethereal state,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Thirtieth Practice

Even if you've mastered the five *paramitas*,
There's no full awakening without wisdom.
Cultivate wisdom free from conceptions
Of any agent, object, or action at all.
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Thirty-first Practice

Unless you face your self-deceptions,
You've no real practice, though you call yourself Buddhist;
Throughout the day, examine and see through
Your many mistaken, distorted views,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Thirty-second Practice

Gossip, with pride or jealousy, about a bodhisattva,
Diminishes the one who speak it.
Best not to talk of the faults of those
Who have set out upon the Great Path.
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Thirty-third Practice

When praise and reward cause conflict or competition,
Learning, reflection, and meditation fade.
Bring into balance your favor for friends,
And turn down the spotlight on the stars,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Thirty-fourth Practice

Harsh language upsets and hinders success
In a bodhisattva's work.
Avoid the use of unskillful words,
Unpleasant for everyone,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Thirty-fifth Practice

Full-blown destructive emotions are very hard to stop,
So be mindful, insightful, wielding antidotes like a sword,
Cut the *kleshas*, such as craving,
The instant they arise,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Thirty-sixth Practice

This is the key: throughout your day, in all you do,
Pay attention to what arises in the mind;
You'll bring goodness to the world

50 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

If you're mindful and self-aware,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

The Thirty-seventh Practice

Understanding the emptiness of agent, object, and act,
Dedicate these causes for happiness, the ones you've created here:
May they ripen in enlightenment
And heal the suffering of beings without end,
For this is the bodhisattva's way.

For the sake of you who wish to train like this,
I've set out these thirty-seven,
Following the masters who taught the meaning
Of the sutras, tantras, and commentaries.

Because my wit is small and my knowledge poor,
The poetics of these verses will not impress the learned;
But, having relied on the sutras and the teachings of the masters,
I am confident this practice is correct.

It is difficult for someone like myself, of modest intellect,
To fathom the profound depths of the bodhisattva's path,
So I ask the masters to forgive
Any faults within this text, contradictions or confusion.

Through the causes for happiness arising from these lines,
May all beings be like Chenresig,
Neither falling to extremes of peace nor of the world,
Their great hearts awakened
To relative appearance and ultimate reality.

*Togme the monk, a teacher of scripture and reasoning, wrote this text in a cave at
Ngülchu Rinchen for his own benefit as well as that of others.*

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Capitol Hill, Seattle, 2012

Transforming Problems and Pleasures on the Path

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by Jigme Tenpay Nyima

With Selections from Shantideva's *bodhicharyavatara*,

A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life

I bring to mind with admiration the beautiful qualities of Arya Chenresig, who was celebrated like this, “He is always made happy by the happiness of others and is profoundly troubled by their suffering. This one who has completely actualized the quality of extraordinary exalted compassion is no longer fascinated by his own pleasure and suffering.”

I’m going to explain here a small fraction of the traditional instructions for practicing with our experience of loss and discomfort, as well as with enjoyable events. These are invaluable teachings for everyday, worldly life. They are also absolutely essential tools for those who wish to lead a life of realization.

The teaching has two main parts: (1) How to practice with adversity, and (2) How to practice with pleasure.

The first part, practicing with adversity, has two subsections: (A) Practicing from the perspective of relative truth, and (B) Practicing from the perspective of ultimate truth.



Prayer wheels at Swayambhunath Stupa, Kathmandu, Nepal.

How to Practice With Adversity Using Relative Truth

Familiarization and Inappropriate Attention

If we habitually allow ourselves to focus solely on the suffering in situations when we are hurt by something, then we will gradually find ourselves getting more and more upset and troubled by even insignificant moments of unpleasantness. It is the nature of whatever state of mind with which we repeatedly familiarize, whether happiness or unhappiness, to grow stronger and occur more frequently.

The Mind, the External, and Happiness

Gradually the force of familiarity becomes stronger and, eventually, virtually everything that we experience will become a cause that leads by default to unhappiness. Eventually, there will simply be no opportunity or gap within which happiness could occur.

We tend to blame our unhappiness entirely on external objects without understanding that the main responsibility lies in the way we habituate our own minds. Because of that habit of blame, the flames of suffering fanned by anger

and negative actions spread endlessly. This is referred to as ‘appearances rising up as the enemy.’

Shantideva, Chapter 5, “Introspective Alertness,” Verse 6

The one who speaks the truth taught,
“All fears and immeasurable sufferings
Come from the mind,
The well-spring of anxiety.”

We need to develop the subtle insight that the reason we sentient beings of these degenerate times are tormented with suffering is fundamentally related to the weak power of our discerning investigation. To be unhurt by difficulties such as adversaries, illness, and other unpleasant ordeals does not mean that we can eliminate problems such as illness and that they will never occur again. Rather, it means that they will not arise as obstacles to our development of the path, which is a more beautiful and peaceful conscious experience. To get this kind of result we need to transform our minds in two ways: loosening the attitude of completely shrinking from any hardship, and cultivating a mind that can grasp the realistic benefits derived from difficult people and situations.

Anxiety, Aversion, and the Increase of Unhappiness

Again and again we should go through the process of directly facing how pointless and enormously harmful it is to view hardship as exclusively negative. We must also look at how much anxiety and deep mental unhappiness such a view creates. Thinking, “From now on, no matter what hardships arise, I will not be anxious,” we must get used to the many stinging blows and train ourselves to be fearless.

It makes no sense to hate our own difficulties. If a painful thing is curable, there is no need to be unhappy, and if it cannot be remedied, then unhappiness is likewise of no benefit.

There is, indeed, much harm in fearing difficulties. If we’re free of anxiety, even a great hurt will feel light and insubstantial like cotton, and it will be an easy burden to bear. But through the power of anxiety, even a small discomfort becomes intolerable because we experience the additional oppression of constantly unhappy feelings.

Shantideva, Chapter 6, “Patience,” Verse 16

My complaining mind,
In the face of heat, cold, rain, or wind,
Illness, bondage or abuse,
Will only magnify my suffering.

Consider that if someone tried to stop desire while thinking of the beauty of a beloved person, he or she would just become exhausted. In the same way, we will be unable to develop patient endurance if we primarily focus our attention on the painful aspects of our difficulties. Instead, we need to become skillful in keeping the mind in its normal condition and natural state without obsessing on the painful characteristics of a situation. This is similar to the instructions on restraining the senses (such as limiting what we pay attention to when training to reduce attachment and anger).

Shantideva, Chapter 5, "Introspective Alertness," Verses 2–3

Left to run wild,
The elephant of my mind will trample me in a constant hell.
Even a living elephant in a drunken rampage
Cannot hurt me like that.

But if the elephant of my mind is securely bound
By the rope of mindfulness in every situation,
All fears will fall away
And everything wholesome will be within my reach.

Cultivating Delight when Adversity Arises

By viewing adversity as an opportunity to progress on the path, we can cultivate joy in regard to that adversity.

Whenever unpleasantness occurs, we should meet it with the particular transformative practice that is best matched to our own level of development. We may have some abstract understanding of a practice and tell ourselves repeatedly, "Through applying this advanced technique to my problems I can achieve this or that benefit." But if we haven't really integrated a practice it will be very difficult to achieve what we want. It will be, as it is said, "farther from the earth than the sky."

Cultivating the Wish to Be Free of Samsara using Adversity

Therefore, we must first internalize the wish to be finally free from cyclic

existence through working with adversity. Think, “As long as I wander without choice or freedom in samsara, this kind of distress will befall me; this is not something that happens unjustly, it is simply the nature of samsara. If it is difficult to bear even the limited distress that I am now experiencing in this fortunate state of existence, how much more difficult it will be with the suffering of unfortunate states of existence.” Thinking, “How sad! Samsara is a bottomless ocean of problems,” you will become disenchanted by worldly things and turn your thoughts toward genuine freedom.

Shantideva, Chapter 6, “Patience,” Verse 12

The causes of happiness occur only now and then;
The causes of suffering, though, are many.
Without suffering there is no wish to be free.
Therefore, mind, hold steady.

Using Adversity to Cultivate Refuge

From this perspective think, “Because the Three Jewels are the only refuge that will not let me down in the face of constant danger and the anxiety that uncertainty creates throughout the succession of my lives, I should depend on them exclusively and on every level. No matter what happens I should never let go of the Three Jewels.” Developing certainty in this thought is the practice of taking refuge.

Shantideva, Chapter 2, “Confession,” Verse 42

O Protectors, I didn’t understand fear like this,
I was reckless and didn’t care.
For the sake of a life of impermanent things,
I naively created many negative causes.

Chapter 2, “Confession,” Verses 47–48

So from this day forth I will count on you,
A guide for those who wander in cyclic life, a victorious buddha,
Who heroically struggled to become the protector of beings,
Whose great strength assuages all my fear.

I take the Dharma that I have realized in my heart,
As my actual refuge,

56 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Which removes the fears of samsara;
And likewise I turn to the community of bodhisattvas.

Eliminating Arrogance with Suffering

As mentioned above, we have not yet freed ourselves from the condition of continual distress and we have no control over what we experience. Realizing this, we can stop the wrong thinking that is the foundation of arrogance and contempt for others, which are the enemies of prosperity and well-being.

Shantideva, Chapter 6, "Patience," Verse 21

Suffering has another beneficial aspect:
Disenchantment reduces pride.
Thus, my compassion for others will increase
And I will shun negativity and delight in what is good.

Using Misfortune to Understand Karma

The distress we now experience and future suffering, which could be much greater, are both fundamentally due to negative actions. Deeply contemplate the four qualities of karma:

1. The operation of karma is definite.
2. Karma tends to increase significantly.
3. We will not meet with a result if its cause is not created.
4. If an action is created it will not fail to produce its result [unless the karma is destroyed by anger or is purified].

With this in mind, think, "If I don't want suffering I should abandon non-virtue that is its cause."

Shantideva, Chapter 6, "Patience," Verse 45

So confused, I don't want suffering,
Yet I'm devoted to its causes.
Why blame someone else
When my own mistakes have caused my troubles?

Purifying Negativity through Misfortune

Take responsibility for previous negative actions using the four opponent powers and make an effort to prevent future negativity.

Shantideva, Chapter 6, "Patience," Verse 42

In the past I must have caused
This kind of pain for others.
Since I myself have hurt others in some way,
Why should I be surprised that harm has come to me?

Using Adversity to Increase Delight in Goodness

Reflect from many different angles and with specific detail, "Since I like happiness, which is the opposite of suffering, then I had best pursue positive actions, its cause." In this way we will increase our partiality for virtue as much as possible.

Training in Compassion through Suffering

Think, "Other living beings are tortured by suffering, just like mine or even greater." Looking from this different point of view, practice thinking how wonderful it would be if they too were free from all suffering.

Shantideva, Chapter 8, "Meditation," Verse 173

If I want happiness
I'd best not single out my own happiness.
If I want protection,
I should always protect others.

Training in Love through Suffering

In a process similar to the cultivation of compassion, we can also cultivate love, which is the wish that others be happy, by looking at our own and others' lack of happiness.

Seeing Others as Dearer than Myself

Make a habit of thinking, "Due to caring only about myself from beginningless time, I have not freed myself from all this distress. Now I will focus on cherishing others, the wellspring of happiness and well-being."

Shantideva, Chapter 8, "Meditation," Verse 129

Whatever happiness there is in this world
Arises from the wish for the happiness of others.

Whatever suffering there is in this world
Arises from the wish for my own happiness.

When we come face to face with distress it's very difficult to practice like this. So it is vital to gain prior experience with these transformative practices in order to be able to apply them at the moment of actual adversity. In the moment of engaging with difficulties it's also best to rely mainly on whichever single practice is the most clear and familiar to us.

Problems as the Basis of Joy Itself

It's not enough, by itself, for our problems to act as an aid to our practice of Dharma. We must also recognize that our problems have surely helped us. This recognition will bring a steady flow of very powerful happiness. Such strong happiness logically arises when we practice any of the instructions explained here and think, "This distress is fuel for my evolution and growth. This growth is rich with the happiness and well-being of complete freedom and fortunate states of existence that would otherwise be very difficult for me to achieve. In the future I will continue to progress in this way. Even though this present experience is unpleasant, I am in a state of sublime joy. It is like a pastry of molasses made with cardamom mixed with peppers."

A Mind Unharmd

Think about this deeply and often, gaining some experience of mental bliss. Then through the power of more frequently experiencing a mind bathed in happiness, the suffering of the senses will begin to seem as if it is fading away. The inability of sense discomfort to harm the mind is, in fact, the mark of illness being out-shone by the brilliance of patience. This freedom of the mind from harm is also the manifestation of patience in the face of enemies or harmful forces.

As I've already explained, reversing the impulse to reject anything unpleasant is the foundation for taking problems as our path of practice. When the mind is disturbed and when anxiety and oversensitivity have destroyed our light-heartedness, we are unable to take on problems as our path of practice.

Shantideva, Chapter 6, "Patience," Verse 9

Whatever happens,
I must not disturb my joyful state of mind.

Being unhappy will not get me what I want
And my good qualities will be undermined.

The Stages of Practice with Difficulties

Train with Small Problems First

Training in taking difficulties as the principle path of practice enhances our capacity for bliss, as I said earlier, because the experience of the blossoming of our spiritual practice through adversity further amplifies our delight.

If we train gradually, beginning with small problems in “easy” stages, it is said that eventually we will be able to train with great difficulties. We should practice with small problems first since it is difficult to have success with challenging situations that are too far beyond our level of ability.

Shantideva, Chapter 6, “Patience,” Verse 14

There is nothing that won’t become easier
Through becoming more familiar.
Thus, by meeting small upsets well, time and again,
Great suffering will become bearable.

Protecting Your Practice in the Beginning

In the beginning, when we’ve first begun training, it’s important to cultivate and maintain distance from entertainment and distractions. When we’re immersed in a consumer environment we’re affected by the influence of unsupportive friends who ask, “Why would you voluntarily do without things and put up with hardship?”

In such an environment the mind dwells on enemies, relationships, and wealth and will be consumed by many worries. Our consciousness becomes muddled, agitated, and out of control, and, thus, lapses into weakness and exhaustion. Our attention is stolen away by distracting situations and objects.

In a retreat-like setting, by contrast, these sorts of distractions are not present, so our awareness can be very clear and brilliant. Then the mind becomes easy to work with.

60 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

This is why, when first beginning to meditate on controlling suffering, *chod* practitioners leave their distracting home environment and do not practice with the harmful situations caused by other people. Instead they mainly practice with visualized celestial beings, spirits, and nightmarish creatures in wild places such as remote cemeteries. [*Chod* is a visualization practice that works with fear.]

Shantideva, Chapter 8, "Meditation," Verse 4

Special insight combined with a mind completely at rest in
contentment
Can finally destroy the disturbing emotions.
When we understand this, through delight in detachment from
mundane obsessions,
We will immediately seek out quiet stillness.

Advanced Practices of Accumulating Positive Potential

Between meditation sessions, that is, in daily life, we can make requests to our teachers and to the Three Jewels for inspiration in order to transform our problems into our path of practice. After our minds have grown quite a bit stronger, we can make offerings to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha and to harmful forces, and then request, "Please grant me difficult conditions so that I might mature my mind and heart." This should always be accompanied by an indwelling confidence marked by happiness and delight.

Thinking of the Results of This Practice

It is not enough that my mind is unharmed by problems or pain; these very hardships must effectively induce the mind to experience happiness. Having stopped internal illness, external enemies, harmful forces, and bad news from appearing in forms we're afraid of, we need to develop the habit of seeing them arise in a form that is useful and pleasing to our minds. We can stop looking at these intimidating events from the perspective of their drawbacks, and train instead with all-out effort to see them as the valuable opportunities that they are.

Qualities We'd Like to Have

The mind of someone refined by this *lojong* practice will be gentle and flexible, spacious and tolerant. He or she will be easygoing when involved with others.

Such a person will be strong, unafraid, and confident, and their Dharma practice will be free of obstacles. When problems do arise they will be experienced as glorious and auspicious, and the consciousness of the practitioner will be continually soothed by the bliss of peace.

Protection of Our Health: The Wheel of Bliss

Since we are practicing the path in a time of spiritual degeneration, it's dangerous to be without this kind of armor. When we're free of the suffering of anxiety, other kinds of problems will also become harmless, as when a soldier drops his weapon. Due to the absence of anxiety, the problem itself, such as illness, will sometimes dissipate on its own. As a great practitioner of the past said, "If we're not dissatisfied or unhappy about anything, the mind will be undisturbed. If the mind is undisturbed, our vital energies, the winds, will be undisturbed. Because of this, the other elements of the body will also be undisturbed. Because of this, the mind will be undisturbed. And on and on the wheel of bliss will revolve."

It is also said, "Just as birds will look for the easy opening of a wound on the back of a horse or donkey in order to attack it, so is it easy for harmful forces to find an opening in someone who has a fearful nature. But those with steady courage are unassailable." We can learn a lot from such sayings.

Protection from Harm Even at the Time of Death

Having seen that all happiness and suffering depends on the mind, skillful practitioners seek to find happiness within. The causes of happiness are complete within us; they do not derive from external situations or objects. Nor does whatever harm done to us by other beings or inanimate things have the ability to crush us. This is also true at the time of death. At all times we ourselves have control.

Shantideva, Chapter 5, "Introspective Alertness," Verses 13–14

Where is the cow with enough hide
To cover the entire surface of the earth with leather?
Yet with just the leather that covers the bottom of my shoes,
It's the same as covering the earth's entire surface.

Just so, I am unable to change
A world of external things.

But if I change this mind of mine,
There will be no need to change anything else.

A bodhisattva's meditative samadhi called "Pervading All Phenomena With Bliss" is also accomplished based on this. There are, of course, many other personal instructions for taking illness and negative influences into the path, including teachings on accepting the suffering of asceticism in practice and on Padampa Sangya's tradition of *shyi byed*. In this text I am simply writing an easily understood overview of the voluntary acceptance of difficulties as explained in the scriptures of Shantideva and his learned followers.

How to Practice With Adversity Using Ultimate Truth

In Meditative Equipoise

Reasoning, such as the refutation of production from the four extremes, forces the logical implication of emptiness, which is the ultimate nature of problems and suffering. Within that empty nature, problems and suffering—even their very names—cannot be found. This recognition draws the mind into supreme peace and the mind rests there.

Shantideva, Chapter 9, "Wisdom," Verses 141–142

Therefore, analyze like this:
There is nothing that is completely causeless.
Neither does anything exist within its own conditions
Whether single or combined.

But neither has anything come from something other than itself.
Nothing remains. Nothing disappears.
How are the things that confused people take to be truly existent
Any different from an illusion?

In Post-meditation

Even after emerging from that state of realization, the cognitive framework, in which emotions such as fear and depression previously arose, is no longer the same one in which suffering arises. We can overpower emotions like fear by observing them as mere names, without real substance. I will not discuss this extensively.

Shantideva, Chapter 9, "Wisdom," Verse 10

For as long as its conditions come together,
The illusion will appear as well.

Verses 151–152

Since all things are empty like this,
What is there to get and what to lose?
Who is there to be respected and by whom?
Who is there to be rejected and by whom?

From what comes happiness or suffering?
What is there to be liked and what disliked?
When searching for a real essence,
Who is longing and for what?

Using Relative Truth to Reflect on the Nature of Pleasure

External Things Are Impossible to Control

Those who are naive chase after external objects in hope of finding happiness. Yet despite whatever happiness they achieve, whether great or small, "Control is in other people's hands, like strands of hair tangled in the limbs of a tree," as it is said. In the end, they will have failed to reach their goals, they will be unable to control what they have gotten, their conjectures about the future will have been proven wrong, and their plans will have fallen through. Our successes attract adversaries and thieves who find an opportunity to take advantage of us; our triumphs are destroyed by the slightest criticism.

Shantideva, Chapter 8, "Meditation," Verse 18

With whatever my mind becomes addicted to,
Will come a thousand sufferings, arising and persisting.

External Pleasures Are Like Drinking Salt Water

No matter how much a crow nurses a baby cuckoo, it is impossible for the cuckoo to become a crow; likewise, the worldly mind, no matter how much we feed it, cannot become a stable mind and will only become exhausted. In

64 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

fact, nothing exists that does not become boring for the gods, emotionally disturbing for devils, and suffering for ourselves. This is quintessential advice that condenses a hundred practices into one key instruction.

Shantideva, Chapter 7, "Joyous Effort," Verse 65

I cannot get enough nice things and pleasures,
Even though they are like sticky honey on the edge of a razor.
Then why am I not insatiable for positive actions
That ripen in bliss and peace?

Desirability Is Merely Projected

Whether something is pleasing or displeasing depends on how the mind perceives it. For example, if our thoughts come mainly from the perspective of seeing the drawbacks of mundane entertainments and business, then no matter how much our popularity and enjoyment increase, we only become more weary of it and fed up by it all. Someone who experiences the same increase [of pleasure] but views worldly things as advantageous will want to increase their control over what they have gained, and they will strive to gain even more.

Pleasure Is the Cause of Negative Attitudes

If we fall under the power of happiness or pleasant things and situations when they arise, the subsequent increase in attitudes such as pride, self-importance, and laziness will obstruct our path of practice. As Pha Dampa says, "People can endure great suffering but only a little happiness." It is difficult not to be overpowered by happiness.

Pleasure Is Impermanent and a Source of Future Problems

To address this, consider from many different angles that all these things are impermanent and have aspects of suffering. Give rise to a healthy disenchantment with the samsaric world and try to change the attitude of thoughtlessness. Again, reflect that every worldly pleasure and success is insignificant and clearly fraught with many problems.

Shantideva, Chapter 2, "Confession," Verse 36

Like the experience in my dreams,
The things I enjoy

Will become the objects of my memories,
What is past I will not see again.

Shantideva, Chapter 4, “Conscientiousness,” Verse 16

Today I am not sick, I have food and I am safe,
But life is for a moment
And the body is like something briefly borrowed.

Transforming Pleasure Into Lasting Benefit

Reminders of Our Precious Situation

Nevertheless, pleasure has some beneficial aspects. As the Buddha remarked, “For the person whose self-mastery is depressed by suffering, awakening is difficult to accomplish; but for someone who abides in happiness, awakening is very easy.” Say to yourself, “How very fortunate I am to be able to practice the Dharma in a state of happiness! In this moment I must waste no time to earn the Dharma with this happiness. I should practice so that happiness and the Dharma become supports for each other through the continual outpouring of happiness from my Dharma practice. Otherwise, it will be like boiling water for a drink in a wooden pot, which itself burns up and loses the water. In the end it will be just what it was in the beginning: nothing.”

We should focus on using whatever small or great happiness comes to us in order to “take the essence” of our lives—to use our lives for their greatest potential. This is the realization offered in Nagarjuna’s *Precious Garland*.

Nagarjuna’s Precious Garland, Chapter Four, Verse 17

So, quickly, while you are healthy,
Use all your pleasures to create a foundation for Dharma practice.
For you stand in the swirl of death’s causes
Like a lamp in the throes of a gale.

Opportunities to Generate Contentment

Even if we are happy, that happiness cannot become a tool for Dharma practice unless we recognize that we’re happy. When we’re in a fit of busyness and activity because we hope for a little bit of happiness, we should appropriately

66 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

apply whichever countermeasures address this, and enjoy the nectar of contentment with whatever we do have.

Shantideva, Chapter 8, "Meditation," Verse 176

For those who want the impossible
There will be only disturbing emotions and failed hopes.
Someone who insists on nothing
Will know unlimited fulfillment.

Training in Bodhichitta

Of course, there are other methods for taking happiness into the path, such as remembering the kindness of the Three Jewels (Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha) and those based on the instructions for training in *bodhichitta*. But to begin with, these are enough.

Shantideva, Chapter 8, "Meditation," Verses 95–96

Since others want to be happy
Exactly as much as I do,
Why am I so special
That I seek happiness only for myself?

When others dread suffering
Exactly as much as I do,
Why am I so special
That I protect only myself?

Stages of this Practice

In a retreat-like setting we should practice to accumulate positive potential and purify our negative baggage. These are the same practices as transforming adversity into the path.

Using Ultimate Truth to Work with Pleasure

How to work with pleasure using ultimate truth can be understood from our previous discussion of suffering and ultimate truth.

Remembering the Extraordinary Benefits

The Lion-like Ability to Transform Any Circumstance

If we're unable to practice Dharma when we're uncomfortable (because of anxiety) and we're also unable to practice Dharma when we're comfortable (because we're attached to comfort), there will never be even a single occasion to practice Dharma. There is no substitute for the ability to transform any circumstance.

If we actualize these instructions, whether we reside in the city, the countryside, or a retreat place, whether the people to whom we're close are wonderful or unworthy, whether we experience success or loss, ease or frustration, whether we hear praise or criticism, gentle or aggressive words, no matter what, we ourselves will be free of the fear of being harmed. Thus, this practice is called the "lion-like yoga."

Making Our Minds Beautiful

Whatever we're engaged in our minds will be happy and expansive, filled with beautiful thoughts and graciously noble. Even though our bodies reside in an impure land, we will enjoy extraordinary bliss that others cannot conceive, like the bliss of bodhisattvas who dwell in the Pure Realms.

This is just as the precious *kadam* masters said, "*Lo jong* will be the harness of your happiness and the end of your suffering. If you are alone, it will befriend you in your grief. If you are ill it will be your nurse."

The Basis of the Six Paramitas

Concentration

Consider how a goldsmith removes impurities from gold by melting it with fire, and makes the gold pliable by rinsing it in water again and again. So too, taking problems into the path makes the mind transparent, and taking happiness into the path makes the mind yearn for Dharma. In this way, the special meditative concentrations through which body and mind become peaceful and workable are quickly accomplished.

Ethics, Generosity, and Patience

These are also instructions that create perfect conditions for the practice of ethics, which is the root of well-being and prosperity. I think this is very

profound. Nonattachment to pleasure creates the basis for the special ethical practices of taking precepts and monastic ordination. Fearlessness toward suffering keeps our ethical practice pure. As it is said, “Generosity is the basis of ethics. Patience purifies ethics.” We need to understand this.

Wisdom

By training like this now, when we reach the higher paths “We will know that all phenomena are like an illusion; we will realize that taking birth is like entering a beautiful garden; and whether in times of prosperity or in times of decline, we will be free from fear of suffering and from the disturbing emotions.”

Equal Taste in the Buddha's Life

For Our Own Welfare

We can find an example in the life story of the Buddha. Before the Buddha achieved enlightenment he renounced the throne of a *chakravartin*, a wheel-turning king, as readily as if it were merely straw. Instead he stayed beside the Nairanjana River, without a thought about the harshness of his austerity there. This teaches us how we should regard hardship and pleasure as being of “equal taste,” without preference, in order to realize the sweet nectar of our own highest welfare.

For the Welfare of Others

After the Buddha attained enlightenment, the most powerful people and gods of all the realms of existence, even up to the highest realm of Akanistha, bowed at his feet and offered him respect, service, and every necessity for his comfort. Yet on other occasions the brahman Bharadvaja ridiculed him with hundreds of criticisms, and the arrogant daughter of a brahman slandered him with accusations of unchaste conduct. For three months, in the land of King Mechin, he lived on rotting oats intended to feed the horses. Yet his mind remained without vacillating between up and down, like Mt. Meru unmoved by the wind. Stories such as these teach us that we should experience things as being of equal taste, in order to accomplish the highest welfare of other living beings.

Dedication

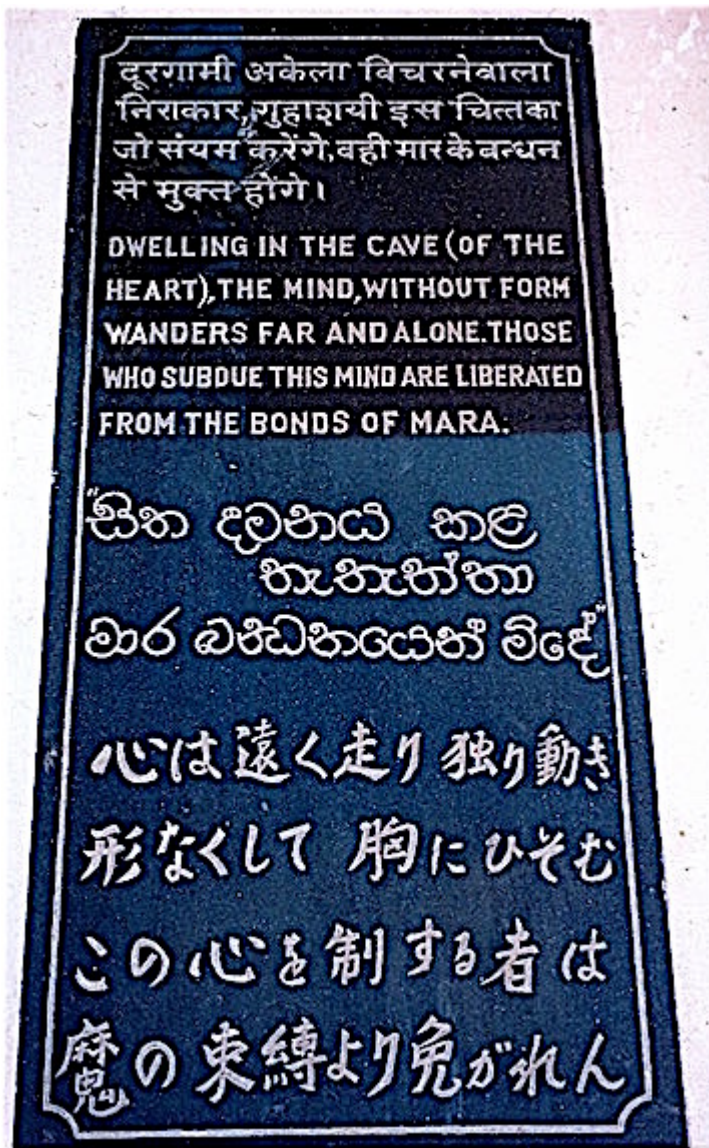
It would be best if this had been taught by the *jowo kadam* masters, whose very life stories demonstrate that “When there was suffering they did not cry out and when there was pleasure they had great weariness with samsara.” But when someone like myself teaches on this topic, I feel rightly put to shame by my own words. Nevertheless, I have written this in order to impress upon myself the imprints for realizing the equal taste of the eight mundane obsessions (i.e., gain and loss, pleasure and pain, praise and blame, fame and disrepute). This text was completed at Chamangi Nag, the Forest of Many Birds.

Here, the fruits and flowers of this worthy explanation
Lay at the foot of the vast tree of great lineage holders,
Adorning the beautiful garden of the teachings of the Omniscient One.
May they attract flocks of birds, fortunate beings,
And make them happy.

Subham astu sarvajagatam.

May all beings be happy.

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, 2006, having recieved the oral transmission (lung) for the text from Kilung Rinpoche.



At Namō Buddha, where the Bodhisattva gave himself to the hungry mother tiger.

Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life, “Patience”

Bodhicaryavatara, Chapter 6

by Shantideva

༄༅། བྱད་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའི་སྡོད་པ་ཉིད་འདུག་པ་བཞུགས་སོ།།

1. Anger can destroy in one moment
All the good we've done:
A thousand eons' generosity,
Our closeness to the awakened ones.
2. There's no evil like hatred,
And no discipline like patience.
So never miss a chance
To practice patience of any kind.
3. When the heart is pierced by anger,
We find no peace, no pleasure, no joy;
And thus, our nights are sleepless
And so we cannot rest.
4. Even if someone full of hate has power,
Those who depend upon that person's favor—
Though showered with wealth and fame—
Will still undermine and thwart that angry tyrant some day.

72 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

5. Such a person will alienate their friends;
Their attractive generosity will earn no trust;
In the end there's never happiness
For the one who anger rules.

6. But those who are enslaved yet rise up
And overcome this worst of enemies
(The anger that torments them)
And live happily in the present and in the future yet to come.

7. The experience of unwanted things,
Of not getting what we want,
Begets a discontented mind,
Quick to feed the flame of anger that burns us up alive.

8. Best, then, not to feed the blaze
Of such a destructive foe,
Which has no other function
Than to cause harm to oneself.

9. Whatever happens,
I must not disturb my joyful state of mind;
Being unhappy won't get me what I want
And my good qualities will be undermined.

10. Why be unhappy about something
If there's a remedy?
And if there is no remedy
How would unhappiness be a benefit?

11. I wish no hardship for myself, for any of my friends,
No hurtful words, no meanness, no unpleasant thing at all,
But what about those who I dislike?
Do I wish the opposite for them?

12. The causes of happiness occur only now and then;
The causes of suffering, though, are many.
Without suffering there is no wish to be free.
Therefore, mind, hold steady.

13. Zealots, adventurers, and competitors

Endure all sorts of pain and injury for no good reason.
Why, then, be fainthearted,
In pursuit of liberation, something truly great?

14. All things become easier
Through becoming more familiar.
Thus, by meeting small upsets well, time and again,
Great suffering will become bearable.

15. Is it not pointless to view as suffering
Such things as the bite of a snake,
A swarm of insects,
Heat or cold or the persistent itch of a rash?

16. My complaining mind,
In the face of heat, cold, rain, or wind,
Illness, bondage, or abuse,
Will only magnify my suffering.

17. Some see their own blood
And grow strong and brave;
Others faint at the mere sight
Of someone else's blood.

18. The former reaction is from a steady mind,
The latter, from the habit of timidity.
Therefore, ignore discomfort,
And be undisturbed by suffering.

19. A wise person will not let suffering
Upset their serenity of mind.
We are at war with the afflictions,
And in battle there are many pains.

20. Those who ignore discomfort,
And thus, defeat the enemy, hatred and its ilk,
Are the true conquering heroes.
The rest just slay a lifeless corpse.

21. Suffering has another benefit:
Disenchantment reduces pride.

74 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Thus, my compassion for others will increase,
I'll shun negativity and delight in what is good.

22. We don't get angry at hormones in the body
When they cause unpleasantness.
So why be angry at beings with minds
Who are simply driven by causes and conditions?

23. For example, illness arises,
Though we don't wish for it.
Likewise, disturbing emotions erupt,
Though we don't want them.

24. People don't intend, "Now I'll lose my temper,"
Yet anger arises impulsively.
Nor do they plan, "I'll sow the seeds of anger,"
Yet anger is produced.

25. All of our faults,
And every kind of negativity,
Arise under the power of conditions.
They do not exist independently.

26. The constellation of those conditions
Lacks the intention to produce anything.
Neither does its product possess
The intention to be produced.

27. Something said to be the "essential nature,"
Or something construed as an autonomous "self,"
Would necessarily arise intentionally: "I will come into being!"
But this is impossible.

28. If something has not yet arisen,
How could it wish to exist?
And if an immutable thing apprehended an object,
It would still be unable to change.

29. If the self were unchanging,
But encountered some other influence,

It would still be inert, unconscious, like space.
How could an unchanging thing be altered?

30. If the self doesn't change even when acted upon,
How has an agent acted upon it?
One thing is said to have acted on another,
But where is the connection between them?

31. Thus, all things are under control of other factors,
And those other factors are themselves dependent.
If we understood this we would not become angry
At all these many illusory things.

32. Who, then, stops what anger?
And isn't that very stopping itself disproved?
Not so, for depending on uprooted anger,
The continuum of suffering can be cut.

33. So whenever we see either friend or enemy
Behaving deplorably,
Reflect, "These things arise from conducive causes,"
And then we can calm down.

34. If embodied beings were capable
Of fulfilling their own wishes,
None would experience suffering,
Since no one desires the slightest disturbance or pain.

35. Instead, they hurt themselves
Carelessly with thorns and harmful things,
Or by wanting a lover or something else nice,
Obsessed and neglecting their health.

36. Some harm themselves by hanging, jumping, or poison;
Some by eating unwholesome food;
And a multitude of others
By creating dangerous karma.

37. Under influence of the disturbing emotions,
We might even destroy this cherished self.

76 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

In such a state, would we not easily
Harm others too?

38. Even if we don't feel great compassion
For those controlled by their emotions,
Who try to harm or even kill us,
In any case, what use would anger be?

39. If hurting others is in the nature
Of such an immature person,
It makes as much sense to get angry with them
As to resent a fire whose nature is to burn.

40. On the other hand, if someone's fault is adventitious
And not their real nature,
Still, getting angry with them makes no sense,
Like blaming smoke that will disappear into the sky.

41. Though it's the club or weapon that harms us,
It's the weapon wielder we blame.
If hatred drives the wielder,
It makes sense to blame the hatred instead.

42. In the past I must have caused
This kind of pain for others.
Since I myself have hurt others in some way,
Why should I be surprised that harm has come to me?

43. Both the weapon and my body are causes of this suffering;
My attacker has brought a weapon,
And I have brought a body.
At which of these should I be mad?

44. Due to blind craving I have obtained
This human body, sensitive as a boil,
So vulnerable it can hardly bear a touch.
At whom should I be angry when this tender body hurts?

45. So confused, I don't want suffering,
Yet I'm devoted to its causes.

Why blame someone else,
When my own mistakes have caused my troubles?

46. Even the gatekeeper of hell,
And the nightmare forest of razor-sharp leaves
Are created by our own actions—
At whom should I be angry?

47. If sentient beings harm me,
Incited by my karma,
And because of this they fall into hellish states,
Is it not I myself who have destroyed them?

48. Because of those who harm me,
My negativities dwindle through the practice of patience.
Because of me,
They fall into long-lasting hellish states of suffering.

49. So if I harm them,
And they benefit me,
Why then this misplaced anger,
And spiteful mind?

50. If I cultivate excellent qualities of mind
I'll never fall into such hellish state.
But even though I save myself,
What will be the fate of those others?

51. Suppose I retaliate instead:
My attackers would still be endangered,
My own conduct degraded,
And my tolerance for hardship thus destroyed.

52. The mind is not material,
It can never be damaged at all.
But when the mind conceives of "my" body,
The mind is hurt by the body's pain.

53. Hurtful speech and insult,
Blame and ridicule,

78 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

These can never harm the body.
Why then, mind, do they enrage you?

54. Some people will dislike me,
But that won't injure me
In my present life or the life to come.
So why is this dislike especially unbearable?

55. Perhaps it's just because
I fear to lose my wealth thereby,
But I will someday part from all my possessions,
Though my harmful actions will follow me.

56. It would be better to die this very day,
Than to live a long, corrupted life.
And even if that dissolute life were long,
The suffering of death is just the same.

57. If someone awakens from a dream
Of a hundred years of happiness,
And another wakens from a dream
Of a single moment's happiness,

58. That happiness will not return
To either of them again.
Long life or short,
At death it is all gone, just the same.

59. Even if we amass great wealth,
And enjoy much pleasure for many years,
We all leave this life as if robbed by a thief,
Naked and empty-handed.

60. Material resources help us live,
Burn negativity, and build merit.
But if we grow mean, grasping for money,
Merit will burn and negativity increase.

61. If in pursuit of gain,
The purpose of our lives is lost,

What is the point of any life
That leaves a trail of harm?

62. I say that the reason I'm upset when slandered
Is the loss of faith suffered by those who may hear it;
Why, then, am I not at all angry
When the one slandered is somebody else?

63. I have great patience for a person who distrusts me,
When his doubt was caused by someone else;
So why be impatient with slanderous words
That some neurotic emotion caused?

64. Even if a gang of vandals destroyed
Thangkas, stupas, or Dharma texts,
There's no good reason for righteous resentment—
Buddhas and great beings would not be upset.

65. Even if someone has harmed
My relative, mentor, or friend,
I can turn back anger as before,
Seeing conditions as cause of that harm.

66. Embodied beings are harmed by both
Sentient beings and lifeless things.
Why be more angry at living ones?
Why not bring patience to both kinds of harm?

67. Through delusion someone does harm,
Another, deluded, grows enraged by that.
Which one is mistaken?
And which is free of fault?

68. What result will come from our old karma,
The karma of harming others?
Since it all follows from our own actions,
Why be upset about what happens?

69. If I really understood this,
I'd put my heart into strengthening

80 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

A mind of kindness toward all beings,
And do many acts of benefit with delight.

70. When flames engulf a house,
And the fire is spreading fast,
It's wise to quickly find and remove
All tinder, accelerants, and combustibles.

71. So when the fire of anger begins to burn in the mind,
Because of some attachment,
Quick, remove that smoldering tinder,
Lest your good karma go up in flames.

72. If a thief's death sentence is reduced,
And lives, but loses a hand instead, is that unfortunate?
If a person's human suffering
Frees them from a future hellish state, is that unfortunate?

73. How could it be that we can't bear
Even our present small suffering,
Yet we don't try to overcome anger,
The cause of suffering in hellish states?

74. We have burned and suffered in hellish states
A thousand times for our desires,
Even so we've not yet achieved
Our own happiness or that of others.

75. The discomfort of patience is different,
It can bring about these two great benefits.
I can, thus, rejoice in my suffering
That cures the anguish of the world.

76. If other people feel so much joy
In praising another's fine qualities,
Why, mind, don't you also praise them
And feel happy, too?

77. The happiness of rejoicing,
Encouraged by great practitioners,

Is a faultless source of joy,
And the best way of attracting others.

78. If we feel no joy ourselves
When others say they're happy,
We will fail in many ways to give and to repay,
And so spoil this present moment and unseen future lives.

79. When our good qualities are praised,
We want others also to rejoice.
But when praise is aimed at someone else,
Is this a cause of our own happiness?

80. Having given rise to the awakening mind,
Wanting happiness for all sentient beings,
Why then does it make us fume
When someone finds happiness without our help?

81. If I truly wish that every being
Awaken fully, be honored by all the world,
Why does it so torment me
To see even the smallest honor given to someone else?

82. If a friend depended on me,
On my help and my largesse,
But then finds elsewhere their support,
Shouldn't I be happy and not displeased?

83. If I wish for the enlightenment of beings
How can I not wish them everything?
How can I have bodhichitta,
Yet resent someone else's prosperity?

84. Whether someone gives a gift to someone else
Or keeps the thing and doesn't give at all,
In either case, the gift is still not mine;
Given or not given, why should it matter to me?

85. Why do we throw away our fine qualities,
Our merit and others' trust?

82 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Tell me, why aren't we angry
At our own disregard for the causes of such wealth?

86. Not only do we have no regret
For the harmful things we've done,
But we jealously compete
With the good deeds others have done.

87. If my enemy is someday unhappy,
Why take pleasure in that?
A mere mental wish—gloating—
Cannot cause them any more harm.

88. And if his suffering were indeed caused by my wish,
How could I possibly delight in that?
If I think I would then be satisfied,
Is anything more pathetic than that?

89. If my mind is snagged by some sharp hook,
Cast by anger—the fisherman,
I will surely be cooked by the guardians of hell
In a boiling cauldron of hate.

90. Honor, praise, and fame
Don't foster skillful actions.
Nor do life, strength, or health,
Nor physical well-being.

91. If I care about my own well-being,
I need to ask, what would fame do to me?
But if pleasure's all I care about,
Then I'd might as well live just to party and get high.

92. For the love of fame some sacrifice wealth,
Or even give up their lives.
But what good are those words of praise?
Who will enjoy them after their death?

93. When the sandcastle crumbles,
Children wail.

When fame and praise fade,
We'll be broken-hearted.

94. Since words have no mind,
Words of praise have no intention;
The intention to praise may make a person happy,
But why should mere words make me happy?

95. Whether aimed my way or at someone else
How does others' regard benefit me?
The joy of liking is theirs alone,
Not even a part of it belongs to me.

96. If others' joy makes me happy,
Then I'll be happy whenever they are.
If this is so, why not be pleased
When it's other people who give them joy?

97. The happiness that arises from the thought,
"They're praising me,"
Is just unwise—
Nothing but a fool's indulgence.

98. Praise and fame distract me,
They feed enchantment with meaningless things,
They make me jealous of what I should admire,
And undo all my good.

99. Don't those people
Who ruin my fame and sour my reputation
Thereby protect me from devolving
To miserable states of being?

100. Entanglement in wealth and honor doesn't help
In the quest for liberation.
Why would I be angry at anyone
Who helps free me from those chains?

101. Why hate those who stop me
From opening the door

84 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

To suffering I unknowingly pursue?
It's as if they bestow upon me the Buddha's inspiration.

102. Even if they thwart my positive actions,
Anger is still unwise.
There is no practice as great as patience,
And it should definitely be mine.

103. If I fail to practice this patience,
It's entirely my own fault alone
If I don't live on that fertile ground
Where the causes of goodness and happiness grow.

104. Patience needs a challenge to grow;
If a challenge arises, patience may too.
Why say that a challenge exhausts my patience,
If it's instead the cause?

105. If someone gives to the hungry,
The hungry person is no obstacle to generosity.
If someone takes robes,
The preceptor is not an obstacle to ordination.

106. In this world, many are those who want from us,
Rare are those who do us harm,
For if we've done no harm ourselves,
Those who would do us wrong are likely few.

107. Thus, as if a treasure appeared on our doorstep,
With no effort on our part,
We should be pleased to meet an enemy,
Who will help us on the bodhisattva's path.

108. Since the enemy helps us hone our patience,
It's only right to offer them
The first fruit of that patience
Of which they are a cause.

109. If you ask, why honor enemies
Who have no wish to practice patience?

Then why honor the sacred Dharma,
A perfect cause for practice, which lacks all intent?

110. Why pay homage to this enemy
Who wants to do us harm?
Because we can not practice patience
With those who, like a doctor, always try to help.

111. So if we've practiced patience
Helped by those with a hateful mind,
Honor them like the sacred Dharma,
For without their help our patience would not arise.

112. Thus, says the Capable One:
"The field of sentient beings is the ground of buddhas;
Multitudes have honored the former,
And so gained liberation and everything good."

113. With the help of sentient beings and conquerors alike,
We can achieve awakened qualities.
If homage is due the conquerors,
Why not likewise for sentient beings?

114. Though their qualities of mind are different,
Buddhas still evolve from sentient beings.
Sentient beings are precious due to this,
And therefore they are equal to the buddhas in esteem.

115. The great gift of sentient beings to us
Is the merit of seeing their kindness.
The great gift of the enlightened ones
Is the merit of our confidence in them.

116. Though it's said that they're equal in the part they play
In bringing forth awakening,
Nothing compares with the excellence, of course,
Of a buddha's ocean of qualities.

117. To honor those in whom appear
Just one among that treasure trove of qualities,

86 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

It would be too little by far
To offer the three realms in totality.

118. Solely because they have a hand
In the rise of a buddha's qualities,
We should rightly honor sentient beings
According to the part they play.

119. How else could we ever repay
Our unwavering noble friends,
Who do immeasurable good for all,
Unless we honor sentient beings?

120. If we serve all beings with kindness,
Even if they do us harm,
We thus repay those noble ones
Who for us gladly give their bodies and even enter hell.

121. Yet, because of our delusions we're proud,
And loath to serve our benefactors
For the sake of whom the sages
Disregard their own bodies.

122. The sages are delighted by the happiness of beings
And saddened when they're harmed.
By pleasing them, we please the sages;
By harming them, we do the sages harm.

123. Nothing desirable would make me happy,
If my body were in flames.
Likewise, when sentient beings are suffering,
A bodhisattva cannot be pleased by any other thing.

124. Thus, I've caused the buddhas sorrow
Through the harm I've done to beings.
I beg forgiveness of the buddhas I have anguished
By confessing now that wrong.

125. With a wish to gladden the buddhas,
I will serve the world from this day on.

May I, thus, please the world's protectors,
Though beings step on my head or even strike me down.

126. Those whose nature is compassion
See with certainty all beings as themselves.
If the nature of all creatures is like that of the buddhas,
How could I fail to honor every living being?

127. It pleases the buddhas when I care for others,
And perfectly achieves my own well-being,
It cures the suffering of this world,
And so should surely be my constant aim.

128. If the underling of a head of state
Were to tyrannize the people,
A far-sighted person,
Even if able to return the harm, would not.

129. For the underling doesn't act alone
But is empowered by the king.
Likewise, never underestimate
A weak person who does you harm.

130. Such a person has the power of hell's gatekeeper,
And of the compassionate ones as well.
So, like the subjects of a wrathful king,
We should try to please all living beings.

131. Even if the king were totally enraged,
He couldn't cause the worst of sufferings—
The kind of suffering we would surely undergo
Due to causing harm to those beloved sentient beings.

132. Even if the king is kind,
He can't confer awakening,
Which is attained instead
By aiming for the happiness of beings.

133. Why can't we see that greatness,
Prosperity, well-being, our legacy in life,

88 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

And even full awakening,
Arise by caring for all beings?

134. It's patience in this troubled world
That bears the fruit of good health and of beauty,
Of honor and respect, of a fine long life.
Of a wheel-turning buddha's bliss.

Thus, the "Patience" chapter of *The Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* is finished.

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Samish Island, Washington, for the 2014 BodhiHeart retreat. Dedicated for Chad Kellogg, September 22, 1971–February 14, 2014.



Snake charmer, Bodh Gaya, India, place of Shakyamuni's awakening.

A Bodhisattva's Garland of Jewels

Bodhisattvamaniavali

by Atisha

༄༅། ལྷ་པར་སྐད་དུ། བོ་རྟེ་སཏུ་མ་ཁི་ཨ་བ་ལི། བོད་སྐད་དུ། བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའི་ནོར་བུའི་ཐེང་བ།

I bow to great compassion.
I bow to profound teachers.
I bow to sacred beings.

Now I shall stop this indecisiveness,
And wholeheartedly take up my practice,
Free of listless, lazy lethargy,
Rising up with joy in my work.

Ever mindful, alert, and careful,
I shall stand watch at the gate of my senses,
Checking my mind again and again,
Throughout the day, throughout the night.

Let me admit my own faults,
Not look for others' mistakes,
Quit advertising my own virtue,
And point out others' good qualities.

Let me be unmoved by wealth and honor,
Ignoring reputation and gain.
Desiring little and content with what I have,
Grateful to those who show me kindness.

I shall meditate on love and compassion,

And strengthen bodhichitta, my awakened heart,
Stopping all ten harmful actions,
And deepening my confidence, my stability.

Let me rest my mind in unassuming simplicity,
Having outwitted pride and anger,
And earn my living without deceit or manipulation,
And support myself with right livelihood.

Let me cast off all material clutter,
And wear instead the jewels of the aryas,
Set aside obsessive busyness,
Spend my time in a quiet place.

Let me stop all negative chatter,
And watch my speech with whoever I'm with.
Then when I meet a great teacher or master,
I can offer my help with respect.

Whenever I meet a beginner,
As well as those who see with a Dharma eye,
I shall think of them all as my teachers,
And view all other beings,
As father, mother, daughter, or son;
But those whose poor influence I fall for,
Those I must avoid.
Instead I'll put my trust in
The noble, inspiring friend.

When I'm free from the unhappy mind of aversion,
I can go where I must with joy;
When I'm free from all sticky clinging,
I can stay where I am, content.

Clinging leads to future suffering,
Which makes a life of liberation difficult to lead.
So wherever I find a true path to happiness,
Let me go that way.

And if in my life I always try to finish first
Whatever I have first begun to do,

Whatever I do will be done well;
Otherwise, I will accomplish nothing.

When a feeling arises that I am better than another,
Let me burst the bubble of my pride
And bring to mind my teachers' good advice,
Since I am myself still joyless, enthralled by negativity;
And when a feeling of discouragement arises,
Let me praise the magnificence of mind
And contemplate the emptiness
Of both discouragement and pride.

In any situation, when attachment or aversion should
arise,
Let me see its many objects as illusory projection;
When I hear upsetting talk
I should regard it as an echo.
And when my body is hurt,
I will think it the result of my old actions.

It may be best to live in wilderness,
Beyond the edge of towns,
Like a wounded, wild animal,
Sequestered, in solitude,
And free of binding ties.

But mindful of my practice vows
Wherever I am now,
When a lack of focus or apathy arises,
Let me notice these shortcomings
And reconnect at once with my path, with its heart.

Whenever I'm with others,
Let me speak calmly, kindly, sincerely,
Fully present with a smile,
Without a frown or vague distracted glance.

When I'm with those I see daily,
Let me delight in giving and not hold back;
Let me protect the minds of others
By steering clear of contention;

Let me cut any jealousy,
And always practice patience.
Let me be grounded and steadfast,
Neither flattering nor fickle in relationships,
Free of contempt for others,
Conducting myself respectfully.

If I give guidance to others,
Let me have compassion and the wish to help.
Without criticizing different teachings,
Let people aspire to whichever they are drawn.
As for myself, I'll practice the ten Dharma activities,
Dividing them among all my days and nights.

Whatever I accomplish throughout the three times
I dedicate to the very highest awakening.
Sending to every living being the force of whatever good
I do,
Sowing the seeds of the seven-part practice,
The great aspirational prayer.

I shall practice like this,
And someday build up a critical mass of wisdom and
skillful activity.
I will exhaust the two kinds of obscuration,
Fulfill the purpose of my human life,
And awaken totally.

These seven jewels:
The jewels of certainty and of ethical discipline,
The jewels of generosity and of learning Dharma,
The jewel of personal standards of integrity,
The jewel of care for the standards of the wise,
The jewel of the highest form of wisdom—
These seven jewels are inexhaustible treasures.
They should be taught to humanity.

I will watch my speech when among many,
And watch my mind when I'm alone.

Written by the glorious master of India, Dipankara, Heart
of Perfect Wisdom, Illuminator Who is Entirely Good.

*Translated by Tenzin Jesse, under the guidance of Geshe Yeshe
Tobden shortly before his death, Seattle 1997, revised 2012*



Tara mural, Lumbini, Nepal.

PART V

Wisdom Meditations

Patrul Rinpoche's Pith Instruction:

Don't prolong the past.
Don't fabricate a future.
Don't believe appearances.
Be present with mindful awareness.
Other than that, there's nothing else to do.

Translator unknown



Buddha in the BodhiHeart Sangha winter garden, Capitol Hill, Seattle.

Heart Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom

The Exalted Mother, The Brief Prajnaparamita

प्रज्ञापारमिताहृदय सूत्रं

नमः सर्वज्ञाय ॥ आर्यावलोकितेश्वरो बोधिसत्त्वो गंभीरायां प्रज्ञापारमितायां चर्या चरमाणो व्यवलोकयति स्म । पञ्च स्कन्धास्तांश्च स्वभावशून्यान्यथयति स्म । इह शारिपुत्र रूपं शून्यता शून्यतैव रूपम् । रूपान् पृथक्शून्यता शून्यताया न पृथग्रूपम् । यद्रूपं सा शून्यता या शून्यता तद्रूपम् । एवमेव वेदानासंज्ञासंस्कारविज्ञानानि । इह शारिपुत्र सर्वधर्माः शून्यताल क्षणा अनुत्पन्ना अनिरुद्धा अमलाविमला नोना न परिपूर्णाः । तस्माच्चारिपुत्र शून्यतायां न रूपं न वेदना न संज्ञा न संस्कारा न विज्ञानं । न चक्षुः श्रोत्र घ्राण जिह्वा काय मनांसि न रूपशब्दगन्धरसस्पर्शव्यधर्माः न चक्षुर्धातुर्यावन्न मनोविज्ञानधातुः । न विद्या नाविद्या न विद्याक्षयो नाविद्याक्षयो यावन्न जरामरणं न जरामरणक्षयो न दुःखसमुदयनिरोधमार्गा न ज्ञानं न प्राप्तिः । तस्मादप्राप्तित्वाद्बोधिसत्त्वानां प्रज्ञापारमितामाश्रित्य विहरत्यचित्तावरणः । चित्तावरणनास्तित्वाद्रस्तो विपर्ययातिक्रान्तो निष्ठनिर्वाणः । त्र्यधवव्यवस्थिताः सर्व बुद्धाः प्रज्ञापारमिताम् आश्रित्यानुत्तरां सम्यक्सम्बोधिं अभिसम्बुद्धाः । तसाज्ज्ञातव्यं प्रज्ञापारमितामहामन्त्रो महाविद्यामन्त्रो ऽनुत्तरमन्त्रो ऽसमसममन्त्रः सर्वदुःखप्रशमनः । सत्यममिथ्यत्वात्प्रज्ञापारमितायामुक्तो मन्त्रः तद्यथा । गते गते पारगते परसंगते बोधि सवाहा ॥ इति प्रज्ञापारमिताहृदयं समाप्तम् ॥

I bow to the Buddha and all the bodhisattvas.

Thus I have heard. On one occasion the Bhagavan, Consummate Victor, was dwelling on Vulture's Peak at Rajagriha in the company of a great community of fully ordained monastics and a great community of bodhisattvas. At that time, the Bhagavan was absorbed in singlepointed concentration on the countless aspects of phenomena called "Profound Appearance." At that same time, Arya Avalokiteshvara, the mahasattva, the extraordinary bodhisattva, was viewing phenomenon through the practice of the profound perfection of wisdom and beheld that those five aggregates are also empty of inherent nature.

After a while, through the power of the Buddha, Venerable Shariputra said to Arya Avalokiteshvara, the mahasattva, the extraordinary bodhisattva, "How should any son or daughter of good lineage train who wishes to embody the practice of the profound perfection of wisdom?" He asked this and Arya Avalokiteshvara, the mahasattva, the extraordinary bodhisattva, replied to

Venerable Shariputra, “Shariputra, any son or daughter of good lineage who wishes to embody the practice of the profound perfection of wisdom should view phenomena like this: look repeatedly and correctly at phenomena, also those five aggregates, as empty of inherent nature.

“Form is empty. Emptiness is form. Emptiness is not other than form. Form is not other than emptiness. Likewise, feeling, perception, compositional factors and the consciousnesses are empty.

“Shariputra, thus, all phenomena are empty, without characteristics, unproduced and unceasing, not distorted and not free of distortion, not diminishing and not developing.

“Therefore, Shariputra, from the point of view of emptiness, there is no form, no feeling, no perception, no compositional factors, no consciousness; there is no eye, no ear, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind; there is no visual form, no sound, no smell, no taste, no object of touch, no phenomenon. There is no eye element and so forth, up through no mind element; there is also no eye consciousness element and so forth, up through no mental consciousness element.

“There is no ignorance, no extinction of ignorance, and so forth, up through no aging and death and no extinction of aging and death. Likewise, there is no suffering, cause, cessation, or path. There is no exalted wisdom, no attainment, and also no non-attainment.

“Shariputra, for this reason, because there is no attainment bodhisattvas abide in reliance upon the perfection of wisdom; since there are no obscurations in their minds they have no fear. Having left misconceptions far behind, they perfectly actualize the state free from distress. Also, all the buddhas abiding in the past, present, and future have fully awakened, manifesting unsurpassed, perfect enlightenment, through relying on the perfection of wisdom.

“Therefore, the mantra of the perfection of wisdom, the mantra of great knowledge, the unsurpassed mantra, the mantra that is equal to the unequaled, the mantra that pacifies all suffering, should be known as valid, since it does not deceive. Thus, I utter the mantra of the perfection of wisdom:

Tayatha gate gate paragate parasamgate bodhi svaha.

(Thus crossing, crossing, crossing over, crossing over to the other shore,
awake! May I, too.)

गते गते पारगते परसंगते बोधि सवाहा ॥

Shariputra, a bodhisattva, a mahasattva, should train in the perfection of wisdom like this.”

Then the Bhagavan arose from that concentration and commended Arya Avalokiteshvara, the mahasattva, the extraordinary bodhisattva, “Excellent! Well said! Son of good lineage, it’s like that. It’s just like that. Therefore, one should practice exactly as you have taught and even the Tatagathas, Those Thus Gone, will rejoice.”

After the Bhagavan had thus spoken, Venerable Shariputra, Arya Avalokiteshvara, the mahasattva, the extraordinary bodhisattva, and all those in the surrounding gathering, as well as the worlds of gods, humans, demigods, and celestial spirits, were delighted, lavishly praising the words of the Bhagavan.

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Pullahari, Boudhanath, Nepal, 2006

Nagarjuna's Fundamental Wisdom

Meditations upon select verses from each chapter



A naga princess gives Nagarjuna the prajnaparamita texts, mural, Lumbini Nepal.

1. Causes

At no time and in no place,
Has anything in my life arisen
Caused by itself alone, by something else,
By both, or through no cause at all.

2. Coming and Going

Upon the path already traversed nothing at all moves,
And upon the path not yet walked nothing at all moves.
But can I walk any other path
Than the one I've walked or the one I've not yet walked?

3. Senses

My eye faculty is neither the activity of seeing,
Nor other than the activity of seeing;
If there's no eye faculty, how does the seen object exist,
Or the activity of seeing?

4. The Aggregates

My body apart from its causes, the elements,
Cannot be conceived;
Neither can the elements apart from material form
Be conceived.
My body, the effect,
Is not the same as its parts, the causes;
Neither is my body
Something other than its parts.

5. The Elements

If I'm unwise,
I think of things
As existent or nonexistent,
And fail to see the peacefulness of the world.

6. Craving and the Addict

If I were the same as my craving,
The two would never be apart;

But if they're completely different,
How could they ever meet?

I think that they're not different,
But I see them come together;
I see them together,
But think that they are different.

7. Conditioned Arising

There is no darkness
Within light or its surroundings;
What, then, is illuminated,
When light destroys darkness?
And how could light destroy darkness
That light will never meet?

Consider how something that exists
Can never die,
For nothing can both exist
And not exist at once.

Nor can something nonexistent cease;
Just as a person
Cannot be beheaded twice!

Thus, arising, abiding,
And ceasing
Are like a dream, an illusion,
Or a city of *gandharvas*.

8. The Doer and the Deed

An action is dependent on an agent,
And an agent is dependent upon an action—
I see them as arising
Solely for this reason.

If I give up the idea of agents and actions,
In just this way,
I will understand clinging
And everything else.

104 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

9. The Seer and the Seeing

Do I exist before I see or hear or feel?
If not, how could seeing, hearing, and feeling still occur?
But if I abide before seeing, hearing, and feeling,
How could I know the existence of that “I”?

10. Fire and Fuel

If a fire and its fuelwood were the same,
Then action and agent would be the same;
If a fire is different from its fuelwood,
Then fire could exist without fuelwood.

Fire doesn't come from something
Other than wood,
But neither does it come from fuelwood.

Fire is not fuelwood,
But it doesn't arise from anything other than fuelwood;
Fire does not contain fuelwood:
In the fire there is no wood, and in the wood there is no fire.

11. Samsara

Since states of past, present, and future
Do not exist,
Why do I conceive of
Birth, old age, and death?

Not only samsara is without beginning—
All existents are beginningless:
Cause and effect, qualities and what's qualified,
Feeling and experiencer—everything is without beginning.

12. Dukkha

Some contend that we create our own suffering,
Or that others cause it, or both,
Or that it has no cause;
But its production can never be found.

If my suffering is caused by myself,
Then where is that person

Who causes my suffering
And so exists apart from that suffering?

And if another person is the cause,
Then where is the one,
Who is cut off from contact with my suffering,
And yet causes it somehow?

13. Conceptions

All things lack an essential nature,
Since we see them change;
But there is nothing without an essential nature,
Because everything has the nature of emptiness.

If things don't have an essential nature,
Then what changes?
But if they have an essential nature,
How could they change?

A thing cannot change
Into something else;
Youth does not become age,
Nor can an old man become old.

If an essential nature could change into something else,
Then milk could become butter,
Or butter could become
Something other than milk.

Wise beings have said that *shunyata*
Is freedom from all opinions,
And that those who believe in emptiness
Are also stuck.

14. Contact

The seer, the seen object, and seeing:
These three
Never meet
All together, or even in pairs.

106 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Neither do my desire, what I desire, and myself
Ever connect;
The other disturbing emotions and sense perceptions,
Likewise, depend on three aspects.

Something can only combine with something different,
But the seer, the object, and seeing
Don't have separate natures,
So they never come together from somewhere else.

A simultaneous thing cannot connect with itself,
But neither can two different things ever meet;
Neither myself who connects, the thing I connect with,
Nor connection itself can inherently exist.

15. Existence and Nonexistence

If existence were a quality of an essential nature,
Then that nature could never cease;
For change in any essential nature
Is impossible, by definition.

And if I don't have an essential nature,
What is it that changes?
Yet if I have an essential nature,
Then how could I ever change?

To think "I exist" is to conceive of something eternal,
To think "I will not exist" is to slip into nihilism;
Insightful people do not believe
In either existence or nonexistence.

I grasp at permanence—
The existence of an unchanging essential nature—
Or fall into the error of imagining a break in my continuity,
Thinking that something previously arisen
Could become nonexistent.

16. Bondage and Freedom

I wonder, how does the mind cycle through lifetimes?
If it were permanent it couldn't transform,

If impermanent, the same thing could not be reborn.
It is just like this for conscious beings.

The aggregates, arising and ceasing,
Are neither bound nor do they become liberated;
Therefore, I too am not bound,
Nor will I be liberated.

Nirvana is never produced,
Nor does cyclic existence cease;
So what, then, is nirvana?
What can we think about samsara?

17. Karmic Action and Results

Personal integrity, loving-kindness,
And the wish to help all others—
That is the Dharma,
Seeds that ripen in this life and beyond.

The Buddha taught that karma
Is either motivation—mental focus,
Or the expression of that intention
Through bodily actions or speech.

If my actions endured till ripening,
They would be permanent;
But if they don't endure,
How could they then bear fruit?

Since karmas do not possess essential nature,
They do not arise;
Since they do not arise,
They cannot cease.

If my actions had a fixed nature,
They would certainly be permanent and thus uncreated;
It is impossible to perform
A permanent action.

Limited by ignorance and fraught with dissatisfaction,
I, the experiencer of a result,

108 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Am neither different from, nor the same as
The creater of the cause of that result.

Imagine a magician
Who creates a perfect illusion,
And then that illusion creates another illusion:
Doer and action are like this.

18. The Self

If the self is the same as the aggregates,
It would arise and cease;
But if the self is different from the aggregates,
It would not have the nature of body and mind.

When actions and disturbing emotions cease, there is peace;
Actions and afflictions arise from concepts of “me” and “mine”;
Those concepts arise from mental fabrication.
Mental fabrication is stopped by realizing emptiness.

What words express is nonexistent,
Language collapses in the face of the nonconceptual:
Things neither arise nor cease,
Like nirvana.

The Buddha said that the world is real
And it is unreal;
That it is both real and unreal
And neither real nor unreal.

I am not the same as the conditions on which I depend,
Nor am I different from them,
Nor fused to them,
Nor discontinuous with them.

Reality cannot be known
Through something else—
It is peaceful, unfabricated by projections,
Inconceivable, without multiplicity.

19. Time

If present and future
Depend on the past,
Then present and future
Would have to overlap with the past.

If present and future,
Didn't meet in the past,
How could they then
Depend on the past?

If they're not dependent on the past,
How could either arise?
Therefore, neither present nor future
Could exist.

Time that is pure change cannot be grasped,
Neither can stationary time be grasped.
Since it surely can't exist,
If I can't apprehend it, how can I know it?

If time depends on things,
Then how could time exist apart from things?
If time doesn't exist apart from phenomena at all,
How could I observe time?

20. Cause and Effect Combined

How could a cause that has dissolved and disappeared
Create an effect?
But how could a cause that is coexistent with its effect
Produce that effect?

How could a cause have produced its effect
Without the two connecting?
But if the two are simultaneous,
How could a cause produce its effect?

If cause and effect were identical,
Produced and producer would be identical;

110 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

If they were different,
A cause would be no different than a non-cause.

21. Arising and Disintegration

Things do not disintegrate while arising,
Nor without arising;
Things do not arise while disintegrating,
Nor without disintegrating.

How could something arise
Without disintegrating,
If in every moment
Things are impermanent?

Disintegration and arising
Are not the same;
Neither are they
Different.

If you think things have existent natures
You will see them as unchanging or annihilated.
For existent natures must be either
Permanent or impermanent.

Yet existent phenomena are neither permanent nor destroyed,
Since conditioned existence
Is the arising of causes and results—
The continuity of disintegration.

22. Awakening

The Buddha is not the same or different from the aggregates,
He is not among the aggregates, nor are they within him,
Neither does he possess aggregates, body, or mind.
Who, then, is the Buddha?

The Buddha can't be described as empty
Or not empty,
Or both, or neither—
Those are merely provisional concepts.

Ask yourself whether permanence or impermanence,
Finite or infinite,
And all the rest
Have a place in a completely peaceful mind.

The nature of the Buddha
Is the nature of this sentient being—
The Buddha has no inherent nature,
And neither do I.

23. Mistakes

Craving, anger, and confusion
Are said to arise from conceptual thought,
Depending on a pleasant or unpleasant feeling,
And on misconceptions.

Since whatever depends on pleasant and unpleasant feelings,
Could not have a fixed nature,
My disturbing emotions
Do not truly exist.

Pleasant feelings, unpleasant feelings, and misconceptions
Do not possess a fixed nature;
So I ask myself, where are these feelings and thoughts
On which the disturbing emotions depend?

When I investigate, I discover that the sight, sound, smell,
Taste, touch and thought I experience
Are the foundation
Upon which craving, anger, and confusion build.

The sight, sound, smell,
Taste, touch, and thought that I experience
Are like a mirage
Or a castle in the air.

And I have to wonder—
Why should pleasant or unpleasant feelings arise
Regarding beings who are like illusions,
And objects like a full moon's reflection on the sea.

I describe something as pleasant
Based on my idea of what is unpleasant;
But unpleasant also relies on pleasant,
So what is pleasant is never indisputable.

I describe something as unpleasant
Based on my idea of what is pleasant;
But pleasant also relies on unpleasant,
So what is unpleasant is never indisputable.

If I didn't believe in *pleasant*,
Why would I be obsessed with craving?
If I didn't believe in *unpleasant*,
Why would anger flare up?

If self, purity,
Permanence, and happiness did not exist,
No-self, impurity,
Impermanence, and suffering would not exist.

But think about this:
In whom do misconceptions exist?
They do not exist
In a person who has become mistaken;

They do not exist
In a nonmistaken person;
Nor do misconceptions exist
In a person who is becoming mistaken.

If my disturbing emotions
Existed as my nature,
How could they disappear?
Who could remove something existent?

If my disturbing emotions
Did not exist as my nature,
How could they disappear?
Who could remove something nonexistent?

24. The Four Noble Truths

The Dharma of the Buddha's teaching
Is based on two truths:
The relative truth of the world
And ultimate truth.

If I don't understand
The distinction the Buddha makes between these two truths,
I won't understand the profound implications
Of his teachings.

Without a strong foundation in the relative,
I won't understand ultimate truth;
Without realizing ultimate truth,
I will never leave suffering behind.

For one who understands emptiness,
Everything is possible;
For one to whom emptiness is not clear,
Nothing is possible.

Whenever I see things as existing
Solidly from their own side,
I see them as existing
Without causes and conditions,

And I simply ignore
Cause and effect,
Agent, action, and object,
Arising, result, and disintegration.

Whatever arises dependently
Is empty:
This is the middle way.
(The middle way, too, is a dependent imputation.)

There is no such thing
As phenomena that arise independently,
So there is nothing
That is not empty.

114 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

If my suffering did not arise dependently,
How could it exist?
Since my suffering is constantly changing,
It doesn't have a fixed nature.

If this suffering had a fixed essence
It would never be interrupted;
If it really were unchanging
It would never ease.

And if the path of practice had a fixed nature
It couldn't be cultivated.
Since I am developing that path,
It is without a solid essence.

If you deny the emptiness
Of dependently arisen phenomena,
Even the conventions of the world
Are undermined.

If you deny emptiness itself,
Activities would be senseless,
Unable to begin,
And there would be doers without doing.

If fixed natures existed,
We would be unborn and unceasing;
We would live without changing,
And our circumstances would never vary.

Whoever sees dependent arising
Sees suffering,
Its causes,
Its cessation,
And the path.

25. *Nirvana*

If all this is empty,
There is no arising and no destruction;

So what exactly do I hope to abandon and stop
In order to leave suffering behind?

But if all is not empty,
There can be no arising and no destruction;
So, again, what exactly do I hope to abandon and stop
In order to leave suffering behind?

Nirvana is expressed as being;
Without discarding and without attaining,
Without discontinuity and without permanence,
Without ending and without arising.

Samsara is not at all different
From nirvana,
Nor is nirvana at all different
From samsara.

The extent of nirvana
Is the extent of samsara;
Not even the most subtle difference
Between them exists.

26. The Twelve Links

Contact is the meeting
Of the visual sense, form, and consciousness;
From that contact
Feeling arises.

Due to feeling, conditioned by feeling,
Craving arises;
When there's craving,
Grasping at things, ideologies and self arise.

When there's grasping,
The one who grasps comes into existence;
If there's no grasping, that one doesn't arise,
And there is freedom.

Existence—the body and consciousness—
Causes birth.

116 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

The result of birth
Is old age, misery, and death,

Likewise, grief, anguish,
Anxiety, and despair—
All the sufferings of body and mind
Come into being like this.

The roots of this cycle of existence
Are karmic actions.
The one who is unwise acts;
The wise one, through insight, does not.

27. Views

Opinions about whether I did or did not
Exist in the past,
Or whether the world is eternal,
All depend on conceiving of a beginning point.

Opinions about whether I will or will not
Exist in the future,
Or whether the world will end,
All depend on conceiving of an ending point.

Since the continuity of body and mind
Is like the flame of a candle,
It is senseless to think that they are either
Finite or infinite.

Since all things are empty,
Where is that thought about permanence
Or anything else?
Who would think it? When? Why? And about what?

I bow to Gautama,
Who taught the genuine Dharma
Through his compassion for us,
Dispelling all our opinions.

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Capitol Hill, Seattle, 2012

Selection From the Prajnaparmita in 8,000 Lines

When conditions exist, the arising of a phenomenon takes place; when those conditions are absent, the arising of that phenomenon becomes inconceivable.

When the sound of a bow harp is being produced, it doesn't come from anywhere. When it is stopped, it doesn't go anywhere, nor pass on anywhere. It has been produced depending on the totality of its causes and conditions: the boat-shaped hollow body of the harp, the skin sounding board, the strings, the hollow arm of the harp, the bindings, the plectrum, the person who plays it and their effort, the ear of the listener, the air in which the sound travels.

The sound comes in this way from the harp, depending on causes and conditions. And yet the sound doesn't come from the hollow body of the harp, nor from the skin sounding board, nor from the strings, nor from the hollow arm of the harp, nor from the bindings, nor from the plectrum, nor from the person who plays it, nor from their effort, nor from the ear of the listener, nor from the air in which the sound travels. It is simply the combination of all of those things that makes the sound conceivable.

A phenomenon does not result from a single cause or from one single condition. And it is also not without cause. It has been co-produced by a totality of many causes and conditions, but it does not come from anywhere. When the totality of causes and conditions has ceased to be, then it does not go anywhere. It is thus that you should view the coming and going of phenomena.

Based on the translation by Edward Conze, The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines and Its Verse Summary (San Francisco: Four Seasons Foundation, 1973). p. 292. Adapted by Tenzin Jesse, Seattle, 2002

PART VI

Refuge Commitments

It is refuge that gives us the courage to turn towards our own minds and practice. — *Venerable Dhammadinna*



Stupa, mural, Lumbini, Nepal.



Western nun in meditation beneath a banyan tree, South India.

Refuge Recitation

All you buddhas, bodhisattvas, and spiritual guides filling the infinite universe, please hear me. Throughout beginningless time until this moment I have taken refuge in many things in my search for happiness. I have filled this life and others with material possessions, career, status, travel, praise, popularity, sports, food, music, entertainment, sex, drugs, money, collections, clothes, improvement projects, and a thousand other enjoyments. Despite the momentary pleasures they gave me, these things left no lasting happiness, contentment, or fulfillment. They have made me even more anxious and confused, and I am still troubled by the desire for something more, dissatisfied and afraid of the hopelessness and grief that may lie ahead of me in life. I long to live a deeply meaningful life.

This sensitivity for truth has now led me to the Dharma, a path of wisdom and compassion that stops all anxiety, obsession, and aversion, and which can protect me from the disappointment of a life of confusion. Now I have found the extraordinary Buddha, a guide who has walked this path and can point the way. Now I have the Sangha beside me for my journey, friends who are dedicated to eliminating the disturbing emotions and to awakening for the benefit of all living beings.

In the Buddha I see a reflection of my own potential for awakening, my buddha nature. I take refuge in my potential. In the Dharma I see an understanding of reality and the process through which I can embody such wisdom and compassion. I take refuge in the realization I will develop. In the Sangha I see the Dharma alive in this world and I am inspired and empowered by those who are living lives of great wisdom. I take refuge in my own deepest aspirations for a meaningful life.

Although my refuge is a constantly developing understanding, in this moment I take refuge through my admiration for the precious qualities of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. I take refuge through aspiring to develop these qualities

in myself. I take refuge through my confidence that commitment to this path will protect me from the sadness of a careless or confused life. I also take refuge in order to offer protection to every being with whom I have a connection, whether good or bad.

Now, on my chosen path, the first activity of a practitioner is to cease all harm to beings for the sake of my own and others' happiness. Therefore, with great joy and relief, I choose to train in some or all of the five great gifts, the precepts.

By Tenzin Jesse, Capitol Hill, Seattle, 2007



Wheel of life detail, Sera Monastery, South India.

The Five Precepts

1. Through my own experience and reflection I know that beings cherish their lives above all, and that taking life harms others and myself. Thus I abandon killing and give the great gift of freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, increasing peace in the world and in my heart. May all beings feel safe around me. This is my first gift.

2. Through my own experience and reflection I know that taking what has not been given creates anxiety and uneasiness for myself as well as harming others. Thus I abandon stealing and give the great gift of freedom from insecurity, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, increasing generosity in the world and in my heart. May all beings feel secure around me. This is my second gift.

3. Through my own experience and reflection I know that engaging in dishonest or insensitive sexual behavior cheapens and debases my relationships and harms others. Thus I abandon harmful sexual behavior and give the great gift of freedom from insincerity, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, increasing friendship in the world and mutual respect between others and myself. May all beings feel respected around me. This is my third gift.

4. Through my own experience and reflection I know that deceiving others creates an environment of inauthenticity for others and myself. Thus I abandon lying and give the great gift of freedom from manipulation, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, increasing transparency in the world and the world's trust in me. May all beings feel undeceived around me. This is my fourth gift.

5. Through my own experience and reflection I know that becoming intoxicated leads to carelessness and destruction. Thus I abandon intoxicating

consumption and give the great gift of freedom from emotional and physical chaos, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, increasing sanity in the world and clarity and self-respect in my heart. May all beings feel protected from irresponsibility around me. This is my fifth gift.

After much turbulence and inconsistency in my life, I gratefully adopt these guidelines for peacemaking and nonviolence in the world. In doing so, I enter the ancient lineage of great peacemakers, such as His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who have also lived by these guidelines. On the basis of this practice of personal integrity, I aspire to full awakening for the happiness of beings throughout infinite space.

Adapted from the sutras by Tenzin Jesse, Capitol Hill, Seattle, 2007

Purification



The Buddha Vajrasattva.

Regret with wisdom.

Restore one's relationships.

Resolve to refrain.

Remediate actively.

PART VII

Ritual and Recitation

All that we are is a result of what we have thought. —*Shakyamuni Buddha, The Dhammapada, translated by F. Max Müller*



Prayer wheels, Boudanath, Nepal.



Korwa (path of circumambulation) and prostrations at a stupa, mural, Lumbini, Nepal.

The Practice of Prostration

By pressing the palms of my hands together
 And touching the tips of my ten fingers,
 May wisdom and method enter into union
 And the ten bodhisattva stages be crossed.

By touching my hands
 To my head, throat, and heart,
 And by touching my knees, hands, and forehead to the earth,
 May the negativities and obscurations
 Of body, speech, and mind be purified
 And the various realms of suffering be emptied.

By touching my two hands and two knees to the earth in prostration,
 May the four auspicious activities be spontaneously accomplished,
 And may I leave samsara far behind
 By quickly achieving buddhahood.

Original translator unknown; adapted by Venerable Dhammadinna, Seattle, 2012.

The Sutra Calling to Mind The Three Jewels



I bow to the Awakened One, a hero, purified, evolved,
 Gone beyond all limits, having overcome all inner foes.
 Suffused with full awareness, he dwells in bliss yet knows the world,
 The teacher of humanity, the mentor of the gods.
 A charioteer unequaled who tames all wild beings,
 I bow to the Awakened One, a hero, purified, evolved.

A buddha is the blossom of causes manifold,
 Of wholesome roots and kindly deeds that ripen without fail.
 His patience made him beautiful,
 A catalyst for good,
 With the subtle signs of greatness,

And marks of charisma in full flower.
His actions are tranquil, full of lissome grace,
And nothing inharmonious
Mars a precious glimpse of him.

No force can ever disturb him,
His bright wisdom subdues all.
He gives joy to those with confidence
Who open up their hearts.
Teacher of all sentient beings,
The bodhisattvas' sire,
King of noble aryas,
And on the path to nirvana
The Buddha is our guide.

His wisdom clear and measureless,
His courage inconceivable,
His speech is pure and sweet to hear,
Ringing with integrity.
Should we ever gaze upon his face
We'd never turn away,
For his presence is astonishing,
Like nothing else at all.

He is untouched by craving,
Disenchanted by all forms,
Unseduced by formless realms,
And free of discontent;
Released from the aggregates,
Unburdened by the elements,
Master of his senses,
And untroubled by all pain.
Set loose from existence,
He has broken all the chains that bind;
Across this river of samsara,
He has reached the other shore.

His wisdom, exalted, is perfect,
He makes his dwelling place
Within the timeless wisdom

Of buddhas present, past, and yet to come.
He does not stay within nirvana
But abides in reality itself,
The state of full awakening
That perceives all living beings.

Such are his stunning qualities,
Great beyond compare;
Amazing is the Awakened One,
A hero, purified, evolved.



The Dharma is beautiful
In the beginning, the middle,
And the end;
Meaningful and resonant,
True, uncompromised.
The hero, purified, evolved,
Taught the Dharma in skillful words,
Whole, without omission,
Apparent here and now.

Through the Dharma one can truly see.
With health, unprejudiced,
It leads us onward by the hand,
Unfaltering and timeless.
To see the genuine Dharma
Is to nourish oneself well,

134 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

For thus have the skillful
Gained awareness and insight.

The Awakened One, a hero, purified, evolved,
Taught according to our needs,
Inspiring us to cease all harm,
Then to aim for full awakening;

There is no contradiction,
The Dharma includes all.
Let us lean upon those teachings
And stop this cyclic rise and fall.



The Mahayana Sangha
In truthfulness and friendly harmony,
Live brilliantly and wise,
In the footsteps of the lineage
Of those who came before.

It is right to join our hands,
In their presence, to bow low;
The Sangha is a field of inspiration
For the seeds of happiness we sow.
With body, speech, and mind refined,
And practice ripening,
Worthy of our gifts,

Our help, our joyous offerings.
Through ages and in every place,
Generous and kind,
In this world, a lightning rod
For good to arise.
Amazing is the Awakened One, a hero purified, evolved.

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Sera Monastery, India, 2004. Photos: A. Boudanath stupa, mural, Lumbini, Nepal. B. Ancient pecha, Delhi, India. C. Monastic robes and alms bowl.

Homages From the Five Great Indian Texts



Pandits debate, mural, Lumbini, Nepal.

Nāgārjuna's Fundamental Wisdom (mūlamadhyamakārikā)

I bow to the completely awakened Buddha,
 The most extraordinary teacher,
 Who taught dependent origination,
 The absence of extinction and the absence of birth,
 The absence of discontinuity and the absence of permanence,
 The absence of coming and the absence of going,
 The absence of multiplicity and the absence of oneness—
 The total pacification of conceptual constructs, nirvana.

Maitreya's Ornament of Clear Realization (abhisamayālaṅkāra)

I bow to the wisdom knowing all phenomena,
 Which leads those who seek the peace of the hearers
 To the total pacification of conceptual constructs.
 I bow to the wisdom knowing paths,
 With which those helping beings
 Accomplish the welfare of the world.
 I bow to that perfected,
 With which the capable ones
 Have taught the varieties in all their aspects.
 To that mother of the buddhas
 And of the community of hearers and bodhisattvas,
 I bow with awe.

Dharmakīrti's Pramāṇavārtika (pramāṇavārtika)

I bow to the one who has cut away the net of conceptualization,
 Who embodies the vast and profound *kayas*, enlightened dimensions,
 Who radiates the light of Samantabhadra throughout the universe.

Vasubandhu's Abhidharmakośa (abhidharmakośa)

I bow to the one who has completely destroyed
 The darkness enveloping all phenomena,
 Who pulls living beings from the quagmire of cyclic existence,
 Who teaches according to the meaning of things.

Chandrakirti's Entrance to the Middle Way (madhyamakāvātāra)

Hearers and solitary realizers
Arise due to the powerful buddhas;
Buddhas are born from bodhisattvas;
And bodhisattvas arise from
The compassionate mind,
The understanding of nonduality,
And bodhichitta, the awakened heart.

Loving compassion is like the seed of this rich crop of heroes,
Understanding, the water with which it is nurtured,
And bodhichitta, its ripening to be long enjoyed;
Therefore I praise compassion before all else.

I bow first to compassion that sees wanderers in samsara
Who are powerless, like a bucket in a well, clinging to a self, "I,"
From which attachment to things arises, "This is mine."
I bow to compassion that sees beings who are fluctuating,
And I bow to compassion for beings empty of inherent identity
Like the reflection of the moon on rippled water.

Maitreya/Asanga's Uttaratantra (uttaratantraśāstra)

I bow to awakening itself,
Beginningless, centerless, and endless,
Peaceful, complete, and self-actualized,
The purified and manifest Buddha,
Who shows the path of stable fearlessness
And clarifies all our confusions,
Who raises the sublime vajra sword
Of understanding and compassionate love,
And cuts down the thicket of our doubts,
Cuts through the tangle of mistaken views,
And uproots the weeds of suffering.

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Capitol Hill, Seattle, 2007



Manjushri, the bodhisattva of wisdom.

Homage to Manjushri

The Gang Lo Ma

I bow to my guru and protector, Manjushri.

Your wisdom shines forth like the sun,
 Dispelling the clouds of affliction and traces of confusion;
 You hold a Dharma text at your heart,
 Symbolizing that you see all things exactly as they are;
 You teach with love like that for an only child,
 With speech graced by sixty qualities,
 To the multitude of beings wandering in the prison of cyclic existence
 Who are engulfed in the darkness of ignorance and stung by suffering.
 Your thunderous roar of Dharma unshackles us
 From the iron chains of karma,
 And stirs us from the stupor of disturbing emotions.
 You wield the wisdom sword
 That cuts down suffering wherever its sprouts appear,
 Clearing away the dark thicket of ignorance.
 Pure from the very beginning,
 You achieved the pinnacle of the ten stages,
 Perfected first a bodhisattva's body of excellent qualities,
 Then an enlightened body, powerfully captivating,
 Ornamented by the one hundred twelve marks and signs of a buddha.
 I bow to you, Manjushri,
 Gentle mind, glorious body, and beautiful speech.
 Please illuminate the shadows in my mind.

Om ah ra pa tsa na dhi

ཞེ་མ་ར་པ་ཅ་རྩ་ནི་ནི་ནི།

ཁར་གི་མྱོ་ཤོས་སྤྱིཔ་གཉིད་སྤྱིན་པུལ་ནི་ལྟར་རྟམ་དག་རལ་གསལ་བས། ཁི་སྟེད་དོན་ཀླན་ཇི་བཞིན་གཞིགས་སྤྱིར་ཉིད་
 གྱི་ཐུགས་ཀར་ཁྲེགས་བམ་འཛིན། ཁར་དག་ཤིད་པའི་བཙོན་རྩར་མ་རིག་མུན་འཐུམས་སྤྱག་བསྐལ་གྱིས་གཞིར་
 བའི། འཕྱོ་ཚོགས་ཀྱན་ལ་བྱ་གཅིག་ལྟར་བཅེ་ཡན་ལག་དྲུག་ཅུའི་དབྱངས་ལྷན་གསུང། འབྲུག་ལྟར་ཆེར་སྟོགས་ཉན་
 མོངས་གཉིད་སྟོང་ལས་གྱི་ལྷགས་སྟོག་འཕྱོལ་མཛད་ཅིང། མ་རིག་མུན་སེལ་སྤྱག་བསྐལ་སྤྱ་གྱུ་ཁི་སྟེད་གཙོད་མཛད་
 རལ་གྱི་བསྐྱམས། ཁདོད་ནས་དག་ཅིང་ས་བཅུའི་མཐར་སོན་ཡོན་ཏན་ལུས་རྫོགས་རྒྱལ་ལྟས་མཐུ་བོའི་སྤྱ། བཅུ་བྲག་
 བཅུ་དང་བཅུ་གཉིད་རྒྱན་སྤྱས་བདག་སྟོའི་མུན་སེལ་འཇམ་དཔལ་དབྱངས་ལ་འདུད།

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Lumbini, Nepal, 2005

Recitations Before Meditation and Teachings



The altar at the BodhiHeart Gompā, Capitol Hill, Seattle.

Pali Refuge

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa (3 times)

Buddham saranam gacchami;

Dhammam saranam gacchami;

Sangham saranam gacchami.

Dutiyampi buddham saranam gacchami;

Dutiyampi dhammam saranam gacchami;

Dutiyampi sangham saranam gacchami.

Tatiyampi buddham saranam gacchami;

Tatiyampi dhammam saranam gacchami;

Tatiyampi sangham saranam gacchami.

I bow to the blessed one, the one free of all defilements,
The fully self realized one.

I go for refuge to the Buddha,

I go for refuge to the Dharma,

I go for refuge to the Sangha.

Twice, I go for refuge to the Buddha,

I go for refuge to the Dharma,

I go for refuge to the Sangha.

Three times, I go for refuge to the Buddha,

I go for refuge to the Dharma,

I go for refuge to the Sangha.

Sanskrit Homage Mantra

Om namo manjushria namo sushriye namo uttama shriye svaha

(Om, I call out to gentle glory, I call out to auspicious glory, I call out to the highest glory. May your qualities take root in my mind.)

Shakyamuni Mantra

Tayata om muni muni maha muniye svaha (7 times)

(Om, thus: capable, capable, magnificently capable, may your qualities take root in my mind.)

Tibetan Refuge and Bodhichitta

I take refuge until I am enlightened

In the Buddhas, Dharma, and Noble Sangha.

Through the positive force of listening to the teachings,
(Or: With the positive force of giving, ethics, patience, effort, meditation, and wisdom,)

May I fully awaken for the benefit of all wanderers in samsara. (x3)

Sang gyay cho tang tsog gyi chog nam la
Chang chup phar du dak ni gyap su chi
Dak khi cho nyen gyi pay so nam gyi
Dro la phan chir sang gyay drup par shog

འུམ་སངས་རྒྱས་ཚེས་དང་ཚོགས་གྱི་མཚོག་རྣམས་ལ་བྱང་ཆུབ་བར་དུ་བདག་གི་སྦྱབས་སུ་མཆི་བདག་གིས་སྤྱོད་སྒྲུབ་ས་པའི་
བསོད་ནམས་གྱིས་འཁོ་ལ་མན་བྱིར་སངས་རྒྱས་འགྲུབ་པར་གྲོག་

Four Immeasurables

May all beings find happiness and its causes.
May all beings be free of suffering and its causes.
May all beings never be parted from their joy.
May all beings rest in equanimity, free of clinging and aversion for those dear or distant.

Seven-part Practice

With body, speech, and mind I bow in admiration,
And present clouds of every type of offering, actual and visualized.
I confess all my negative actions accumulated since beginningless time,
And rejoice in the virtues of all holy and ordinary beings.
Please remain with us until samsara ends,
And turn the wheel of Dharma for sentient beings.
I dedicate all the good in myself and others to great enlightenment.

Mandala Offering

I anoint this world with perfume and scatter it with flowers
Bejeweled with Mount Meru, four lands, sun and moon,
Imagined as a buddha realm, I offer this to you
May every living being enjoy this pristine universe.

Inner Mandala Offering

The objects of attachment, aversion, and ignorance—

146 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Friends, enemies, and strangers, my body, wealth, and enjoyments—
I offer these without any sense of loss.
Please accept them with pleasure, and inspire me and others
To be free from the three poisonous attitudes.

Idam guru ratna mandala kam nirya tayami
(I offer to the guru this precious jeweled mandala—the universe)

Requesting Inspiration from the Lineage Masters

Glorious and precious root guru,
Sit upon the lotus and moon seat above my head.
Guiding me with your great kindness,
Lead me to the attainments of your body, speech, and mind.

Yours are the eyes through which the vast scriptures are seen,
Supreme fording-place for the fortunate who would cross over to spiritual
freedom,
You are illuminators whose wise methods vibrate with compassion,
O lineage of spiritual masters, please inspire my mind.

Dedication

Due to this merit may we soon attain the awakened state of guru buddha,
That we may be able to liberate all sentient beings from their suffering.
May the precious bodhi heart not yet born arise and grow.
May that born have no decline but increase forevermore.

Ge way di yi nyur tu dag;
Lama sang gyay drup kyur nay
Dro wa jig kyang ma lu ba;
Gyay gyi sa la go par shog
Chang chup sem chok Rinpoche;
Ma gyay pa nam gyay kyur jig
Gyay pa nyam pa may pa yang;
Kong nay kong tu pel war shog

འཕྱུག་པའི་འདི་ཡིས་སྤྱད་དུ་བཏགས། སྤྱི་མ་སངས་རྒྱལ་འགྲུག་གྱུར་ནས། འཕྱོ་བ་གཅིག་ཀྱང་མ་ལུས་པ། སྤྱིས་ཀྱི་ས་ལ་འགོད་པར་
གོག་བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས་མཆོག་རིན་པོ་ཆེ། མ་སྤྱི་མ་རྣམས་སྤྱི་གྱུར་ཅིག་སྤྱི་མ་ཉམས་པ་མེད་པ་ཡང་། གོང་ནས་གོང་དུ་འཕེལ་བར་གོག།

Long-life Prayer for His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

In that snowy mountain paradise
You're the source of good and happiness
Powerful Tenzin Gyatso Chenresig,
May you stay until samsara ends.

*Gan gri ra way kor way shing kham dare
Pen dang day wa ma loo jung way nay
Chen ray zig wang ten dzin gyat tso yi
Shab pay si tay bar du den gyur jig.*

འཕྱག་པའི་ར་བས་བསྐྱོར་བའི་ཞིང་ཁམས་འདིར། བན་དང་བདེ་བ་མ་ལུས་འབྱུང་བའི་གནས། སྤྱིན་རས་གཟིགས་དབང་བསྐྱན་
འཛིན་གྱི་མཆོག་ཡི། ཞབས་པད་སྤྱིད་མཐའི་བར་དུ་བརྟན་གྱུར་ཅིག།



Offerings at Sarnath, India, where the Buddha first taught.

Food Offering

Om ah hum, om ah hum, om ah hum

To the supreme teacher, the precious Buddha,
To the supreme practice, the holy, precious Dharma,
To the supreme guides, the precious Sangha,
To all the objects of refuge we make this offering.

May we and all those around us
Never be separated from the Triple Gem in any of our lives.
May we always have the opportunity to make offerings to them,
And may we continuously receive their blessings and inspiration
To progress along the path.



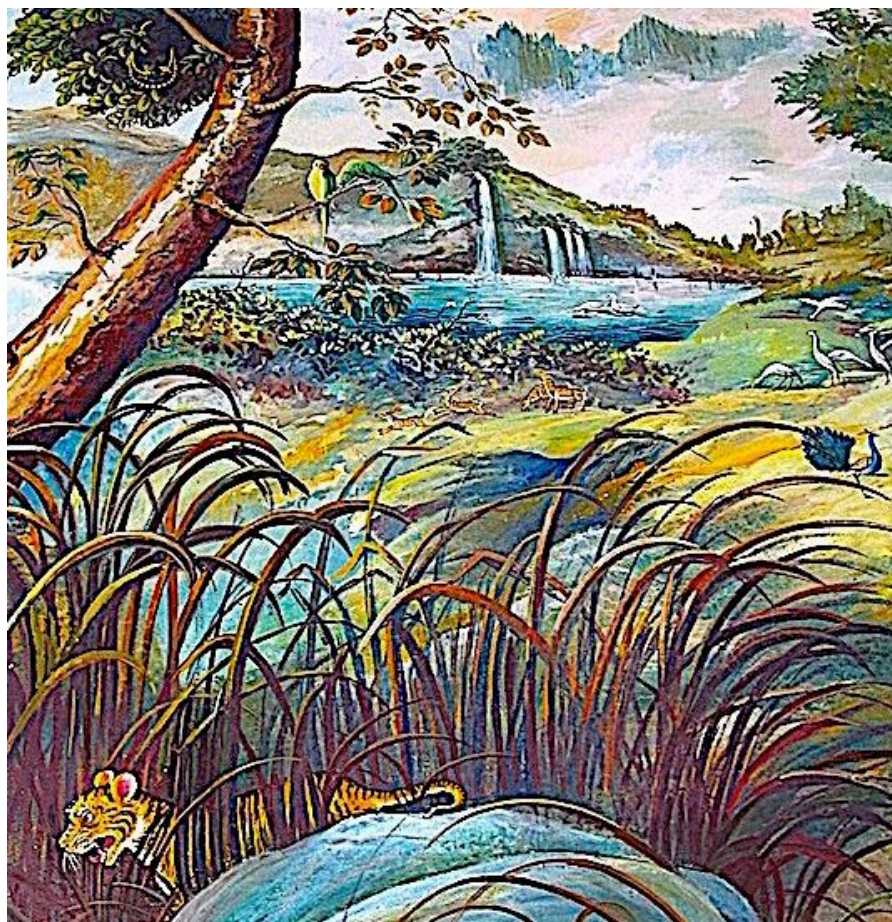
Mural, Sera Monastery, South India

Children's Prayers

by Tenzin Jesse



Forest path from Mcloud Ganj to Tushita Retreat Center in India



Tiger, mural, Lumbini, Nepal.

Written by Tenzin Jesse, Seattle, 2012, for the Bodhiheart children

The Four Best Thoughts

May all the people and tigers and turtles be happy and kind.

May all the people, the bears, and the bugs be safe and not mean.

May all the people, the nice ones or not, have fun and good things,

May all the people, the birds, and the fish be peaceful, be friendly, and share.

Food Offering

To my hero of kindness, the gentle Buddha,

To patience and generosity, my Dharma practice,

To my parents, teachers, and Sangha guides,

To all my protectors I offer this delicious food.

May I and everyone around me

Never be separated from goodness in this world.

May we always have the chance to increase it,

And may we always receive our mentors' love and inspiration

To become wise and to care about others.

Dedication

Because of my good deeds,

May I become a truthful and kind buddha

So that I can protect all people and animals from every kind of harm.

The Bodhicitta Rituals



The Bodhiheart Sangha Green Tara.

Aspiring Bodhichitta 1

With a wish to free all beings
 I shall always go for refuge
 To the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha
 Until I reach full enlightenment.

Today, inspired by wisdom and compassion,
In the Buddha's presence
I generate the aspiration for full awakening, bodhichitta,
For the benefit of all sentient beings.

As long as space remains,
And as long as sentient beings endure,
May I too remain
And dispel the miseries of the world.

Aspiring Bodhichitta 2

From this moment until I attain buddhahood,
May I never give up, even if my life is at stake,
The mind that wishes to attain complete enlightenment
In order to free all wandering beings
From the fears of cyclic existence and solitary complacency.

Engaging Bodhichitta

Gurus, buddhas and bodhisattvas,
Please listen to what I say from the depths of my heart.

Just as the buddhas of the past
Have developed the altruistic intention, true bodhichitta,
And just as they practiced successively
The stages of the bodhisattva path,
So too I, for the sake of benefiting all beings,
Will develop the altruistic intention
And will follow the trainings
Exactly as all bodhisattvas have done.

At this moment, my life has become fruitful,
For, having attained a human existence,
Today I have been born in the Buddha's lineage
And have become the Buddha's spiritual child.
Henceforth, whatever happens,
I will undertake actions that accord with this lineage
And will act so as not to sully this faultless, venerable lineage.

Translators unknown

PART VIII

Lineage Invocations by H. H. the Dalai Lama

Hatred is not stopped by hatred in any case; hatred is stopped by love; this has long been known. —*Shakyamuni Buddha, The Dhammapada*



Ananda mourns at Kushinagar, place of Buddha's parinirvana. Photo by Katie Egart.

The Harmonious Song of the Sages' Truth

An Aspiration for the Flourishing of the Nonsectarian Rime Teaching of the
Buddha

By His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama

འགྲུབ་བསྟན་ངེས་མེད་རྒྱས་པའི་སྒྲོན་ལམ་དང་སྟོང་བདེན་པའི་དབྱངས་སྟན་བཞུགས་སོ།།



Omniscient Shakyamuni, kinsman of the sun,
Whose essence is the four enlightened bodies,
And Amitayus, Amitabha, and Arya Chenresig,
Manjushri, Vajrapani, and Fierce Tara,
The Victor and the multitude of his courageous descendants,

160 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

The seven great successors, the six ornaments, and the two most excellent,
The eighty mahasiddhas, the sixteen arhats,
And those others who care only for aiding the Dharma and wanderers in
samsara,
All you great beings and bodhisattvas, please listen to me!



For uncountable eons the Capable One
Completed the two collections of positive causes and wisdom,
And thus perfected omniscience, loving-kindness, and skill.
Through the power of this truth,
May the entire Buddhadharma long blaze brightly!

You who first threw open the door to the light of Dharma
In the snowy mountain land,
Abbot Shantarakshita, Master Padmasambhava, and Dharma King Trisong
Detsen,
Translators, scholars, *vidyadharas*, and the twenty-five main disciples,
Through the power of your commitment,
May the Snowy Land's Buddhadharma long blaze bright!



In the bejeweled cathedral of the vast teachings
Is the profound practice, a great treasure trove of Dharma,
The profound and extensive heart-essence, *nying thig*, dazzling with radiant
light—
May the Snowy Land's Buddhadharma long blaze bright!

This highest path that embraces and perfects
All phenomena of samsara and nirvana,
As the great expanse of the essence, clear light, primordial purity,
Is the method leading to the city of primordial Samantabhadra—
May the Snowy Land's Buddhadharma long blaze bright!

The lineage of profound view and vast practice,
Atisha's treasure of complete instructions,
Is the tradition of advice that comes through Dromtonpa—
May the Snowy Land's Buddhadharma long blaze bright!

The Buddha's words, gathered in the three sets of scripture,
Advice beautifully arranged for the three kinds of beings,
The golden garland of the Kadam tradition, with its four deities and three
baskets—
May the Snowy Land's Buddhadharma long blaze bright!

162 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Marpa the translator, Shepa Dorje, and the others,
Are the sources of that stream of blessings
Which is the treasure chest of the Kagyu lineage,
The unparalleled succession of that magnificent, lofty tradition—
May the Snowy Land's Buddhadharma long blaze bright!

All phenomena of samsara and nirvana
Realized as the reflection of simultaneously arising mind,
And the mind itself realized as the nature of the dharmakaya free of elaborations,
Are mahamudra pervading all appearances of samsara and nirvana—
May the Snowy Land's Buddhadharma long blaze bright!



The scholars who uphold the teachings of the Buddha
By explaining, debating, and writing
About the key points of hundreds of sutra and tantra texts—
Both outer and inner sciences—
Are the sacred Khon Ton lineage, the compassionate Shakyapas—
May the Snowy Land's Buddhadharma long blaze bright!

The whispered instructions that possess the four validities
Are the heart of the most profound practice of path and result, the *lamdre*
lineage,
The tradition of teachings on the characteristics of the powerful yogas—
May the Snowy Land's Buddhadharma long blaze bright!

The path of the two stages of the great secret vajra vehicle,
Adhering to the profound middle way view,
And skillfully unfolding emptiness and clear appearance,
Was taught by the victorious Losang—
May the Snowy Land's Buddhadharma long blaze bright!

This excellent tradition, which is an unmistakable practice
Of the meaning of the three baskets and four classes of tantra,
Is a complete path with all the essential points and stages in proper order—
May the Snowy Land's Buddhadharma long blaze bright!

The transmission of scripture and realization
In the combined Buton Jonang tradition
Of the inner, outer, and alternative Kalachakra,
Is a tradition of explanation unlike that of other sutras and tantras—
May the Snowy Land's Buddhadharma long blaze bright!

In essence, the ten great pillars of exegesis
And all the chariots of the practice lineage, the Shije, etc.,
Are rich with many personal instructions integrating sutra and tantra—
May the Snowy Land's Buddhadharma long blaze bright!

May Dharma holders live long and the sangha community be harmonious,
May the three wheels of the teachings protect them,
May beings with confidence in the teachings fill the world,
May the nonsectarian *rime* Buddhadharma long blaze bright!
May even the words war, starvation, maliciousness, and cruelty
Be unheard of throughout all worlds.
May beings be kind,
May auspiciousness increase among them and in their environment,
And may an ocean of happiness and joy spread in all directions.

From this day on, by earnestly hearing, thinking, and meditating,
Specifically on the profound view and vast mind of bodhichitta—
The complete path of teachings—
May I too quickly touch the ground of both momentary and enduring
happiness.

For the sake of sentient beings as limitless as space,
And with the joy of confidence and aspiration,

164 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Free from the laziness of discouragement and attachment to diversion,
May I engage in the beautiful activities of the buddhas and bodhisattvas.

May my body, enjoyments, and good qualities
Become the cause of bliss for all mother sentient beings,
And may all their manifold sufferings
Completely ripen upon myself.



May all who see, hear, remember, or have confidence in me
Always experience the greatest joy and happiness,
And may even those who insult, abuse, criticize, or hurt me
Receive the blessings of the path to awakening.

Thus, for as long as space remains,
And as long as the suffering of beings endures,
So may I too remain as the sole source,
Direct and indirect, of well-being and lasting happiness.

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Dharmsala, India, 2004

Photos: His Holiness teaching at his residence in Dharamsala, India.

To the Seventeen Great Panditas of Glorious Nalanda

An Invocation to Ignite the Three Kinds of Confidence

By His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama

འུམ་ དཔལ་རྒྱ་ལུ་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཆེན་བཅུ་བདུན་གྱི་གསོལ་འདེབས་དང་གསུམ་གསལ་བྱེད་ཅེས་བྱ་བ་བཞུགས་སོ།།

I bow in admiration to you, Shakyamuni, the sun among teachers,
Greater than a god, you guide wanderers by teaching dependent arising,
Having attained astonishing abandonment, realization, and the ability to
protect,
Spurred by your compassionate aspiration to help beings.

Nagarjuna, at your feet, I call out to you who established the exceptional Middle
Way path,
As predicted by the Buddha himself,
And through the profound reasoning of dependent arising,
Brilliantly clarified the meaning of suchness, free from extremes,
The intent of the Prajnaparamita, mother of buddhas.

Bodhisattva Aryadeva, I call out to you,
Noble crown jewel among the holders of Nagarjuna's tradition, his foremost
Dharma heir,
Deeply learned and realized,
You mastered the countless tenets
Of both Buddhist and non-Buddhist philosophies.

Buddhapalita, at your feet, I call out to you who clarified the thought of the

Aryas,
The ultimate truth of dependent origination,
As well as the crucial significance of mere designation and imputed existence,
And achieved the highest level of realization.

Acarya Bhavaviveka, I call out to you,
Who developed a coherent system of tenets
That refuted extremes such as truly existent production
And asserted the valid cognition of shared perceptions and external objects.

Candrakirti, I call out to you who taught the complete path of sutra and tantra,
Expertly discussing the profound and vast Middle Way path,
In which appearance and emptiness counteract the two extremes
Through dependent arising and mere conditionality.

Bodhisattva Shantideva, I call out to you,
Who skillfully taught the extraordinary path of great compassion,
To a multitude of fortunate students,
Through the manifold means and reasonings of the vast and profound.

Great Abott, Shantarakshita, I call out to you, skilled in the reasoning of
madhyamaka and *pramana*,
You developed the Middle Way path of the emptiness of duality
According to the dispositions of your students,
And brought the teachings of the Buddha to the Land of Snow.

Kamalashila, at your feet, I call out to you
Who clearly described the stages of meditation according to sutra and tantra,
The unification of *shamatha* and *vipashyana* with the Middle Way view free of
extremes,
And made the Buddha's authentic teachings understandable in the Land of
Snow.

Asaṅga, at your feet, I call out to you,
Inspired and cared for by Maitreya,
You taught the vast path, thoroughly unpacking all the scriptures of the
Tripitaka,
And, as predicted by the Buddha, blazed a trail for the Mind-Only school.

Acharya Vasubhandu, I call out to you,
Most gifted scholar, acknowledged as another omniscient one,

Through upholding the emptiness of duality in the seven treatises of Abhidharma,
You clarified the Vaibashika, Sautrantika, and Yogacara tenets.

Dignaga, at your feet, I call out to you, virtuoso logician,
Whose work gives us a fine eye for critical analysis
By opening a hundred doors to valid understanding,
And probing the Buddha's teaching with organic reasoning.

Arya Dharmakirti, I call out to you who understood all logical nuances of
Buddhist and non-Buddhist philosophies,
Skilled in conveying the Dharma's amazing methods,
Allowing us to gain certainty in the vast and profound aspects of the Sautrantika
and Mind-Only schools
Through the path of reasoning.

Vimuktisena, at your feet, I call out to you,
Who lit a lamp illuminating *The Ornament of Clear Realization*,
The meaning of the Prajnaparamita passed down from Asanga and his brother,
Consistent with the Madhyamaka tradition, free from the extremes of existence
and nonexistence.

Acarya Haribhadra, I call out to you,
Who uncovered the meaning of the perfection of wisdom, the mother, as
predicted by the Buddha,
And explained the breathtaking Prajnaparamita sutras, the three mothers,
Following the guidance of the protector Maitreya.

Gunaprabha, at your feet, I call out to you, highly disciplined and learned,
Who brilliantly integrated the meanings of a hundred thousand Vinaya sutras,
And comprehensively explained the Pratimoksha without mistake,
According to the Mulasarvastivadin tradition.

Shakyaprabha, at your feet, I call out to you, exceptional holder of the Vinaya,
Who acquired a wealth of excellent qualities through the three higher trainings,
And rigorously explained the meaning of the vast scriptures,
In order to preserve the beautiful teachings of the monastic tradition.

Kind and masterful Jowo Atisha, I call out to you,
Who passed to us the complete teachings of the Buddha, both vast and
profound,

168 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

By setting out paths in terms of students of three different capacities,
And caused the flowering of Dharma in the Land of Snow.

Due to my invocations, made with admiring and unshakable confidence,
To all of you extraordinary scholars who beautify the world like ornaments,
Who are wellsprings of superb, transformative teachings,
May my mind be matured and liberated through your inspiration.

By understanding the way in which things exist, the meaning of the two truths,
And gaining certainty about falling into and disengaging from samsara through
the four truths,
And by developing stable confidence in the Three Jewels through valid
cognition,
May I lay the foundation for the path to freedom through your inspiration.

With your inspiration, may I give rise to spontaneous bodhichitta,
Rooted in a compassion without boundaries, which longs to protect wanderers
in samsara,
And in the renunciation that aspires to perfect freedom,
Wherein all suffering and its causes are finally pacified.

With your inspiration, may I easily develop confident understanding
Of all the paths and profound topics of both the Perfection and Vajra vehicles,
Through study, reflection, and meditation
On the meaning of the commentaries composed by the great trailblazers.

In life after life, may I always have an excellent situation for the practice of the
three trainings,
And support the Dharma, just like the pioneers of old,
Through teaching, practice, upholding, and transmitting
The words of the Dharma and its realized insights.

May every community be filled with more and more scholars and yogis,
Who spend their time in study, reflection, exegesis, and meditation,
Having abandoned all wrong livelihood,
So that the whole world is uplifted and ennobled.

Empowered by this, may I quickly traverse all the stages and paths of the
complete sutra and tantra,
And having attained the state of an omniscient buddha,

Spontaneously fulfilling my own and others' benefit,
May I be a blessing to beings for as long as space remains.

*Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Seattle, 2009; Offered to His Holiness the Dalai Lama
during teachings in Bloomington, Indiana, 2010*

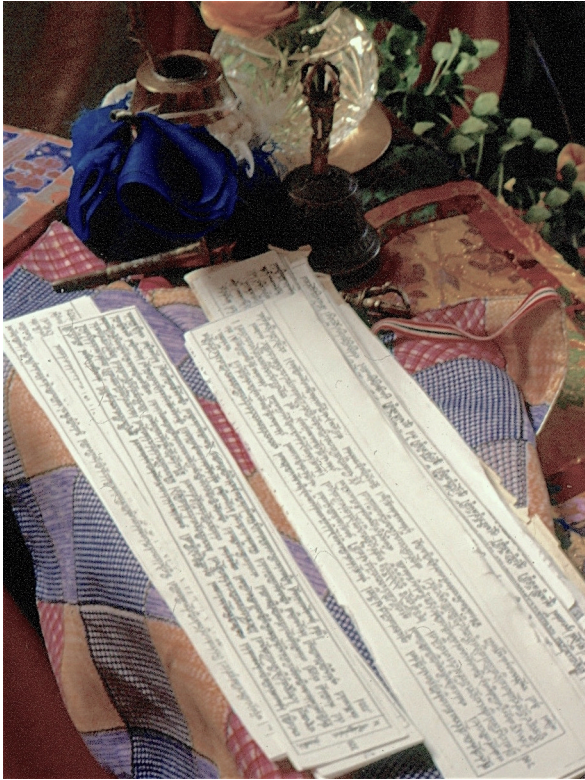


The tree at Lumbini where Shakyamuni was born.

PART IX

Sadhana

Buddhist sadhana aims at the realization that both samsara and nirvana lack any fixed, inherent nature, and is ferociously motivated by the aspiration of bodhichitta. The practice contains both calm-abiding and vipassana meditation techniques, weaving together all the teachings of the sutras, both wisdom and compassion, in one experiential moment, internalizing all the Dharma that the practitioner has previously understood.



Tibetan text and puja table.

Medicine Buddha Sadhana

Visualization

Imagine that about four inches above the crown of your head a lotus flower appears. In its center is a white moon disc and seated upon the disc is your root guru—the dharmakaya, essence of all the buddhas—in the form of the Medicine Buddha. He is blue in color and radiates blue light from his body. His right hand rests on his right knee in the mudra of granting sublime realizations, and holds a stem of the arura plant between his thumb and forefinger. His left hand, in the mudra of concentration, holds a lapis lazuli bowl filled with nectar. He sits in the full vajra posture and wears the three saffron robes of a monastic. He has all the signs and marks of a Buddha.



Refuge

I take refuge until enlightened,
In the Buddhas, Dharma, and Noble Sangha.
Through the positive force of my giving, ethics, patience, effort, meditation,
and wisdom
May I fully awaken for the benefit of all wanderers in samsara.

Four Immeasurables (Brahmaviharas)

May all beings find happiness and its causes.
May all beings be free of suffering and its causes.
May all beings never be parted from their joy.
May all beings rest in equanimity, free of clinging and aversion for those dear
or distant.

Especially for the sake of all mother sentient beings, I must quickly and more
quickly—in this very life—attain the precious state of complete and perfect
buddhahood. Therefore I shall practice the yoga method of Guru Medicine
Buddha.

Seven-part Practice

With body, speech, and mind I bow in admiration to Guru Medicine Buddha,
And present clouds of every type of offering, actual and visualized.
I confess all my negative actions accumulated through beginningless time,
And rejoice in the virtues of all holy and ordinary beings.
Please remain as our guide until samsara ends,
And turn the wheel of Dharma for sentient beings.
I dedicate all the good in myself and others to the ripening of the two
bodhichittas
And the attainment of buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Mandala Offering

I anoint this world with perfume and scatter it with flowers,
Bejeweled with Mount Meru, four lands, sun and moon,
Imagined as a buddha realm, I offer this to you:
May every living being enjoy this pristine universe.

The objects of attachment, aversion, and ignorance—friends, enemies, and
strangers, my body, wealth, and enjoyments—I offer these without any sense of

loss. Please accept them with pleasure, and inspire me and others to be free from the three poisonous attitudes.

Idam guru ratna mandala kam nirya tayami.

(I offer to the guru this precious jeweled mandala—the universe.)

Requests

I request you, Bhagavan, master of healing, whose sky-colored holy body of lapis lazuli signifies omniscient wisdom and compassion as vast as limitless space—please inspire my mind.

I request you, compassionate master of healing, holding in your right hand the king of medicines symbolizing your vow to help all the sentient beings plagued by the 404 diseases—please inspire my mind.

I request you, compassionate master of healing, holding in your left hand a bowl of nectar symbolizing your vow to give the glorious undying nectar of the Dharma, which eliminates the degenerations of sickness, aging, and death—please inspire my mind.

Accumulation of Merit

I prostrate, go for refuge, and make offerings to the fully realized destroyer of all defilements, the completely perfected Buddha who has realized the ultimate nature of all phenomena, Medicine Buddha, the king of lapis light. May your vow to benefit all sentient beings now ripen for myself and others. (*Repeat 3 or 7 times*)

Self Generation and Mantra

In response to your request, infinite rays of white light stream down from the heart and body of the King of Medicine. Completely filling your body from head to toe, they purify all disease, afflictions, and the negative karma and mental distortions that cause them. Your body becomes the nature of light, clean and clear like crystal.

The Guru Medicine Buddha melts into light and absorbs into your heart. Your mind becomes completely nondual with the dharmakaya, the essence of all Buddhas.

Within the state of emptiness you appear as the Medicine Buddha. At your heart

176 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

appears a lotus and moon disc. Standing at the center of the moon is the blue syllable *Om* surrounded by the syllables of the mantra.

Light rays begin to radiate from the syllable at your heart and go out in all directions. They pervade the sentient beings of all six realms. Through your great love, wishing them to be happy, and your great compassion, wishing them to be free from all suffering, they are purified of all disease and afflictions, and the negative karma and mental obscurations that cause them.

Continue this visualization as you recite the mantra:

Tayata om bhekandze bhekandze maha bhekandze randza samungate soha
(Om, thus: healer, healer, great healer, the king, an ocean of goodness, may your qualities take root in my mind.)

Now think that all sentient beings are transformed into the aspect of the Medicine Buddha. Feel great joy that you are able to lead them to the Medicine Buddha's enlightenment.

Dedication

Just as Guru Medicine Buddha with compassion guides all sentient beings, infinite as space, may I also become a compassionate guide of all sentient beings existing in all directions of the universe.

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

Recite the long life prayer for His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Translator unknown; adapted by Tenzin Jesse

Chenresig Sadhana by H.H. Dalai Lama

The Experience of the Inseparable Guru and Chenresig

A Well-spring of Powerful Attainments

By His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama



His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Louisville, Kentucky.

Refuge and Bodhichitta

I take refuge until I am enlightened,
In the Buddhas, Dharma and Noble Sangha.
Through the positive force of giving, ethics, patience, effort, meditation & wisdom,
May I fully awaken for the benefit of all wanderers in samsara.
(Recite three times.)

The Four Immeasurables

May all beings find happiness and its causes.
May all beings be free of suffering and its causes.
May all beings never be parted from their joy.
May all beings rest in equanimity, free of clinging and aversion for those dear or distant.

Transforming the environment and the offerings

May this earth in every direction be pure, free of faultline and rock,
As smooth as a child's palm, like lapis lazuli.
May both human and divine offerings, actual and visualized,
Fill the vastness of space, like Samantabhadra's clouds of peerless offerings.

Through the compelling truth of the Three Jewels of refuge,
Through the inspiration of all the buddhas and bodhisattvas,
Through the efficacy of completed collections of positive action and insight,
Through the power of the inconceivable and intrinsically pure sphere of reality,
May these offerings be transformed into their actual nature of emptiness.

Visualization

In the space of the dharmakaya of great spontaneous bliss,
Amidst billowing clouds of magnificent offerings,
Appears a sparkling throne of jewels supported by eight snow lions,
Cushioned with a blooming lotus, a sun and moon,
Upon which sits the extraordinary Chenresig, Avalokiteshvara,
That immense treasure of compassion,
In the form of a monk wearing saffron-colored robes.

My root lama, Venerable Losang Tenzin Gyatso, Vajradhara, kind in three

ways,

With a glowing, fair complexion and radiant smile,
Your right hand at your heart, in a gesture of teaching Dharma,
Holds the stem of one white lotus that supports a text and sword.
Your left hand, resting in meditative ease, holds a thousand-spoked wheel.
You are clothed in the three saffron robes of a monk,
Crowned with a scholar's golden, pointed hat.

Your aggregates, elements, sensory spheres and limbs
Are a perfect mandala in the nature of the five male and five female buddhas,
The male and female bodhisattvas, and the wrathful protectors.

Encircled by a five-colored rainbow,
You are seated, legs crossed in the vajra posture,
And send forth a network of cloud-like self-emanations
To tame the minds of all living beings.

Within your heart sits Chenresig, a wisdom being, with one face and four arms.
His upper two hands are joined together,
His lower two hands hold a crystal mala and white lotus.
He is adorned with jewel ornaments and heavenly silks.
Over his left shoulder an antelope skin is draped,
And he sits cross-legged on a silver moon and lotus.
At his heart, is a white syllable *Hrih*, a concentration being,
Radiating brilliant colored light in all ten directions.

At your brow, Lama, is a white *Om*,
At your throat, a red *Ah*,
And at your heart, a blue *Hum*,
From which infinite lights shine out in myriad directions,
Inviting the Three Jewels of refuge to dissolve into you,
Transforming you into the collected essence of all the objects of refuge.

The Seven-part Practice

Your liberating body is adorned with all the signs of a buddha,
Your beautiful speech, possessing all sixty melodies, harmonious, flows without
hesitation,
Your vast and profound mind, suffused with wisdom and compassion, is beyond
conception—

180 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

I prostrate to the wheel of the three hidden beauties of your body, speech and mind.

To you I offer material possessions, my own and things unowned,
Actual objects and those imagined,
My body, wealth, and positive causes created through the three times,
Visualized as vast clouds of Samantabhadra offerings.

My mind is oppressed by the stifling darkness of confusion,
And I have done many wrongs against reason and my vows.
Without reservation I confess these all to you.
Whatever mistakes I have made in the past,
With a deep sense of regret, I vow these never to repeat.

From the depths of my heart I rejoice
In the awakening deeds of the great masters,
And in the positive actions past, present and future
Of myself and all others,
Of ordinary and arya beings of the three vehicles.

I request you to rouse every living being
From the sleep of emotional affliction and cognitive bias,
With the cosmic music of the Dharma's pure truth
Resounding with the melody of profundity and peace
In harmony with the various dispositions of your students.

I entreat you to firmly set your feet
Upon the indestructible vajra throne
In the indissoluble state of *Evam*,
Until every sentient being experiences the calm breath of joy
In the state of final realization, unburdened by the extremes of samsara or nirvana.

I fully dedicate my positive actions, past, present and future,
So that I may be in the continuous care of teachers,
And attain full enlightenment for the benefit of all,
Through accomplishing my aspirations, the supreme practice of
Samantabhadra.

The Mandala Offering

I anoint this world with perfume and scatter it with flowers
Bejeweled with Mount Meru, four lands, sun and moon,
Imagined as a buddha realm, I offer this to you
May every living being enjoy this pristine universe.

I make this offering of a precious jeweled mandala,
Together with other pure offerings, wealth,
And positive actions enacted throughout the three times
With body, speech and mind.

To you, my lama, and the three precious jewels,
I offer all with unwavering confidence.
Accepting these out of your boundless compassion,
Send forth to me waves of your inspiring strength.

Idam guru ratna mandala kam nirya tayami
(I offer to the guru this precious jeweled mandala—the universe)

The Inspiration of the Lama

From the *Hrih* in the heart of Cheresig,
Seated in the heart of my venerable teacher,
Pour streams of nectar and rays of five-colored light
Flowing down through the crown of my head,
Eliminating all obstructions and endowing me
With all the common and supreme attainments.

Om ah guru vajradhara losang tenzin gyatso sarva siddhi hum hum
(*Om ah, guru Vajraholder Losang Tenzin Gyatso, grant me all attainments, hum hum*)

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

Contemplations on the Gradual Path, the Lam Rim

Inspire me to be devoted to my lama
With pure thought and action, gaining confidence that you,
My kind and uplifting teacher, are the basis of both temporary and lasting bliss,
For you show me the right path without wrong turns,
And embody the totality of refuges past number.

182 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Inspire me to live a life of Dharma
Undistracted by the illusory obsessions of this life,
For well I know that the value of my freedoms and endowments
Cannot be matched by even the most extravagant wealth,
And that my precious body once attained cannot endure,
For at any moment it may easily be destroyed.

Inspire me to turn to the three precious jewels as my ultimate refuge
And most trustworthy protection from the fears
Of unfortunate states of existence,
And so to cease harmful actions
And engage in health-giving deeds by being always mindful
Of kushala and akushala causes and effects.

Inspire me to practice the three higher trainings,
Out of wise compassion for myself,
Having realized that even the prosperity of the extravagantly wealthy
Is a mere deception, like a siren's seductive spell.

Inspire me to cultivate the bodhichitta aspiration,
And train in oceans of bodhisattva deeds,
Having seen that all these beings, my mothers since beginningless time
Who have nourished me with kindness,
Are trapped and struggling in one extreme or the other,
Drowning in samsara or withdrawn in isolated quietude.

Inspire me to practice the yoga
That joins calm abiding with extraordinary insight,
In which the hundred-thousand wonders of emptiness, always free from both
extremes,
Are reflected, unblurred, in the clear mirror of unwavering meditative
concentration.

Inspire me to strictly observe
All my vows and words of commitment—the roots of powerful attainments,
Since the kindness of Vajradhara, my spiritual mentor,
Has opened the door to the profound mantra practice.

Inspire me to give rise within this lifetime
To the blissful state of mahamudra—the union of awakened body and mind,

By severing the root of my all-creating karmic energy
With the sharp sword of the wisdom of non-dual bliss and emptiness.

The Merging of the Spiritual Master

Having made these requests
For the realizations of the entire paths of sutra and vajrayana,
And having done a glance meditation upon the lam rim,
My supreme lama now gladly descends through the crown of my head
And dissolves into the indestructible drop
At the center of my eight-petaled heart.

There, my lama reappears upon a moon and lotus seat.
At his heart sits Chenresig,
Within whose heart is the letter *hrīh*
Encircled by a garland of the six-syllable mantra.

A stream of nectar begins to pour from the letters of the mantra,
Healing all disease, eliminating any obstacle, purifying all negative karma,
And expanding my insight and my knowledge of the teachings of the Buddha.
Thus I receive the vast inspiration, lacking nothing,
Of the victorious buddhas and their heirs.

Again, light rays shine forth,
Cleansing every problem and deficiency from all beings and their environment.

In this way I attain the supreme yogic state,
Transforming every appearance, sound and thought
Into the three hidden views of a noble arya.

Om mani padme hum
(Om the jewel and the lotus, hum)

Recite the six-syllable manta as many times as possible.



Mani stone on the korwa around the Dalai Lama's residence, Dharmasala, India.

Dedication

In Manjushri's blue jasmine garden of Dharma practices,
(Himself a victorious mind-treasure),
Lit by the spectacular radiance of the youthful moon of beautiful practice,
May the seeds of explanation and realization sprout and flower
Across this vast earth,
And may such great auspiciousness beautify our world till the end of samsara.

Because the bejeweled banner of sacred and secular rule,
Flies high above the three realms, never lowered,
Signalling uncountable virtues and excellent deeds,
May it fulfill every wish for benefit and bliss.

When the darkness lifts that has oppressed us in these degenerate times
Throughout this world, a world like a sapphire held by a celestial maiden,
May all living creatures celebrate that light,
Held in the embrace of meaningful happiness and bliss.

In short, my protector, may I never be parted from you on the beaded string of
my lives,
And by the power of your affectionate care,

May I enter directly, with effortless ease,
Into the great city of nondual bliss-emptiness, the all-powerful awakened state.

Conclusion

By the force of the brilliant compassion of the victorious buddhas and their
descendents,
May all favorable indications become increasingly auspicious,
And may all causes of well-being in both cyclic existence and nirvana
Grow larger and brighter like the waxing moon.

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

*The Buddhist Monk, Ngawang Lobsang Tenzin Gyatso
Maintaining the title of Holder of the White Lotus*

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Seattle, 2008, informed by and with appreciation for an earlier translation by Sharpa Tulku and Brian Beresford. May I be one of those devoted students who will benefit from this practice.

Sadhana of Prajnaparamita the Great Mother

Composed by Asanga

With a few elaborations (in English italics or in parenthesis) from other
selected two-armed, golden Prajnaparamita sadhanas



188 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

I bow to my inspiration, the Bhagavati Prajnaparamita.

Praise to Prajnaparamita

(Prajnaparamita—beyond words, thought, or explanation,
Never born and never ceasing, the nature of space itself,
The experience of the wisdom of non-referential awareness,
I bow to you, Mother of all the buddhas, present, past, and yet to come.)

Having offered my homage to the perfection of wisdom,
The wisdom of nonduality, the truth realized by all the tathagatas,
The unsurpassed seed of enlightenment,
I will write the sadhana for accomplishing the wisdom of nonduality,
Including the instructions given in the texts.

Creation of the Mandala

First, for a short while, a yogi should settle in meditative equipoise in order to contemplate the practice of the Goddess Prajnaparamita. Understand that every aspect of the mandala is without any essential nature whatsoever.

The Five Wisdom Tathagatas

Having visualized the mandala, (a pure land),

At the center appears Akshobhya: *Om namo akshobhya Hum.*
In front, to the East, Vairocana: *Om namo vairocana ya Om.*
On the right, to the South, Ratnasambhava: *Om namo ratnasambhava ya Tam.*
Behind, to the West, Amitabha: *Om namo amitabha ya Hri.*
On the left, to the North, Amoghasiddhi: *Om namo amoghasiddhi ye Ah.*

The Five Devis

In the Southeast appears Locana: *Om namo locana ye Lam.*
In the Southwest, Mamaki: *Om namo mamaki Mam.*
In the Northwest, Pandara: *Om namo pandara ye Pam.*
In the Northeast, Tara: *Om namo tara yai Tam.*
Abiding with Akshobhya, Prajnaparamita: *Om namo prajnaparamita ye Dhi.*

Offering

Offer to each the five sense offerings three times.
(Goddesses appear from the seed syllables and join you in making offerings,

then dissolve again into the seed-syllable hearts.

Offerings have the aspect of beauty, the nature of emptiness, and function to cause uncontaminated bliss.)

Om vajra pushpe hum svaha.

Om vajra dhupe hum svaha.

Om vajra gandhe hum svaha.

Om vajra dipe hum svaha.

Om vajra naividya hum svaha.

Om sarva tathagata puja vajra svabhava atmako ham.

Aspirational Bodhichitta

Then generate the feeling of loving-kindness, thinking, “Alas, sentient beings are oppressed by the suffering of the six realms of existence over and over, life after life. Through the yoga of Prajnaparamita I will attain highest, complete enlightenment, and thereby establish all sentient beings in the state of Prajnaparamita, thus freed from suffering, liberated from samsara, and abiding in the state of bliss.” Thus should you arouse bodhichitta as an aspiration.

Inviting the Merit Field

At your heart center appears a white *Ah*,

Which transforms into a moon mandala, like a pool of nectar.

On that disk appears a golden letter *Dhi*.

From the *Dhi* emanate one hundred thousand countless rays of light,

Spreading throughout the realms of three thousand world-systems

And calling forth countless billions of buddhas,

The Bhagavati Prajnaparamita, the five devis—Locana etc.,

And the host of gurus and spiritual friends

Who appear in front of you.

Mandala Offering

Imagine that the entire sky fills with countless beautiful flowers, incense, candles, perfumes, delicious food, the precious wheel, the precious elephant, the precious horse, the precious jewel, the precious general, etc. Offer all this which you have imagined in the sky to the host of buddhas, goddesses, and gurus.

(I anoint this world with perfume and scatter it with flowers

Bejeweled with Mount Meru, four lands, sun and moon,

190 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Imagined as a buddha realm, I offer this to you
May every living being enjoy this pristine universe.
The objects of attachment, aversion, and ignorance—

Friends, enemies, and strangers, my body, wealth, and enjoyments—
I offer these without any sense of loss.
Please accept them with pleasure, and inspire me and others
To be free from the three poisonous attitudes.

Idam guru ratna mandala kam nirya tayami
(I offer to the guru this precious jeweled mandala—the universe)

Refuge

Then accumulate energy by making offerings, going three times for refuge,
confessing all negativities, and rejoicing in the positive actions of yourself and
others.

(I take refuge until enlightened, in the Buddhas, Dharma, and Noble Sangha.
Through the positive force of my giving, ethics, patience, effort, meditation,
and wisdom, may I fully awaken for the benefit of all wanderers in samsara.)

The Seven-part Practice

(With body, speech, and mind I bow in admiration to Prajnaparamita,
And present clouds of every type of offering, actual and visualized.
I confess all my negative actions accumulated through beginningless time,
And rejoice in the virtues of all holy and ordinary beings.
Please remain as our guide until samsara ends,
And turn the wheel of Dharma for sentient beings.
I dedicate all the good in myself and others to the ripening of the two
bodhichittas
And the attainment of buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings.)

Dissolving the Refuge Field

Then the buddhas and the devis—Locana and the rest—dissolve into the sky.

Arousing Engaged Bodhichitta

Meditate accordingly on the quality of engaged bodhichitta.
(Meditate on the four immeasurables.)

Meditation on Emptiness

Then one should recite the verses:

Om svabhava shuddho sarva dharma svabhava shuddho ham

(*Om*: I am naturally pure, the natural purity of all things.)

(Everything is empty. Rest in emptiness, free from mental constructions and fabrications. Meditate on emptiness using methods that you have been taught previously. Use any of the reasonings, such as dependent arising and dependence upon parts, to establish emptiness.)

In that state, seeing myself as a mere collection of parts, the aggregates of body and mind, piled up, blazing like a stainless full moon radiating a profusion of liquid light throughout the universe, recite:

Om shunyata jnana vajra svabhava atmako ham.

(*Om*: the vajra wisdom of emptiness nature is my nature of myself)

(Think, “All things included in samsara and nirvana, animate and inanimate, my body and mind, are empty, like a dream.”)

Think, “I am myself without form, and without any conceptual nature, even as I radiate a seeming profusion of light rays.”

The Visualization of Prajnaparamita

Having contemplated that,
From that blue sky of emptiness arises the letter *Ah*
Which transforms into a moon mandala.
On that disk appears a golden letter *Dhi*.
The moon and *Dhi* are transformed into a double lotus.

At the center of that lotus you see a *Ha*,
Encircled by the sixteen Sanskrit vowels, *Ah* and the others.
These are encircled by the thirty-two consonants, *Ka* and the others.
All of these are white.

Surrounding the letters, on the petals of the lotus, appear the eight yoginis: the Goddess of Beauty, the Goddess of Garlands, the Goddess of Dance, the Goddess of Song, the Goddess of Flowers, the Goddess of Incense, the Goddess of Lights, and the Goddess of Perfume.

192 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

All this is transformed into a wisdom moon, radiating clear rays of light.
On top of that moon arises a lotus,
On top of the lotus appears a Prajnaparamita text,
On top of the text appears a moon mandala,
And on top of the moon is a second Prajnaparamita text.

All this is transformed into Bhagavati Prajnaparamita.
She is golden, with one face, two arms, and she is seated on a double blue lotus and white moon throne. *Seated in the vajra posture, she is a mature woman, beautiful, enchanting, extraordinary.*

Her two hands are in the dharmachakra mudra of bestowing teachings.
She is crowned by the five tathagatas, the dyhani buddhas.
She is adorned with all the ornaments and wears elegant clothing.
At both her left and right shoulders is a blue lotus,
Upon each of which rests a volume of the Perfection of Wisdom scriptures.
She is surrounded by the buddhas and bodhisattvas.
Looking more closely, her body, like a window into the star-filled galaxy,
Is seen to be composed of an infinite number of small buddhas,
Each radiating golden light.

(Realize that the vast multiplicity of animate and inanimate phenomena pervading the universe are completely empty.

“I myself am also completely empty, and insubstantial.”

Form, sound, smell, taste, and touch are thus beyond conception, completely uncontaminated by grasping at the external and clinging to the internal.

This is the condition for the arising of perfect and complete awakening, the state of omniscience.)

The Mantra

When you are unable to continue the concentration on this visualization, recite the mantra.

A golden *Hum* appears *from deep within the galaxy of buddhas* at her forehead.

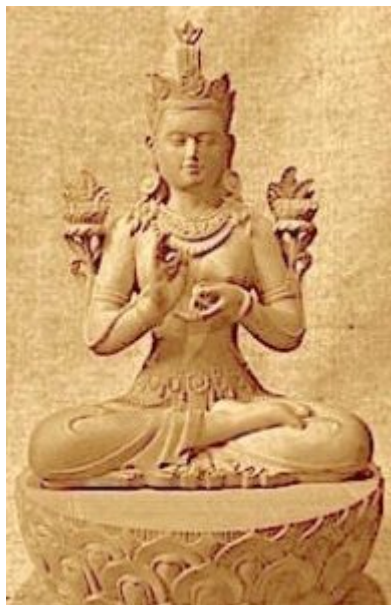
A white *Ah* appears *from the galaxy* at her throat chakra.

A yellow *Dhi* appears *from the galaxy* at her heart chakra.

And a blue *Hum* appears *from the galaxy* at her navel.

Visualize those four seed syllables *radiating the mantra which begins to echo at your heart center* as you recite:

Om ah dhi hum svaha.



Dedication

(Through whatever merit I have created by practicing the sadhana of Prajnaparamita, may all beings throughout the world become Prajnaparamita, the Great Mother.)

The wise who train in the practice of the Goddess Prajnaparamita will surely obtain the state of omniscience.

Composed by Arya Asanga, in Gandhara, India, fourth century C.E.

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, 2018, Seattle Washington, with a few elaborations (in English italics or in parenthesis) from other selected two-armed, golden Prajnaparamita sadhanas included in the Tibetan Kangyur and Tengyur, as well as some very approximate translations of mantras.

Photos: A. Detail of the Java Prajnaparamita from The Art of Indian Asia by Heinrich Zimmer, completed and edited by Joseph Campbell, 1960, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey. B. The Goddess Prajnaparamita. Photo credit unknown.

PART X

Dedication



Mani stones on the korwa around H.H. the Dalai Lama's residence in Dharmasala, India.

The Extraordinary Aspiration of Samantabhadra

The King of Prayers



Buddhas at the Ganden Monastery Temple, Mundgod, South India.

I bow down to the youthful Arya Manjushri.

You lions among humans,
Gone to freedom in the present, past, and future,
In the worlds of ten directions,
To all of you, with body, speech, and sincere mind, I bow down.

With the energy of aspiration for the bodhisattva way,
With a sense of deep respect,

And with as many bodies as atoms in the world,
To all you buddhas visualized before me, I bow down.

On every atom are buddhas numberless as atoms,
Each amid a host of bodhisattvas.
And I am confident that the sphere of all phenomena
Is entirely filled with buddhas in this way.

With infinite oceans of praise for you,
And oceans of sound from the aspects of my voice,
I sing the breathtaking excellence of buddhas,
And celebrate all of you gone to bliss.

Beautiful flowers and regal garlands,
Sweet music, scented oils, and parasols,
Sparkling lights and sublime incense,
I offer to you victorious ones.

Fine dress and fragrant perfumes,
Sandalwood powder heaped high as Mount Meru,
All wondrous offerings in spectacular array,
I offer to you victorious ones.

With transcendent offerings peerless and vast,
With profound admiration for all the buddhas,
With strength of conviction in the bodhisattva way,
I offer and bow down to all victorious ones.

Every harmful action I have done
With my body, speech, and mind
Overwhelmed by attachment, anger, and confusion,
All these I openly lay bare before you.

I lift up my heart and rejoice in all the positive potential
Of buddhas and bodhisattvas in the ten directions,
Of solitary realizers, hearers still training, and those beyond,
And of all ordinary beings.

You who are the bright lights of worlds in ten directions,
Who have attained a buddha's omniscience through the stages of
awakening,

All you who are my guides,
Please turn the supreme wheel of Dharma.

With palms together I earnestly request:
You who may actualize parinirvana,
Please stay with us for eons numberless as atoms in the world,
For the happiness and well-being of all wanderers in samsara.

Whatever slight positive potential I may have created
By paying homage, offering, and acknowledging my faults,
Rejoicing, and requesting that the buddhas stay and teach,
I now dedicate all this for full awakening.

May you buddhas now living in the worlds of ten directions,
And all you gone to freedom in the past, please accept my offerings.
May those not yet arisen quickly perfect their minds,
Awakening as fully enlightened ones.

May all worlds in ten directions
Be entirely pure and vast.
May they be filled with bodhisattvas
Surrounding buddhas gathered beneath a bodhi tree.

May as many beings as exist in the ten directions
Be always well and happy.
May all samsaric beings live in accord with the Dharma,
And may their every Dharma wish be fulfilled.

Remembering my past lives in all varieties of existence,
May I practice the bodhisattva way,
And thus, in each cycle of death, migration, and birth,
May I always abandon the householder's life.

Then, following in the footsteps of all the buddhas,
And perfecting the practice of a bodhisattva,
May I always act without error or compromise,
With ethical discipline faultless and pure.

May I teach the Dharma in the language of gods,
In every language of spirits and nagas,

200 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Of humans and of demons,
And in the voice of every form of being.

May I be gentle-minded, cultivating the six paramitas,
And never forget bodhichitta.
May I completely cleanse without omission
Every negativity and all that obscures this awakening mind.

May I traverse all my lives in the world,
Free of karma, afflictions, and interfering forces,
Just as the lotus blossom is undisturbed by the water's wave,
Just as the sun and moon move unhindered through the sky.

May I ease the suffering in the lower realms
And in the many directions and dimensions of the universe.
May I guide all wanderers in samsara to the pure bliss of awakening,
And be of worldly benefit to them as well.

May I practice constantly for eons to come,
Perfecting the activities of awakening,
Acting in harmony with the various dispositions of beings,
Showing the ways of a bodhisattva.

May I always have the friendship
Of those whose path is like mine,
And with body, speech, and also mind,
May we practice together the same aspirations and activities.

May I always meet a spiritual mentor
And never displease that excellent friend,
Who deeply wishes to help me
And expertly teaches the bodhisattva way.

May I always directly see the buddhas,
Masters encircled by bodhisattvas,
And without pause or discouragement for eons to come,
May I make extensive offerings to them.

May I hold within me the Buddha's genuine Dharma,
Illuminate everywhere the teachings that awaken,

Embody the realizations of a bodhisattva,
And practice ardently in all future eons.

While circling through all states of existence,
May I become an endless treasure of good qualities—
Skillful means, wisdom, *samadhi*, and liberating stabilizations—
Gathering limitless pristine wisdom and positive potential.

On one atom I shall see
Buddha fields numberless as atoms,
Inconceivable buddhas among bodhisattvas in every field,
Practicing the activities of awakening.

Perceiving this in all directions,
I dive into an ocean of buddha fields,
Each an ocean of three times buddhas in the space of a wisp of hair.
So I, too, will practice for an ocean of eons.

Thus I am continually immersed in the speech of the buddhas,
Expression that reveals an ocean of qualities in one word,
The completely pure eloquence of all the buddhas,
Communication suited to the varied tendencies of beings.

With strength of understanding I plunge
Into the infinite enlightened speech of the Dharma
Of all buddhas in the three times gone to freedom,
Who continually turn the wheel of Dharma methods.

I shall experience in one moment
Such vast activity of all future eons,
And I will enter into all eons of the three times,
In but a fraction of a second.

In one instant I shall see all those awakened beings,
Past, present, and future lions among humans,
And with the power of the illusion-like stabilization
I will constantly engage in their inconceivable activity.

I shall manifest upon one single atom
The array of pure lands present, past, and future.

202 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Likewise, I shall enter the array of pure buddha fields
In every direction without exception.

I shall enter the very presence of all my guides,
Those lights of this world who are yet to appear,
Those sequentially turning the wheels of complete awakening,
Those who reveal nirvana—final, perfect peace.

May I achieve the power of swift, magical emanation,
The power to lead to the Great Vehicle through every approach,
The power of always beneficial activity,
The power of love pervading all realms,

The power of all-surpassing positive potential,
The power of supreme knowledge unobstructed by discrimination,
And through the powers of wisdom, skillful means, and samadhi,
May I achieve the perfect power of awakening.

Purifying the power of all contaminated actions,
Crushing the power of disturbing emotions at their root,
Defusing the power of interfering forces,
I shall perfect the power of the bodhisattva practice.

May I purify an ocean of worlds,
May I free an ocean of beings,
May I clearly see an ocean of Dharma,
May I realize an ocean of pristine wisdom.

May I purify an ocean of activities,
May I fulfill an ocean of aspirations,
May I make offerings to an ocean of buddhas,
May I practice without discouragement for an ocean of eons.

To awaken fully through this bodhisattva way
I shall fulfill without exception
All the diverse aspirations of the awakening practice
Of all buddhas gone to freedom in the three times everywhere.

In order to practice exactly as the wise one
Called Samantabhadra, All-embracing Good,

The elder brother of the sons and daughters of the buddhas,
I completely dedicate all this goodness.

Likewise may I dedicate
Just as the skillful Samantabhadra,
With pure body, speech, and mind,
Pure actions and pure buddha fields.

I shall give rise to the aspirations of Manjushri
For this bodhisattva practice of all-embracing good,
To perfect these practices
Without discouragement or pause in all future eons.

May my pure activities be endless,
My good qualities boundless,
And through abiding in immeasurable activity,
May I actualize infinite emanations.

Limitless is the end of space,
Likewise, limitless are living beings.
Thus, limitless are karma and afflictions.
May my aspiration's reach be limitless as well.

One may offer to the buddhas
All wealth and adornments of infinite worlds in ten directions,
And one may offer during eons numberless as atoms of the world
Even the greatest happiness of gods and humans;

But whoever hears this extraordinary aspiration,
And longing for highest awakening
Gives rise to faith just once,
Creates far more precious positive potential.

Those who make this heartfelt aspiration for the bodhisattva way
Will be free of all lower rebirths,
Free of harmful companions,
And will quickly see Amitabha, Infinite Light.

And even in this very human life,
They will be nourished by happiness

And have all conducive circumstances.
Without waiting long, they will become like Samantabhadra himself.

Those who give voice to this extraordinary aspiration
Will quickly and completely purify
The five boundless harmful actions
Created under the power of ignorance.

Blessed with supreme knowledge,
Excellent body, family, attributes, and appearance,
They will be invincible to vast interfering forces and misleading teachers,
And all the three worlds will make offerings.

Going quickly to the noble bodhi tree,
And sitting there to benefit sentient beings,
Subduing all interfering forces,
They will fully awaken and turn the great wheel of Dharma.

Have no doubt that complete awakening
Is the fully ripened result—comprehended only by a buddha—
Of holding in mind by teaching, reading, or reciting
This aspiration of the bodhisattva practice.

In order to train just like
The hero Manjushri, who knows reality as it is
And just like Samantabhadra as well,
I completely dedicate all this goodness, just as they did.

With that dedication which is praised as greatest
By all the buddhas gone to freedom in the three times,
I, too, dedicate all my roots of goodness
For the attainment of the bodhisattva practice.

When the moment of my death arrives,
By eliminating all obscurations
And directly perceiving Amitabha,
May I go immediately to Sukhavati, the pure land of Great Joy.

Having gone to Sukhavati,
May I actualize the meaning of these aspirations,

Fulfilling them all without exception,
For the benefit of beings for as long as this world endures.

Born from an extremely beautiful, superlative lotus
In this joyful land, the Buddha's magnificent mandala,
May I receive a prediction of my awakening
Directly from Amitabha Buddha.

Having received a prediction there,
May I create vast benefit
For beings throughout the ten directions,
With a billion emanations by the power of wisdom.

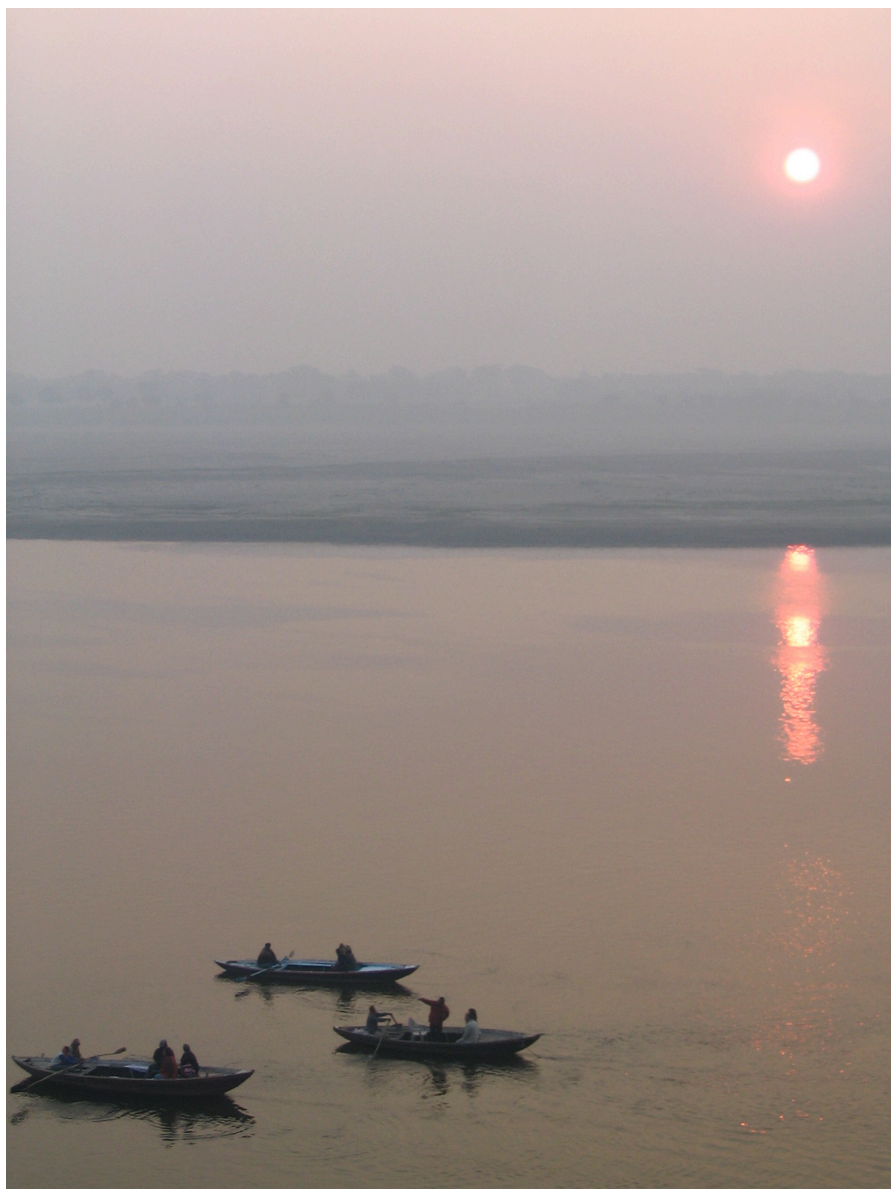
Through even the small virtue I have accumulated
By offering this prayer of the bodhisattva practice,
May all the positive aspirations of beings
Be fulfilled in an instant.

Through creating limitless positive potential
By dedicating this prayer of Samantabhadra's deeds,
May all beings drowning in this torrent of suffering
Enter the presence of Amitabha.

Through this king of aspirations, which is the greatest of the sublime,
Helping infinite wanderers in samsara,
Through the accomplishment of this scripture dazzling with
Samantabhadra's practice,
May suffering realms be utterly emptied of all beings.

Thus, *The Extraordinary Aspiration of the Practice of Samantabhadra*, also known as *The King of Prayers*, from the *Gaṇḍavyūha* chapter of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* (translated by Jinamitra, Surendrabodhi and Yeshe-sde circa 900 C.E.), is complete.

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Ganden Monastery, South India, 2002, relying on the commentary Ornament Clarifying the Exalted Intention of Samantabhadra ('phags-pa bzang-po spyod-pa'i smon-lam gyi rnam-par bshad-pa kun-tu-bzang-po'i dgongs-pa gsal-bar byed-pa'i rgyan) by lCang-skye Rol-pa'i-rdo-rje, and the clarification of many difficult points by the very kind Khensur Rinpoche Konchog Tsering of Ganden Monastery.



The river Ganges at Varanasi.

Shantideva's Dedication

Bodhicaryavatara, Chapter 11

May every being in all directions,
 Troubled by suffering in body and mind,
 Experience an ocean of happiness—joy,
 Because of my positive deeds.

May no one be hurt, nor do any harm,
 Nor ever fall sick again.
 May none feel afraid or hopeless or worried,
 With a heart worn down by depression.
 May the blind see sights,
 And the deaf hear sounds.
 May the young and old without protector,
 Have the hand of a defender.

May the naked find clothing,
 The hungry find food.
 May the thirsty find water,
 Clean, clear, and refreshing.

May the poor find wealth,
 And those weak with grief find joy.
 May those broken by loss
 Take heart and find new life.

May all who are ill be swiftly healed,
 Forevermore free of disease.

May medicines cure and food nourish,
May all live long and well.

May those who shiver with cold be warm,
And those who swelter in heat be cooled.
May billowing clouds of bodhichitta
Rain lightly down upon our earth.
May those set out by boat or plane
Achieve their heart's desires,
Safely returned to solid ground,
With loved ones reunited.

May nature issue timely rains
And yield abundant harvests.
May rulers govern ethically
And people throughout the world thrive.

May bombs and missiles of burning ember,
Become a rain of roses;
May soldiers become an army of love,
Children at play with flowers.

May hellish places become delightful,
Fragrant lakes of blooming lotus
Peaceful with entrancing song
Of crane and duck, of goose and swan.

May the frightened be fearless,
And the bound be free.
May those oppressed become strong.
May living beings across the earth be kind to one another.

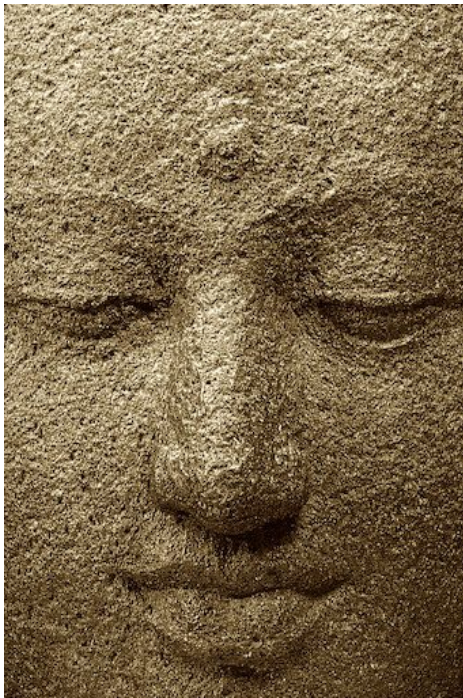
For as long as space remains,
And for as long as living beings endure,
May I too remain
To ease the suffering of the world.

Translated by Tenzin Jesse, Rajpur India, 2005

PART XI

Lam Rim by Numbers – A Dharma Study Aid

Every Buddhist teaching is marked by four views: all functioning ‘things’ are impermanent; all phenomena contaminated by ignorance are suffering, all phenomena are empty of a self nature; and, nirvana (the cessation of anger, craving and ignorance) is peace.



An Overview of the Path



The path of calm abiding.

Two Buddhist Traditions

1. The Pali Tradition: Southern School, Hinayana, Individual Vehicle, Foundation Vehicle.
2. The Sanskrit Tradition: Northern School, Mahayana, Great Vehicle, Bodhisattva Vehicle.

Four Tibetan Schools of Mahayana Buddhism

1. Nyingma
2. Kagyu
3. Sakya
4. Gelugpa

Three Scopes of Practice of the Lam Rim

1. Initial scope: the wish for good circumstances, a “good life,” now and in the future.
2. Middle scope: the wish for stable happiness, nirvana, that is invulnerable to the suffering of change.
3. Great scope: the wish to develop all capability and to purify even subtle negativity in order to free all beings from suffering.

Three Turnings of the Wheel

1. At Sarnath: the four noble truths.
2. At Rajagriha: the perfection of wisdom.
3. At Shravasti: buddha nature.

Three Baskets—Tripiṭaka

1. Vinaya
2. Sutra
3. Abhidharma

Four Benefits

1. The mundane welfare of oneself
2. The mundane welfare of others
3. The ultimate welfare of oneself
4. The ultimate welfare of others

Three Principle Aspects of the Path

1. The wish to be free from samsara
2. The wisdom realizing emptiness
3. Bodhichitta

Three Persons Who Practice Buddhism

1. Hearer
2. Solitary realizer
3. Bodhisattva

Three Fruits

1. Arhat
2. Bodhisattva
3. Fully Enlightened Buddha

Three Vehicles

1. Hinyana, the Foundation Vehicle
2. Mahayana, the Great Vehicle
3. Vajrayana, the Tantric Vehicle

Four Schools of Philosophical Tenets

1. Vaibhashika
2. Sautrantika
3. Chittamatra
4. Madhyamaka (a. Svatantrika b. Prasangika)

Five Paths

1. Path of accumulation
2. Path of preparation
3. Path of seeing
4. Path of meditation
5. Path of no more learning

Two Collections

1. Wisdom
2. Method

Preliminaries



Doors at Sera Monastery in South India.

Four Reliances

1. Rely on the message, not on the personality of the teacher.
2. Rely on the meaning, not just the words.
3. Rely on the definitive meaning, not just the provisional meaning.
4. Rely on wisdom and insight, not just ordinary, judgmental mind.

Three Wisdoms

1. Hearing
2. Thinking
3. Meditating

Three Faults When Listening to Teachings

1. Not paying attention, like a pot turned upside down that cannot receive anything.
2. Not remembering the teachings, like a pot with holes that cannot retain anything.
3. Believing one knows it all, like a pot that is already full and cannot receive anything more.

Two Kinds of Meditation

1. Analytic meditation (*vipaśyanā*)
2. Stabilizing meditation, calm abiding (*śamatha*)

Four Practices between Sessions

1. Mindfulness of one's senses
2. Mindfulness of one's activities
3. Eating an appropriate diet
4. Getting adequate sleep

Four Freedoms and Gifts

1. Freedom from survival preoccupations
2. Freedom from excessive suffering or excessive pleasure
3. Contact with truly enlightened beings and their teachings
4. Ability to comprehend the teachings

Three Purposes of Our Precious Human Life

1. Creating the causes of temporary well-being: ceasing harmful actions.
2. Achieving one's own final purpose: ceasing disturbing attitudes (nirvana).
3. Achieving complete awakening, omniscience, in order to bring about the temporary and final happiness of others.

Three Insights from the Rarity of a Precious Human Life

1. We will cherish our opportunity and want to make it meaningful.
2. We will see the impermanence and fragility of our present good situation.
3. We will see its dependency on causes and want to create those causes which are:
 - Ethical discipline
 - The six far-reaching attitudes
 - Aspiration and dedication.

Eight Mundane Obsessions

1. Material gain
2. Loss
3. Sense pleasure
4. Discomfort
5. Praise
6. Criticism
7. Fame
8. Loss of reputation

The 1st Scope: A Wish for Ordinary Happiness

Two Kinds of Impermanence

1. Gross
2. Subtle

Six Advantages of Remembering Impermanence

1. Living a meaningful life and wishing to practice a spiritual path.
2. Prioritizing effectively and acting deliberately, with agency.
3. In the beginning, understanding that it is urgent that we mature and seek teachings.
4. In the middle, persisting and not faltering in our practice.
5. In the end, developing a sense of personal priorities and not allowing ourselves to be under the control of trivial pursuits.
6. Feeling peaceful and satisfied with our lives at the time of death.

Six Disadvantages of Not Remembering Impermanence

1. Unmindful of what is most important to us, we won't practice.
2. Procrastinating about what is most important, we'll be overwhelmed by the eight mundane obsessions.
3. Our practice will lack urgency.
4. Forgetting ourselves, we'll succumb to negativity.
5. We will feel regret when we look back at our lives and at the time of death.

Eight Points of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Argument for Reincarnation

1. There are two types of existents:
 - *Things that change and depend on causes
 - *Things that don't change and do not depend on causes.
2. There are three types of things that change:

220 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

- *External substances

- *Internal consciousness

- *Compositional factors.

3. There are two causes of external substances:

- *Substantial causes

- *Cooperative conditions.

4. Consciousness is different from matter.

5. There are two levels of consciousness:

- *Gross consciousness

- *Subtle consciousness.

6. There are three conditions for the arising of a consciousness:

- *Observed-object condition (the object)

- *Physiological condition (sense faculty)

- *Immediately preceding condition (substantial cause).

7. Consciousness cannot have a material substantial cause.

8. A substantial cause of consciousness is the preceding moment of consciousness, or it would be produced either:

- *Causelessly

- *Or from discordant causes.

Nine Points of the Meditation on Death

A. Death is certain.

1) Everyone who is born must die, no matter who we are.

2) With each passing moment we approach death.

3) We will die even if we have not had time to practice Dharma.

B. The time of death is uncertain.

4) There is no guarantee we will live long.

5) It takes great effort to stay alive and very little to die.

6) Our body is extremely fragile. Small things can cause death.

C. Only our internal resources and spiritual practice can help at the time of death.

- 7) At the time of death, we leave money and possessions behind.
- 8) Friends and relatives remain here while we go on.
- 9) Not even our body is of any help. It is burnt or buried and of no use to anyone.

Three Forms of Lower Suffering Existence

1. Beings that experience continuous pain, aggression, and hatred.
2. Beings that experience continuous frustration, dissatisfaction, and craving.
3. Beings that experience confusion and fear as do animals.

Three Jewels or Refuges

1. Buddha
2. Dharma
3. Sangha

Three Stages of Taking Refuge

1. In the beginning: refuge in the view of mind as the source of happiness.
2. In the middle: reflecting on the qualities of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.
3. In the end: refuge in the inner Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha that we will ourselves become.

Three Measures of Taking Refuge

1. Knowing the excellent qualities of the Dharma and its practitioners
2. Accepting the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha as ideal
3. Not taking refuge in mundane objects

Three Kinds of Confidence

1. Admiring confidence
2. Aspiring confidence
3. Convinced confidence

222 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Four Reasons that a Buddha is a Reliable Refuge

1. A buddha is free from all fears.
2. A buddha has skillful ways to free others from fear.
3. A buddha has great compassion for all beings, whether or not they are close to her.
4. A buddha fulfills the aims of all beings, whether or not they have helped her.

Eight Precepts For Maintaining Refuge by Asaṅga

1. Find a Dharma teacher.
2. Study the Buddhist teachings.
3. Focus on the teachings for overcoming disturbing attitudes.
4. Follow the example of the Sangha by making an effort to realize the four noble truths.
5. Withdraw one's mind from acquisitiveness and the pursuit of trivial things.
6. Practice the ethical standards established by the buddhas.
7. Try to be sympathetic and compassionate to others.
8. Make a practice of offering to the Triple Gem.

Twelve Ear-Whispered Trainings for Maintaining Refuge

Three things to avoid:

1. Taking refuge in teachers who contradict the Buddha's view, or in worldly objects or deities.
2. Harming any living being.
3. Being influenced by people who reject the teachings.

Three things to practice:

1. Regard any image of a buddha, regardless of its quality or artistry, as an actual buddha, worthy of respect and veneration.
2. Regard all Dharma scriptures as the actual Dharma jewel.
3. Regard all who wear the robes as an actual Sangha jewel.

Six things in common:

1. Go for refuge to the Three Jewels again and again, reflecting on their amazing qualities.
2. Offer the first portion of one's food and drink to the Three Jewels while reflecting on their kindness.
3. With compassion, encourage others to go for refuge.
4. Go for refuge three times during the day and three at night, reflecting on the benefits of this practice.
5. Do every action with trust in the Three Jewels.
6. Never forsake your refuge, even if just as a joke or at the cost of your own life.

Four Principles of Karma

1. Karma definitely ripens according to its character.
2. Karmic imprints tend to increase.
3. We will not experience a result for which we did not create the cause.
4. Karmic causes are never lost.

Two Kinds of Karma

1. Wholesome (*kushala*)
2. Unwholesome (*akushala*)

Four Characteristics of Akushala Karma

1. It is unhealthy, troubled and productive of mental dysfunction.
2. It is unclear, confused, and uncertain.
3. It is accompanied by delusion.
4. It is accompanied by upset and discontent.

Four Characteristics of Kushala Karma

1. It is healthy—untroubled and free of mental dysfunction.
2. It is clear—bright, unconfused, not murky.
3. It is accompanied by wisdom.
4. It is accompanied by well-being and contentment.

Four Kinds of Result

1. A result that ripens in the form of rebirth

224 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

2. A result that corresponds to its cause
3. A result that is our habitual tendencies
4. A result of our environment

Four Aspects of a Complete Action

1. The correct object
2. The intention and motivation
3. The actual action
4. The culmination of the action (the action is complete and one rejoices)

Six Factors that Increase the Karmic Weight of an Action

1. Frequency
2. Presence of an opponent mental factor
3. Intensity of the accompanying attitude
4. Intensity of the deed or taking joy in the suffering or happiness of another
5. The karmic weight of the object
6. The nature of the action—causing greater suffering or happiness to another

Four Opponent Powers of Purification

1. Regret (the mistake)
2. Repair (relationships with self and other)
3. Resolve (not to repeat or to be mindful)
4. Remediate (with restitution or an action that offsets the harm)

Ten Harmful Actions

(These actions are negative, by definition, because they create the causes for unhappiness for the doer of the action.)

1. Killing: taking the life of any sentient being, including animals.
2. Stealing: taking what has not been given to you.
3. Harmful sexual behavior: adultery or other sexual expression or activity that is physically or emotionally harmful.
4. Lying: deliberately deceiving others.
5. Divisive speech: creating disharmony or preventing reconciliation.
6. Harsh words: ungentle speech that belittles, ridicules, puts down, or deliberately hurts another's feelings.

7. Idle talk: gossip or chatter under the influence of anger, jealousy, attachment, etc., which wastes time or inflames afflictions.
8. Obsessive thoughts of desire: craving others' possessions and scheming to obtain them.
9. Maliciousness: intending to hurt others, get back at them, or retaliate.
10. Wrong views: narrow-mindedly holding cynical views that completely deny the existence of something that is or could be true, for example, the law of cause and effect.

Ten Constructive Actions

1. Protecting the lives of others.
2. Generously giving material goods, service, time, or skill to help others.
3. Cultivating trust/honesty in relationships by respecting others' feelings and others' relationships.
4. Speaking the truth.
5. Uniting people; speaking about others' good qualities.
6. Speaking with soft, gentle, and loving words.
7. Speaking about helpful, beneficial, or meaningful things.
8. Having a loving attitude and rejoicing in others' happiness.
9. Generating empathy and compassion when others suffer.
10. Cultivating open-mindedness, wisdom, and realistic attitudes.

Five Precepts

1. Refrain from killing
2. Refrain from stealing
3. Refrain from false speech
4. Refrain from unwise sexual behavior
5. Refrain from taking intoxicants

Three Kinds of Vows

1. Individual liberation vows (*prātimokṣa*)
Lay vows
Novice monastic vows
Full ordination
2. Bodhisattva vows
3. Tantric vows

The 2nd Scope: A Wish to Be Free of Samsara



Tsa-tsas and mani stone along the korwa around H. H. the Dalai Lama's residence in Dharmasala, India.

Four Truths

1. True Suffering
2. True Origin
3. True Cessation
4. True Path

Sixteen Distortions of the Four Noble Truths

Regarding the Truth of suffering, the four distortions perceiving:

1. The impermanent as permanent
2. The impure as pure
3. The miserable as pleasurable
4. The selfless as self

Regarding the Truth of the cause, the four distortions viewing:

1. Suffering as without cause
2. Suffering as produced by a single cause
3. The cause of suffering as permanent and unchanging
4. Suffering as produced by an external deity

Regarding the Truth of cessation, the four distortions believing:

1. There is no liberation.
2. Certain contaminated states are liberation.
3. Some suffering states are auspicious and lofty.
4. Suffering can be extinguished but then returns.

Regarding the Truth of the path, the four distortions thinking:

1. There is no path to liberation at all.
2. Realizing the selflessness of persons is not a path to liberation.
3. Certain concentrations are a path to liberation.
4. There is no path to liberation that ends suffering forever.

The Twelve Insights into the Four Noble Truths

1. There is dukkha.

2. Dukkha should be understood.
3. Dukkha has been understood.
4. There is a cause of dukkha, craving.
5. Craving should be abandoned.
6. Craving has been abandoned.
7. There is the cessation of dukkha.
8. The cessation of dukkha should be realized.
9. The cessation of dukkha has been realized.
10. There is a path with eight aspects leading to the cessation of dukkha.
11. The path to the end of dukkha should be developed.
12. This path has been developed.

Three Characteristics of Cyclic Existence

1. Transience
2. Unsatisfactoriness
3. Selflessness

Three Kinds of Suffering

1. Suffering of suffering
2. Suffering of change
3. Suffering of being under the control of karma and delusions

Three Forms of Higher Suffering Existence

1. Human grief, loss, loneliness, disappointment, and fear of aging, sickness, and death
2. Experience of burning jealousy
3. Experience of excessive, self-absorbed pleasure

Six Sufferings of Samsara

1. Whatever brings happiness does not last
2. Chronic dissatisfaction—always wanting more
3. Having to die again and again
4. Meeting with suffering again and again
5. The roller-coaster of mental and emotional highs and lows
6. The suffering of loneliness

230 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Eight Sufferings of Human Existence

1. Being separated from what we like
2. Getting what we dislike
3. Not getting the objects of our desires
4. Experiencing discomfort in body and mind
5. Birth
6. Aging
7. Sickness
8. Death

Three Poisons or Kleshas (kleśa)

1. Greed
2. Aversion
3. Delusion

Six Root Kleshas (kleśa)

1. Attachment
2. Anger
3. Pride
4. Ignorance
5. Deluded doubt
6. Distorted views: wrong conceptions

Four Kinds of Wrong View

1. View of the transitory collection—conceiving of the five aggregates of body and mind as truly existent “I” and “mine”
2. Eternalism
3. Denying the existence of cause and effect, rebirth, enlightenment, and the Three Jewels
4. Thinking that unethical actions are ethical and that incorrect practices are the path to liberation

Twenty Secondary Afflictive Emotions

Derived from anger:

1. Wrath (belligerence)
2. Resentment (vengeance, holding a grudge)

3. Spite
4. Jealousy (envy)
5. Cruelty (harmfulness, malice)

Derived from attachment:

1. Miserliness (avarice)
2. Complacency (conceit, haughtiness)
3. Agitation (excitement)

Derived from confusion:

1. Concealment
2. Lethargy (dull-mindedness, gloominess)
3. Laziness
4. Lack of conviction (non-faith, lack of trust, cynicism)
5. Forgetfulness
6. Inattentiveness (non-introspection)

Derived from both attachment and confusion:

1. Pretension (deceit)
2. Dissimulation (dishonesty)

Derived from all three:

1. Distraction (desultoriness)
2. Lack of self-respect (shamelessness)
3. Inconsideration for others (lack of a sense of propriety)
4. Lack of conscientiousness (unconcern)

Four Changeable Factors

1. Drowsiness (sleep)
2. Regret (worry)
3. Investigation
4. Analysis (discursiveness)

Eleven Beneficial Mental Factors

1. Confidence, trust (faith)

232 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

2. Self-respect (integrity)
3. Consideration for others (embarrassment, decorum)
4. Non-attachment
5. Non-hatred (loving-kindness)
6. Non-deludedness (non-ignorance, open-mindedness)
7. Joyous effort (enthusiasm, diligence)
8. Flexibility (pliancy, alertness)
9. Conscientiousness (concern)
10. Equanimity
11. Nonviolence (compassion, nonharmfulness)

Six Stimulants for the Disturbing Attitudes and Emotions

1. The seeds (potentials)
2. Trigger objects
3. Negative influences
4. Verbal stimuli
5. Habits
6. Inappropriate attention

Twelve Samsaric Links of Dependent Arising

1. Ignorance
2. Karmic formations
3. Consciousness
4. Mind and matter
5. Six senses
6. Contact
7. Feeling
8. Craving
9. Clinging
10. Becoming
11. Birth
12. Aging and death

Twelve Transcendent Links of Dependent Arising

1. Suffering
2. Faith
3. Joy
4. Rapture
5. Tranquility

6. Happiness
7. Concentration
8. Understanding that sees things as they are
9. Disenchantment
10. Dispassion
11. Emancipation
12. Knowledge of destruction of problems

Three Higher Trainings

1. Higher training in ethics
2. Higher training in concentration
3. Higher training in wisdom

Eightfold Path and Two Results

Ethics:

- Right speech
- Right action
- Right livelihood

Concentration:

- Right effort
- Right mindfulness
- Right concentration

Wisdom:

- Right view
- Right intention

Two Results:

- Right Insight into the nature of reality
- Right Liberation

Five Controlling Faculties of Meditation / Strengths

1. Confidence

234 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

2. Effort
3. Mindfulness
4. Concentration
5. Wisdom

Four Foundations of Mindfulness

1. Mindfulness of the body
2. Mindfulness of feeling tone
3. Mindfulness of mental states
4. Mindfulness of phenomena

Five Hindrances

1. Entertaining the sense desires
2. Irritability (aversion)
3. Dullness and lethargy (sloth and torpor)
4. Agitation and anxiety
5. Skeptical doubt

Five Problems in Meditation, Eight Corrections

Laziness

- Cultivate admiration for the qualities of meditators.
- Want samadhi for what it offers.
- Try hard due to wanting samadhi.

Forgetting the instruction.

- Recall the object if lost, remember the object before losing it.

Mental dullness and agitation.

- Check frequently to see if either are present—watchfulness.

Not trying to change dullness and agitation.

- For dullness, tighten concentration to increase intensity and clarity. Uplift and encourage oneself. If not helpful, change object to:

One's good fortune to be born in a place where Dharma is around

Benefit of thinking well of your teacher

Good qualities of the Buddha

- If that doesn't work, take a break, pace back and forth, etc. and then return.
- For agitation, loosen concentration. If not helpful, switch object or move to counting breath which puts the mind in neutral and allows you to return to the object.

Taking action when it isn't needed.

- Leave it alone.

Four Immeasurables (Brahmaviharas)

1. Loving-kindness
2. Compassion
3. Joy regarding the happiness of others
4. Equanimity

Five Aggregates

1. Form/physical phenomena, body (*rūpa*).
2. Feeling (*vedana*) pleasant, unpleasant, neutral which arise due to contact between the 6 sense organs (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind) and the 6 external objects (sight, sound, odor, taste, touch, mental object).
3. Discrimination /perception (*sañña*) – discerns the characteristics of an object.
4. Mental formations (*sankhara*) – mental factors that shape our intention regarding an experience; includes mental states, emotions, volition.
5. Consciousness (*viññana*)– cognizes objects.

Two Kinds of Consciousness

1. Valid cognizer

- a. Direct valid perceiver

236 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

- Sense direct valid cognizer
- Mental direct valid cognizer
- Yogic direct valid cognizer

b. Inferential cognizer

- Inference through fact
- Inference through renown
- Inference through example
- Inference through scripture

2. Non-valid cognizer

- Correct assumption
- Doubt
 - Doubt not tending to fact
 - Equal doubt
 - Doubt tending to fact
- Wrong consciousness
- Appearing but not ascertained

Threefold Investigation

1. Not contradicted by direct perception
2. Not contradicted by inference
3. Not contradicted by other scripture

Four Seals

1. All produced phenomena are impermanent.
2. All contaminated phenomena are of the nature of suffering.
3. All phenomena are empty of self nature.
4. Nirvana is peace.

The 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta



Two-thousand-year-old stupa, Boudanath, Nepal.

Three Kinds of Bodhichitta

1. King-like
2. Captain-like
3. Shepherd-like

Twelve Benefits of Bodhichitta

1. Enormous merit is gained with ease.
2. Past virtue is transformed into a cause for enlightenment.
3. The sole root of attaining enlightenment is bodhichitta.
4. One's wishes are easily accomplished.
5. One becomes a source of happiness for others.
6. It is the only way to benefit others while in cyclic existence.
7. One is not bothered by harm.
8. One's potential develops quickly.
9. Negativities and obscurations are quickly purified.
10. One becomes a source of inspiration for others.
11. One enters the Mahayana path.
12. One becomes a child of the buddhas.

Seven Points of Cause and One Effect

1. Equanimity regarding friend, enemy, and stranger
2. Recognizing all beings as intimately related
3. Realizing the kindness of others
4. Wishing to reciprocate that kindness
5. Heart-warming love
6. Compassion
7. Great determination
8. Bodhichitta

Five Points of Exchanging Self and Others

1. The disadvantages of self-centeredness
2. The advantages of cherishing others
3. Nine points of equalizing self and others
4. The possibility of exchanging self and others
5. Taking and giving—*tonglen*

Nine-point Meditation Equalizing Self and Others

1. All beings are alike, wishing not to suffer and to be happy.
2. Ten people may have different sorrows or suffering yet all equally want to be free of their sorrow.
3. Ten people may long for different things, yet each equally thinks that what they desire will make them happy.
4. All these beings have helped us.
5. Even if some have harmed us, the benefit we receive from them far outweighs any harm.
6. Holding resentment toward those who harm us is counterproductive.
7. The roles of friend, enemy, and stranger are constantly changing.
8. There are awakened beings who see others without categorizing them.
9. Self and other is not an inherent distinction between people—self only exists in reference to other.

Two Kinds of Bodhisattva Vows

1. Aspiring
2. Engaged

Eight Trainings in the Aspiration Vows

Trainings to keep bodhichitta from weakening now

1. Bring bodhichitta to mind daily, three times during the day and three at night.
2. Bring to mind the benefits of bodhichitta.
3. Train to never mentally abandon any being.
4. Train to create positive actions and cultivate wisdom.

Trainings to Prevent Weakening of Bodhichitta

1. Avoid intentionally deceiving those who try to help you on the path; avoid intentionally speaking any falsehood.
2. Avoid discouraging someone who is trying to practice; encourage those who are acting positively and set a good example.
3. Avoid disparaging bodhisattvas; instead, point out their good qualities.

4. Avoid manipulating or deceiving others for personal gain; be straightforward, sincere, and honest with others.

Sixteen Root Bodhisattva Vows

Actions that harm the practice of bodhichitta

1. Praising yourself and denigrating others
2. Not giving material goods or the gift of Dharma
3. Not forgiving someone who has harmed you, even though they have apologized
4. Abandoning the Mahayana
5. Stealing offerings intended for the Three Jewels
6. Abandoning the Dharma
7. Causing monks or nuns to give up their ordination
8. Committing the five heinous actions
9. Holding wrong views (does not require the four factors)
10. Destroying towns and so on
11. Teaching emptiness to those who are unprepared to receive this teaching
12. Undermining others' aspiration for complete enlightenment
13. Causing someone to abandon their vow of individual liberation
14. Denigrating the Foundation Vehicle
15. Falsely claiming to have realized emptiness
16. Receiving misappropriated property belonging to the Three Jewels
17. Taking away the support of meditators
18. Giving up bodhichitta (does not require the four factors)

Four Factors of a Complete Downfall

1. Not thinking of the harmful action as faulty
2. Not intending to abstain from such an action in the future
3. Rejoicing in a harmful action or enjoying having broken a vow
4. Not having any regret about a harmful action

Three Exceptions of Losang Tsang Kapa

1. Not having the nondegenerate vows
2. Not being in a normal state of mind
3. Suffering from extreme pain through disease

Forty-six Secondary Bodhisattva Vows that Strengthen Bodhichitta

Generosity:

1. Pay homage to the Three Jewels each day.
2. Resist the mind of desire.
3. Respect one's elders.
4. Reply to sincere questions.
5. Accept invitations.
6. Accept gifts, even precious ones.
7. Give the Dharma to those who desire it.

Ethics:

1. Do not forsake those who break their moral discipline.
2. Observe the foundational trainings in order to generate or sustain faith in others.
3. Choose actions that give the greatest benefit to other sentient beings.
4. Make kind and compassionate choices over other considerations.
5. Do not acquire things through wrong livelihood, through hypocrisy, flattery, hinting, manipulation, or seeking large rewards.
6. Avoid frivolous thought or action out of agitation, delusion, and lack of mindfulness, such as making fun of others, laughing loudly, or being noisy and disruptive.
7. Understand that bodhisattvas should achieve liberation from cyclic existence.
8. Avoid actions that may give one a bad reputation.
9. Employ all skillful methods to overcome others' negativities.

Patience:

1. Practice the four noble disciplines.
2. Give care and concern for those who are angry.
3. Accept others' apologies.
4. Check one's angry mind and refrain from thoughts of anger.

Joyous Effort:

1. Do not gather a circle of followers out of desire for wealth and fame.

2. Eliminate the three types of laziness.
3. Avoid senseless talk that is due to attachment.

Concentration:

1. Seek the fullest purpose of concentration.
2. Make an effort to remove obstacles to concentration.
3. See that attaining a taste of concentration is not the main purpose of its practice.

Wisdom:

1. Never abandon the Foundational Vehicle, particularly its view of selflessness.
2. Avoid excessively focusing on the Foundational Vehicle while making only weak effort in the Mahayana.
3. Avoid excessively focusing on non-Buddhist teachings while neglecting the Buddhadharma.
4. Avoid excessive involvement in non-Buddhist subjects.
5. Do not denigrate the Mahayana, particularly in relation to its teachings on emptiness.
6. Avoid praising yourself and denigrating others.
7. Put energy into study of the Dharma.
8. Rely on the meaning, rather than the mere words, and do not criticize the guru.

Ethics of Benefiting Others:

1. Help whoever needs assistance.
2. Take care of those who are ill.
3. Dispel others' suffering.
4. Guide those who are reckless.
5. Return kindness that is shown to you.
6. Relieve others' grief.
7. Give charitably to the needy.
8. Take care of friends, disciples, servants, and so on.
9. Show consideration for others' wishes.
10. Praise others' good qualities.
11. Use force only when necessary.
12. Use miraculous powers, threatening activities, and so on only when beneficial.

Six Paramitas

1. Generosity
2. Patience
3. Ethics
4. Joyous effort
5. Concentration
6. Wisdom

Three Kinds of Generosity

1. Giving material aid
2. Giving protection from fear
3. Giving the Dharma

Three Kinds of Ethics

1. Restraining oneself from harmful action
2. Acting positively
3. Working for the benefit of others

Ten Ways of Benefiting Others

1. Helping those who are suffering or ill.
2. Giving counsel to those who are confused or unaware of ways to help themselves.
3. Providing help to those who need it to realize their goals.
4. Protecting those who are afraid or are in danger.
5. Comforting those who grieve or whose loved one has died.
6. Helping the poor and needy.
7. Providing a place to stay for those in need, such as Dharma practitioners, the poor, and travelers.
8. Helping to reconcile those who are quarreling.
9. Supporting those who are practicing Dharma or acting constructively.
10. Stopping those who are acting in harmful ways or are about to do so.

Three Kinds of Patience

1. Patience of not retaliating
2. Patience of enduring difficulties
3. Patience of practicing the Dharma

244 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Four Noble Disciplines

1. Not responding to anger with anger
2. Not responding to physical harm with physical harm
3. Not responding to criticism with criticism
4. Not responding to verbal argument with verbal argument

Three Kinds of Joyous Effort

1. Armor-like effort: prepared to do as much as is needed for as long as necessary.
2. Delighting in kushala actions and the practice of the six perfections.
3. Delighting in helping others.

Three Kinds of Laziness

1. Procrastination
2. Being busy with trivial activities and negative behavior
3. Discouragement and self-disparagement

Two Extremes

1. The view of permanence
2. The view of nihilism

Two Kinds of Wisdom

1. Conventional wisdom regarding karma and the Three Jewels
2. Ultimate wisdom regarding the nature of reality

Two Truths

1. Relative or conventional truth
2. Ultimate truth

Three Kinds of Dependency

1. Dependence on parts or moments
2. Dependence on causes
3. Dependence on labels

Four-point Analysis

1. Is the self the same as one's body and mind?
2. Is the self different from one's body and mind?
3. Is the self both different from and the same as one's body and mind?
4. Is the self neither different from nor the same as one's body and mind?

Seven-part Analysis of a Chariot

1. Is a chariot the same as its parts?
2. Is it different from its parts?
3. Does it depend on its parts?
4. Do the parts depend on the chariot?
5. Does the chariot possess its parts?
6. Is the chariot a collection of parts?
7. Is the chariot the shape of its parts?

Four Diamond Slivers

1. Are things produced from themselves as a cause?
2. From separate others as a cause?
3. From both?
4. Causelessly?

Four Alternatives

1. Is only one result produced from a cause?
2. Does one cause produce a result?
3. Is only one effect produced from many causes?
4. Are many effects produced from many causes?

Four Extremes

1. Does a result exist at the time of its cause?
2. Does a result not exist at the time of its cause?
3. Is the result both existent and nonexistent?
4. Is it neither existent nor nonexistent?

Threefold Circle

1. Emptiness of the agent

246 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

2. Emptiness of the object
3. Emptiness of the action

Three Kinds of Compassion

1. Ordinary compassion that arises from observing sentient beings
2. Compassion that arises from observing beings as impermanent
3. Objectless compassion

Dharma by Numbers Index



Pandit and texts, mural at Lumbini, Nepal.

This outline is intended as a guide to locating where the various lists fall in the Lam Rim outlines above. Why so many lists and numbers? As one lama said, they are for students who like lists and numbers!

Two (2)

Two Buddhist Traditions – Overview of the Path

Two Collections – Overview of the Path

Two Kinds of Consciousness – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Two Kinds of Bodhisattva Vows – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Two Kinds of Impermanence – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Two Kinds of Karma – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Two Kinds of Meditation – Preliminaries

Two Kinds of Wisdom – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Two Truths – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Three (3)

Three Baskets – Overview of the Path

Three Characteristics of Samsara – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Three Exceptions of Tsang Kapa – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Three Faults When Listening to Teachings – Preliminaries

Threefold Circle – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Threefold Investigation – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Three Forms of Higher Suffering Existence – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Three Forms of Lower Suffering Existence – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Three Fruits – Overview of the Path

Three Higher Trainings – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Three Insights of a Precious Human Life – Preliminaries

Three Jewels or Refuges – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Three Kinds of Bodhicitta – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Three Kinds of Compassion – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Three Kinds of Confidence – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Three Kinds of Dependency – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Three Kinds of Ethics – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Three Kinds of Generosity – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Three Kinds of Joyous Effort – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Three Kinds of Laziness – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Three Kinds of Patience – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Three Kinds of Suffering – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Three Kinds of Vows – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Three Measures of Taking Refuge – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness
Three Persons Who Practice Buddhism – Overview of the Path
Three Poisons or Kleshas – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara
Three Principle Aspects of the Path – Overview of the Path
Three Purposes of a Precious Human Life – Preliminaries
Three Scopes of Practice of the Lam Rim – Overview of the Path
Three Stages of Taking Refuge – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness
Three Turnings of the Wheel – Overview of the Path
Three Vehicles – Overview of the Path
Three Wisdoms – Preliminaries

Four (4)

Four Alternatives – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta
Four Aspects of Complete Actions – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness
Four Benefits – Overview of the Path
Four Changeable Factors – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara
Four Characteristics of Kushala Karma – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness
Four Characteristics of Akushala Karma – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness
Four Diamond Slivers – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta
Four Extremes – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta
Four Factors of a Complete Downfall – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness
Four Foundations of Mindfulness – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara
Four Freedoms and Gifts – Preliminaries
Four Immeasurables (*Brahmaviharas*) – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara
Four Kinds of Result – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness
Four Kinds of Wrong View – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara
Four Noble Disciplines – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta
Four Opponent Powers of Purification – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness
Four-point Analysis – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta
Four Practices Between Sessions – Preliminaries
Four Principles of Karma – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness
Four Reasons Buddha is a Reliable Refuge – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness
Four Reliances – Preliminaries
Four Schools of Philosophical Tenets – Overview of the Path
Four Seals – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara
Four Tibetan Schools of Mahayana Buddhism – Overview of the Path
Four Trainings that Maintain Bodhicitta – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta
Four Truths – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

250 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

Five (5)

Five Aggregates – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Five Hindrances – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Five Paths – Overview of the Path

Five Points of Exchanging Self and Others – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Five Precepts – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Five Controlling Faculties (Strengths) – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Six (6)

Six Benefits of Remembering Impermanence – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Six Disadvantages of Forgetting Impermanence – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Six Factors Increasing Karmic Weight – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Six Paramitas – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Six Root Kleshas – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Six Stimulants for Disturbing Emotions – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Six Sufferings of Samsara – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Seven (7)

Seven-part Analysis of a Chariot – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Seven Points of Cause and Effect – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Eight (8)

Eightfold Path and Two Results – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Eight Mundane Obsessions – Preliminaries

Eight Points of H.H. Dalai Lama's Argument for Rebirth – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Eight Precepts to Maintain Refuge – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Eight Sufferings of Human Existence – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Eight Trainings in the Aspiration Vows – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Nine (9)

Nine Point Meditation on Death – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Nine Points of Equalizing Self and Others – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Ten (10)

Ten Constructive Actions – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Ten Harmful Actions – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Ten Ways of Benefiting Others – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Eleven (11)

Eleven Beneficial Mental Factors – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Twelve (12)

Twelve Benefits of Bodhicitta – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Twelve Ear-whispered Refuge Trainings – 1st Scope: Ordinary Happiness

Twelve Insights into Four Noble Truths – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Twelve Samsaric Links of Dependent Arising – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Twelve Purified Links of Dependent Arising – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Sixteen (16)

Sixteen Distortions of the Noble Truths – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Sixteen Root Bodhisattva Vows – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

Twenty (20)

Twenty Secondary Afflictive Emotions – 2nd Scope: Wish to Be Free of Samsara

Forty-six (46)

Forty-six Secondary Bodhisattva Vows – 3rd Scope: Bodhicitta

3 Scopes, 3 Aspects, 4 Seals, 4 Truths

A. Lam Rim 1st Scope —Common Spiritual Values

B. Lam Rim 2nd scope —The Four Noble Truths

1st Truth: True Sufferings

Three Principle Aspects of the Path:

1) Wish to be Free of Samsara:

Three Characteristics of Samsara:

- i. Impermanent (1st seal)
- ii. Unsatisfactory – Dukkha (2nd seal)
- iii. Selfless (3rd seal)

2nd Truth: True Origins

Karma and the disturbing attitudes

3rd Truth: True Cessations

2) Realization of Emptiness (4th seal: nirvana)

4th Truth: True Paths

Eight-Fold Path = The Three Higher Trainings

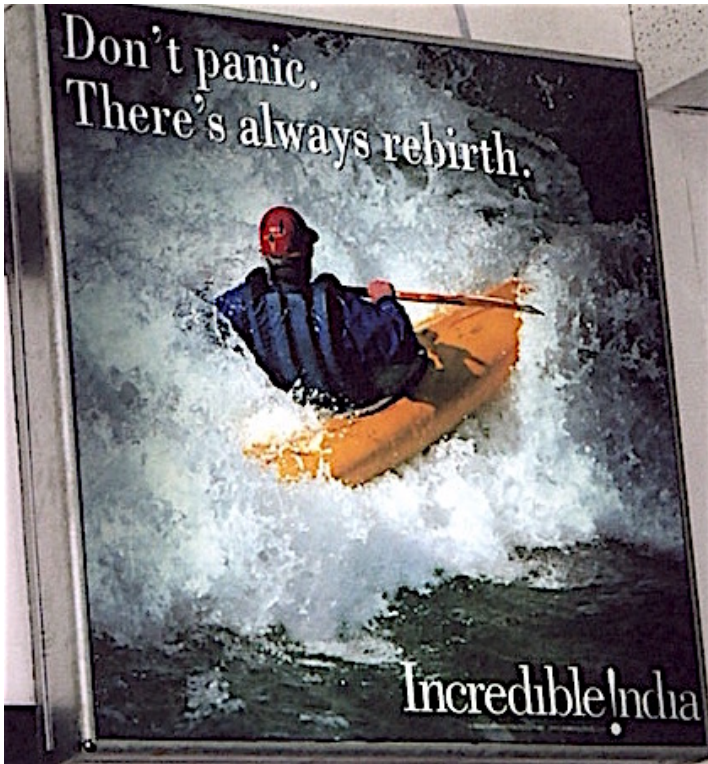
C. Lam Rim 3rd Scope

3) Bodhichitta

The Six Paramitas

PART XII

Reference



Sign on the wall of immigration control at Delhi airport, India.

Sanskrit/Tibetan Terms



Sanskrit Devanagari festival letters, North India.

On the left, transliterated Sanskrit and Tibetan forms—On the right, the slightly Anglicized English forms used within this book.

Sanskrit, unless otherwise noted. Tibetan transliteration is in Wylie.

bodhicitta — bodhichitta

dharmacakra — dharmachakra

dharmakāya — dharmakaya

jñāna — jnana

bka' 'gyur (Tibetan) — Kangyur

kāya — kaya

mālā — mala

258 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

mudrā — mudra

smon lam (Tibetan) — mon lam

pāramitā — paramita

prajñā — prajna

pūjā — puja

sādhana — sadhana

samādhi — samadhi

śamatha — shamatha

śāstra — shastra

śīla — sila

śrāvaka — shravaka

stūpa — stupa

śūnyatā — shunyata

sūtra — sutra

bstan 'gyur (Tibetan) — Tengyur

Titles and epithets

ācārya — Acharya

arhat — Arhat

ārya — Arya

bhagavān — Bhagavan

bhagavatī — Bhagavati

dge bshes — Geshe

jo bo (Tibetan) — Jowo

mahāsattva — Mahasattva

mahāsiddha — Mahasiddha

nāgas — nagas

rin po che (Tibetan) — Rinpoche

thāgata — Tathagatas

vidyādhara — Vidyadahra

Buddhas

amitābha — Amitaba

amitāyus — Amitayus

amoghasiddhi — Amoghasiddhi

avalokiteśvara — Avalokitesvara

devī — Devi

spyān ras gzigs (Tibetan) — Chenresig

locanā — Locana

maitreya — Maitreya

māmāki — Mamaki

mañjuśrī — Manjushri

prajñāpāramitā — Prajnaparamita

ratnasambhava — Ratnasambhava

śākyamuni — Shakyamuni

samantabhadra — Samantabhadra

tārā — Tara

vairocana — Vairocana

260 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

vajrapāṇi — Vajrapani

vajrayoginī — Vajrayogini

Indian Scholar-Yogis

āryadeva — Aryadeva

atiśa — Atisha

bhāvaviveka — Bhavaviveka

buddhapālita — Buddhapalita

candrakīrti — Chandrakirti

dharmakīrti — Dharmakirti

dignāga — Dignaga

‘brom ston pa (Tibetan) — Dromtonpa

haribhadra — Haribhadra

kamalaśīla — Kamalashila

nāgārjuna — Nagarjuna

padmasambhava — Padmasambhava

prajñāpāramitā — Prajnaparamita

śākyaprabha — Shakyaprabha

śāntideva — Shantideva

vasubandu — Vasubandu

vimuktisena — Vimuktisena

Tibetan Scholar-Yogis

dge bshes ‘chad kha pa (Tibetan) — Geshe Chekawa

dge bshes glang ri thang pa (Tibetan) — Geshe Langri Tangpa

‘jigs med bstan pa’i nyi ma (Tibetan) — Jigme Tenpa Nyima
 blo bzang tsang ka pa (Tibetan) — Losang Drakpa
 mar pa (Tibetan) — Marpa
 dpal sprul rin po che (Tibetan) — Patrul Rinpoche
 bsad pa rdo rje mi la ras pa (Tibetan) — Shepa Dorje Milarepa
 bstan ‘dzin rgya mtsho (Tibetan) — Tenzin Gyatso
 thogs med bzang po (Tibetan) — Thogme Zangpo
 khri srong lde btsan (Tibetan) — Trisong Detsen

Practices/Lineages/Schools

abhidharma — Abhidharma
 bon (Tibetan) — Bon
 bu ston jo nang (Tibetan) — Buton Jonang
 dge lugs (Tibetan) — Gelug
 bka’ gdams (Tibetan) — Kadam
 bka’ brgyud (Tibetan) — Kagyu
 cittamāra — Chittamatra
 kālacakra — Kalachakra
 lam rim (Tibetan) — lam rim
 lam ‘bras (Tibetan) — Lamdre
 blo sbyong (Tibetan) — lojong
 mahāmudrā — mahamudra
 mahāyāna — Mahayana
 mantrayāna — Mantayana

mūlasarvāstivādin — Mūlasarvastivadin

rnying ma (Tibetan) — Nyingma

snying thig (Tibetan) — Nyingthig

prajñāpāramitā — prajnaparamita

ris med (Tibetan) — Rime

sa skya (Tibetan) — Sakya

sautrāntika — Sautrantika

svātantrika — Svatantrika

tantra — tantra

theravāda — Theravada

vajrayana — Vajrayana

vinaya — Vinaya

vipassanā — Vipassana

yogācāra — Yogachara

Places

nālandā — Nalanda

sārnāth — Sarnath

śrāvastī — Shravasti

sukhāvatī — Sukhavati

Acknowledgements



Tara mantra stone on the korwa around His Holiness the Dalai Lama's residence in Dharmasala, India.

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And thank you, of course, to Venerable Dhammadinna for her support for me and for this project, for the lively inquiry of her wide-ranging intellect and for the example of her practice in the midst of our urban community. There is not a page in this book that is not influenced by the suggestions of her close and careful reading of the text.

I would also like to acknowledge my Tibetan and Sanskrit teachers who represent all four lineages of Tibetan Buddhism. Jeffrey Scheoning, from Sakya Monastery in Seattle, gave all his Sunday mornings for more than a year to teach just two rank beginners the alphabet and grammar; Christina Zubelli taught Sanskrit to me and one other student in the same way. A Nyingma teacher, Lama Yeshe Wangmo, showed me that language is a sacred medium for contemplation of Dharma, taught me to read and empowered me to translate. Jim Scott of the Kagyu Pullahari Institute in Nepal showed me how to practice Tibetan translation with humility and devotion to every word. Lobsang Dhonden in Seattle and Gavin Kilty in Dharamsala, both taught me a bit of colloquial.

And like many Tibetan translators, I am greatly influenced by Jeffrey Hopkins' translations and ground breaking contributions to the Western understanding of Dharma. He has been unfailingly generous and encouraging to me throughout my Dharma career. I would like to thank him particularly for saying to me in one of my most formative moments, *"The point is not to decide which is the 'right and best' system of philosophical tenets; the point is to understand the differences between them and see the beauty of them all."*

Finally, I am grateful to the 14th Dalai Lama who once traveled to Seattle, brought the Dharma to my heart and has lived a life that convinced me that buddhas and bodhisattvas are among us.

About the Author

Tenzin Jesse (Jesse McGarvey) was born in 1955 in Dayton, Ohio and was given a Catholic education, graduating from the University of Dallas in 1977 where she studied literature and philosophy. After graduate studies in psychology, Jesse worked for five years as a crisis counselor in the first generation of grass roots shelters for battered and homeless women. Around 1986 she moved to Seattle and began sea kayaking on the Pacific. She spent the next two decades guiding wilderness sea kayaking expeditions in Mexico, Alaska, and British Columbia.



In 1993, in the midst of her years in the wild with the bears and the whales, Jesse heard His Holiness the Dalai Lama teach and was profoundly inspired. She began studying Buddhism and the classical Tibetan language with Gelug, Kagyu and Nyingma teachers and completed the studies of the seven-year Lama Tsong Khapa Master's Program, a traditional Buddhist monastic curriculum including the *Abhisamayalamkara* and *Madhyamakavatara*, and has since written a Tibetan language textbook.

In 2004 she relocated to India to study with the Dalai Lama and received ordination from His Holiness shortly thereafter. As is traditional, she received the name of her ordination preceptor, His Holiness, Tenzin Gyatso, and keeps it to remind her of that precious link.

In 2006 she returned to Seattle and, together with Venerable Dhammadinna, founded BodhHeart Sangha where she now teaches the Dharma. Jesse holds a Masters in Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Pacific University in Oregon.

Gompa Builders' Dedications

The Bodhiheart Gompa Founders' Dedications

(Private, Bodhiheart edition only)



May you all sail through time on the winds of your noble deeds.

—Tenzin Jesse

May the Triple Gem protect us in all of our lives, may we always have the opportunity to make offerings and may we continuously receive blessings and inspiration to progress along the path.

—Venerable Dhammadinna

268 A Dew Drop, Dream, A Water Moon

May we be beautiful at heart.

—Arthur Clawson

I make this dedication to my teachers, and to their teachers, and to all of their teachers before them. “To all the Buddhas, those Thus Gone, to the Sacred Law, immaculate, supreme, and rare, and to the Buddha’s heirs, an ocean of good qualities—that I might seize this precious attitude, I will make a perfect offering. The attitude of heart, that virtue ocean-vast, that brings the happiness and benefit of all that lives: such is my delight and all my joy. May all the pain of every living being be thereby scattered and destroyed.” HH Dalai Lama.

—Allyson Carlyle

May all the time and funds graciously given to the construction of this building be of benefit and contribute to the welfare and happiness of beings.

—Tien Liang

May our most wonderful and precious teachers remain and share the Dharma for a long, long time!

—Todd Gray

May all sentient beings live in beautiful, pristine environments.

—Ruth Schaefer

For the awareness of dependent-arising and for the highest enlightenment of all mother-beings, may our teachers continue to direct the wisdom of Lord Buddha’s teachings into our heart, as a magnifying glass concentrates the rays of the sun.

—Renny & Linda Greenmun family

To Amelie Dang — Teacher of ways of the heart.

—David Warth

In heart felt gratitude to our wonderful teachers who inspire us.

—Peter Hohn & Chris Feldt

For my daughters and sons, who have been wonderful to me.

—Joyce McGarvey

To Barbara, Alra and Eva

—Paul Gianutsos

Tayata om bekenze bekenze maha bekenze radze somangate soha.

Having discovered the Three Jewels, may we transform ourselves into beings that radiate lovingkindness and compassion from within towards all sentient beings.

—Chad Kellogg (1971-2014)

“As long as time and space endure, as long as beings are to be found, may I remain to drive away the sorrows of the world.” Shantideva

—Mary Shelkey

May all beings everywhere with whom we are inseparably interconnected, be fulfilled, awakened, liberated and free. May there be peace in this world and throughout the entire universe, and may we all together complete the spiritual journey.

—Greg & Carol Meckling

May everyone come in contact with the Dharma here or in some other such auspicious place.

—Paula Jenson

May this place have peace and happiness morning and night and all who seek refuge here find liberation from suffering.

—Layne Shepherd

May this gompa give peace, kindness, and much happiness to all who enter its walls.

—Cate & Warren Buck

May we all turn each day into a training for ourselves.

—Bryan Williams

In memory of our family and friends who have passed into another phase of their being.

—Cindy Phillips & Eileen Stretch

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Adienne DiLiberto – Amir Kouretchian – Amy Rider
Angeline Johnston – Anita Repanich – Ann Miller
Ann Sneen – Anne Meegan – Annette Rider
Beth Hartwick – Beth Healy – Betsy Napper
Bev Kindblade – Bob Hoelzen –Brittany Aäe
Brook Madrone – Brook Stone & Doug Wallace – Carrie Kim
Cheryl Gere – Christina Zubelli – Claire Schwartz
Cole Pomeroy – Cori Mar – Dan Reisinger
Dan Tasse – Dave Dixon – David & Penny Clees
David Zuker – Deanna Vesco – Demi Raven
Diane Hennessey – Diane Morrison – Diego Gonzales
Dixie Peaslee – Karen Vaniver – Sarah Stolz
Catherine & Jai Lingappa – Elizabeth Falsberg
Elizabeth Sokol – Emily Curtis – Erica Wilder
Erin Bogarte & Theresa Nafzinger – Esther Tang
Eva Gianutsos – Eva Mansell – Flo Rublee
Gail Sherman – Haydn – Heidi Clark – Jackie Boatman
Jacob Lange – Jason Suplizio – Jasmine Gray – Jeff Akerman
Jeff Clark – Jeff Dunn – Jen Wilkinson
Jim & Anna McGarvey – Jim Wild – Joan Valles
Joanne Walby – Jonathan Lilly – Joy Scott
Jules Faye – Julia P Hohn – Karen Esswein
Karin Kapadia – Karla Winkel – Kate Bracy & Anne St. Germaine
Kate Munson – Katie Englund – Keenan McGarvey – Kathryn Maly
Kevin Wanamaker – Krista Franklin – Kristina Englund
Lauren Fogel – Linda Rodrigue – Lynette Shaw
Lynn Gualtieri – Lynn Stewart – Marianne Dresser – Mark Coonts
Marshall Carter – Mary Weber – Matt & Chiaki Weatherford
Michele Gomes – Mike Kientz – Mike Stelten – Nigel O'Rourke
Paul Butler – Phil Aspenwall – Pia Dixon
Raissa Meegan – Rene Claudio & Anneka – Robert Coyner – Ron Yeh
Rosa Colon – Sage Miller – Samantha Porter
Sean Looney – Shelly Bodiford – Soohee Kim
Stephen Johnston – Steve & Ellen Wilhelm – Susan Westover
Tamara Turner (1940-2017) – Thaddea Pojanowska – Toby Steers
Tom Gibb – Val Simpson – Viki Sonntag