



Awam Supplemental Practice Manual

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Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Foundational Principles and Views	5
Core Practices of the Buddha	
The Four Foundations of Mindfulness	8
Mindfulness of Breathing	10
Four Dhyanas/Jhanas	14
Four Thoughts that Turn the Mind	17
Six Paramitas	22
Self-Empowerment	25
Sadhana Practices	
Vajrasattva	27
Dorje Drollo	31
Yamantaka	32
Hayagriva.....	34
Vajrayogini/Vajravaraahi	35
Chod - Cutting through Ego	37
Kalachakra	46
Guyagarbha	48
Mantrayana (<i>list of mantras</i>)	52
Core Completion Stage Practices	
Tummo	54
Phowa	56
Four Blissess	57
Four Empties.....	58
Clear Light.....	59

Dzogchen Practices and Texts

Four Absorptions	61
The Cuckoo of Awareness	64
Three Statements of Garab Dorje.....	66
White Lotus.....	68
Rigdzin Dupa - Gathering of Vidyadharas.....	71
Khandro Nyingtik.....	73

Protectors

Ekajati & Brief Offering Prayers: Ekajati, Rahula, & Dorje Legpa	75
King Gesar.....	78
Dorje Gotrab - Vajra Armor	80

Tibetan Prayers for the Deceased	82
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Retreat Text(s)	85
------------------------------	----

Tsok and Puja texts	87
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Introduction

This supplemental text includes practice texts that are less common, but an important part of our tradition, as well as some which are longer and more suitable for separate practice sessions or retreats. There are also some texts containing supplemental information supportive to practice, without being a practice themselves. Most do not include commentaries.

Foundational Principles and Views

Impermanence – Nothing is permanent, everything is impermanent; everything changes. (This posed a problem for the principle of rebirth and some later assertions of yidam forms of Buddhas after death. The Buddha refused to answer questions regarding what happens after death, as he did with other metaphysical views.)

Interdependence – Nothing is independent, all depend on something else, cause and effect. This is often related to *karma* (literally “action”) as in the principle of *cause and effect*.

Compounded (parts) – This is the third key principle of his view. *Everything is composed of parts*, whether our body, other living entities, or inanimate objects. Nothing is a singularity.

Morality/ethics – The Buddha’s view asserts that there *are* valid principles regarding morality and ethics, and there are *consequences* for our actions. “Transcendent wisdom” may be acceptable within a transcendent view, but we are all *interdependent*, so it is very helpful to have such guidelines. Context matters.

Wholesome actions – Wholesome (moral) actions are those conducive to our progress on the path, whereas unwholesome actions, their opposites, are not, or worse, are actually harmful to our progress. We remove the “obstacles” in our life and replace them with beneficial actions for self and others.

Karma & rebirth – Karma (*action*) infers that our actions have consequences (cause and effect), although it is not certain that *karma* is *certain* or *transferable* as traditionally asserted. *Rebirth* is closely connected to *karma*. But according to scholars of pre-sectarian Buddhism, it “appears that” the Buddha may have taught *karma and rebirth* as principles based on *moment to moment*, rather than life to life. In either case, it is important to acknowledge consequences of our actions.

Ahimsa (no harm) – This principle appears in the Vedas and was adopted by the Buddha. A general guideline is, “Do good or at least do no harm for the benefit of all beings”.

Cause and effect/conditions – Mentioned earlier, this is one of the key principles of Buddhist thought (and science). There are always *relationships*. One thing (or more) causes an effect (or more). These can be simple or massively complex. As a principle, it is ever present and

one of the most important in terms of our understanding. We may not always know every cause (or effect), but it is important to be sensitive to this principle. The most common relationship described is each of our actions has an effect or *consequence*. It is a frequent topic related to ethics where we monitor the effects of our actions and seek to engage in positive, helpful, or wholesome actions that yield intended results for the benefit of self and others.

Intentional actions/choices – Another key principle in Buddhism is that *we have a choice*. We intentionally choose to engage in wholesome actions and to help others.

Habitual tendencies – Much of our life is a series of routine habits. The problem is when that habit gets in the way of our goal of liberation. “Practice” is a process of eliminating “bad” habits and replacing them with “good” habits, changing the neural pathways in our brain.

Equanimity – This means *mental calmness or composure ... no matter what*. It is one of the *supreme* attainments on and off of the cushion. The goal is to achieve and remain in that state 24/7. This is embodied in nearly every form of meditation and facilitates achieving a *deep inner peace and contentment*. It is one of the most effective ways of overcoming countless forms of obscurations in our life. You empty your mind of all your obscurations and afflictions and fill it with dharma.

True nature – This refers to an insight into “*the way things are*”, as opposed to our everyday empirical perceptions that are described as “*the way things appear*”. This insight is generally a reference to the term “*emptiness*” as a lack of “*inherent existence*”, but not the lack of any existence at all. Not all Buddhists agree with this view, philosophical schools vary in their opinions. *Ignorance* of this true nature is considered a fundamental cause of *dukkha*.

Buddhanature vs. atman (soul) – Buddhanature is not a *universal* principle in Buddhism, but it is a prominent one. In our *very nature* we embody innate qualities of a Buddha, such as altruism, lovingkindness, compassion, interdependence, transcendent wisdom, and so forth. They remain “hidden” due to our habitual tendencies (*karma*). Our Buddhanature is why we are able to attain awakening. *Atman* or soul is common in other religious traditions, but the Buddha, who came from a place that did *not* believe that, argued that he could not find such a thing.

Buddhanature vs. Brahman – *Brahman* is considered to be the highest universal principle in Hinduism, ultimate reality which does not change but is the cause or source of all changes.

Buddhanature is similarly represented as the source or cause of Buddhahood, the principle of “emptiness”, a luminous nature of mind, and/or the storehouse consciousness (*karma* and memories), each of which is considered to be *innate* in every sentient being. It is considered to be what enables awakening as the “source” that enables *all* beings to attain this state.

Tantra/deities/yidams – In tantra, Buddhism takes on a vast array of “deity” forms, but these are *Buddhas*, not gods. *Yidams* represent these as *Buddha-forms*. Specifically, the term refers to such a form used in practice by a Buddhist disciple, which is said to provide insight and/or assistance in attaining liberation.

Core Practices of the Buddha

The Four Foundations of Mindfulness

Mindfulness practice is primarily a focus on paying attention to specific objects; first those having to do with our body (usually beginning with the breath), then feelings in the body, then mind itself, and finally outer phenomena and dharma. The application is to then apply that skill to things in daily life, internal and external one thing at a time.

This presentation is significantly simplified in ways that I believe to nevertheless be highly effective for those willing to make the effort and take the time.

It takes patience and persistence. “Training the mind”, as the Buddha referred to it, is a process of habituating the mind, which changes the neural pathways in our brain. We need to train persistently until we have mastered our skill, as one would do in any other skill set.

1. Preparation

- a. Sit on a comfortable support with legs crossed and back straight (you may sit on a chair, but it is best to keep back from touching the back of the chair if you can; you may use back support if needed).
- b. Take 1-3 deep, slow breaths; breathe out slowly and relax from the top of your head down to your toes.

2. Practice(s)

- a. Focus on breath – focus your attention on the rise and fall of your abdomen; if needed place your hands gently on your abdomen to improve your feel; continue for 15 minutes.
- b. Focus on the body – focus your attention on the physical parts of the body (skin, muscles, bones, internal organs, etc.), then all together; continue for 15 minutes.
- c. Focus on feelings – focus on pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral feelings (physical, mental, psychological, or social) in the body, in the mind; continue for 15 minutes
- d. Focus on the mind – the nature of thoughts (pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral), then specific features such as those below, for 15 minutes:
 - i. Degree of lovingkindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity
 - ii. Degree that mind is focused and tranquil
 - iii. Whether mind can be taken higher or not

- iv. Whether mind is completely liberated or not (or thinking it is) and knows the absence of “self-existence” and the “true nature of things”, especially in difficult or challenging situations.
- e. Focus on hindrances and awakening factors for 15 minutes:
 - i. Hindrances that arise, abide, and depart; how they can be removed and how to prevent recurrence of each (e.g., sensual desires, anger, laziness, restlessness and worry, and doubt), then rest in open awareness
 - ii. Awakening factors - whether these are present or not, how that experience arises, how they are perfected:
 1. Mindfulness, contemplation, concentration, energy; a sense of rapture or joy, tranquil happiness, contentment, quiet stillness or equipoise, and awareness of the progression of those factors.
 2. Then the sensation in mind of limitless space, limitless consciousness, nothingness, and/or neither perception nor nonperception that is perfectly developed.
 3. Finally, the “signless concentration” of mind itself.

Mindfulness of Breathing

Anapanasati Sutta: Mindfulness of Breathing

translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu © 2006

Mindfulness of In-&-Out Breathing

"Now how is mindfulness of in-&-out breathing developed & pursued so as to be of great fruit, of great benefit?"

"There is the case where a monk, having gone to the wilderness, to the shade of a tree, or to an empty building, sits down folding his legs crosswise, holding his body erect, and setting mindfulness to the fore.[1] Always mindful, he breathes in; mindful he breathes out.

"[1] Breathing in long, he discerns, 'I am breathing in long'; or breathing out long, he discerns, 'I am breathing out long.' [2] Or breathing in short, he discerns, 'I am breathing in short'; or breathing out short, he discerns, 'I am breathing out short.' [3] He trains himself, 'I will breathe in sensitive to the entire body.' [2] He trains himself, 'I will breathe out sensitive to the entire body.' [4] He trains himself, 'I will breathe in calming bodily fabrication.' [3] He trains himself, 'I will breathe out calming bodily fabrication.'

"[5] He trains himself, 'I will breathe in sensitive to rapture.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out sensitive to rapture.' [6] He trains himself, 'I will breathe in sensitive to pleasure.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out sensitive to pleasure.' [7] He trains himself, 'I will breathe in sensitive to mental fabrication.' [4] He trains himself, 'I will breathe out sensitive to mental fabrication.' [8] He trains himself, 'I will breathe in calming mental fabrication.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out calming mental fabrication.'

"[9] He trains himself, 'I will breathe in sensitive to the mind.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out sensitive to the mind.' [10] He trains himself, 'I will breathe in satisfying the mind.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out satisfying the mind.' [11]

He trains himself, 'I will breathe in steadying the mind.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out steadying the mind.' [12] He trains himself, 'I will breathe in releasing the mind.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out releasing the mind.'

"[13] He trains himself, 'I will breathe in focusing on inconstancy.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out focusing on inconstancy.' [14] He trains himself, 'I will breathe in focusing on dispassion [literally, fading].' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out focusing on dispassion.' [15] He trains himself, 'I will breathe in focusing on cessation.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out focusing on cessation.' [16] He trains himself, 'I will breathe in focusing on relinquishment.' He trains himself, 'I will breathe out focusing on relinquishment.'

"This is how mindfulness of in-&-out breathing is developed & pursued so as to be of great fruit, of great benefit.

The Four Frames of Reference

"And how is mindfulness of in-&-out breathing developed & pursued so as to bring the four frames of reference to their culmination?

"[1] On whatever occasion a monk breathing in long discerns, 'I am breathing in long'; or breathing out long, discerns, 'I am breathing out long'; or breathing in short, discerns, 'I am breathing in short'; or breathing out short, discerns, 'I am breathing out short'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&... out sensitive to the entire body'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out calming bodily fabrication': On that occasion the monk remains focused on the body in & of itself – ardent, alert, & mindful – putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world. I tell you, monks, that this – the in-&-out breath – is classed as a body among bodies, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on the body in & of itself – ardent, alert, & mindful – putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world.

"[2] On whatever occasion a monk trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to rapture'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to pleasure'; trains

himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to mental fabrication'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out calming mental fabrication': On that occasion the monk remains focused on feelings in & of themselves – ardent, alert, & mindful – putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world. I tell you, monks, that this – careful attention to in-&-out breaths – is classed as a feeling among feelings, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on feelings in & of themselves – ardent, alert, & mindful – putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world.

"[3] On whatever occasion a monk trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to the mind'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out satisfying the mind'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out steadying the mind'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out releasing the mind': On that occasion the monk remains focused on the mind in & of itself – ardent, alert, & mindful – putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world. I don't say that there is mindfulness of in-&-out breathing in one of lapsed mindfulness and no alertness, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on the mind in & of itself – ardent, alert, & mindful – putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world.

"[4] On whatever occasion a monk trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out focusing on inconstancy'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out focusing on dispassion'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out focusing on cessation'; trains himself, 'I will breathe in...&...out focusing on relinquishment': On that occasion the monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves – ardent, alert, & mindful – putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world. He who sees with discernment the abandoning of greed & distress is one who watches carefully with equanimity, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves – ardent, alert, & mindful – putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world.

"This is how mindfulness of in-&-out breathing is developed & pursued so as to bring the four frames of reference to their culmination.

Four Dhyanas/Jhanas

1. **Access concentration** – abandoning *hindrances* or *unwholesome states* - sense desires (wanting or craving), ill will, laziness and sluggishness, restlessness and remorse, and doubt – so they do not arise or distract, if they do arise:
 - a. Intentionally relax
 - b. Select an object of focus, usually the breath (similar to previous practices above – see Mindfulness of Breathing; in this case “knowing each in and out breath is a sign of reaching access concentration)
 - c. Abide in relaxed diligence (alertness); ok to move, just be mindful of moving
 - d. If distracted, repeat
 - e. Stay fully focused on the meditation object
 - f. Breath becomes very subtle (may no longer be aware of breathing)
 - g. Shift attention to a pleasant sensation (preferably physical), e.g., a slight smile, as in many images of the Buddha or lovingkindness at the heart center; if mind wanders several times, return to focus on the breath, a sign of insufficient concentration
 - h. Observe the physical pleasantness until it begins to grow in intensity, gladness arises, the transition to the *first jhana*.
 - i. Generally, practice access concentration for a month or more before continuing, even when signs are present
2. **First jhana** – **rapture** (a sense of joy!) and happiness, accompanied by thinking and examining (in the background), secluded from the hindrances (above)
 - a. Focus undistractedly on the pleasant physical sensation (not emotional) from the access concentration
 - b. The feeling should grow stronger (tends to be slow at first, but more quickly with more experience)
 - c. Rest in the experience 10-15 minutes until it suffuses the whole body (if becomes too intense, start over with access concentration)
3. **Second jhana** – single-pointed focus on calming **tranquility** arises, without thinking or examining

- a. The sensation will calm into happy tranquility with a decline in rapture or joy and thinking (may experience some ebbs and flows in the transition) – feels much like ordinary happiness
 - b. Rest in the happy tranquility for 10-15 minutes or more, until it fully suffuses the whole body
4. **Third jhana** – mindful and clearly comprehended **contentment** arises
- a. Take a deep breath and let it all out as you dial down the intensity of the second *jhana*
 - b. Happiness declines as contentment or satisfaction arises
 - c. Rest in the contentment for 10-15 minutes or more, until the whole body is fully suffused with contentment
5. **Fourth jhana** – **undistracted quiet stillness of deep concentration** and a mind fully purified by equanimity
- a. Let go of the contentment and rest in quiet stillness with concentrated even-mindedness (*equanimity* – neither pleasant nor unpleasant)
 - b. Maintain quiet stillness and equanimity (may experience a sense of isolation and withdrawal) for 10-15 minutes or more, until the whole body is fully suffused by a “pure bright mind”¹ (may even visually experience a bright whiteness, like sitting under a white sheet in bright sunlight with eyes open)

A concise version:

- **First Jhana** - in a place of “seclusion” (such as the *forest*, real or imagined, or *wherever you are right now*),
 - focus on that outer environment,
 - continue breathing **slowly and deeply**, and
 - *feel a sense of joy and happiness* throughout your body.
- **Second Jhana** - remaining in that place...
 - shift your focus to your inner experience, *relaxing* your brain and body...*(feel it!)...*,

¹ No clear explanation is given of this term, but may relate to the Buddha saying he was “awake” or the term “alertness” or “clear seeing” – insight.

- still breathing **slowly and deeply**, and
- *continue to feel joy and happiness* throughout your body.
- **Third Jhana - go even deeper,**
 - focus your concentration on your *mind itself*,
 - breathing with *deep mental calm and peace*, and
 - *feel* a very subtle *inherent happiness* throughout your body.
- **Fourth Jhana - finally...**
 - focus deep concentration on "*awareness of awareness*" itself,
 - still breathing with *deep mental calm and peace*, and
 - *feel complete mental purity* of "*profound peace and contentment*" ... at **all times**.

Four Thoughts that Turn the Mind

Homage to *Samantabhadra* and *Samantabhadri*! Because I suffer due to my own actions, and I now have this precious human life without knowing when I will die, I will now engage in virtuous actions for the benefit of all sentient beings with joy and devotion!

The Preliminary Practices - Ngondro

Four Thoughts that Turn the Mind

The Common Preliminaries

The **Four Thoughts that Turn the Mind** are contemplations on (1) the suffering of *samsara*, (2) precious human life, (3) impermanence and death, and (4) karma and reincarnation. The primary purpose for contemplating these four “thoughts” is as a motivation for us to do the practices for training the mind. They are, to some degree, fear-based and you can argue numerous more positive reasons for doing these practices. Nevertheless, there is some value in contemplating these thoughts. And at a very minimum, they are such fundamental concepts within the tradition of which you need at least a basic understanding and experience to understand and appreciate the more advanced preliminary practices.

1. **The Preciousness of Human Rebirth:** Contemplating the rarity and incredible value of this human life, which offers the unique freedom and opportunity to practice the Dharma.
2. **Impermanence and Death:** Reflecting on the fact that all conditioned things are temporary, and that death is certain but its timing is unpredictable, urging us to practice now rather than later.
3. **Karma (Cause and Effect):** Understanding that our actions (body, speech, and mind) have consequences and that we are the creators of our own happiness and suffering.
4. **The Defects of Samsara (Suffering):** Recognizing the unsatisfactory nature of cyclic existence, where pain, dissatisfaction, and the fleeting nature of pleasure are unavoidable. Contemplating these four realities is meant to build a foundation for genuine practice, enabling one to become detached from the cycle of suffering.

These may be assigned by the lama for a period of 1-3 months. One begins with a period of focus on the “Four Thoughts”, such as in *Words of My Perfect Teacher* or the *100-Day Ngondro Retreat*.

A simple practice:

Homage to Samantabhadra and Samantabhadri (the ultimate, transcendent buddhas, male and female). Because life is filled with (1) hindrances (sufferings), (2) impermanence and change, (3) and all actions have consequences (karma), I suffer due to *my own* actions.

Knowing I *will* die and that I know have (4) this precious human life, I will now engage in *virtuous actions* for the benefit of *all sentient beings* with great joy and devotion with *love and compassion* for all. (Core views and actions of a Buddha)

Contemplating these four realities is meant to build a foundation for genuine practice, enabling one to become detached from the cycle of suffering.

The Four Immeasurables

1. Loving-kindness towards all: the hope that a person will be well; "the wish that all sentient beings, without any exception, be happy."
2. Compassion: the hope that a person's sufferings will diminish; "the wish for all sentient beings to be free from suffering."
3. Joy: joy in the accomplishments of a person – oneself or another; sympathetic joy; "the wholesome attitude of rejoicing in the happiness and virtues of all sentient beings."
4. Equanimity: learning to accept loss and gain, praise and blame, and success and failure, all with detachment, equally, for oneself and for others. Equanimity is "not to distinguish between friend, enemy or stranger, but regard every sentient being as equal. It is a clear-minded tranquil state of mind - not being overpowered by delusions, mental dullness or agitation."

The Four Immeasurables in Early Buddhism:

Iti-vuttaka Sutra: The most fruitful way to achieve merit is lovingkindness, one of the four "divine abodes" which are to be extended boundlessly to all sentient beings.

Monks, whatever grounds there are for making merit productive of a future birth, all these do not equal a sixteenth part of the liberation of mind by lovingkindness. The liberation of mind by lovingkindness surpasses them and shines forth, bright and brilliant.

Just as the radiance of all the stars does not equal a sixteenth part of the moon's radiance, but the moon's radiance surpasses them and shines forth, bright and brilliant, even so, whatever grounds there are for making merit productive of the future birth, all these do not equal a sixteenth part of the liberation of mind by lovingkindness. The liberation of mind by lovingkindness surpasses them and shines forth bright and brilliant.

Just as the last month of the rainy season, in the autumn, when the sky is clear and free of clouds, the sun, on ascending, dispels the darkness of space and shines forth, bright and brilliant, even so, whatever grounds there are for making merit productive of a future birth, all these do not equal a sixteenth part of the liberation of mind by lovingkindness. The liberation of mind by lovingkindness surpasses them and shines forth, bright and brilliant.

And just as in the night, at the moment of dawn, the morning star shines forth, bright and brilliant, even so, whatever grounds there are for making merit productive of a future birth, all these do not equal a sixteenth part of the liberation of mind by lovingkindness. The liberation of mind by lovingkindness surpasses them and shines forth, bright and brilliant.

In the two *Metta Suttas* of the *Anguttara Nikāya*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brahmavihara> the Buddha states that those who practice radiating the four immeasurables in this life and die "without losing it" are destined for rebirth in a heavenly realm in their next life. In addition, if such a person is a Buddhist disciple and thus realizes the three marks of existence [impermanence (*aniccā*), selflessness (*anattā*) and unsatisfactoriness or suffering (*dukkha*)], this disciple will reach *nibbāna*.

In the *Majjhima Nikaya* on the Four Divine Abodes, the Buddha states: Here a monk dwells pervading one quarter with a mind imbued with lovingkindness, likewise the second, likewise the third, likewise the fourth; so above, below, around, and everywhere, and to all as to himself, he dwells pervading the all-encompassing world with a mind imbued with lovingkindness, abundant, exalted, immeasurable, without hostility, and without ill will. When the liberation of mind by lovingkindness is developed in this way, no limiting action remains here, nor persists there. Just as a vigorous trumpeter could make himself heard without difficulty in the four quarters, so too, when the liberation of mind by

lovingkindness is developed in this way, no limiting action remains there, none persists there. This is the path to the company of Brahma (ultimate god realm).

Again, a monk dwells pervading one quarter with a mind imbued with compassion ... with a mind imbued with altruistic joy ... with a mind imbued with equanimity, likewise the second, likewise the third, likewise the fourth; so above, below, around, and everywhere, and to all as to himself, he dwells pervading the all-encompassing world with a mind imbued with equanimity, abundant, exalted, immeasurable, without hostility, and without ill will...

Lovingkindness (*Metta*)

I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha most excellent, in order to enable all sentient beings to attain enlightenment. (3X)

Settle into stillness of body, speech and mind. Think of someone your love. Bring that *feeling* into your heart. Focus on it and let it grow stronger and stronger. As it grows it expands throughout your body, filling it entirely. Soon you can no longer contain it and it radiates out to others nearby, then those in the immediate surroundings, then those in the neighborhood, the city, the state, the country, the region of the globe, all sentient beings in and around the globe ... all animate beings. This too becomes so strong that it then radiates out through the solar system, the galaxy, the universe, and all universes across time and space. Continue meditating in this state until you feel confidence in this lovingkindness for all.

Then *rest* naturally in this confidence without thoughts. *Let go and let be*. Sit in stillness as long as you can.

Dedication: By the merit of this practice may I attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. (3X)

Compassion (*Tonglen*)

Settle into stillness of body, speech and mind. Think of someone you know who is suffering, whether due to pain, mental anguish or some other form. Put yourself in their place. Feel their suffering. At the same time *know* that they do not want this suffering. They just want it to go away! Imagine their suffering as a thick, black cloud clogging their

mind. Breathe it in and down to your heart where it is instantly transformed into pure, warm, white light. Breathe that out sending it back to them as lovingkindness and compassion for their suffering. Repeat it over and over until you *feel* that they are no longer suffering.¹ If you have time, continue with another being and so forth.

At the end of the session *relax, let go and let be*. Sit in stillness as long as you can.

Dedication: By the merit of this practice may I attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. (3X)

The Six Perfections (Paramitas)

Generosity (Dāna): Cultivating a mindset of giving – material goods, protection, and wisdom – without expecting anything in return.

Ethics (Śīla): Living ethically by adhering to precepts, controlling impulses, and avoiding harm to oneself and others.

Patience (Kṣānti): Developing tolerance, endurance, and acceptance of difficult circumstances, people, or truths.

Persistence/Joyful Effort (Vīrya): Maintaining unwavering effort and enthusiastic perseverance in practicing the Dharma.

Meditation/Concentration (Dhyāna): Cultivating one-pointed focus, mental stability, and mindfulness to calm the mind and gain insight.

Wisdom (Prajñā): Developing the clear insight to understand the true nature of reality, specifically that all things are empty of a separate, permanent self.

Practices:

Generosity:

Settle into stillness of body, speech and mind. Reflect on your body, life and wealth to get a clear understanding of all that might be included here. Imagine each thing in some detail. Then pray that someday you will be free to give them away, with no attachment whatsoever, with the pure intention that they will be of benefit for the liberation of other sentient beings. Continue until you feel confident that you will someday be able to give in this way.

Conclude by resting naturally in this confidence without thoughts. *Let go and let be.* Sit in stillness as long as you can.

Ethics:

Five precepts: not killing, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct, or intoxication.

Cultivate loving kindness, compassion, generosity, respect, contentment, and honesty for all.

Other specifics are based on various traditions within Buddhism.

Patience:

Settle into stillness of body, speech and mind. Reflect on a time when you have been impatient with yourself or others. Re-imagine that experience and your impatience at that time. Once you have a clear experience, imagine yourself in the same situation responding with great patience and control. Continue until you feel confident that you will be able to respond with patience the next time you face this situation. If you have time, continue with another experience of impatience in your life.

Conclude by resting naturally in this confidence without thoughts. *Let go and let be.* Sit in stillness as long as you can.

Persistence (Joyful Effort):

Settle into stillness of body, speech and mind. Reflect on your commitment to your practice. Do you ensure that there is time to practice *every* day? What things do you let get in the way? How much *joy* do you experience in your practice? How strong is that as a motivator for you? Are you so *compelled* to practice that it is often difficult to stop? If not, how would that feel? Imagine making a joyful effort every day and finding time to do even more until your whole life is your practice. Continue until you feel confident in your desire to make that happen with joy and devotion.

Conclude by resting naturally in this confidence without thoughts. *Let go and let be.* Sit in stillness as long as you can.

Concentration/meditation:

The Object of Focus: Common points of focus include the sensation of breath in the nostrils or stomach, a flickering candle, or counting repetitions.

The Technique: Gently bring the attention back to the chosen object every time the mind drifts to thoughts, emotions, or external distractions.

The Goal: The aim is not to have a blank mind, but to train the mind to sustain focus on one thing, which develops deeper awareness and stability.

How to Practice:

- **Get Comfortable:** Sit in a comfortable, quiet place with a straight back and gently focused eyes.
- **Choose a Focus:** Focus on the breath (inhalation and exhalation) or a specific object, such as a candle, picture of the Buddha, or other object.
- **Common forms:** Breath, mindfulness, calm abiding, four jhanas, four formless absorptions, four immeasurables, six perfections, yidam or deity practice, completion-stage practices, Dzogchen or Mahamudra.
- **Manage Distractions:** When you notice your mind has wandered, acknowledge it without judgment and return to your focus.
- **Consistency:** Consistent, daily practice is key to developing stronger mental focus. Repetition has been shown to be more effective than time.

Insight/Wisdom:

- Examining the nature of “reality” (clear seeing) – everything is impermanent (including us), interdependent, and lack any inherent being or “self” or “soul”, and we are subject to “suffering” or imperfection.
- Cultivating insight with lovingkindness and compassion for all beings with insight into our relationships and interactions with others; we are interrelated, interconnected, and interdependent.
- Awareness of no permanent, unchanging self or soul.
- Abiding in “profound peace” of the Buddha.
- Let go and let be...

Self-Empowerment

The Samadhi-Empowerment Ritual

Excerpted from the Profound Teachings of Kyobpa Rinpoche²

Namo Guru! I shall engage in the yoga of the fourfold empowerment, so that all mother sentient beings, extensive as space, may be endowed with happiness, free from suffering, and attain the state of buddhahood. [3X]

Between the eyes of myself, appearing as the yidam deity, upon a lotus, sun, moon, and silken cushion sits my root guru in the form of Vajradhara appearing as the Transcendent Conqueror, Glorious Heruka. [In union] with the consort Vajravarahi, he holds a vajra and bell, and she a knife and skull cup. The Father and Mother are adorned with bones, precious jewels, and silken ribbons. One leg extended and the other bent, they majestically pose in the nine moods of dance upon Kalaratri and Bhairava, radiating with brilliant light.

Offering of seven limbs: Every slightest virtue accumulated through prostrating, offering, confessing, rejoicing, beseeching, and praying, I dedicate towards complete and great enlightenment.

Supplication for actual empowerment: Lama, Great Vajradhara, please bestow empowerment upon me! (3X)

White light radiates from a spiral hair between the eyes of the Lama Yab-Yum and dissolves into the space between my eyes. Physical obscurations are cleared away and the supreme *vase empowerment* is obtained. I embody the form of all the buddhas combined, the divine mandala, apparent yet empty.

From the Lama Yab-Yum's place of union, white light tinged with red radiates and dissolves into my throat. Verbal obscurations are cleared away and the supreme

² This excerpt is from the profound teachings of Kyobpa Jigten Sumgon. I, Khenpo Drimed Dawa, received this empowerment from Yogi Lama Gursam in January, 2009. According to HE Garchen Rinpoche, this may be used to self-empower oneself for any practice. May this text be of countless benefit to sentient beings. Any errors or omissions are my own.

secret empowerment is obtained. I embody the speech of all buddhas combined, the nature of mantra, heard yet empty.

Blue light radiates from the heart orb of the Lama Yab-Yum and dissolves into my heart. Mental obscurations are cleared away and the *wisdom empowerment* is obtained. My own mind has the nature of all the buddhas' minds, free from every bondage of girth, cessation, and abiding.

Then the Lama Yab-Yum melts into light, and dissolves into my crown, purifying the grasping at the three doors of body, speech, and mind. The supreme *fourth empowerment* is obtained. Within primordial awareness of equal body, speech, and mind, the even and vast essence is spontaneously realized. I abide in uncontrived primordial awareness, mahamudra.

Dedication: By the virtue arising from this, may I and all other beings swiftly accomplish the glorious lama, and may all sentient beings without exception thus be established in this state. [3X]

Sadhana Practices

Vajrasattva

Focus: Vajrasattva (Dorje Sempa) – Buddha of Purification, *Meditation and Recitation Practice for Purifying Obscurations and Negative Karma*



Refuge prayer (repeat 3X)

In the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha most excellent,
I take refuge until enlightenment is reached.

By the merit of generosity and other good deeds,
May I attain Buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings.

The Four Immeasurables – Lovingkindness, Compassion, Joy & Equanimity (repeat 3X)

May all mother sentient beings, boundless as the sky, have
happiness and the causes of happiness.

May they be liberated from suffering and the causes of
suffering.

May they never be separated from the happiness which is free from sorrow.

May they rest in equanimity free from attachment and aversion.

Visualization, the Power of Support:

Above the crown of my head, I visualize a white lotus with a moon-disk seat. On this is the syllable **Hung**, which transforms into a vajra with a **Hung** in its center. The **Hung** then transforms into Vajrasattva, the essence of our own kind Root Lama. He sits gracefully in the half lotus position on the moon disk on the white lotus. Vajrasattva is brilliant, luminous-white in color, youthful with long black hair gathered on top of his head, the rest curling down his back and around his shoulders. In his right hand he holds a golden vajra at his heart center, symbolic of great compassion. In his left he holds an upturned bell resting on his hip, symbolic of the wisdom of emptiness. He wears the Sambhogakaya adornments – the five silken garments and the eight jeweled ornaments.

I prostrate to the holder of the vajra, Vajrasattva, the Sambhogakaya form of Samantabhadra, the embodiment of all the Buddhas.

At Vajrasattva's heart level is a vajra on a moon-disk. At the center of the vajra is a HUNG syllable surrounded by the 100-syllable mantra. Light radiates out in all directions from the rotating mantra to all the Buddhas. They are pleased and send their blessings in the form of light that is absorbed into the mantra at Vajrasattva's heart-center, increasing its brilliance. Light fills his body completely, enhancing the magnificence of his appearance.

Power of Regret. I recall with deep regret the negative actions I have done in the past. I feel remorse and conceal nothing. Nothing can be purified without strongly felt regret. There are no actions that cannot be purified.

Power of Remedial Action and Mantra Visualization: I and all sentient beings, deluded by our ignorance, regret our negative actions. Oh! Lama, Vajrasattva, Holder of the Vajra, please purify us.

Nectar produced from the mantra-syllables flows through the right great toe of Vajrasattva. It enters the crown of my head purifying my body of all obscurations and negative karma. As it flows down to my throat, all obscurations and negative karma of speech are fully purified. And as it continues to my heart center, all obscurations and negative karma of my mind are purified. These obscurations are expelled in the form of a smoky dark liquid through the pores of my skin and lower openings of my body as I am filled with nectar and completely purified. (*Recite the mantra 1-3 times as you can.*)

Om Benza Sato Samaya

Manu Palaya

Benza Sato Tenopa

Tishta Drido Mé Bhawa

Suto Khayo Mé Bhawa

Supo Khayo Mé Bhawa

Anu Rakto Mé Bhawa

Sarwa Siddhi Mé Prayatsa

Sarwa Karma Sutsa Mé

Sitam Shriya Kuru Hung

Ha Ha Ha Ha Ho

Bhagavan

Sarwa Tathagata

Benza Mamé Muntsa

Benzi Bhawa

Maha Samaya Sato Ah

Power of Resolve: I resolve never to perform these negative actions again.

Vajrasattva is pleased with our prayers and replies, "Your delusions are now cleared away and you are purified."

With delight, Vajrasattva then dissolves into me through the top of my head. I then become Vajrasattva. Boundless light radiates out filling the entire universe, transforming all phenomena into the perfect Buddhafield of Pure Joy. All sentient beings are transformed into Vajrasattva, sounds are the resonance of the mantra, and all thoughts are the spontaneous display of wisdom. (*Meditate as Vajrasattva on this union of appearance and emptiness.*)

Through the virtue of this practice, may I attain the enlightened state of Vajrasattva for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Closing prayer:

Glorious, holy, venerable, kind root and lineage lamas,
 Divine assembly of Yidams and assemblies of Buddhas,
 Bodhisattvas, yogins, yoginis and dakinis dwelling in the ten directions,
 Please hear my prayer!

By the power of this vast root of virtue, may I benefit all beings through my body, speech and mind.

May the afflictions of desire, hatred, ignorance, arrogance, and jealousy not arise in my mind.

May thoughts of fame, reputation, wealth, honor, and concern for this life not arise for even a moment.

May my mind stream be moistened by lovingkindness, compassion, and bodhicitta;
 And, through that, may I become a spiritual master with good qualities equal to the infinity of space.

May I gain the supreme attainment of Mahamudra in this very life.

May the torment of suffering not arise even at the time of my death.

May I not die with negative thoughts.

May I not die confused by wrong view.

May I not experience an untimely death.

May I die joyfully and happily in the great luminosity of the Mind-as-such and the pervading clarity of Dharmata.

May I, in any case, gain the supreme attainment of Mahamudra at the time of death or in the bardo.

Dedication of Merit (*repeat 3X*)

By the merit of this practice

May I attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. <*Bell & Drum*>

Dorje Drollo
The Daily Practice of the Secret Sādhana of Dorje Drolö
by Dudjom Rinpoche

Taking Refuge and Arousing Bodhicitta

Namo!

In the guru, the powerful and wrathful heruka,
 I take refuge. For the sake of all beings, I arouse
 bodhicitta. (3X)

The Visualization

Hūṃ. Instantaneously I visualize myself as Dorje Drolö:
 Reddish-brown, ferociously wrathful and chewing his
 lower lip;
 His right hand wields a vajra, his left a *kīla* of iron;
 Clad in a brocade gown, Dharma robes and boots;
 His hair curls to the right, and his conch earrings rattle.
 Adorned with a garland of freshly severed human heads,
 Amidst a blaze of wisdom fire,
 He is poised on a tigress who has just given birth.
 In his heart, on a sun disc, around a red **hūṃ**
 Revolves the root mantra.

Hung Hung Hung *and*

Om Ah Hung Benza Guru Drowolö Loka Sarwa Siddhi Hung Hung

The Dissolution

Hung Hung Hung

Everything dissolves into clear light.

Phaṭ Phaṭ Phaṭ, *once again assume the form of the deity.*

Dedication of Merit and Prayer of Auspiciousness

Through this merit, may I and all beings
 Mature into the form of Dorjé Drolö, subjugator of māras,
 And be utterly victorious in battle over the four māras,
 So that all is auspicious for us to empty the depths of saṃsāra.

Accordingly, make prayers of dedication, aspiration and auspiciousness. Composed by Jikdral Yeshé Dorjé for the practice of some of his devoted American students.



Yamantaka

A Daily Practice of Mañjuśrī Yamāntaka

by Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö

With refuge and bodhicitta as a preliminary, recite the following:

Ayai! From the dharmadhātu, the empty space of
É as such,

Which is unborn and does not cease,

I bring to mind that which is naturally present:

Within the great palace of **Ai**,

Not created through causes and conditions,

Mañjuśrī arises out of awareness, like a fish
leaping from water,

In a form of overwhelming splendour,

And standing upon nāgas, *nyen*, earth lords, rudras,

Buffaloes, sun, moon and lotus.

He has three faces, six arms and four striding feet,

The right face is white, the left face red, and the central face blue.

In his right hands he holds a wheel, sword and vajra;

With his left hands he holds a club and wooden pestle and makes a threatening mudrā.

The wrathful ones of the five families adorn his crown

And he has all the glorious attributes and ornaments of the charnel ground.

His consort, indivisible within the dharmadhātu,

Is dark blue and proffers a heart and blood-filled skullcup.

As emanations, the eight deities of adornment

And the ten of wisdom wrath are all present.

The deities emanate countless wrathful hosts

And an effusion of vajra sparks.



Visualize them all as appearing yet unreal.

Upon a sun at Yamāntaka's heart,

The mantra garland revolves around a syllable Hūṃ,

Emitting and absorbing rays of light to fulfil the twofold aims.

All appearance and existence arises as the wisdom intent

In which deity and mantra of the Great Awesome One are indivisible.

Om A Trotéka Yamantaka Hana Mata Bhandza Hung Pé

Recite this general approach mantra.

Conclude with:

The deity's appearance dissolves into the sphere of luminosity.

Then arises once again in the form of overwhelming splendour.

Ajra Kāvāci Rakṣa Haṃ

Through the positivity and merit of this, may I swiftly

Attain the realization of wrathful Mañjuśrī, and thereby

Every single sentient being

Reach his state of perfection too.

Dedicate the merit and recite prayers of aspiration.

Hayagrīva

Daily Practice of Hayagrīva by Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö

After taking refuge and generating bodhicitta:

Out of **Hriḥ**, on a lotus and sun disc,
And a seat of eight folded serpents,
I appear as Hayagrīva, perfect in an instant of recollection.
He is red with three faces and six arms,
The central face red, the right green and left white,
All three featuring horse's heads at the crown.
He holds vajra, *khaṭvāṅga* and sword in his right hands,
Makes a threatening mudrā and holds a spear and lasso
with his left hands.

His eight legs are in the heroic stance and he wears a
tiger-skin skirt.

And he stands amidst a blazing mass of wisdom fire.

Surrounded by the mantra garland,

From which light radiates out to destroy all harmful influences and obstacles

And to bring the attainment of blessings and accomplishment.

Om Hriḥ Pemanta Kṛita Benza Krodha Hyaghriwa Huluhulu Hung Pé

Recite this mantra. At the end of the session, continue with:

Appearance as the deity dissolves into the space of dharmatā.

Then, once again, I arise in the form of Hayagrīva.

Om Ah Hung

Recite this to guard the three centres. Then conclude with:

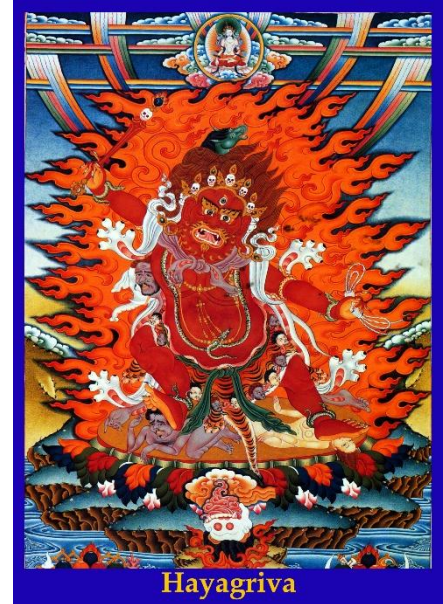
Through the positivity and merit of this, may I swiftly

Attain the realization of Hayagrīva, and thereby

Every single sentient being

Reach his state of perfection too.

With this, dedicate the merit and make prayers of aspiration.



*Translated by Adam Pearcey with the generous support of the Khyentse Foundation and Tertön Sogyal Trust,
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Vajrayogini/Vajravarahi

In the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha most excellent, I take refuge until enlightenment is reached. By the merit of generosity and other good deeds, may I attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. (3X)

Om Svabhava Shuda Sarva Dharma Svabhava Shudo Ham

From emptiness comes the sound of **Hum Hum**. Then the foundation of the universe arises, establishing the vajra ground. Around it is a vajra-fence, and above it a vajra-tent, all surrounded by the blazing fire of wisdom.

In the center of this circle of protection is the syllable **É**, which transforms into a tetrahedron, the small point of which is down, expanding upward. It is blue on the outside and red on the inside. On top is a red **Pam**, which changes into a multicolored lotus. Above that is an **Ah**, which is transformed into a moon disk. On that is a **Ram**, which is transformed into a sun disk. On this is the essence of my mind in the form of a red **Bam**. Red light radiates out as an offering to all the Buddhas and



Bodhisattvas, and purifying all sentient beings, who are transformed into Vajrayoginis. The light returns and transforms me into Vajrayogini.

My body is red and brilliant, like 100,000 suns. I have three eyes and bared fangs, showing wrath and affection. From the right rear of my head is a grunting black sow. My head is adorned with a crown of five skulls. My hair is partially loose. I wear a garland of 51 fresh skulls and am adorned with the five bone ornaments. My right hand holds a vajra and my left hold at skull cup filled with blood at my heart.

On my left shoulder rests a khatvanga. I am naked with the body of a 16 year-old girl with upright breasts. I stand on my bent left leg with my right leg folded in the dancing posture. I am surrounded by the flames of primordial wisdom.

At my navel is a red Vajravarahi, at my heart a blue Yamani, at my throat a white Mohani, at my forehead a yellow Shobhani, at the crown of my head a green Bhariavi, and at all my limbs smoke-colored Chandali, each in the same form as Vajrayogini.

At the secret place of Vajrayogini is a red tetrahedron at the center of which is a red **Hri**, which radiates light and invites all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and their retinues in the form of Vajrayoginis. These dissolve into my crown, generating bliss and energy throughout my body. Their voices manifest the red vowels and consonants at my throat, generating the energy of voice. Their minds manifest streams of Bodhicitta into my heart, generating the wisdom of bliss and emptiness. My appearance as Vajrayogini is experienced as an illusion. Emptiness is the clear nature of the Dharmakaya.

Om Vajravarahi Mahayogini Atmako Ham

Om Vajravarahi Argham Padyam Pupé Dupé Aloké Ghandé Néwité Shapta Pratitsa Soha
<Snap fingers and/or bell>

I prostrate and praise the glorious Vajradakini, wheel turner of the Dakinis, embodiment of the five wisdoms and the three kayas, who protects all sentient beings. <Bell>

At the secret place of myself as Vajrayogini is a red tetrahedron glowing like a flame. In the center is a red lotus, upon which is a red sun disk and a red **Bam**, surrounded by the mantra circling counterclockwise.

Om Om Om Sarva Buddha Dakiniyé Vajra Varnaniyé

Vajra Vairochaniyé Hum Hum Hum Phat Phat Phat Soha

(Recite the mantra 108X or as many times as you can.)

Light radiates from the **Bam** and all phenomena dissolve into me. I dissolve from the top down and the bottom up into the **Bam**. The **Bam** dissolves from the bottom up into the crescent, the bindu, the nada and into emptiness. *(Meditation: Rest in the natural state of pure awareness.)*

I arise as Vajrayogini with one face and two arms.

Dedication: By this virtue may I quickly attain the state of Vajravarahi, and may I lead all sentient beings into that state with none left behind. (3X) <Bell & Drum>

Chod - Cutting through Ego

Longchen Nyingtik Chod Practice: Sound of Dakini Laughter

By Jigme Lingpa

I prostrate to the lady queen of the expanse, great bliss, Yeshe Tsogyal མ

The requisite articles are:

- *The skin of a carnivorous beast with the four clawed feet intact;*
- *A small tent;*
- *A khatoanga;*
- *A great supreme thighbone trumpet;*
- *A chod dharmaru;*
- *Bells and little bells,*
- *And chevrons.*

In short, the items appropriate to the yogic activity are the preparation that is to be made. The drumbeat is set to (1) bold and (2) regular text.

Then, in a place that gives a terrifying impression recite the four immeasurables to rouse bravery.

Send from your heart center a "nine-pointed vajra of meteoric iron" onto that terrifying place, like a lightning bolt.

Think that the gods and demons stay there, their will to fight broken.

Then, go in the strong manner of assurance of the view.

Assuming the stance of blazing savagery, take all the gods and demons by their feet, swing them around three times overhead, then smash them down onto the solid ground.

Toss aside your small tent and mat.

4 drum beats to set pace by syllable...

I cre-ate my-self in-stant-ly

As se-cret wis-dom da-ki-ni

E-qual in size to the en-ti-re u-ni-verse,

Her bo-dy is com-plete in e-ver-y re-spect.

Loud-ly blow the hu-man thigh-bone trum-pet,

To rouse the force of the view and per-form the dance.



Pause drums; then 3 trumpets – long; then 4 fast drum beats

PHAT...

**I, a yo-gin with con-duct of fear-less yo-gic ac-ti-vi-ty,
Use the con-duct of mind e-qual-ly en-com-pass-ing sam-sa-ra and nir-va-na
To dance up-on gods and de-mons of self-grasp-ing
And smash du-al-is-tic think-ing, sam-sa-ra's dis-cur-sive thought, in-to dust.**

Root and lin-eage vid-ya-dha-ra gu-rus, come to the dance!

O-ce-an of yi-dam he-ros, come to the dance!

Host of da-ki-nis who scout the pla-ces, come to the dance!

Grant your bless-ings so yo-gic ac-ti-vi-ty turns in-to the path!

Phat...

**Dan-cing now on the ea-ster-n con-ti-nent of Pur-va-vi-dé-ha,
Where the dance floor of the da-kas and da-ki-nis is a cir-cle,
I dance up and down on the head of an-ger, Gyal-po, and
Trill, trill, trill goes the flute of mir-ror-like wis-dom.
HUM...HUM...HUM...**

Phat...

**Dan-cing now on the sou-thern con-ti-nent Mam-bud-vi-pa,
Where the dance floor of da-kas and da-ki-nis is a tri-an-gle,
I dance up and down on the head of ar-ro-gance, Lord of Death, and
Thwack, thwack, thwack goes the drum of wis-dom of e-qual-i-ty.
HUM...HUM...HUM...**

Phat ...

**Dan-cing now on the wes-tern con-ti-nent Go-da-ni-ya,
Where the dance floor of the da-kas and da-ki-nis is a se-mi-cir-cle,
I dance up and down on the head of de-sire, Rak-sha-shi,
Ting, ting, ting go the bells and lit-tle bells of dis-crim-in-a-ting wis-dom.
HUM...HUM...HUM...**

Phat ...

Dan-cing now on the nor-thern con-tin-ent of Ut-ta-ra-ku-ru,
 Where the dance floor of da-kas and da-ki-nis is a square,
 I dance up and down on the head of *jeal-ou-sy*, Sa-ma-ya-brea-ker, and
 Flap, flap, flap go chev-rons of all-ac-comp-lish-ing wis-dom.
 HUM...HUM...HUM...

Phat ...

When danc-ing on the peak of cen-tral Mt. Me-ru,
 Where the dance floor of da-kas and da-ki-nis is so ma-jes-tic,
 I dance up and down on the head of *ig-nor-ance*, Death De-mon, and
 Sing, sing, sing goes the HUM song of dhar-ma-dha-tu wis-dom.
 HUM...HUM...HUM...

Enter into equipoise...

Identify the demons again and engage in the actual giving of the body.

Phat ...

In the ex-panse of self-ap-pear-an-ces, lu-mi-no-si-ty - the great bliss,
 The space di-vorc-ed from the e-la-bor-a-tions of con-cep-tu-al ef-fort and ac-ti-vi-ty,

Root gu-ru, the sixth one, Vaj-ra-dha-ra,

The mind, sym-bol, and au-ral lin-eage gu-rus, yi-dam de-i-ties,

Da-ki-nis, dhar-ma-pa-las, and guards mass'd like clouds,

Are vis-i-ble, un-stopped, in the midst of a sphere of rain-bow lights.

Take refuge:

Phat ...

Be-cause of not know-ing that this un-con-tri-ved,
 Self-a-ris-ing ri-gpa is the en-ti-ty of the ob-jects of re-fuge,
 Sen-ti-ent be-ings are drown-ing in the o-cean of suf-fer-ing –
 Please give them re-fuge with your mind of three ka-yas. (3X)

Phat ...

The mind **that** grasps **ap-pear-an-ces** as things
 Is **to-tal-ly se-ver-ed** by **the** con-duct of **yo-gic ac-ti-vi-ty**.
 Then to **re-al-ize** the **ac-tu-a-li-ty** of **re-al-i-ty**,
 I **a-rouse** the **mind** freed **from** hope **and** fear. (3X)

Offer a mandala:

Phat ...

Self-cher-i-shing's **ag-gre-gate**, this **il-lu-so-ry bo-dy**,
 Is **ful-ly ar-rang-ed** as the **heaps** of a **man-da-la**
 Then of-fer'd **with-out ex-pec-ta-tion** to **the** de-i-ties of the **ac-cum-u-la-tion** field.
 May the **root** of **all** self-**gras-ping** **be** cut!
 Phat ...

Guru yoga:

Phat ...

In the **ex-panse with-out out-flow-ing**, **dhar-ma-ka-ya's** space,
 A-midst its **lu-ster**, a **sphere** of **in-ter-mesh-ing** **rain-bow ra-ys**,
 Is the **fa-ther, know-er** of **all the three times**, **Pad-ma-sam-bha-va**,
 In the **man-ner** of **her-u-ka** whose con-duct is **yo-gic ac-ti-vi-ty**,
 To-ge-ther with an o-cean of **mo-ther da-ki-nis** as-semb-led.
 Your **bo-dy** with **spark-ling marks** and **signs** is a **lamp** alight, alight.
 Your **speech** with **dhar-ma** for **those** to **be** tamed **is** **soun-ding**, **re-sound-ing**.
 Your **mind**, **the** state of **lu-mi-no-si-ty**, is the **va-jra** **es-sence**.
 Your **son** **sup-pli-cates** you **with** **in-tense** **de-vo-tion**.

Out-ward-ly, the **gods** and **de-mons' form** is **dis-cur-sive** thought **ri-sen up** as **an en-e-my**;
In-ward-ly, hope **and** fear is the **mind** **gras-ping** at **du-al-ity**;
In be-tween, **var-i-ous ap-pear-anc's** are **all** the **un-fa-vor-a-ble** con-**di-tions** —
 May the **pro-found dhar-ma**, **the** **Cut-ter** of **Ma-ra**,
 Cut them **off** right **now**, on **this** **ve-ry** seat!

So that **the con-quer-or's le-vel, ex-panse dhar-ma-ka-ya be seized,**
Fa-ther, re-ver'd gu-ru, please grant me your bles-sings!

Phat ... Phat ... Phat ...

Enter into equipoise...

3X trumpet, 4 fast drums...

Phat ...

Then this im-pure por-tion, bo-dy of la-ten-cies,
So gross due to be-ing ve-ry well fed and fat-ten-ed,
Has the pure por-tion, rig-pa, brought out from with-in
In the form of the Wrath-ful Wo-man³, with the sound of Phat!

Ha-ving one face, two arms, flay-ing knife and skull cup,
She sli-ces my skull off.

Span-ning the thou-sand-fold re-alm,
It is plac'd on a hearth of three skulls and in-side
The bo-dy of el-e-ments set out as the feast is made,
By the light of the three syll-a-bles to blaze in-to am-ri-ta.

Om Ah Hung Ha Ho Hri (3X)

Call out the guests:

Phat ...

You the re-ci-pi-ents of of-fer-ing, the three roots and sa-ma-ya'd ones,
Then you re-ci-pi-ents of gen-er-o-si-ty, prin-ci-pal-ly of the eight class-es of
el-e-men-tals,
Up through the de-mons and dons of re-tri-bu-tion,
Come here to this place of yo-gic ac-ti-vi-ty's conduct!
To-day, I the fear-less yo-gin

³ Black Wrathful Woman is Throma.

Ar-range **this** il-lu-so-ry bo-dy that **parts** sam-sa-ra and nir-va-na
 In a ka-pa-la hav-ing ar-e-a of a **third** or-der world
 As the **feast** of-fering of the **grand** life-less corpse.

I trans-form it in-to **am-ri-ta** of **un-out-flow-ed** wis-dom.
 This ma-gi-cal **dis-play** that ap-pears as **nine-fold** wish-es
 Of-fer'd **with-out** the grasp-ing of **self-che-rish-ing**
 Is a **grand** feast in-deed, **please** come as guests!

Oh the **sound** of the great **su-preme** **skull** drum so bright!
 Oh the **me-lo-dy** of great grounds' **trum-pet** so sweet!
 Oh the **flash** of the bells, **lit-tle** **bells**, and **chev-rons** so de-**light-ful**!
 Just like **vul-tures** **flock-ing** to flesh,
 Please come **here**, this in-stant!
 Phat ...

Offering and dedication:

3X trumpet, 4 fast drum beats:

Phat ...

To the **vid-ya-dha-ra** gu-rus of the **Three** Li-ne'-ges,
 Start-ing with **pri-mor-di-al** pro-**tec-tor**
 And go-ing through the root **gu-ru**,
 And to the **yi-dams**, da-**ki-nis**, and **dhar-ma** pro-**tec-tors**,

I make the off'ring of the **am-ri-ta** of the **grand** life-less corpse.
 May I and o-thers, with **gods** and **de-mons** brought to the fore,
 Com-plete the two **ac-cumu-la-tions** and **pur-i-fy** all **ob-scur-a-tions**.
 Due to **tak-ing** yo-gic **ac-ti-vi-ty** to its end for the be-**ne-fit** of mi-**gra-tors**,

May ap-pear-an-ces be **train'd** in-to lu-mi-no-si-ty--**il-lu-sion** and
 Dread and **an-xi-e-ty** be li-ber-a-ted in **dhar-ma-ka-ya**.
 Please bless me to be he-ru-ka in style.

Phat ...

To the **eight** class-es of **el-e-men-tals**, **the non-hu-mans**
Who tran-scend-ed this world and who have not,
And to the host of **flesh-eat-ing dons** who **lead beings a-stray**,
I of-fer on top of a hu-man hide **span-ning the third or-der**
Thou-sand-fold world heaps of flesh, blood, **and bones**.

If I **grasp** at **self**, oh **how** weak I am!
 If you **can-not do** it, you are **even** worse!
 If you **want** it **now**, eat **the raw flesh** whole!
 If there's **no** hurry, cook **it** in **chunks** and **eat** it!
Don't leave **be-hind ev-en** a speck!

Phat ...

For all **those** who **from** **be-gin-ning-less** time **in** **sam-sa-ra**
Have re-tri-bu-tions re-sult-ing from **mur-der-ous grud-ges**,
And those who just **came** by **for** the **left-overs**, **guests** of **my com-pas-sion**,
And e-ver-y one of **those** who **is** **men-i-al** **and** has **no** say,

I **de-di-cate** an **in-ex-haus-ti-ble** **treasure** of **de-sir-able ob-jects**
Of the senses, **ac-cor-ding** to **what-ever** you **might** want!
May all **con-nec-ted** to **me**, both **good** and **bad**, **be-come** **bud-dhas** and
Be **cleansed** of their **debts** of **re-tri-bu-tion**.

Phat ...

Give without reservation, then enter into equipoise...

In conclusion 3X trumpet, 4 fast drum beats:

Ah...

When the **mass** of **con-cepts**, **vir-tu-ous** and **un-vir-tu-ous**, **is** **self-li-ber-a-ted**,
The con-cept **la-bels** of **hope** and **fear** are **not** **re-fer-en-ced**, but

**The in-fal-li-ble in-ter-de-pen-den-cy of the ap-pear-ing fac-tor, the
con-tin-u-i-ty of the mass of vir-tue,
Has to be de-di-ca-ted with-in the un-out-flow-ed dhar-ma-dha-tu.**

Phat ...

**Through the gen-er-o-si-ty of the fic-tion-al bo-dy
May those with debts of re-tri-bu-tion ac-cu-mu-la-ted o-ver kal-pas have them pur-i-fied
and**

**When their mind-streams have been li-ber-a-ted by the truth of su-per-fac-tu'l dhar-ma,
May they ap-pear as the first in my as-sem-bly.**

**At that time, when the un-con-triv'd, self-pre-sent, in-nate fact
Has been pro-duced in the mind-streams of the un-ruly gods and de-mons,
In-stead of fol-low-ing af-ter con-fu-sion of gras-ping at "I",
May their mind-streams be mois-ten-ed with love and com-pas-sion.**

**And for my-self, hav-ing ta-ken the conduct of yo-gic ac-ti-vi-ty to
com-ple-tion,**

**May hap-pi-ness and sad-ness have their taste e-qual-ized with sam-sa-ra and nir-va-na
trained in-to dhar-ma-ka-ya.**

**May I be vic-tor-ious in all di-rec-tions with ev-er-y con-nec-tion that I make a mean-ing-
ful one,**

**And may I take en-ligh-ten'd ac-ti-vi-ty to com-ple-tion and ac-com-lish a
rain-bow bo-dy!**

Phat ...

4 fast drum beats (6X); then 4 hard drum beats (2X); then 1 hard drum beat

*Add: By the merit of this practice, may I achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient
beings. (3X) <Bell & Drum>*

In the state of the view, with great compassion, visualize sending and taking happiness and suffering with totally pure generosity of dharma. Make positive relations and obstructive connections, good and bad, into the path of emancipation.

Samaya Ma Ma Ko Ling Samanta

This text was slightly adapted from “Longchen Nyingtik Chod Practice ‘Sound of Dakini Laughter’, text by Jigme Lingpa and instructions by Dza Patrul” by Khenpo Drimed Dawa November 14, 2020, for practice by the Awam Tibetan Buddhist Institute, Tucson AZ USA. Two versions were created. One with very slight formatting and wording changes for drum beat; the other without most instructions for the actual practice text.

Kalachakra

The Essence of the Kalachakra Tantraⁱⁱ

Focus: *Nondual wisdom of the innate mind of immutable bliss-emptiness and compassion*

I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha most excellent for the benefit of all sentient beings. (3X)

Om Svabhava Shuda Sarva Dharma Svabhava Shudo Ham



Kalachakra is blue color. He holds a vajra in his right hand and a bell in his left hand. He is in union with his golden dakini consort, Vish-vamata.

The Maras from all directions become contentious. Unoppressed by their painful analytic exertion, the excellent and precious qualities of the gurus' wisdom mindstream are transmitted into my heart-essence. And thus, the mind stream tantra is communicated into me.

The *outer* Kalachakra – the mountains, countries, planets, stars – taking form, arise from the expansion and contraction of the inner channels, winds, and drops in their own shapes, as the union of appearance and emptiness.

The *inner* Kalachakra is all inner phenomena, which are pure by nature. The *innate* Kalachakra is residing in the yidam. Together they are the great unchanging bliss and emptiness indivisible as Mahamudra, taking its place of rest as the Heruka who pervades all of samsara-nirvana, the natural mode of spontaneous rigpa, that of indivisible primordial purity and effortless presence, which gives the final teaching – the very being of the dharmakaya, the body of vajra wisdom.

The essence of Kalachakra is the mantra made of ten seed syllables known as the Tenfold Powerful One:⁴ (*illustrated here*) the *outer* is



⁴ Ya, Ra, Va, La, Ma, Ksha, Ha, plus a crescent, bindu, and nada

the vessel of the realms of the world; the *inner* is the vajra body; the *innate* is the mandala of the mind.

Homage to the Adi Buddha, the uncontrived, space-pervading vajra, wholly arisen as the constant consort of form!

We have blissful feelings of our self and the bliss of Buddha wisdom nature, while reciting the mantra continuously. The deity whose truth is undivided outer, inner, and innate, May glorious Kalachakra give constant protection.

The É syllable, emptiness free of extremes, is Vish-vamata, embodiment of the feminine principle of wisdom; **Vam**, great bliss, is the masculine principle as glorious Kalachakra; their non-dual play is the Ten-Fold Powerful One. The three – outer, inner, and innate – undivided, are the natural environment.

The space-pervading vajra stripped bare, totally isolated from particles of change, is the true view.

Oh glorious gift of the wheel of space, É **Ma!** Wondrous!

Om Ah Hung Ho Hacha Mala Vara Yam Soha

(21X) *Then relax your brain, body and abide in peace for 15 minutes.*

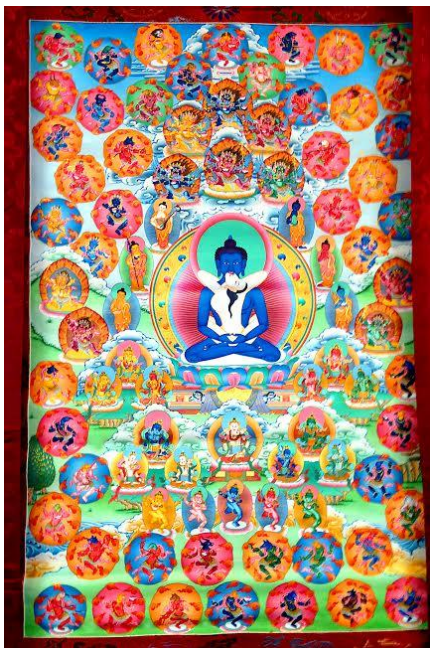
A “tilaka”⁵ between the eyebrows condenses the essential points of the Kalachakra Tantra: rigpa and the “wheel of time”.

Dedication: By this virtue may I quickly attain the state of Kalachakra and Vishvamata, and may I lead all sentient beings into that state with none left behind. **(3X)** <Bell & Drum>

⁵ A mark between the eyebrows (popular in Hinduism).

Guyagarbha

Daily Guhyagarbha Sadhana of the 42 Peaceful Deities



Refuge

I and the six classes of living beings who fill all of space respectfully take refuge in the gurus, yidams, dakinis and the Buddha, dharma, and noble sangha. (3X)

Bodhicitta

I and boundless sentient beings,
Although primordially being buddhas, generate the
mind of highest enlightenment
by the power of reflecting upon it as apart from samsara.
(3X)

Command the obstructors to leave: Om Rulu Rulu Hung Jo Hung

Generating the protective circle:

Hung A blazing fire of wisdom, a vajra fence, latticework, dome, canopy, and wheel of weapons pervade space. **Hung Hung Hung**

Generating the celestial mansion:

A shining white **Ah**, the nature of mind, radiates out in the ten directions; then reabsorbs. From the **Ah** come a moon and a sun seat, the vowels which signify the major marks, and the consonants which signify the minor marks, arranged in two circular rows. The **Ah** melts into light from which appears a **Hung**-marked vajra. That is transformed into the nature of Samantabhadra, blue in color, abiding in vajra posture and radiating a mass of light pervading all of space, manifesting the mandalas of the five families.

Dhrum Bisho Bishuddhe Limitless space and the circle of wisdom abide as the great, incomparable mansion. It is square with four doors and four pediments. Atop five walls are precious cornices from which loops and half loops of jewels hang. A circular dome pervades the expanse of space. Outwardly and inwardly pure, there is the wisdom of clear light. Both outer and inner dimensions, along with umbrellas and banners, fill the space like playful

clouds; and countless numbers of goddesses bring everything desired as dense clouds of offerings.

Generating the deities:

Ah is the unborn nature as it is.

Cha is the wisdom enlightened mind.

So saying, I appear as Samantabhadra, blue in color, with Samantabhadri on my left. Means and wisdom, clouds of joy, bodhichitta, and the host's causal circle – the result is the ripened realization of the conqueror and the wondrous host of the forty-two peaceful deities. This actualization of the unconditioned and the conditioned is the vajra mandala that the host of causes and conditions, having no power, cannot surmount.

Ah Ho From the heart of the yabyum non-dual embrace, clouds of syllables radiate to accomplish the work of the Buddha and are then drawn back into the mandala.

Samantabhadra yabyum absorbs the Vairochana yabyum. Visualize each of the other deities taking their respective places. Then from the heart of Samantabhadra, an awareness Samantabhadra emerges, standing up with legs together and folded hands, adorned as a single *sattva*, having circumambulated the mandala of deities three times, he stands at the western door tossing flowers.

He then requests of the deities, “To liberate all beings in this world, unite me with the mahamudra.” Light rays of means and wisdom and ripened karma from the deities touch me. My body, speech and mind are purified, becoming an orb of light.

Free of subject-object duality, light radiates from the deities in the form of **Om Ah Hung**. Touching me, the light becomes the syllable **Hung** and is absorbed into Samantabhadra yabyum's heart. He has an overwhelmingly brilliant presence. Then having produced bodhichitta from its place of abode in the secret place of the yum, all the deities become absorbed in that bodhichitta along with the sound of their respective mantras. In the middle of the mandala, atop a lion, sun, and moon, all become one mass of light whose nature is bodhichitta, which transforms into **Hung** and **Mum** sending forth and drawing back light rays that become a vajra and bell. These are then transformed into the Vairochana yabyum.

Om Maha Shunyata Jnana Benza Svabhava Atmako Ham

I am blessed with the empowerment of the fivefold wisdom of body, speech, mind, qualities, and activities. Then the mandala of Vairochana yabyum is blessed with the vajra in the lotus.

Samaya Ho

So summoned with the sacred words of joining in union, the bodhichitta of the yab spreads forth into the secret place of the yum, and that is blessed as the incomparable mansion inside of which are the seed syllables of the deities. Radiance is generated. Samantabhadra yabyum is visualized in the heart of Vairochana along with the mandala of other deities.

Inviting the samadhi mandala:

From the mandala of enlightened mind, this mandala of space-time invites all samadhi mandalas. This mandala of approach is most excellently perfect. Coming from all directions and times, this mandala unites into the mandala of my own appearance, and the highest samaya becomes completely present.

Om Eh Ha-ya-hi Bha-ga-van Maha Ka-ru-ni-ka Dri-shaya Ho

Sa-ma-ya Tom Dza Hung Bam Ho

The mandala arrives from Akanishtha and is offered:

Om Argham, Padyam, Pupe, Dupe, Aloke, Ghande, Newide, Shapta Ah Hung [*snap fingers and ring bell*]

In union with the great wondrous body, speech, mind,
Qualities, and activities of the king of wisdom,
May I be joined into Mahamudra.

Om Benza Samaya Hung

Om Benza Samaya Tom

Om Benza Samaya Ho

Visualize that the approach mandala and your samadhi mandala become indivisible.

Dza Hung Bam Ho

Mantra Recitation:

From the syllables in the heart centers of all the deities, light rays spread forth and touch all sentient beings of boundless space cleansing away all pollutions and faults. Sentient beings transform into syllables and are absorbed into the heart center of the Vairochana yabyum.

Om Ah Hung Bodhicitta Ma-ha-su-kha Jnana Dhatu Ah/

(108X or as many times as you can, then continue)

There is nothing other than Buddhanature. *(Dissolve the visualization and meditate.)*

Reappearing as the complete mandala, dedicate the merit with: By the virtue of this, may all sentient beings in existence claim the highest stage of total peace, and with kayas and wisdom free of synthesis and analysis, may they be made auspicious in all of time-space.

(3X)

The original sadhana, based upon the teachings of the Omniscient Longchenpa, was composed as "A Glorious Sadhana of Mayajwala - The Oral Instructions of the Omniscient Guru" by HH Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche. Thanks to the patronage of Aaron Paronto, it was translated by the Lotsawa Palden Phuntsok (James Rutke) for an Intensive Guhyagarbha course he taught at Dharmakirti College on January 8th of 2012.

This daily sadhana was adapted from the original translation (above) and the Guhyagarbha Tantra with commentary by Longchenpa (Secret Essence Definitive Nature Just As It Is) by Khenpo Drimed Dawa in this form on March 23, 2016.

Mantrayana

Continue in mental calm and deep peace as long as you can, then continue... with the "celestial choir" (mandala), radiating mantras for the benefit of all beings! (3X each)

Shakyamuni Buddha (Historical Buddha - liberation): **Om Muni Muni Maha Muni Ye Soha**

Padmasambhava (taming "gods and spirits"):^{*}

Om Ah Hung Benza Guru Peme Siddhi Hung

Yeshe Tsogyal (Buddha Vajravarahi in human form):

Om Jnana Dakini Bam Ha Ri Ni Sa Siddhi Hung

Vajrasattva (Buddha for purification of all hindrances): **Om Benza Sato Ah**

Chenrezig (Male Buddha of Compassion): **Om Mani Padma Hung**

Tara (Female Buddha of Compassion and fears):^{*} **Om Tare Tutare Ture Soha**

White Tara (Great Compassion, long life, healing, and serenity):

Om Tare Tuttare Ture Mama Ahyur Punya Jyana Putring Kuru Soha

Medicine Buddha (Buddha who cures "suffering"):

Tayata Om Bekadze Bekadze Maha Bekadze Radza Samungate Soha

Amitabha (Buddha of the pure land Dewachen): **Om Ami Dewa Hri**

Or Padmasambhava (Buddha of pure land of Copper Colored Mountain):

Om Ah Hung Benza Guru Peme Siddhi Hung

Or Pure land of the Dakini's - Akanishta: **Om Vajra Vairochaniye Soha**

Vajrakilaya (Most powerful female Buddha for removing obstacles and destroying forces hostile to compassion): **Om Vajra Kili Kilaya Hung Phat** or

Om Benza Kili Kilaya Raksha Troda Na Hung Phat (4-arm Khenchen Lama terma)*

Kurukulle (Female Buddha who magnetizes all good things to benefit beings):

Om Kurukulle Hri Soha

Simhamuka (*Female Buddha who disperses discursive thoughts that shroud the nature of mind*): Ah Ka Sa Ma Ra Tsa Sha Da Ra Sa Ma Ra Ya Phat

Vajravarahi (*Female Buddha of transcendent wisdom*): Om Vajra Vairochaniye Soha

Prajnaparamita (*"Heart Sutra", female buddha of perfection of transcendent wisdom*):

Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Soha

Ekajati (*Female protector who removes inner and outer fears and "demons"*):

Om Sarwa Bhavantu

King Gesar (*Protector embodying all wisdoms, compassion, and "powers"*):*

Om Guru Mani Radza Siddhi Hung

Dorje Gotrab (*Protector from sickness, hunger, fighting, and social problems*):*

Om Padma Sha-wari Phad Nen Par-shig Naga Nen Teyatha Sarwa Wi-rita

Hana Hana Bezer Na Racha Racha Soha

Samantabhadra (*Masculine principle of skillful means to pure-awareness mind*):

Hung Hung Hung Benza Tsita Hung

Samantabhadri (*Feminine principle of transcendent wisdom to pure-awareness mind*):

Ah Ah Ah Benza Bahdra Samanta Ah

"All mantras are subsumed within" - HE Garchen Rinpoche: Continue with Om Ah Hung
(for list of those in need) for the benefit of the many; for the benefit of all!

* Four Roots of guru (Padmasambhava or Gotrab Dorje), yidam (Vajrakilaya), dakini (21 Taras), and protector (King Gesar)

Core Completion Stage Practices

Tummo

Recite the brief Ngondro preliminary practices.

First cycle (may repeat until comfortable with the process):

- On the in-breath the fire/heat in the lower abdomen (at the juncture of the side and central channels) blazes and fills your body, especially your abdomen, with blissful inner fire (heat).
- On the outbreath, it blazes and
 - Melts the **red bindu** or **Ah-stroke** (“female drop”) at the navel chakra, opening the central channel; and the red female drop ascents up the central channel,
 - At the heart the red female drop melts away the **blue bindu** or **Hung**, opening the channel to the throat,
 - At the throat the red female drop melts the **red bindu** or **Om**, opening the channel to the crown,
 - Then at the crown the red female drop melts the **white bindu** or **Ham** (“male drop”) completing the opening of the central channel.
- On the next in-breath, the “melted” white bindu (**Ham** or male drop – *bodhicitta*), slowly drips down the now open central channel into a new red female drop below, where you experience even greater blissful inner fire.

Second cycle:

- On the out-breath the female drop rises up the open central channel and melts a new white male drop at your crown,
- On the in-breath, the drop “drips” down the open central channel into a new red female drop, arousing even greater blissful inner fire.

Continue until “signs” appear (physical heat such as sweat, or 1-2 degrees increase in body temperature measured with a thermometer). *Repeat* the second cycle as many times as needed.

At the end of each session, breathing naturally, meditate single-pointedly on the *inner heat* until you achieve stability, indicated by a luster, radiance, or translucence of body and surroundings – their illusory nature. Continue for 15-30 minutes or as long as you can.

Dedication: With the mind of liberation, *Bodhicitta*, I dedicate all merit from this practice for the liberation of all sentient beings. (3X)

Phowa – Transference of Consciousness

Recite the brief Ngondro preliminary practices.

Transference Mind Training:

Visualization:

Block the apertures with dark blue HUNGS emanating from your heart: anus, “aperture of becoming” (genitals), urinary tract, navel, mouth, nostrils, eyes, ears; upside down white HAM blocks crown (white drop).

Your central channel is inflated and white with a yellow sheen.

There is a white bindu below your navel chakra at the convergence of central and side channels (red drop).

A smiling Guru – *Amitabha, Vajradhara, or Samantabhadra* – is above your crown.

Activity:

Forcefully close your anus. Look up. Place your tongue on your palate (roof of your mouth).

Make fists with your thumbs inside (vajra fist) and press them into your groin on either side. Draw the white bindu upwards.⁶

Say “HIK KA” seven times – to navel, then heart, then throat, then head (eyebrow level), then crown.

Then the bindu descends to below your navel. Relax and check for signs. Stop if signs are present; otherwise, repeat the practice as above.

Dedication: With the mind of liberation, *bodhicitta*, I dedicate all merit from this practice for the liberation of all sentient beings. (3X)

This practice is *preparation* for the actual time of death. When one is certain of dying do not stop at the crown, but eject the Hik Ka out of the crown of the head into *Amitagha, Vajradahra, or Samantabhadra*, and repeat as needed, but without descending.

⁶ Alternately, it is often taught to draw the bindu up with seven HIKs and down with one long “KAaaaaaaaah.”

Four Bliss

Recite the brief Ngondro preliminary practices.

The Four Bliss:

From emptiness, visualize yourself as *Vajrayogini* or other yidam with consort, transparent like a crystal.

As in *tummo*, the inner heat of bliss melts the red drop then ascends and melts the white drop at the crown and descends in the central channel now to the “tip of the jewel” (sex organ).⁷

With increasing practice, you experience the four blisses (ascending) – “bliss” at the navel chakra, “supreme bliss” at the heart, “special bliss” at the throat, and “innate bliss” at the crown.

Then the descending blisses are aroused as the white drop at the crown melts and descends to the throat, heart, navel and then continues to the tip of the sex organ (without orgasm) where innate bliss is again aroused.⁸

Repeat with ever increasing levels of bliss. Then hold the vital energies at the tip of the sex organ until a sense of *innate happiness (eudaemonia)* arises.

Dedication: With the mind of liberation, *bodhicitta*, I dedicate all merit from this practice for the liberation of all sentient beings. (3X)

⁷ The tip of the jewel usually refers to the genitals, penis or clitoris. Other references indicate this is the tip of the cervix in the female. Some texts refer to “the secret place”, which is less clear. Some interpret that as the genitals or the cervix (in the female), whereas others indicate a place near the base of the spine, which would be approximately the prostate in a male or cervix in the female.

⁸ Some start with descending bliss from melting of the white drop, then ascending with melting of red drop. Since the AH-stroke at the navel is the source of the heat, and the previous practices started at the navel, it makes more sense to follow the same pattern here.

Four Empties

Recite the brief Ngondro preliminary practices.

Four empties:

From emptiness, visualize yourself as *Vajrayogini* with *khatvanga* or other yidam with consort, transparent like a crystal.

From the tip of the jewel, the *ascending* four blisses are aroused as the melted red drop at the navel chakra ascends on the winds to the crown.

Then the melted white drop descends with (1) “emptiness”⁹ at the crown chakra, (2) “great emptiness” at the throat chakra, (3) “extreme emptiness” at the heart chakra, and (4) “total emptiness” at the navel chakra. At the tip of the jewel, the “union of bliss and emptiness” is achieved.

Repeat as many times as necessary to achieve the actual experience of union of bliss and emptiness.

Dedication: With the mind of liberation, *bodhicitta*, I dedicate all merit from this practice for the liberation of all sentient beings. (3X)

Alternating between ascending bliss and descending emptiness has been shown to be a highly effective way of achieving the union of the two states.

During the illusory body practice with the four empties, you may also begin to experience the clear light. This is not likely to be the actual clear light, but an approximation called “semblant clear light.” This is none other than your own true nature, Buddhanature, or Dharmakaya.

⁹ Replacing the four blisses with four “empties”.

Clear Light

Recite the brief Ngondro preliminary practices.

Instructions on dreaming (during sleep): 1st session:

Cultivate the spirit of awakening (altruistic intention or *bodhicitta*).

Pray: “May I understand the *clear light* and dispel the ignorance of self and others.”

Lie in lion posture¹⁰ (real or imagined) with a white bindu in heart chakra. Pray to realize the nature of mind ... your Buddhanature. *Clear light* appears as you fall asleep and as you awaken, between the waking and dream states.

It is important to then recognize in the daytime, so that you will have the same experience when you die. We all have Buddhanature; we just don't recognize it.

2nd session: Dissolution of consciousness

From clarity and emptiness, visualize:

At the forehead, feel warmth – the dissolution of earth into water

At the heart, a sinking feeling – the dissolution of water into fire

In your mind, a feeling of agitation – the dissolution of fire into air

Falling fast asleep – the dissolution of air into consciousness

Focus on the heart and recognize the clarity and emptiness (*rigpa* or *clear light*).

Dispelling obstacles:

If it doesn't work, HH Khenchen Lama Rinpoche recommends sitting in the meditation posture before you go to sleep and meditate on Buddhanature. Then do the main practice while falling asleep.

Recognizing our Buddhanature (inner) *and* surroundings (outer) is *key* ... the union of *samsara* and *nirvana*.

In a more elaborate process, from the experience of the semblant *clear light*, the process is reversed through the black, red, and white lights until the vital energies return to the central channel and we again arise as *Vajrayogini* or the yidam and consort. This body now appears

¹⁰ This is the posture assumed by the Buddha as he lay dying. Lie on your right side with legs straight (or slightly bent, left on top of the right). Place the right hand on the right side of your head as a support. (Some versions have you extend your right elbow to support your head in a more upright position.)

as the impure illusory body, which re-enters our “coarse body” due to the force of karma that has not yet been completely purified. Your coarse body need not be abandoned if you choose to continue for the benefit of others – the *Bodhisattva* ideal.

Dzogchen Texts and Practices

Four Absorptions or Higher Jhanas

These very subjective practices are commonly practiced beyond the Four Jhanas. I have inserted a very simple version of the Jhanas as preparation to the Four Absorptions:

Four Jhanas - *This brief set of practices are essential before transitioning to the Four Absorptions.*

- **Prepare** with a **deep breath ... IN**, then **OUT slowly**
 - *Feel it* relaxing your brain and body as it goes out... 3X.
 - This purifies all *afflictive emotions and mental obscurations* similar to Vajrasattva practice.
- **First Jhana** - in a place of "seclusion" (such as the *forest*, real or imagined, or *wherever you are right now*),
 - continue breathing **slowly and deeply**,
 - focus on that outer environment, and
 - *experience joy and happiness* from that outer environment.
- **Second Jhana** - remaining in that place...
 - continue breathing **slowly and deeply**, and
 - shift your focus to your *inner consciousness*, relaxing your brain and body,
 - *continue to feel joy and happiness* throughout your body.
- **Third Jhana** - go even deeper,
 - Continue breathing with *deep mental calm and peace*, then
 - focus your concentration on your mind itself,
 - feel a very subtle inherent happiness throughout your body.
- **Fourth Jhana** - finally...
 - still breathing with *deep mental calm and peace*,
 - focus deep concentration of "*awareness of awareness*" itself,
 - *feel complete mental purity* of "profound peace and contentment" ... at *all times*.

If you diverge, step back one or more levels, then continue until you are completely stable in deep peace and contentment with total mental calm, always and all ways (no matter what you are thinking or doing ... 24/7). This is the foundation of all other forms of meditation.

Four Formless Absorptions, these are very close to Dzogchen practices and may facilitate transition. [Question: *Why did the Buddha reject the **highest two absorptions** (below) from his early teachers (with no mention of the first two), if they were later included in the Pali Canon as even higher than the jhanas? (The first two are not mentioned in his early training.) At the same time, these illustrate a very close connection with Dzogchen practices, hence my inclusion.*]

The four states are experienced sequentially, with each stage a more subtle focus to become wider and calmer:

1. **Sphere of infinite space**: You move entirely past the perception of physical form and concepts of materiality, focusing purely on boundless, *infinite space*.
2. **Sphere of infinite consciousness**: Letting go of the concept of space, your focus shifts inward to the mind itself, experiencing it as *limitless and all-encompassing awareness*.
3. **Sphere of nothingness**: You focus on the absence of anything whatsoever, *dwelling in a state of "nothing is there" or voidness*.
4. **Sphere of neither perception nor non-perception**: The mind becomes so exceedingly subtle that it does not actively "perceive" objects in the traditional sense, yet it is not unconscious. It is *an absolute peak of conditioned, worldly existence*. **Note: some versions do not include #4.**

Here are two specific examples from the Pali Canon.

Example One - 8 Sallekha Sutta:

- *Infinite space* – abide in the peace of space, surmounting perceptions of form(s).
- *Infinite consciousness* – abide in the peace of consciousness, beyond infinite space.
- *Nothingness* – abide in peace of "nothingness", aware that there is "nothing" there.
- *Neither-perception-nor-nonperception* – abide in peace.

Example Two - 26 Ariyapariyesana Sutta:

- *Infinite space* - impermanent, not self, deathlessness.
- *Infinite consciousness* - feeling, perception, formations and consciousness as impermanent ... not self, deathlessness.
- *Nothingness* - turns away from anything that “exists”, **deathlessness - peaceful**, sublime, stilling of all formations, relinquishing of all attachments, destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, Nirvana; destruction of taints.
- [Omitted in this text: Neither-perception-nor-nonperception]

The Cuckoo of Awareness

This is the earliest known document on the Dzogchen view. An Ornament for Acquiring Realization known as The Six Diamond Stanzas: Translation of the Tun-huang manuscript:

Svasti: Holy of Holies! Homage to the body-speech-mind of the All-Beneficent Lord (*Samantabhadra*), Vajra of Great Bliss!

1. The intrinsic nature of diversity is nondual, since
2. Singularity is unintelligible.
3. Facticity is non-conceptual, since
4. The totality of created appearance is all-beneficent.
5. Already having abandoned the disease of striving,
6. Just remain in effortless abiding.

*Here are two of my versions based upon several sources of these, known as **The Six Vajra Verses** and **The Small Hidden Grain**:*

The Six Vajra Verses – my version based on translations by others:

The *essence* at the heart of *all* our perceptions¹¹ is of “one taste”,
Pure and simple.

That *essence*, the very *nature of reality*, transcends words or concepts,
Yet it manifests as the *dynamic radiant play* of *bodhicitta* mind¹².

Abandon striving for some other *essence*, and
Abide softly¹³ and deeply¹⁴ in this perfect awareness as it is.

Essence of “The Small Hidden Grain” – my summary¹⁵ based upon translations by others:

Our perceptions of the empirical world are a delusion.

They are merely an experience in our mind that words can only begin to explain.

¹¹ Seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, *and* thinking (includes memories and emotions)

¹² *Bodhicitta* – the mind of enlightenment

¹³ Peace

¹⁴ Mental calm

¹⁵ From three translations of 7 to 10 verses

Yet they do exist¹⁶, as perceptions, like a mirage in our brain, the “suchness” of the *nature* of our mind that transcends words and concepts.

There is no fixed object to meditate upon, just abide in the *nature* of mind – suchness, awareness of being conscious in this world of illusion¹⁷.

No austerities, postures, sutras, tantras, sadhanas, or rituals are necessary.

If those *are* used, abide in the deep peace of mental calm at *all* times (with sincere lovingkindness and compassion for all), without *any* attachment or aversion¹⁸.

¹⁶ The originals state or infer that phenomena do *not* exist, similar to the “mind only” view. Contemporary science recognizes the difference between our *perceptions* (empirical reality) and scientific reality.

¹⁷ Like watching the “movie” of your life in your mind

¹⁸ As noted above, the originals assert that no “practices” are required, yet more recent texts explain that these practices *may* be done within the context of the Dzogchen view.

Three Statements of Garab Dorje & Commentary

The Three Statements:

First, there is an extremely concise Statement of Garab Dorje:

1. Direct introduction of the view.
2. Developing confidence in the view.
3. Abiding in the view until fully awakened.

Second is by my own root guru, HH Khenchen Lama Rinpoche:

1. Introducing directly the face of rigpa itself.
2. Decide upon one thing, and one thing only.
3. Confidence directly in the liberation of rising thoughts.

Third, there is from *The Golden Letters*, translated by John Reynolds:

1. One is introduced directly to one's own nature.
2. One definitively decides upon this unique state.
3. One continues directly with confidence in liberation.

Fourth, from *The Feature of the expert, Glorious King, Teaching on the Three Lines that Strike the Key Points – Root Text and Commentary by Patrul Rinpoche* by Tony Duff:

1. First, put your mind into a relaxed state.
2. Second, decision on one thing is the second key point.
3. Third, assurance built on liberation is the third key point.

Fifth is from "Three Crucial Statements" by Mipham Rinpoche:

1. First is knowing the essence of mind.
2. Second is called sustaining meditation.
3. Third is called immediate freedom.

Mipham's description:

1. As for the **direct introduction** to one's own nature: This fresh immediate awareness of the present moment, transcending all thoughts related to the three times, is itself that primordial awareness or knowledge (*yeshes*) that is self-originated intrinsic awareness (*rigpa*). This is the direct introduction to one's own nature.
2. As for **deciding definitively** upon this unique state: Whatever phenomena of Samsara and Nirvana may manifest, all of them represent the play of the creative energy or

potentiality of one's own immediate intrinsic awareness. Since there is nothing that goes beyond just this, one should continue in the state of this singular and unique awareness. Therefore, one must definitively decide upon this unique state for oneself and know that there exists nothing other than this.

3. As for directly **continuing with confidence** in liberation: Whatever gross or subtle thoughts may arise, by merely recognizing their nature, they arise and selfliberate simultaneously in the vast expanse of the Dharmakaya, where emptiness and awareness (are inseparable). Therefore, one should continue directly with confidence in their liberation.

That is pure Dzogchen Atiyoga. A Dzogchen Master starts with "direct introduction" with everyone. If they don't "get it" then one starts to use all the infinite methods and means to help bring about the experience of rigpa. When one has the experience of rigpa, then one confirms the validity of one's path now being "remaining with rigpa" as path. Then, one simply continues in that state. Rigpa is the view to be experienced, rigpa is the path to be followed, and rigpa is the fruit of the path. There is no change in rigpa, either in the beginning, middle or end. The fruit is your first realization of rigpa. There are no stages of rigpa. Toga does not modify rigpa.

White Lotus

White Lotus is a commentary by Mipham Rinpoche on the Seven-Line Prayer to Guru Padmasambhava, revered by all lineages of Tibetan Buddhism. The seven-line invocation of Padmasambhava – is one of the best-known prayers in the Tibetan Buddhist world.

**A Shower of Blessings: A Guru Yoga Practice to Accompany the Seven-Line Prayer by
Mipham Rinpoche**

Āḥ! I am in my ordinary form; before me, in the sky

Appears Oḍḍiyāna, and the immaculate Dhana-kośa lake,

Deep and full of water with eight kinds of purity.

In its center you dwell, on a jeweled lotus blossom, its petals open wide:

All sources of refuge combined, Orgyen Dorje Chang,

Ablaze in splendor with the major and minor marks of perfection, and embracing the
consort Yeshe Tsogyal.

You hold a vajra in your right hand, a skull cup containing a vase in your left,

Beautiful in all your silk, jewel and bone ornaments.

In an expanse of blue, white, yellow, red and green light, you preside resplendent, radiating
great bliss.

All around you, gurus, devas and ḍākinīs gather like clouds.

Pour down your blessings in a rain of compassion: watch over and care for me!

Essence of all buddhas, in your immortal wisdom body,

Now and always, I bow to you with passionate longing and devotion.

My bodies, possessions and all my merit, past, present and future

I visualize as Samantabhadra's offering clouds, and present them to you.

My harmful actions and downfalls, committed through beginningless time, I confess
without exception.

You alone have completely mastered the precious qualities of all the buddhas
and bodhisattvas,

And with all my heart I rejoice at your liberating life story.

With total trust I pray to you,

And implore you: shower down a great rain of Dharma, profound and vast.

Gathering all the actual merit of myself and others,
 For as long as these infinite realms of living beings remain
 I shall follow your example, Lord,
 And dedicate it all to guiding beings as limitless as space.

You are all my sources of refuge in one, a great treasure of wisdom and love,
 Our precious, our greatest, protection in this dark age, the dregs of time.
 Tormented and drained by the five kinds of degeneration, when I call on you
 In desperate yearning, look upon your child with all the love of your wisdom mind.
 Let the power of your compassion burst out from your vast expanse of realization,
 And flood my devoted heart with your blessing.
 Quickly show me the signs and marks of attainment,
 And grant me siddhis, ordinary and supreme.

Hūṃ! In the north-west of the land of Oḍḍiyāna,
 In the heart of a lotus flower,
 Endowed with the most marvelous attainments,
 You are renowned as the Lotus-born,
 Surrounded by many hosts of ḍākinīs.
 Following in your footsteps
 I pray to you: come and bless me with your grace!
 Guru Padma siddhi hūṃ

Recite The Seven Line Prayer as many times as you can.

*Imagine that, because you are praying with sincere devotion, from the place of union and the heart of
 the guru and the consort fine shafts of wisdom light – blue, white, yellow, red and green – shoot out
 and dissolve into your heart, blessing and transforming your very being.*

Recite the Vajra Guru Mantra as much as you wish:

Om Ah Hung Vajra Guru Pema Siddhi Hung

At the end of the session:

From the three syllables **Om Āḥ Hūṃ** at the three centres of the guru,
 White, red and blue rays of light strike out

And dissolve into my own three centers, purifying the obscurations
 Of my body, speech and mind, and transforming them into vajra body, speech and mind.
 Finally, the guru and his retinue melt into light
 And into a red and white bindu marked with **Hūṃ**,
 That dissolves into my heart, through which the guru's wisdom mind
 And my own mind merge inseparably, and so I abide in the ever-present Dharmakāya.

A Ah

As you utter "A, Aaḥ!" look into the actual face of the great primordial dharmakāya – the very nature of your own mind that from the very beginning is utterly beyond alteration or change, beyond rejecting or accepting anything at all. Once again, consider all illusion-like appearances as the nature of the guru. Dedicate the merit and make prayers for auspiciousness, so that peace and well-being prevail.

Rigdzin Dupa - Gathering of Vidyadharas

Very Concise Atiyoga Rigdzin Dupa

The Simple Path of Kyerim

(For those of superior capacity)

Refuge - At my heart is the letter **Hung** that sends out rays of light. As a result, from the natural abode arise the lama and the ocean-vast assembly of vidyadharas indivisible from him. All the deities of the Mahaguru's mandala, surrounded by all sources of refuge from all ten directions and four times without any missing, appear in the space in front of me—
Vajra Samadza!

Bodhicitta - All appearing phenomena are groundless emptiness wisdom. The state of the unqualified resolution of all samsara and nirvana becomes manifest.

The Seven Branches

1. Prostrate face with the absolute lama, our own rigpa.
2. Offer with delight in all appearances as ornaments of rigpa.
3. Confess without words.
4. Rejoice letting everything liberate naturally.
5. Request to turn the wheel of Dharma abiding in dharmadhatu.
6. Request to remain resting in the continuous clear light.
7. Dedicate free of elaboration.

Expelling Negative Forces - Expel all deluded perceptions into primordial purity.

Circle of Protection (Protection Spheres) - Everything arises as the display of emptiness and primordial wisdom without object.

Descent of Blessings - Bring forth the state of the nature of things.

Blessing the Offerings - Recognize the nature as it is and rest in this state.

Generating the Deity - Generate the body as the deity, speech as mantra, thoughts and concepts as emanation and reabsorption of the Dharmata.

Generating the Mandala - With **Hung** settle into the state of rigpa. Phenomena and beings arise interdependently as the great mandala of the spontaneously-perfect, infinitely pure reality.

Requesting the Wisdom Deities to Take Their Seats - The nature of rigpa is our absolute request to remain.

Prostration - Rest in the natural display of self-appearing primordial wisdom as the supreme prostration.

Offering - All objects appearing arise as offering clouds of indivisible bliss and emptiness.

Offering Praise - The supreme praise is seeing the way rigpa abides as the Dharmakaya ground.

*Mantra Recitation** resting in rigpa:

Om Ah Hung Benza Guru Peme Siddhi Hung (*108x or as many times as you can*)

*Dissolution** - The mandala dissolves into suchness. Rest free of reference point. *From this, the mandala arises again.*

*Receiving the Siddhi** - Let everything liberate naturally beyond conceptual mind.

*Confession**

Hung! Everything that arises is self-liberated on arising,
The confession without words within the unbiased basic space.

*Dedication**

Ho! I dedicate any roots of virtue,
with or without reference point,
in the fundamental nature of the great youthful vase body,
uncompounded, and free of elaboration.

*Prayer for Auspiciousness**

Ho! May we attain the rainbow body!

*Post-meditation** - *Go about your activities seeing everything like an illusion.*

* *These sections are abbreviated from the Rigdzin Dupa text and/or commentary as no specific "absolute" text has been provided.*

Khandro Nyingtik

The Inner Practice of the Five Families

from the Khandro Nyingtik

Homage to the Ever Excellent Five Families!

The inner practice of the five families is as follows. The *Luminous Expanse* says:

Empty yet clear awareness, the five primordial wisdoms,
One's very own rigpa, method and knowledge in union.

As this suggests, one's own unchanging rigpa is Vairocana. The unceasing creative power of Ever Excellent awareness arises as the male and female buddhas of the four families and the four gatekeepers. This means there is no accomplishment from elsewhere; it is enough for the visualization to be within oneself.

Generate the following, therefore, as perfect from the very moment it is brought to mind. You yourself are **Samantabhadra**, dark blue with one face and two hands, indivisibly united with the consort **Samantabhadri**. As insignia, you hold a vajra and bell. Your legs are crossed, and you are adorned with the precious ornaments. You are in sambhogakāya form with all the major marks and minor signs.

Visualize Vajrasattva at your forehead, Ratnasambhava at your throat, Amitābha at your heart, and Amoghasiddhi at your navel. And visualize the four gatekeepers at your four limbs. All the deities are in union with their consorts and are of the colour corresponding to the family to which they belong. Visualize the samaya-sattva and jñāna-sattva as instantly indivisible, and recite the following secret essence mantras:

Oṃ Āḥ Hūṃ

Oṃ Hūṃ Trāṃ Hrīḥ Āḥ

Siddhi Phala Hūṃ Jaḥ

Know that the forms are illusory, apparent yet unreal, and recite the mantra as audible emptiness. For the perfection stage, rest in an experience of indivisibility.

As to the benefits of practicing in such a way, it will bring every possible quality within the present lifetime. You will accomplish beings' welfare by means of the four types of activity

and actualize the five kayas and primordial wisdoms. And you will attain perfect awakening within this very rebirth.

May this inner practice of the five families meet with the one who has the right karmic destiny. Samaya. Gya. Gya. Gya. Khatham. Ithi. Let it be virtuous!

Concise Protector Practices

Ekajati

Focus: The female protector of Dzogchen who removes inner and outer feats and “demons”

I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha most excellent for the benefit of all sentient beings. (3X)

Om Svabhava Shuda Sarva Dharma Svabhava Shudo Ham

In a stretch of clear sunny sky, a moon disk rises into the sky. On the moon disk is the red seed syllable **Ram**, emitting great red light. The seed syllable revolves and turns into Ekajati.



She is naked with a tiger-skin dangling below her waist. She has one knotted upright ponytail on the top of her head, one eye in the center of her forehead indicative of her non-dual vision of self and other. Her one single tooth is pointed down like a phurba and destroys obstacles. Her one breast at the center of her chest symbolically feeds those who correctly follow the Dzogchen teachings that she protects. She holds a khatvanga in her right hand with a swastika at the top symbolizing eternal enlightenment, and a mala in her left hand. She wears wear a garland of 51 fresh skulls and a five-skull crown symbolizing her ferocious nature towards all that is evil.

From her eye in her forehead shines a beam of white light into my own forehead. From her throat shines a red light into my own throat. From her heart, a beam of blue light shines into my heart. The three lights merge inseparably throughout my body.

Ho! From the palace of the ultimate expanse of Akanishta, mother of all the Buddhas in the three times, protectress of Mantra, Ekajati-ma, surrounded by hundreds of thousands of wrathful wisdom dakinis, please protect the Buddha’s precious teachings through your activity.

With your great compassion, liberate samaya breakers and enemies. Come here to this place to enjoy this ornamented tormā.

The time has come to protect the Buddha's teachings. The time has come for the glory of the noble three jewels. The time has come to extend the life of the Lama's enlightened form. The time has come to dispel the obstacles of yogins. The time has come to accomplish the enlightened activities of the dharma protectors. In this way, mamo, dakinis, and dharma protectors, please accomplish the enlightened activities entrusted to you by this yogin.

Dedication: By this virtue may I quickly attain the state of Buddhahood, and may I lead all sentient beings into that state with none left behind. (3X) <Bell & Drum>



Brief Offering Prayer to Ekajaṭī

by Mipham Rinpoche

Hūṃ! Wrathful expression of the wisdom of
Samantabhadrī,

Mother Ekajaṭī, Queen of Space,

Together with the hosts of mamos—of wisdom, with
special karma and the worldly:

We supplicate you! We offer to you! Carry out the
entrusted activities!

Rahula

Brief Offering Prayer to Za Rāhula *by Mipham*

Rinpoche

Hriḥ! Great planetary sage, Rāhula,

With your eight emanations and four animal-headed sisters,

Spirits of the planets and stars and the eight classes of arrogant ones:

We supplicate you! We make this offering to you!

Carry out the activities we request!

Dorje Legpa

**Brief Offering Prayer to the Oath-Bound Vajrasādhu
(Dorje Legpa) by Mipham Rinpoche**

Hūṃ! Great oath-bound being, Vajrasādhu – Tiklé Tsal,

Along with those who delight you, the tenma goddesses, kiṃkaras and messengers,

And the assembly of three hundred and sixty brothers:

We supplicate you! We make this offering to you! Carry out the activities we request!

King Gesar

*The Swift Infusion of Blessings – A Guru Yoga of the Great Embodiment of
Unchanging Awareness Wisdom*

by Mipham Rinpoche, edited by Yogi Khenpo Drimed Dawa

Focus: Yidam and protector of all wisdoms, compassion, and “powers”

I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha most excellent for the benefit of all sentient beings. (3X)

Om Svabhava Shuda Sarva Dharma Svabhava Shudo Ham



Emaho! In the sky before me is an expanse of rainbow-colored light, with vast, cloud-like gatherings of local deities and deities of the Three Roots,

Out of which appears the Supreme Being, Gesar Norbu Draddul Tsal, inspiring, replete with blessings, and smiling with joy.

Protector, embodiment of all the Buddhas, Compassionate One, Nirmanakaya emanation of the great and glorious Orgyen, Lord, who embodies the three buddha families, great lion Gesar, like a child, in a state of intense and fervent

devotion, I pray to you, my kind father, from the depths of my heart.

In your wisdom mind, which never parts from the state of clear light, great clouds of loving kindness and compassion are amassed now and forever more,

And for the disciples with the right karma and aspirations from the past, your compassion brings down a powerful rain of blessings and inspiration.

Even within the battle dress and armor of the brave drala warriors, appear countless mandalas of the deities of the Three Roots – merely by thinking of you all, we are inspired with great and powerful blessings.

The male warriors perform their imposing dance of war, the female warriors sing their captivating songs, the horses pant and neigh excitedly, and the brave dralas bellow with laughter.

For us, whose minds are filled with devotion and joy, do not neglect your promises and commitments, but grant us your blessings – make our bodies a stronghold of drala warriors, Empower our speech with miraculous force and arouse in our minds the awareness-power of bliss and emptiness!

Make us one with you, Lord Gesar, forever inseparable!

Oh lama, care for us! (21X)

Oh lama, Great Being, Wish Fulfilling Jewel, care for us! (21X)

Om Ah Hung Benza Maha Guru Mani Radza Sarva Siddhi Pala Hung (21X)) *Then dissolve the visualization and rest in pure awareness.*

Dedication: By this virtue may I quickly attain the state of Buddhahood, and may I lead all sentient beings into that state with none left behind. (3X) <Bell & Drum>

Dorje Gotrab – Vajra Armor

The Means of Achievements of Wish-fulfilling Jewel on Vajra Armor

Focus: Protector from sickness, hunger, fighting, and social problems

I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha most excellent for the benefit of all sentient beings. (3X)

Om Svabhava Shuda Sarva Dharma Svabhava Shudo Ham



Marvellous! The great and glorious Guru Vajra Armor has one face, two arms, and is dark blue in color. He has a purba in his right hand and a vajra and in his left; and is adorned with glorious cemeterial ornaments.

On a lotus, sun, and moon disk, he stands with his two legs spread in the fighter stance on the back of a nine-headed dark-black hog,

surrounded by a blazing flame of wisdom.

With resounding complete into words of mantras, he frees beings from defilements as a divine figure of a Buddha-field. Compassion and the thought process of wisdom are ripened into the condition of actuality. Recite the mantra through the display of spontaneous Samantabhadra:

Om Padma Sha-wari Phad Nen Parshig Naga Nen Teyatha Sarwa Wirita Hana Hana Bezer Na Racha Racha Soha (21X) Then:

With the blessing of Guru Padmasambhava, there are thirteen syllables: one vowel “O”, four vowels “I”, one vowel “E”, and four long full-stops. When recited without any omissions, all outer, inner, and secret obstacles are removed. All will be auspicious in this life, the next life, and the intermediate bardo state. Practice as one who possesses such good fortune! Samaya gya, gya, gya!

Then dissolve the visualization and rest in pure awareness.

Marvellous! One’s heart is blessed with the blessing of the root and lineage Gurus, who have attained the accomplishments. Under their sweet care and that of the Yidam Deity,

accompanied with Dakinis and oath-bound protectors, present here like a body and its shadow, may all my wishes also be fulfilled with the auspicious presence of spontaneous achievements!

Dedication: By this virtue may I quickly attain the state of Buddhahood, and may I lead all sentient beings into that state with none left behind. (3X) <Bell & Drum>

It is transcribed by Shri Emaho from the sky-treasury through the state of wisdom on the request of the great Tertön Drukdra Ogyen Droduel Thinley Wangi Gyelpo on the ceremonial day of Monkey month in the earth dog year. Edited by Yogi Khenpo Drimed Dawa.

Tibetan Prayers for the Deceased

Prayer for Deliverance from the Bardo's Narrow Passage

Attributed to the Khenchen of Orgyen, Padmasambhava

Oh, child of Buddhanature <name>, homage to the yidam, and to the host of dakinis.

Through your great love, please guide (him, her, us).

When (she, he, we) wander due to great delusion through Samsara lamas of the oral lineage, please guide (him, her, me) on the luminous, undistracted path of listening, reflecting, and meditating!

Supported by throngs of dakinis, supreme mothers, deliver (her, him, me) from the bardo's terrifying, narrow passage! Escort (her, him, me) to the land of totally pure, perfect Buddhahood.

When (she, he, I) wander due to intense ignorance through Samsara, Buddha Vairochana, please guide (her, him, me) on the luminous path of the wisdom of Dharmadhatu!

Supported by Dha-tish-vari, your supreme consort, deliver (her, him, me) from the bardo's terrifying, narrow passage! Escort (her, him, me) to the land of totally pure, perfect Buddhahood!

When due to fierce aggression (she, he, I) wander in Samsara, Buddha Vajrasattva, please guide (her, him, me), on the luminous path of Mirror-like Wisdom!

Supported by Buddha Lochana, your supreme consort, deliver (her, him, me) from the bardo's terrifying, narrow passage! Escort (her, him, me) to the land of totally pure, perfect Buddhahood!

When due to intense pride, (she, he, I) wander in Samsara, Buddha Ratnasambhava, please guide (her, him, me) on the luminous path of Equalizing Wisdom!

Supported by Mamaki, your supreme consort, deliver (her, him, me), from the bardo's terrifying narrow passage! Escort (her, him, me) to the land of totally pure, perfect Buddhahood!

When due to intense desire and attachment (she, he, I) wander in Samsara, Buddha Amitabha, please guide (her, him, me) on the luminous path of the Wisdom of Discernment!

Supported by Panda-vara-sini your supreme consort, deliver (her, him, me) from the bardo's terrifying, narrow passage! Escort (her, him, me) to the land of totally pure, perfect Buddhahood!

When due to intense jealousy (her, him, me) wander in Samsara, Buddha Amoghasiddhi, please guide (her, him, me) on the luminous path of All-accomplishing Wisdom! Supported by Samaya-tara, your supreme consort, deliver (her, him, me) to the land of totally pure, perfect Buddhahood!

When due to strong habitual tendencies (he, she, I) wander in Samsara, dakas and Vidyadharas, please guide (her, him, me) to the land of totally pure, perfect Buddhahood!

When due to strong habitual tendencies (she, he, I) wander in Samsara, dakas and Vidyadharas, please guide (her, him, me) on the luminous path of Co-emergent Wisdom!

Supported by a throng of dakinis, your supreme consorts, deliver (her, him, me) from the bardo's terrifying, narrow passage! Escort (her, him, me) to the land of totally pure, perfect Buddhahood!

When due to intense delusion (she, he, I) wander in samsara, throng of Peaceful and Wrathful Buddhas, please guide (her, him, me) on the luminous path that abandons panic and terrifying appearances!

Supported by a host of dakinis, who control space, deliver (her, him, me) from the bardo's terrifying, narrow passage! Escort (her, him, me) to the land of totally pure, perfect Buddhahood!

Ah! May the Space element not arise as an enemy, and may (she, he, I) see it as the Pure Realm of the Blue Buddha. May the Water element not arise as an enemy, and may (she, he, I) see it as the Pure Realm of the White Buddha.

May the Earth element not arise as an enemy, and may (she, he, I) see it as the pure Realm of the Yellow Buddha. May the Fire element not arise as an enemy, and may (she, he, I) see it as the Pure Realm of the Red Buddha.

May the Wind element not arise as an enemy, and may (she, he, I) see it as the Pure Realm of the Green Buddha. May the Rainbow element not arise as an enemy, and may (she, he, I) see it as the Pure Realms of various Buddhas.

May the sounds, lights, and light-rays not arise as enemies, and may (she, he, I) see them as the pure Realm of the all-encompassing Peaceful and Wrathful Yidams.

May (she, he, I) realize all sounds to be (her, his, my) own sounds, may (she, he, I) realize all lights to be (her, his, my) own lights. May (she, he, I) realize all rays to be (her, his, my) own rays.

May (she, he, I) recognize the Bardo to be (her, his, my) own appearance, and may (she, he, I) actualize it as the Pure Realm of the Three Kayas! EMAHO!

Retreats

One of the principle practices of Buddhism is **the retreat**. Traditionally, once one received an empowerment or teaching, one would enter a retreat for a period of time as directed by the *lama*, to engage fully in the practice. Some of these retreats are extended periods of time that are often beyond the means of many lay practitioners in the West with other commitments such as family and job. Nevertheless, most of us can commit the time to do one or more shorter periods of retreat, perhaps in your own home, if an affordable retreat facility is not readily available (these need not necessarily be Buddhist retreat centers). However, it would be beneficial to explore what options *are* available to you in your geographic location. The internet is the easiest source to locate such facilities.

To set up your own retreat, it is helpful to prepare some foods and ritual needs ahead of time so that your time may be used to focus on your practice. Be prepared not to leave during this time unless absolutely necessary. Retreats are considered “silent” or “sealed.” In addition to not leaving, this means that one does not speak to others during this time (except chanting or answering questions by the retreat master or *lama*). So be sure to *turn off* the cell phone, computer and so forth.

Divide the retreat time into units of time, e.g., eight 60-minute blocks for one day, with a short break between each. Each block of time would then consist of a repetition of the same sequence of activities. An example would be to complete your formal *sadhana* practice including 1000 mantra recitations and resting in the natural state for a total of 40 minutes. This could be followed by a 10-minute break of walking meditation (walk slowly while continuing to recite the mantra), followed by a short tea break and start anew.

With some experience, one may choose to do fewer, longer blocks such as four two-hour or three-hour blocks. Tibetan retreats are traditionally divided into four or six sessions each day: (a) early morning, late morning, afternoon, and evening or (b) one very early morning, one after breakfast, one late morning, one after lunch, one later afternoon, and one in the evening. There are usually short breaks for tea or meals, or perhaps practice walks in between. Longer sessions often include periods of study and contemplation, in addition to the time spent in meditation practice. Times for eating or tea should also be considered part of the practice and done mindfully with awareness.

The benefit of a retreat at a *dharma* center or retreat facility is that they may serve meals and have structured practice. Some individuals find that much more suitable for their practice. There is a sense of energy associated with group practice that is difficult to replicate in individual practice. Thus, you are highly encouraged to find a local *sangha* with which to associate before or following your retreat. Just be aware that others may not sustain the mindfulness of practice during meals, breaks, etc. A retreat should be a continuous practice, not a vacation.

Tsok and Puja Texts (with Commentaries)
Brief Sang (Smoke) Offering by Mipham Rinpoche
(edited by Khenchen Drimed Dawa)

Ho! With this smoke offering, in great clouds like those of Samantabhadra,

Primordial Buddha – absolute purity nature of mind, ultimate formless reality

We sanctify the guru, yidam deity, buddhas and bodhisattvas,

We sanctify the vīras, ḍākinīs, and dharma protectors,

- *Viras – “heros”, masculine energies*
- *Dakinis – feminine insight/wisdom*
- *Protectors – enlightened beings or powerful spirits*

We sanctify the warrior spirits, regional deities, and treasure-keepers,

- *Warrior spirits – energy to protect & maintain spiritual vitality*
- *Regional deities – mountain gods and local spirits incorporated into Buddhism*
- *Treasure keepers – guardians of hidden sacred teachings or objects to be found by “treasure revealers” at a later relevant time*

We sanctify all these personal gods and powerful guardians,¹

We sanctify the outer environment and its inhabitants into vast purity.

And we offer a sky-treasury of inexhaustible sensory delights.

- *From the smoke offerings*

Let everything be auspicious so that hindrances are pacified and all our wishes
 spontaneously fulfilled!

- *Liberation and wellbeing of all*

Recite “**Oṃ Āḥ Hūṃ!**” (3X)

The Concise Tsok (Feast) Offering

by Mipham Rinpoche (commentaries by Khenchen Drimed Dawa)

Om Ah Hum Hoh (*“hoh” is added for the “offering”*) *With this, bless the substances for the feast offering.*

Gurus, devas, ḍakinis all: come now to this ganachakra feast.

- *Gurus – teachers*
- *Devas – celestial, non-human male beings, yet not fully enlightened*
- *Dakinis – “sky dancers” symbolizing enlightened feminine energy and wisdom; spacious qualities of mind guiding practitioners*

Outer, inner and secret great bliss are the ganachakra offerings I make.

- *Outer (external) – physical actions, rituals symbols, external offerings*
- *Inner (internal) – subtle body energy or own mind, transforming emotions into wisdom*
- *Secret (transcendent) – profound, non-dual, direct experiences such as the ultimate nature of mind*

All impairments and breakages of samaya, I confess.

- *Commitments to maintain pure view, practices, or relationships*

Duality, enemies and obstructors: liberate them into the dharmadhatu.

- *Duality, enemies, and obstructors – mental constructs, negative emotions, and external forces that hinder our progress*
- *Liberate them – transform them into the ultimate nature of reality, dharmadhatu...*
- *Dharmadhatu – the ultimate nature of reality (non-dual, transcendent, or suchness; awakened mind)*

May your wisdom mind, the great bliss of equality, be delighted;

Please grant me attainments, ordinary and supreme.

The Tsok Feast Offering to Accompany the Vajra Seven-Line Prayer *by Mipham Rinpoche*

Arrange whatever samaya substances you have, such as meat and alcohol.

Hung. With **Ah** appears a skull cup, as vast as the space of dharmadhatu,

With **Om**, all appearance and existence are displayed as the tsok offerings

With **Hung**, they transform into the wisdom play of great bliss,

With **Hrih**, gurus, devas and dakinis, all the deities gathered, are pleased and satisfied.

Om Ah Hung Hrih

With this, bless the offerings.

Hung! In the northwest of the land of Oddiyana,

In the heart of a lotus flower,

Endowed with the most marvelous attainments,

You are renowned as the Lotus-born,

Surrounded by many hosts of dakinis.

Following in your footsteps,

We invite you to this feast of desirable offerings,

So come now, bless us with your grace!

Pour down your blessings on this sublime place,

Transform the ganachakra offerings into wisdom nectar,

Grant us, the supreme practitioners, the four empowerments,

Dispel obstructors, negative forces and obstacles

And confer siddhis, ordinary and supreme.

Hung. Beloved master Pema Totrengtsal,

With your throng of Vidyadharas and dakinis,

Encompassing the three roots in this mandala of the buddhas,

In deep devotion, with fervent yearning, I pray to you.

All the merit of my and others' body, speech and mind, our wealth,

And everything desirable in the universe, every source of pleasure and enjoyment with
nothing left out,

I offer Samantabhadra's unending ganachakra of great bliss.

With all your compassion and love, accept them with delight, so your heart's wishes are fulfilled.

Guru Rinpoche, I pray to you;

Vidyadharas and dakinis, inspire me with your blessings;

Grant this devoted disciple attainments, ordinary and supreme;

Let all my impairments and breakages of samaya be healed, I pray.

Obstacles outer, inner and secret – liberate them all into dharmadhatu.

Until I realize enlightenment, hold me close, without ever parting,

Like the waxing moon let my lifespan, merit, experience and realization grow ever greater,

And bless me so that all my aspirations spontaneously come true.

Om Ah Hung Benza Guru Pema Siddhi Hung

This arose from the lake of Jampal Gyepa's mind on the tenth day of the second month of the

Hemalamba year,¹ as a genuine wish-granting gem. Maṅgalam. | Rigpa Translations, 2015.

ENDNOTES

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- ⁱ Adapted by Khenpo Drimed Dawa from text translated by Konchok Tamphel, Garchen Buddhist Institute
- ⁱⁱ Adapted by Khenpo Drimed Dawa from the *Essence of the Kalachakra Tantra* by Ngawang Lodro Tsungme and Jamgon Kingtru's *Treasury of Knowledge*, both translated by Lotsawa Palden Phuntsok, and *Kalachakra – The Tenfold Powerful One* from Kalacharanet.org.