

**THE WISH~FULFILLING
GOLDEN SUN
OF THE
MAHAYANA
THOUGHT TRAINING**

**by
Thubten Zopa**

(The greatest simpleton amongst
all the followers of Guru Shakyamuni)

MEDITATION FOUR

THE MAHAYANA EQUILIBRIUM MEDITATION (*T'eg.pa.ch'en. pö.lo.jong.tsül*)

It is never enough to gain only self-Liberation. Attachment to my own self-peace and striving solely for this is very selfish and cruel.

Visualising a disturbing enemy, a helping friend and a stranger, surrounded by all sentient beings, after contemplating each section of this meditation, I should think, "There is no reason to be attached to, and help the friend, nor to hate the enemy and return harm."

1. If I were to work only to gain my own self-peace, there would be no reason to have been born human, because, even as an animal, I could strive for this.

The different forms of animal have the same aim: self-happiness, and perform many negative actions, such as destroying enemies, cheating others with political mind and fighting, as do many highly educated people, who also seek only their own self-pleasure. There is almost no difference between them other than physical shape.

2. The main purpose of my being born human is to strive for and achieve higher aims: to bring every sentient being into everlasting happiness. This is something that no animal can do.
3. Just as I wish to avoid suffering and find happiness, so do all other sentient beings.

Therefore, I and all other sentient beings are equal; therefore there is no logical reason to care more for myself than for another and I should harm neither enemy nor any other sentient being.

4. For countless rebirths I have been discriminating all beings as either friend, enemy or stranger with the self-"I" consciousness.

Päl.dän.ch'ö.dr'ag said:

If there is self "I" consciousness, then there is the discrimination of self-others.

Attachment and hate arise from discriminated partisanship between other and self.

All negative things arise from acting under the influence of these negative minds.

- a. **How** the self-"I" consciousness (ignorance, wrong conception) causes

“I” attachment (greed)

producing

attachment to self-happiness (possessiveness).

All the different functions of the negative mind arise from the above.

- i. Anger is caused by greed and self-attachment; it makes me discriminate against whoever disturbs my happiness, thus producing the enemy.
- ii. Greed points out the friend who helps, and the enemy who hinders. Such reasoning comes from past, present and future instances of help and hindrance.
- iii. Ignorance discriminates the stranger, who neither helps nor hinders.

b. Results

- i. Anger makes me hate and harm the enemy.
- ii. Greed makes me be attached to, and help the friend.
- iii. Ignorance makes me see the stranger as of a permanent self-nature.

By following the advice of these negative minds I become involved in suffering and complicated situations.

Greed creates suffering and danger for myself and all other beings. The whole Earth is in danger of explosion. Attachment offers no peace, and only causes suffering.

5. The two negative actions, helping with greed and harming with anger, have thrown me into samsaric suffering for beginningless lives, making perfect peace and Enlightenment impossible to achieve.
6. To continue in this way will cause me the same suffering, receiving neither realisations nor Enlightenment, for countless eons.

Negative actions leave negative impressions on the consciousness. These ripen into negative karma, and create suffering ad infinitum.

7. The three objects—friend, enemy and stranger—are not definitely true. The reasons for their being what they are, are very temporal. The present friend, enemy and stranger have not always been the friend, enemy and stranger in past countless lives. Even the enemy of last year may be the friend of this year, or the friend of this morning become this afternoon’s enemy. It can change within the hour, and does so because of attachment to food, clothing and reputation.

The Teaching, *Pung.zang.g'i.zhug.pa* says:

If one tries to befriend an enemy for a moment, he becomes your friend. The same thing occurs when one treats a friend as an enemy. Therefore, knowledgeable ones are never attached to

food, clothing or reputation, nor to friends or enemies, by understanding the impermanence of temporal relationships.

Guru Shakyamuni said:

The father becomes the son in another life, mother becomes wife, enemy becomes friend; it always changes. Therefore, there is nothing definite in samsara.

According to this realisable quotation, there is no reason to be attached to friends nor to hate the enemy.

8. If that ignorant, self-“I” conception and all of its objects were true, these three distinctions (friend, enemy, stranger) should exist from countless previous lives to the present, and even beyond Enlightenment.

This contradicts the significance of Buddhahood, for the Enlightened Being is called Buddha because his wonderful, sublime Knowledge has not a tiny atom of the delusions and illusions that cause such discriminations.

Therefore, the fully-understanding One showed his compassionate method, the Equilibrium Meditation, to free me from delusions, illusions and discriminations.

The discriminations are not true because that conception and its objects are totally illusive. There is no self-“I.”

9. My afflictions are not created by the enemy but by myself. In my previous lives I afflicted others through ignorance, and the results of this return during my present life.

As a Sutra says:

I have killed all of you before and was chopped up by all of you in previous lives. We have all killed each other as enemies, so why should we be attached to each other?

Chandrakirti said:

It is very foolish and ignorant to retaliate with spite, in the hope of ending the attack of the enemy, because the retaliation itself only brings more suffering.

Therefore, there is no reason to retaliate.

10. The enemy is the object of my practice of patience, to control my anger. I should not hate the enemy who, by strengthening this practice, brings peace into my mind.

11. The enemy is infinitely more precious than any possession. He is the source of my past, present and future lives' happiness. I should never hate. Any material possession can be given up for his peace.
12. The enemy is my greatest need. He is the cause of all beings' Enlightenment, including mine. He is my best possession; for his peace I can give up myself.
From now on I must never hate nor harm the enemy, nor any other being.
13. The enemy harming me physically and mentally is under the control of his negative mind. He is like a stick which someone uses to beat another. There is no reason to get angry, harming the person in retaliation—it is not his fault; as the pain of the beating is not the fault of the stick.
14. If I had clear Wisdom, I would see that harming others with hate is, in fact, harming myself with hate. Obviously, I should not do it.
15. The enemy, as well as every other being, is the object of the Buddha's compassion. The numberless Buddhas hold the enemy and every other being as dear as their own heart.
Therefore, even lightly harming any being is like harming the infinite Buddhas.
16. The Buddha always considers all sentient beings, even enemies, more important than himself. Mindlessly harming any being for my own peace is the act of a mind like stone.
17. The enemy and all other beings have been my mother countless times. The Holy Body, Speech and Mind of the infinite Buddhas are servant to all beings, enemies included. So I must not give harm.
18. Not harming the worst enemy, which is in my mind, and destroying the outside enemy instead, is like shooting a friend and not shooting the enemy by not recognising the object.
I should not harm the outer enemy but the inner one that causes all the suffering.
19. Because of high realisations based on this meditation, a Bodhisattva would see no sentient being as an enemy even if all should rise against him.
The enemy is merely the conception of my hate, just as friend and stranger are conceived by greed and ignorance. I should not believe as my negative minds discriminate.
20. I should check up with my inner Wisdom Eye: the attached friend and hateful enemy will never be found anywhere, neither inside nor outside either of their bodies. With the true Wisdom Eye, I can see that these are only names.

For all these reasons I can now see clearly that I have been foolish and nonsensical for beginningless lifetimes.

Realisation of this meditation is our most beneficial possession. It brings peace to numberless beings as well as to our many future lives. Inner realisation of this meditation brings the true, well-subdued peace—as indestructible as a diamond. The enjoyment of this peace is invaluable and has no end.

All this is within our mind and is unshakeable, even if all sentient beings were to rise as an enemy against us, so why don't we try to experience this understanding peace as shown by the Enlightened Ones who completed this realisation?

PRAYER TO BE SAID AFTER MEDITATION FOUR

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge that it is only the delusion of self-attachment that makes me differentiate myself as more important than others, and that the blessings of this prayer give much power to accomplish the Equilibrium Meditation.

DUG.NGÄL TR'A.MO TZAM.YANG MI.DÖ.CHING
suffering subtle even not desiring
 DE.LA NAM.YANG CH'OG.SHE ME.PAR.NI
happiness to never satisfaction not having
 DAG.D'ANG ZHÄN.LA KY'Ä PAR YÖ.MIN ZHE
I and others to differences having no saying
 ZHÄN.DE GA.WA KYE.PAR J'IN.GY'I.LOB
others happiness gladness generate please bless

(Please bless me and each sentient being to think continually that all others should have happiness and its cause, and to be happy when seeing another being create even the tiniest merit. For there is not the slightest difference between myself and all other beings, never finding satisfaction, even in dreams, nor desiring the smallest suffering.

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

MEDITATION FIVE

THE SEVEN TECHNIQUES OF MAHAYANIC CAUSE AND EFFECT (PART 1)

I. HOW ARE ALL SENTIENT BEINGS MY MOTHER?

That all sentient beings have been my mother is shown by:

1. Scriptural authority

Nagarjuna said:

If we divided this Earth into pieces the size of juniper berries, the number of these would not be as great as the number of times that each sentient being has been our mother.

2. Logical reasons

- a. Because of beginningless mind, samsaric transmigration is beginningless and my previous lives are numberless. But, due to different individual karmas, my present mother has not been my mother in all previous lives. For instance, when this mother was an elephant I was an ant, born from a mother ant; when I was a yak, she was a flea; and so on.
- b. However, the mother of my present, human life has been my human mother numberless times.
She has also been my mother when we were turkeys, hens, cows, etc., countless times each.
- c. Of all the realms of samsara, there is none in which I was never born. I have been born in every single place throughout the entire extension of space.
Each and every physical form in existence, even the most ugly and miserable of all, seen or not seen by me, I have taken innumerable times.
- d. Finally, the time when sentient beings began to be mother does not exist. Such a time is not the object of even the Omniscient Mind of Enlightened Beings, so it cannot be that of the limited minds of ordinary beings.
What is true, as above, for my present mother is also true for all other sentient beings.

II. REMEMBERING THE KINDNESS OF ALL MOTHER SENTIENT BEINGS

Even worldly people are grateful for the kindness of the mother, which extends from conception until death.

My mother's kindness is responsible for all the opportunities I have, of making use of my physical body and of leading the sort of life that I do.

If she hadn't taken care of me when I was in the womb, I wouldn't have been born alive. If she hadn't fed me well afterwards, I wouldn't have enjoyed the various functions of my physical body, such as using

my eyes to see the most beautiful objects,
 my ears to hear the most beautiful sounds,
 my nose to smell the sweetest perfumes,
 my tongue to enjoy the most delicious tastes, or
 my body to enjoy sexual love, and have many children.

Also, becoming rich by working with my body, speech or mind, and being skilful and creative with my hands; all this depends on my mother's kindness. My mother always took good care of me, feeding me properly, protecting me from many dangers, directing my life, and making me study so that I could have a comfortable life and good reputation.

From the time of my conception she has been worried and concerned about me. When I was in the womb she worried day and night, didn't move as freely as before, and always took more care of me than of herself, because of the great love and compassion she had for her baby. She took much care in eating—renouncing desirable food, and eating only that which would not give me harm, avoiding foods that were too hot and too cold, etc.

At the time of my birth, she bore the extreme suffering of feeling as if her body were about to split apart, and had fear that her life was in danger. If my mother hadn't wanted to bear the suffering of childbirth, I wouldn't have been born.

When I was a baby, in spite of disgust, she always kept me clean of ka-ka, pi-pi, snot, etc. She always tried to keep me warm and protected, and gave me the best clothes and food that she could. She would also keep the best part of her own food and other enjoyments for me.

My mother told lies to give me a good reputation, and to hide my faults and bad behaviour. To protect me from danger she fought or did anything possible to help, taking more care of me than of herself.

In all, my parents took great care of my life with much suffering, creating bad karma by making other beings suffer so that I would be happy.

Moreover, because my present mother has been my mother in countless human lives, she has been infinitely kind to me since time without beginning.

Nagarjuna said:

*The amount of milk we have drunk from the one mother is
 greater than the amount of water in the oceans.*

If all the milk I have ever received from my mother could be collected, it would fill infinite space, and I could continue to drink it in future lives. Similarly, the

food received from her is as infinite as space, and all my past ka-kas and pi-pis, the result of that food, would fill an infinite, immense extension. So would the clothes she gave me, the immense ocean of tears she shed out of worry for me, and the numberless bodies she sacrificed to protect my life.

Besides the kindnesses she gave me as a human, there are those she gave as all different beings.

I have received exactly the same amount of benefits from each sentient being. Therefore, as my present mother has been infinitely kind to me, so has every other sentient being.

III. REPAYING ALL MOTHER SENTIENT BEINGS FOR THEIR KINDNESS

Receiving Bodhicitta depends on having Great Compassion. This depends on Great Love, which comes from the unselfish love that sees only beauty. This can be easily achieved by considering sentient beings as mother and remembering their kindness to me. This is done because living beings cherish, of the two parents, their mother more than their father.

Even worldly people feel the responsibility of repaying help received from their mother or from other people, even if this help is in small, insignificant things. For instance, this help may be in satisfying my desires, by giving invitations to parties, food, or sups of tea, or by saying one or two sweet, empty words, pleasing to my ears. Also, even deeply ignorant animals such as dogs help their master in return for kindness received, so why can't I do the same?

Yet, repaying mother sentient beings in their worldly needs is not enough nor is it the best way, because it can't extinguish their suffering or its cause.

The best method of repayment is by helping them with the true realisation of Dharma, because this helps them to stop all interrupting mind, and so to receive Enlightenment.

PRAYER TO BE SAID AFTER THE THIRD TECHNIQUE (during Meditation Five)

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge

that all sentient beings are my mother, all have been constantly kind to me, and all are in great suffering.

NYAM.T'AG DRO.WA DI.KÜN DAG.G'I.MA
tormented living beings this all my mother
 YANG.YANG DR'IN.GY'I KYANG.PÄ TSÜL.SAM.NÄ
again and again have been kind how thinking by
 DUG.PÄ B'U.LA TZE.WÄ MA.ZHIN.D'U
beautiful beloved boy of compassion mother as
 CHÖ.MIN NYING.JE KYE.WAR J'IN.GY'I.LOB
effortless compassion to generate please bless

(Please bless me to generate true effortless compassion, such as a mother has for her beloved, beautiful boy, by thinking that all living beings are equally tormented, and that all are my mother, and have been constantly kind to me.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

After all this, I should check up in my mind to see if I am still harbouring thoughts of self-attachment and self-cherishing, which are my worst enemy.

If so, I should apply the following solution, with deep feeling.

IV. EQUALISING ONESELF WITH OTHERS

Shantideva said:

The practice of equalising oneself with others is a Holy and mystical practice.

How is this?

The greatly courageous mind takes on the suffering of others by taking more care of others than of itself and gives its own happiness and merits to others.

The importance of this Teaching is not grasped by those of lower understanding, and it is difficult for them to rejoice at this action. Therefore, this practice is recognised as Holy and mystical.

Guru Tzong.k'a.pa said:

Even the breath running in and out can become a great method of helping other beings—by making them receive the highest, most magnificent state, obtained through the practice of a Bodhisattva's deeds, characterised by Bodhicitta: taking more care of others than of oneself.

I should equalise myself with others because we are equal in fact: all sentient beings, myself included, desire happiness and dislike suffering.

Shantideva said:

We should primarily train ourselves in the practice of equalising oneself with others.

As all beings are equal in happiness and suffering, they should be protected as oneself.

There are many parts of the body, yet they protect each other from suffering, equally. Similarly, although the suffering of other beings is separate to me, we are all equal in desiring happiness. The action of curing the suffering of others should have no expectations, just as I don't expect to receive anything by curing my own suffering.

Therefore, as there is no reason to cherish myself more than others, I should take more care of others than of myself.

By deeply thinking of the numberless shortcomings of cherishing myself, and the numberless benefits of cherishing others, I can raise the greatly courageous thought: thinking of curing the suffering of all other beings by feeling even their smallest suffering as unbearable, and not being upset even by the thought of suffering all their sufferings.

PRAYER TO BE SAID AFTER MEDITATION FIVE

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge of my sameness with others, dispelling all haughty thoughts.

DOR.NA J'I.PA RANG.D'ÖN K'O.NA.D'ANG
in brief little child self interest solely and
 T'UB.WANG ZHÄN.D'ÖN BA.ZHIG DZÄ.PA.YI
mighty power others interest only he does
 KYÖN.D'ANG YÖN.TÄN YE.WA TOG.PÄ.LÖ
defect and good quality distinction understand by mind
 DAG.ZHÄN NYAM.JE NÜ.PAR J'IN.GY'I.LOB
others equalise be able please bless

(Please bless me to be able to change myself into others and to equalise myself with them, by thinking of the benefits and shortcomings of the following actions: The Buddha works only for others; the limited-minded child works only for himself.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

MEDITATION SIX

THE SEVEN TECHNIQUES OF MAHAYANIC CAUSE AND EFFECT (PART II)

V. SHORTCOMINGS OF THE SELF-CHERISHING CONCEPTION

On the basis of the following short explanation, I should think about the shortcomings of self-cherishing thoughts.

The self-cherishing conception

1. has kept me locked in the prison of samsara for numberless lives since beginningless time, compelling me to bear the sufferings of the six realms as much as possible;
2. has kept me in ignorance, continuously obsessed by countless problems;
3. has prevented all opportunities of reaching Enlightenment;
4. has stopped my receiving any other realisations;
5. has prevented the understanding and practice of Dharma;
6. has not even allowed the enjoyment of temporal happiness;
7. will continually destroy me in the future, as it has done in the past; and
8. changes helpful living beings and inanimate objects into enemies who destroy me.

My Guru becomes my enemy. So do my friends—relatives and non-relatives—myself and my body, and possessions and non-possessions.

Tsong.k'a.pa said:

All the defects and sufferings are the fault of only one thing—the self-cherishing conception. From the beginninglessness of samsaric life, how much suffering has been experienced in all three samsaric worlds? But still the creator of all faults has not been recognised, and is sought in external objects. Because of this ignorance, I have held and harmed the wish-fulfilling mother sentient being as an enemy. On the other hand, my worst enemy, the self-cherishing conception, the cause of all

suffering, has been held as the dearest friend. Whatever the action performed, it is under the control of the self-cherishing conception.

Shantideva said:

How much suffering and fear, and how many harmful things are in existence? If all arise from clinging to the "I," what should I do with this great demon?

There are three hundred and sixty kinds of harmful and interrupting evil spirits, one thousand and eighty kinds of hindering spirits, and four hundred and twenty-four kinds of sickness. Yet all disturbances and sufferings of the present life, all sorts of human tribulations, quarrels, arguments and similar problems arise from the self-cherishing conception. This wrong conception makes me create much evil karma by forcing me to work for self-happiness, self-perfection, good reputation, etc. It makes me jealous of those who possess even the most insignificant thing, proud of being rich and powerful, angry when I hear rude words or see ugly objects, regard other beings as enemies, break my relationships with friends, and not get along with my teacher, parents, spouse, brothers and sisters. The self-cherishing conception disrupts the peace between all beings, and as long as this great demon lives in my heart, keeping peace from myself and others, there can be no method whatsoever by which permanent harmony can be found.

Sha.po.pa said:

Until oneself has been recognised as one's own enemy, no realised Guru can help. When one sees oneself as one's own enemy, then the Guru can be helpful.

This great enemy prevents my following the Guru's orders correctly, despite repeated warnings from Dharma friends. It makes me follow only my own habitual and very old, bad character. Thus, I appear hostile to those whose advice I ignore. Instead of recognising my own bad habits as the cause of all these problems, I blame other beings for them.

PRAYER TO BE SAID AFTER THE FIFTH TECHNIQUE (during Meditation Six)

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas, and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge of all the shortcomings of the self-cherishing conception, completely dispelling this wrong conception from my mind.

RANG.NYI CHE.PA DZIN.PA CHONG.NÄ.DI
myself care holding horrible disease this
 MI.DÖ DUG.NGÄL KYE.PÄ GYUR.T'ONG.NÄ
undesired suffering arising as cause seeing by
 LE.LÄN DÄ.LA KÖN.D'U ZUNG.J'Ä.TE
creator of faults regarding spiteful holding by
 DAG.DZIN DÖN.CH'EN JOM.PAR J'IN.GY'I.LOB
I clinging demon great destroy please bless

(Please bless me to destroy the great demon of the “I”-clinging conception by seeing that horrible disease, the self-cherishing mind, as a spiteful object and the cause of all the undesired suffering, and by blaming it for the creation of all faults.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

VI. THE BENEFITS OF CHERISHING OTHERS MORE THAN ONESELF

Infinite benefits result from taking care of others more than myself. A simple example, taking care of other beings makes them happy, as I am happy when cherished by others; and what could give me greater happiness than seeing my mother happy?

But this practice has great purpose and infinite benefits—the definite cessation of all interrupting obscurations and negative actions and imprints, that I have been creating from beginningless time until the present. Thus it allows me to accumulate merits, thereby receiving basic, gradual realisations leading to perfect Enlightenment, so pleasing the Kings Buddha and their sons: Bodhisattvas and Arhants.

Since reaching Buddhahood depends on this practice, it is of the utmost importance to cherish others more than myself.

How is this?

1. Buddhahood is the co-operation of Dharmakaya and Rupakaya.

Obtaining these depends on

- following and completing the co-operative path of Method and Wisdom, which depends on
- practice and realisation of the six Paramitas, which depends on

- Bodhicitta, which is based on
 - Mahayana great compassion, and this depends on
 - taking care of others more than myself.
2. Becoming an Arhant depends on the three Trainings:
- Wisdom Training (penetrative insight) depends on
 - Concentration Training: disciplining the mind away from immoral actions, that is control of intense agitation and selfishness by moral discipline. This depends on
 - other beings—the object of keeping precepts.

PRAYER TO BE SAID AFTER MEDITATION SIX

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge of how to take more care of all other sentient beings than of myself, and the Knowledge that taking greater care of other sentient beings and leading them to Enlightenment is the door to Infinite Knowledge.

MA.NAM CHE.ZUNG DE.LA GÖ.PÄ.LO
mother all taking care to happiness leading thought
 T'A.YÄ YÖN.TÄN JUNG.WÄ GOR.T'ONG.NÄ
infinite knowledge door of seeing by
 DRO.WA DI.D'AG DAG.G'I DRAR.LANG.KYANG
living beings this all my raise as enemy even
 SOG.LÄ CHE.PAR DZIN.PAR J'IN.GY'I.LOB
life than as dear to hold please bless

(Please bless me to be able to hold sentient beings dearer than my life, even should they all rise against me as enemies, by seeing that the thought of taking the greatest care of sentient beings and leading them to Enlightenment is the door to Infinite Knowledge.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

MEDITATION SEVEN

THE SEVEN TECHNIQUES OF MAHAYANIC CAUSE AND EFFECT (PART III)

VII. *TONG.LEN*—GIVING AWAY AND TAKING OVER

All sentient beings should be living in perfect happiness and its cause right now, but it is extremely difficult for them to achieve this from their side alone.

As we look at kind mother sentient beings they appear lost, their Wisdom Eye blinded by the cataract of ignorance. They are crazy with delusion, unconscious, and always stepping over the very fearful precipice into the three lower realms.

All mother sentient beings are completely ignorant of the cause of happiness, yet are hungry for happiness; they create only the cause of suffering, although they do not desire suffering. They do not know the great Enlightened happiness, or the perfect self-happiness. Blind in their Wisdom Eye, they recognise neither right practice nor right avoidance. Lacking the Guru who leads to those perfect goals, they commit many evil actions of the three doors of body, speech and mind, and so are constantly being reborn in the lower realms.

But we have received the perfect human rebirth with the possibilities of opening the Wisdom Eye and of practising Dharma, having met the Guru to lead us to Enlightenment. So we can recognise practice and avoidance by knowing the causes of temporal happiness and suffering, and of perfect happiness and actual suffering.

So for all these reasons we should feel pity, and take on ourselves the responsibility of making all mother sentient beings receive the cause of happiness and perfect happiness, and for releasing them from suffering and its cause, and we ourselves should make all sentient beings free from all suffering and its cause, and lead them to permanent great happiness and its cause. So we offer all our happiness, including Enlightenment, and all our belongings to all mother beings, and take over all their suffering and problems.

The practice of giving away makes the practice of great love practical and successful. The practice of taking over makes the practice of compassion successful and increase quickly.

Before starting this practice, the great Mahayana compassion should be meditated on deeply by thinking with feeling, how good it is that all mother sentient beings should be completely released from suffering, and by seeing all the different sufferings they are experiencing.

Also, the great Mahayana love should be deeply meditated on with strong heartfelt feeling, by rejoicing at the thought that all sentient beings should have the great happiness, and by visualising to give them all greatest pleasures including Enlightenment.

The main purpose of this practice is to control and extinguish self-attachment, i.e., taking the greatest care of only ourselves.

Such a mind often doubts, and is worried and afraid of temporal life sufferings, hot and cold, hunger and thirst, etc.

This meditation, “Giving away and taking over,” is not the same as the great Mahayana thought but it requires greater skill than the other practices.

Besides all this, we should have deep understanding of the bad results and shortcomings of not giving, and the numberless benefits of giving. What our egotistic mind doesn't want to give away are:

1. our most cherished body,
2. our possessions and enjoyments, and
3. our merits.

These three objects should be dedicated to control instantly our egotistic mind, which is the main destroyer of happiness and Enlightenment, and the cause of all suffering and problems.

In *D'a.wa dröl.ma*, Guru Shakyamuni said:

This body, which becomes rotten, and this life change and separate without control; and the child of lower intelligence is often controlled by a sinful mind creating extremely unrighteous actions with greed for worldly objects, which are nothing but a dream or magic show. But wise people have left riding on death.

This quotation explains that the body is very trivial and perishable, that the greatest benefits are available to those who give without attachment, and that greed for dream-like or phantom-like objects only creates continuous suffering.

The Teaching, *Lab.drön*, says:

If a body and mind such as mine—impermanent, changing every second and impure—can receive Enlightenment, is it received without a cause?

This emphasises that it is far better and more worthwhile to give for receiving Enlightenment, than living in and taking care of this miserable samsaric body.

The Teaching, *Kye.rab*, says:

It is unwise to be displeased when others can benefit by our own non-self-existent, perishable, trivial body, which is impure, always suffering and very unkind to us.

All problems that result from attachment to possessions are “protecting” problems, such as those of continually developing craving, holding, fear, finishing, looking after, increasing delusions and decreasing enjoyments. Keeping possessed objects is also an ungenerous, lower-being action, admired only by humans who are like babies.

The total benefit of giving is to receive instantly the infinite Knowledge of Buddha by accomplishing all paths: it is one of the quickest ways of cleaning ourselves of all obscurations. Also, it gives happiness and protection from problems, although these are not the aim of the practice.

The Sutra, *Dr’ag.shül.chän.gy’i.zhü.pa*, says:

Whatever is dedicated (given) causes no protection problems, stops craving and holding, frees from fear, helps the progress of Bodhicitta, never stops giving, brings pleasures, avoids delusions and increases enjoyments. Dedication always becomes a Holy-Being action and is always admired by the Buddhas.

Whether we practise giving or not, there will come a time when we are separating from our body and all our possessions. We shall die against our will, our possessions will leave us, and we shall leave them. Therefore, we should die having performed meaningful actions, the mind happy having given up possessed objects. This done, we are not caught up with them at death, and being extremely happy and free from worries, we are reborn in this way.

A condensed meditation to be practised wholeheartedly follows:

Shantideva prayed:

May I receive every type of suffering that sentient beings experience.

I should definitely follow the Holy Bodhisattvas’ deeds—I have a great responsibility to do so not only for the sake of all mother sentient beings, but for even my own.

1. I contemplate

that I am taking over all the different tremendous sufferings and problems, all the heavy and subtle obscurations of all the beings of **narak** so that they become Lord Buddha.

As I breathe in through my right nostril

these sufferings enter in the form of very dark horrible fogs.

These fogs become a thunderball, as great as Mount Meru (the greatest mountain in the world).

It plummets with the fierce force of the lightning of a dangerous electrical storm.

It strikes the infinitely black, rigid, rocky earth which is the wrong conception of the self-existent 'I' the attachment to taking more care of myself than of others, and ordinary conceptions, situated in the heart.

The great thunderball shatters the unimaginably large, rocky earth of all my delusions and obscurations—the interruptions to my Enlightenment—to pieces, as in an explosion of atoms, instantly disappearing, leaving only the mere emptiness of it all.

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya

of Lord Buddha by receiving all the gradual paths. All my speech, body and mind are one with Guru Lord Buddha's Holy Speech, Body and Mind.

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body, to each of the lower narak beings. Each wish-fulfilling Lord Buddha's Holy Body becomes everything in the nature of happiness that the beings need to cure their sufferings.

For example:

to the hot naraks appears a refreshing amrita rain to cool and give happiness;

to the cold naraks it appears as warm sunshine giving warmth and great happiness;

to the narak beings nearby these suffering places, who are also suffering in different ways, each Lord Buddha's Holy Body becomes one and the same as the different things that are causing the suffering. These things suddenly appear as enjoyments, giving great happiness, eradicating the suffering.

This also happens to the ordinary narak beings whose sufferings can be seen by ordinary people.

Each of their enjoyments generates an understanding of Dharma and all the levels of realisations including Enlightenment.

All become one with Lord Buddha, their mind being Dharmakaya and their body being Rupakaya.

2. I contemplate

that I am taking over every different type of suffering that **animals** experience:

- a. suffering of deep ignorance,
- b. suffering from heat and cold,
- c. suffering from hunger and thirst, and
- d. suffering of being eaten by other beings, of torture, and of hard work given by others.

As I breathe in through the right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupaka...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body, to each of the animal beings. Each wish-fulfilling Lord Buddha's Holy Body becomes everything in the nature of happiness that these beings need to cure their sufferings.

For example:

becoming heat to those who suffer cold;

becoming cool amrita water or a refreshing breeze to those who suffer from heat;

becoming amrita food for those who are hungry;

becoming amrita drink for the thirsty ones;

becoming all kinds of helpers and beautiful things, which guide them from life's dangers and such suffering as being eaten and beaten and tortured by other beings.

All of them receive all realisations including Enlightenment, beginning with Refuge, by enjoying all that was dedicated to them. All of them become Lord Buddha.

3. I contemplate

that I am taking over each **preta's** sufferings: the sufferings of inner and outer hindrances, and hindrances to eating food—all their obscurations—so that they become Lord Buddha.

As I breathe in through the right nostril...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body, to each of the pretas.

For example: becoming one with the hot burning sufferings in their stomachs, transforming all into the Gradual Path's realisations and infinite happiness.

It becomes one with the filthy, dirty, stagnant lakes which they cannot drink, transforming them into pure crystal amrita lakes, giving all the path's realisations and infinite happiness.

It becomes one with those interferences that keep them from enjoying food, and it instantly transforms them into Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Gurus, helping the pretas in many ways, granting them realisations in Dharma.

Also, I visualise as Guru Shantideva said:

May all pretas receive satisfaction from the continuously flowing amrita milk coming from Avalokiteshvara's hand and be always cool bathing in it.

All their minds become Dharmakaya and bodies Rupakaya, becoming one with Lord Buddha.

4. I contemplate

that I am taking over each **human being's** different sufferings and problems, every heavy and subtle obscuration that blocks the path to Enlightenment.

As I breathe in through the right nostril...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body. Each of Lord Buddha's Bodies becomes a method to cure their sufferings.

Shantideva said:

May I become food and drink in the famine suffering eons for those poverty stricken sufferers.

May I become never-ending wish-fulfilling treasures materialising in front of each of them as all the enjoyments they need.

May I be a guide for those who do not have a guide, a leader for those who journey, a boat for those who want to cross over, and all sorts of ships, bridges, beautiful parks for those who desire them, and light for those who need light.

And may I become sleeping clothes for those who need them, and a servant to all who need servants.

May I also become the basic conditions for all sentient beings, such as earth or even the sky which is indestructible by cause.

May I always be the living conditions for all sentient beings until all sentient beings are Enlightened.

May I also become the suffering-cutting medicine for sick people, and cure sickness as an amrita drink for an undying life for those who suffer death.

And amrita food for old-age suffering people, who enjoy it instantly, cutting off old age and death sufferings.

And become any object that they had difficulty in finding, such as parents, children, wives, husbands.

And become inseparable beautiful objects with them as they like, stopping the suffering of being separated from beautiful delightful objects.

And transform their bodies into Buddha's Holy Body by cutting off the sufferings of this delusion body.

All these enjoyments give them infinite happiness, and beginning with Refuge they become one with Lord Buddha—their mind becoming Dharmakaya, and their body becoming Rupakaya.

5. I contemplate

that I am taking over all the **asuras'** sufferings, worries, jealousies and all their delusions, heavy and subtle. Thus, they become one with Lord Buddha—their mind becoming Dharmakaya and their body becoming Rupakaya.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body, to each of the asuras.

It becomes one with the enemies with whom they fight, becomes one with the weapons which injure them and transforms enemies into Guru Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, showing the Dharma and leading them along the path.

It transforms weapons into a rain of flowers and beautiful rainbow-coloured clouds, as beautiful decorations in the nature of making them receive realisations and infinite happiness.

Their mind becomes Dharmakaya and their body becomes Rupakaya.

6. I contemplate

that I am taking over all the sufferings and obscurations of the **suras**. Such sufferings as death, quarrels, fights, banishment and being controlled, as well as those of the unconscious suras.

They all become one with Lord Buddha, their mind becoming Dharmakaya and their body, Rupakaya.

As I breathe in through my right nostril...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body, to each of the suras.

It becomes one with the amrita of immortality—to abolish the suffering of death.

It becomes one with the weapons that injure them, and transforms all into the path to Enlightenment and into transcendental enjoyments; all interfering enemies are transformed into Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, leading them into Enlightenment.

It becomes the whole path beginning with Refuge for the cognitionless suras.

They all become one with Buddha, with the achievement of Dharmakaya and Rupakaya.

7. I contemplate

that I am taking over all the subtle superstitions interrupting **Bodhisattvas** from receiving Enlightenment; and the subtle illusive mind of **Shravakas** and the **Pratyekabuddhas** and their self-cherishing conceptions.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body, to each of the Bodhisattva's and Arhants.

It becomes the higher Tantric realisations for the Bodhisattvas, bringing Enlightenment quickly by purifying the subtle illusive minds. It also becomes fundamental Mahayana realisations and higher Tantric realisations for the Arhants by purifying self-cherishing conceptions and every other negative mind.

(There is not one tiny negativity to get from Guru Buddha's Nirmanakayas, because they are completely purified of every single defect.)

8. I contemplate

that I am taking over all hindrances to my **Gurus** living until I receive all Sutra-Tantric Teachings and realisations that lead me into Enlightenment, especially to receive all the Teachings that lead me immediately into Enlightenment in this very lifetime.

Also the interruptions to my Gurus' Holy deeds spreading all over the samsaric realms, and to their becoming automatically successful in everything that they think of.

Now all my Gurus have eons of long life, until I receive all realisations and Teachings, there being many chances to receive all the explanations and Teachings from the Gurus.

All their deeds become capable of spreading through the universe without a single hindrance.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril ...

I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body, to each of the Gurus.

All the light becomes the Gurus' possessions and enjoyments, increasing their transcendental happiness for the sake of all sentient beings and myself.

9. I contemplate

that I am taking over all interruptions which shorten the **Nirmanakayas'** and **Holy Beings'** lives and the lives of **Practitioners**, as well as interruptions to the widespread development of their Holy deeds and practices.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril I send pure white light, which is my and Lord Buddha's Holy Body, to each of the Nirmanakayas, Holy Beings and Practitioners. The light makes everything that they undertake successful, and becomes the things they need.

10. I contemplate

that I am taking over all the negative influences—hindrances which cause degeneration or destruction of the **Teachings of Lord Buddha**, as well as the hindrances to the Teachings of the Buddha prevailing in the universe.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril I send pure white light, which becomes continuously existing, uninterrupted Teachings. The light makes degeneration impossible until every sentient being receives Enlightenment.

Shantideva said:

*May the Teachings of Buddha—the source of all happiness
and the medicine to cure sentient beings' suffering—live longer
with honour and riches!*

DEDICATION OF MY OWN BODY

My body should be dedicated to the realms and places of different beings, besides being dedicated to the living beings themselves.

1. I contemplate

that I am taking over all the old evil karma that resulted in the place of the **narak** beings, mostly horrible and extremely fearful, with red-hot burning iron, hot water springs, etc. All of these places are purified by dedicating my body.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light, which becomes the pure land of the Buddhas. The whole ground becomes as smooth as palm, extremely soft, shiny, free of impure smells, having sandal smell, and strewn with all kinds of flowers.

All the walls are made of jewels, and lotuses, opal, and many other beautiful, sweetly scented flowers wave up and down. Many birds make charming sounds, and there are oceans with the sweet, tasty qualities of calmness, light and cool. All is transcendently happy, one with true understanding of the Dharma: Absolute True Nature and the relative truth, and delusions and problems never develop.

ii. I contemplate

that I am dedicating my body to take over the **animal** and the **preta** world. They are all purified of impurities such as thorns, precipices, avalanches, ugly bushes and trees, etc.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light which becomes the same pure land as described above, and is the light of the delightful Buddha, which is myself. All this enjoyment causes them to become one with Lord Buddha.

3. I contemplate

that I am taking over and dedicating to the human realm, purifying all the ugly, suffering places and transforming them into pure realms. I also do this with the **asura** and **sura** realms.

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril I send pure white light to the human realm. Their enjoyment causes them to become one with Lord Buddha. In this way I also purify the asura and sura realms.

4. I contemplate

that I am taking over the realms of **Gurus, Arhants, Bodhisattvas** and **Buddhas**

As I breathe in through my right nostril ...

(As above—in case of each)

Now I fully achieve the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya ...

(As above)

As I breathe out through my left nostril

I send pure white light to each. The pure white light sent to the realm of Arhants makes them become one with Buddha. Pure realms that are offered to Gurus and Bodhisattvas are increased very much to help all sentient beings eradicate ignorance quickly.

DEDICATION OF MY OWN POSSESSED ENJOYMENTS

I should also dedicate my own possessed enjoyments to the six different realms, to the Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas, and to Bodhisattvas and Gurus. My enjoyments are changed into the wish-fulfilling precious things which are needed to give the path to Enlightenment and other needs.

I contemplate

that all these beings become one with Lord Buddha because of the dedicated enjoyments, and that the dedicated enjoyments become the six different offerings to their six senses, and are in the nature of infinite happiness.

The dedication prevents any interruption to the working of Dharma for all sentient beings, and it makes all sentient beings, as well as myself receive all the Teachings and to have a long life.

DEDICATION OF MERITS

The merits created by the practice of “Taking over and giving away” in the past, present and future, should be dedicated to the narak beings, becoming the enjoyments they need to cut off their ignorance and suffering.

Similarly, such merits should be dedicated to the pretas, animals, humans, asuras and suras.

The merits dedicated to Arhants, Bodhisattvas and Gurus become higher realisations, and they become one with Buddha by receiving these realisations.

The merits appear as all kinds of different offerings, for the enjoyment of Gurus, Bodhisattvas and Buddhas.

The final dedication of merits should be to prevent all hindrances to the Teachings of the Buddhas, so that they exist until the end of samsara.

The limited-minded person may think that this practice is meaningless, since nothing is received or given. This results from ignorance of the essential mental practice.

Guru *Tsong.k'a.pa* said:

*The practice of the higher Paramita is not material giving.
The essential practice is giving up sincerely every possessed
thing, even merits, by seeing detached and giving mentally, to
other sentient beings.*

Through such practices we can receive Enlightenment quickly, to help other beings besides helping ourselves. There are histories of past Holy Beings creating realms for other beings through this practice.

In previous times, for the sake of us degenerated beings, the Brahmin, *Gya.tso.dül* took Teachings from the Tathagata, *Rin.ch'en.nying.po*, and saying five hundred prayers he received Holy Bodhicitta. Later, as the compassionate Founder, Guru Shakyamuni, he descended for the sake of beings of the time of the five degenerations, beings who had been given up by the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. (These beings had not been abandoned by those Holy Beings, but were so heavily deluded that they were karmically unapproachable by other than Guru Shakyamuni.) To create merits, an infinite number of Holy statues to him were built by the gods and other sentient beings for whom he worked as a saviour. And because of the great Bodhicitta that he had generated in his previous life as the Brahmin *Gya.tso.dül*, equalising and exchanging himself with others, in many other ways was he more greatly kind and powerful than other Buddhas.

While generating Bodhicitta, the Bodhisattva, *K'or.lo.gyur.gyäl tzib.kyi.mü.ky'ü* visualised the formation of the pure and happy paradise, enabling such heavenly realms to evolve. This he did in the presence of the Tathagata, *Rin.ch'en.nying.po*, with the thought of creating a blissful paradise of perfect Knowledge in which there are only perfectly knowledgeable Beings who have transcended from other Buddha realms. Thereafter, this realm became the object of the prayers of all present beings. But it is almost impossible to be born there, for even to create the cause of one magnificent wish-fulfilling tree, from which we can receive any thing we desire, is extremely difficult for ordinary beings. Yet, even now, beings are taking birth there through just praying to, and reciting the name of the

Buddha of Medicine, *Män.gy'i.la.be.tur ya.wang.g'i gyäl.po*. Also, beings are praying by reciting the names of the most venerable female Buddha, Tara, and of the noble, compassionate Buddha Avalokiteshvara. Some are reciting the *Zang.po chö.pä mön.lam*, the prayer of the Bodhisattva, *Kün.d'u zang.po*, to be able to emulate his deeds. And innumerable sentient beings can create the cause for rebirth in the Western Paradise because of *K'or.lo.gyur.gyal's* achievement of Bodhicitta.

A Sutra Teaching says:

It is possible to know and see the minds and behaviour of all living beings and to be able to count the atoms of the planet Earth, and were infinite space to be covered evenly with hairs it would be possible to count them. But it is not possible to completely enumerate the full Knowledge of Bodhicitta, for from this Bodhicitta arise the Buddhas of the three times, and so too does all worldly happiness.

As the quotation explains, it is only from Bodhicitta that all happiness of worldly beings arises; and all the Buddha realms, the infinite Knowledge of the Buddhas and the Holy actions that come from the Buddhas' Holy Body, Speech and Mind also come only from Bodhicitta. In all of Guru Shakyamuni's previous Bodhisattva lives, his only form of work was to cherish others more than himself, and this has been so with all Beings who have received Enlightenment. It is absolutely essential to understand and practise equalising and exchanging ourselves with others, as the Buddha has said in many Mahayana Sutra Teachings. This precious Citta is the fundamental, supreme heart of all Bodhisattva action. Many times has it been said in the Teachings that we beings who practise this are highly fortunate, for the point of such practice is incomprehensible to beings of lower Wisdom. Even places where Holy Beings with Holy Bodhicitta have been become places of veneration for gods and other sentient beings who wish to create merits, and these beings make offerings to objects such as even the dust upon which the great Bodhisattvas have stepped. Shravakas (*Lang.gyäl*) and Pratyekabuddhas (*Nyam.t'ö*) follow paths to release only themselves from suffering. The Buddha said that by making even a small offering to the lower Arhants one can receive limitless merits. If this is so, then why not give cause for receiving limitless merits by making offering to great Bodhisattvas. It is said that by even saying the names of the great Bodhisattvas one can bring all success and stop all turbulence, so why not pray to them?

Reciting the name of the Great Compassionate Guide, Avalokiteshvara, three times is enough to eliminate all fear of one's surroundings, just as one recitation of the name of Vajrapani, the owner of the Buddha's mysticism, can pacify the mischievous and disturbing spirits.

If we have strong belief in the power and effectiveness of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, then, keeping just the written letters of their names on our body or seeing the Holy statues helps us succeed as we desire, and pacifies all hindrances.

By constantly developing the understanding of this, we should try to have the firm belief that the precious Bodhicitta and changing oneself into others are all panaceas, and that through this arises the happiness of ordinary world. If we do not have unshakeably firm belief on this point, then the root of the Mahayana Path is broken, and no matter how much we think of, listen to and meditate on whatever profound and extensive Teachings of Sutra and Tantra, we shall never approach the experience of the Mahayana Path, the Path that pleases the Buddhas. Therefore, we must follow the Holy Gurus and the Holy practitioners, and make purification of this sinfulness, accumulating the necessary and co-operative merits in many ways. We must pray constantly and hard to the Guru Deities and try to develop the ability to practise the Mahayana Path as widely as possible.

The Thought Training Teaching says:

*One should complete that training of the wishing citta well,
thinking of attaining Enlightenment.*

With strong compassion, we should take upon ourselves the responsibility to eliminate the suffering of each and every sentient being through the training of the object and aspect of love and compassion.

If there is no Citta seeking Enlightenment, then we do not have the complete meaning of Bodhicitta. To have the perfect, complete meaning of Bodhicitta we must seek the Enlightenment of all other beings as well as of ourselves. If there is no Citta seeking to work for the Enlightenment of others, then it cannot become Bodhicitta or be a part of the Mahayana Path. This is easy to prove by the wisdom of logic; if there is no desire to release all mother sentient beings then we are not even in part Mahayanists. If there is no wish for Enlightenment, then we do not have the perfect, complete meaning of the word, "Bodhicitta."

The mind that longs to receive ultimate Enlightenment for the benefit of other beings is called "Bodhicitta." If we have real understanding of the essence of Bodhicitta then we definitely know that the wish for Enlightenment is needed. Therefore, the way to train the thought is to have a strong wish for Enlightenment, and simultaneously to attempt the *Tong.len* practice of taking over and giving up with the Citta or equalising and exchanging oneself with others.

Having meditated for a long time on the great love and great compassion, we attempt the *Tong.len* practice with the Citta of equalising and exchanging ourselves with others. Feeling the unbearable suffering of all mother sentient beings, we should feel the strong desire to take their negativeness and suffering upon ourselves in order to release them from the samsaric realms. We should take pleasure in taking on the samsaric suffering of all sentient beings by arousing great, dauntless compassion without feeling upset even at being in the lowest, most suffering narak for eons. We would not look back, but would think how to release each mother sentient being from suffering and by which method each could receive the ultimate Enlightenment. We should try to develop the Wisdom realising the dependent nature of all this.



Figure 10—Lotus Flower

BODHICITTA

THE PRACTICAL, SKILFUL MAHAYANA METHOD OF MAKING MEANINGLESS DAILY LIFE MEANINGFUL, IN ORDER TO RELEASE OTHERS FROM SUFFERING

Those who practise Hinayana have the control to prevent the three negative feelings of happiness, suffering and indifference from arising from the three poisons of greed, hatred and ignorance. But this is not enough, as the Buddha said in the Sutra Teaching, *Tzug.na. rin.po.ch'e do*. The three feelings should be utilised in the cause of great compassion.

When the feeling of happiness arises in ourselves, we should summon up dauntless compassion, thinking, "I shall cut the continuity of suffering of sentient beings covering space, for they will endlessly experience samsaric suffering by their craving such happy feelings which will only increase their greed."

When an unhappy mind arises in ourselves because of the feeling of suffering, we should summon up dauntless compassion, thinking, "I shall cut the continuity of suffering of sentient beings covering space for they will endlessly experience samsaric suffering from such unhappy feelings, from which hatred arises, and they will again have to experience greater and greater suffering."

When there arises in ourselves the feeling of indifference for mother sentient beings covering space, who will endlessly experience samsaric suffering because of the arising of ignorance and craving, we should summon up dauntless compassion, thinking, "I shall eliminate their ignorant darkness as quickly as possible, by myself."

In the Sutra Teaching, *Do.de p'äl.po.ch'e*, the Buddha said that whatever suffering situation or aspect of sinfulness that appears to ourselves should be taken as the occasion to take the suffering of all mother sentient beings onto ourselves. We should energetically develop the wish and the courage to experience by ourselves the sufferings of all sentient beings, no matter how great they are or how infinitely many they may be. Whatever happiness or merit that may appear to ourselves should be dedicated to all sentient beings, without expectation for ourselves—We should try to have such a strong wish, thinking how wonderful it would be if only all mother sentient beings could be happy, and should utilise everything in the Mahayana Path through the practice of *Tong.len*, no matter what aspect appears, be it beautiful, ugly or indifferent.

When greed for attractive objects arises, we should think, "There are many sentient beings who, like myself, have greed for such objects arising; by taking all their greed on myself, may the sentient beings have merits devoid of greed."

When hatred towards ugly objects arises, as it does in countless beings including ourselves, then we should meditate on *Tong.len*, thinking, "May all mother sentient beings have the merits of not hating as I take all their hatred on myself."

When ignorance arises due to indifferent objects, we should meditate sincerely and thoroughly, thinking, "May all sentient beings have merits by being devoid of ignorance."

Even when pleasures, beautiful objects, sweet sounds and smells and so on appear, we should offer and dedicate them all to the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and noble Arhants, and train the mind strongly and sincerely to dedicate the merits of making offerings to all mother sentient beings. The merits of the dedication become unimaginably infinite, and varied offerings to the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and lower Arhants. The Buddha becomes extremely pleased by these most supreme, infinite pleasures, and the Bodhisattvas and Arhants are also pleased by the different offerings, as these offerings become the necessary outer and inner cause for completing the merits necessary to finish the Bodhisattva Path, and also become the necessary cause for the lower Arhants quickly to achieve the result of Nirvana.

THE THOUGHT TRAINING

With all actions we should arouse the Bodhicitta, as shown in the following examples.

When we go into temples or rooms, we should think with Bodhicitta, "May all mother sentient beings be led into the city of Nirvana into which I am leading them just as I enter this place."

When we come out, we should have the Bodhicitta thought, "May all sentient beings be released from the samsaric prison, and as I now leave I am leading them out."

When we open doors, think, "May all the heavy-birth beings be let out of the narak realms by the Transcendental Wisdom gone beyond the world, and I am opening the door."

When we close doors we should make Bodhicitta arise, thinking, "May the doors to all the lower realms be closed so that beings cannot descend any lower, and I am closing them just as I close this one."

When washing ourselves, we make Bodhicitta arise, thinking, "May all the smells of the sentient beings' delusions be washed away."

When we sweep, think, "May the sentient beings' dust of hate, greed and ignorance be purified, just as I am sweeping away the dust now."

When we sit down, think, "May all sentient beings reach Enlightenment."

When we sit in the cross-legged position, think, "May all sentient beings have firm merits in the immovable stage."

When we get up from the cross-legged position, think, "May all sentient beings clearly see that all causative existences are changeable by nature."

When we sit on a cushion or bed, think, "May all sentient beings be able to understand all the Teachings of the Buddha in the path of the square."

When we make prostrations, we should imagine that all sentient beings in human form are prostrating together with ourselves as leader, thinking, “May all mother sentient beings be purified.”

When we lie down to sleep in the Buddha position, like Guru Shakyamuni, think, “May all sentient beings be led to the Nirvana stage, and I shall lead them to it.”

When we arise, think, “May all sentient beings be out of all delusions—I am getting them up out of samsara.”

When we leave to go, think, “May I lead all sentient beings on the Mahayana Path.”

When we read a book, think, “May all mother sentient beings be able to distinctly realise all the meanings of every word of the Buddha’s extensive and profound Teachings, without being mixed up; as I read and understand the subject I am making them fully realised.”

When we write, think, “May all sentient beings achieve great Wisdom, and understand all the subtle points of avoidance and observance of practice in all life-times of existence, in relative and Absolute Truth, by themselves, as I am writing now.”

When one helps other people, think, “May all sentient beings be like Avalokiteshvara, who has completed all the Buddhas’ Holy deeds with skilful Bodhicitta, taking the work of other beings with gladness, and may I stop thinking mainly of my own progress and cease being lazy and discouraged in the practice of Bodhicitta.”

When we put a heel on the ground, think, “May all sentient beings be in the struggleless stage, completely free of all delusion.”

When we put cushions on the floor, think, “May all sentient beings achieve the Method and Wisdom of the Path to Enlightenment.”

When we put on a belt, think, “May all sentient beings achieve the two-grade Tantric Path in their mind, and be always bound by the path of the three Higher Trainings.”

When we go to a quiet place, think, “May all sentient beings completely avoid sinful existence by avoiding greed, hatred and ignorance.”

When we offer scented flowers to Holy Objects, think, “May all sentient beings complete the practice of morality. Due to this, may all their broken precepts be purged and may they complete the Paramita path.”

When we light a lamp, think, “May I extinguish all sentient beings’ ignorant darkness and light their wisdom lamps, enabling them to see the Absolute Nature, by having the wisdom lamp within myself.”

When we eat food, think, “May I see the suffering of all present and future sentient beings, and feel their hunger and thirst, wishing that they may enjoy the undiluted, blissful nectar of Transcendental Wisdom.”

When we take medicine, think, “May I release all sentient beings from all sickness and become the Buddha of Medicine, who pacified all pain, and whose name, when mentioned, destroys the physical and mental sickness which disturbs the whole life’s practice for Enlightenment.”

When we see Holy statues of Buddha, think, “May all sentient beings receive the infinite supreme Knowledge of his supreme Body, Speech and Mind.”

When we see Stupas, think, “May all sentient beings achieve the Buddhas’ Omniscient Mind, which is symbolised by this Stupa.”

When we talk about or discuss the Dharma, think, “May all sentient beings be able to understand all the words in the practice of Bodhicitta, extinguishing each and every doubtful and unrealised mind as soon as it arises.”

When we excrete, think, “May all sentient beings’ delusions and mental defilements be removed, just as this.”

When we look at scenery, think, “May all sentient beings attain the Omniscient Mind, fully realising the vast number of varied existences in their Absolute, Pure Nature.”

THE BODHICITTA

Equalising and exchanging ourselves with others, based on the prior development of great love and great compassion, is Bodhicitta. It is not enough to practise Bodhicitta only during meditation periods—it is extremely important to practise continually, even in break times, practising with every action and dedicating the merits. It makes each movement extremely beneficial, makes each action a Mahayana action, gives a great deal of help to making progress in our development of Bodhicitta and brings our mind closer to other paths.

If we have still not received the Holy Bodhicitta Mind, it is because we have wasted beginningless samsaric lifetimes in following useless superstitions and performing meaningless actions. Because of this, no matter how much effort we make, even in meditation time, there is no progress; and instead of virtuous meditation there are only deluded minds and superstitions. Therefore, if we are struggling we should seek the cause. What is lacking? At all times there is the definite need for constant memory and alertness.

We should guard the doors of the sense organs, and make any object of the six senses that appears the co-operative cause for the progression of Bodhicitta. This is the most supremely wise Mahayana practice.

As it is said in the Bodhisattvas’ Thought Training Teaching:

In order to keep the memory of one’s thought, one should train oneself, even with words, in all actions.

But we should make as much steady progress as possible while there is the chance. It is of the utmost importance to do everything that is helpful for the practice of Bodhicitta, even in break times. The Tibetan ascetic follower of Atisha, the *Ka.dam.pa* Guru, *Lang.ri.t'ang.pa*, always trained himself by saying the dedicating prayer of Bodhicitta frequently. Another great *Ka.dam.pa* practitioner, the ascetic yogi *Ch'ä.ka.wa*, said, as his death approached, "Of all phenomenal sounds there is none so sweet as the sound of the Thought Training Prayer," and he asked the great ascetic *Lang.ri.t'ang.pa* to repeat the Prayer of the Thought Training before he died.

Guru *Tzong.k'a.pa* also said that no matter what concentrations are made on the path, realisations cannot intuitively arise; they need to be continuously meditated on, and we even had to be habituated to the saying of the Thought Training Prayer.

Those who long from the heart to follow the Mahayana Path should hold as the best Teaching this technique of the great, realised Bodhisattva, Shantideva, which the Great Father Atisha passed down in personal transmission to his spiritual son, and to his disciples.

THE BENEFITS OF BODHICITTA

The benefits of Bodhicitta are unimaginable but just to give a brief explanation the following are some of the benefits of receiving the precious Bodhicitta in our mind:

1. We can enter the door of the Mahayana, and deserve such Holy names as "The Son of the King (Buddha)" or "Bodhisattva."
2. This Holy caste of beings surpasses even the great noble beings, Arhants of the Shravakayana and Pratyekabuddhayana.
3. These Bodhisattvas become the object of offerings made by gods and other sentient beings.
4. We quickly and happily collect merits and
5. purify all obstacles and sinfulness, which
6. quickly and effortlessly brings every success in all works for ourselves and all other beings.
7. We cannot be disturbed by hindrances and mischievousness.
8. Our mind becomes a Holy field from which each and every panacea and happiness arises. The happiness of all sentient beings depends on Bodhicitta and
9. Through the Bodhicitta, it is possible to instantly receive all five paths to the level of entering the door to the Mahayana. Even without fore-knowledge or miracle-making ability, if there is this precious Citta, that person is recognised as a Mahayanist. But without Bodhicitta the person is not a Mahayanist, even if he has the power of fore-knowledge

and can make miracles. And even if we have achieved the Arhant stage, having full understanding of the nature of Shunyata and single-minded concentration, if we do not have Bodhicitta we are unable to enter the door to the Mahayana Path. Hinayana and Mahayana are not differentiated by the avoidance or suppression of delusions, or the realisation of Absolute True Nature.

One great yogi explained to the great *Ka.dam.pa* ascetic, *Geshe Ton.ba*, how he had such and such realisation, and offered it to him. This great yogi was told by the follower of Atisha, the great Bodhisattva *Drom*: “You have such firm meditation that it cannot be disturbed by even a great drum beating in your ear. But if you don’t have the great love and compassion of Bodhicitta, your position is such that you should make confession day and night.”

When *Drom* was a little unwell this great yogi went to ask after his health, passing through the walls without resistance.

Drom said: “Are you frightened by your shameful limbs? Why, venerable yogi, have you forsaken the sentient beings?”

PRAYER TO BE SAID AFTER MEDITATION SEVEN

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge of how to bring happiness to all my mother sentient beings, by taking over all their suffering and defilements, and giving away to them all my happiness and virtues.

D'E.NA JE.TZÜN LA.MA T'UG.JE.CHÄN

then venerable Guru kind

MA.GY'UR DRO.WÄ DIG.DRIB DUG.NGÄL.KÜN

mother becoming sinfulness obscuration sufferings all

MA.LÜ D'A.TA DAG.LA MIN.PA.D'ANG

every and all now me to ripen and

DAG.G'I DE.GE ZHÄN.LA TANG.WA.YI

my happiness virtue others to by giving

DRO.KÜN DE.D'ANG DÄN.PAR J'IN.GY'I.LOB

living all happiness and to have please bless

(Most venerable guide, please bless all sentient beings to enjoy happiness, all their suffering and defilements ripening within me, and all my happiness and virtues be given away to them.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

THE BODHISATTVA'S ACTIONS

A SUMMARY OF THE SALIENT POINTS

I. TAKING THE BODHICITTA VOWS, WITH PRAYERS, IN THE PRESENCE OF A HOLY OBJECT

1. We receive the Bodhicitta ordination that was not received before.
2. We can keep the ordination received, without letting it degenerate.

II. HOW TO FOLLOW THE HOLY BODHISATTVA'S DEEDS AFTER RECEIVING BODHICITTA

1. Following the general deeds of the Bodhisattva.
 - a. Following the six Paramitas, to ripen our own mind.
 - b. Following the practices of the four virtuous collections, to ripen the minds of others.
2. Following the last two Paramitas especially.
3. Following the Vajrayana Path.

THE PRACTICE OF THE SIX PARAMITAS (II.1.a.)

The meaning of the Paramita

The method of following the Paramita

The divisions of the Paramita

What should be done in the practice of the Paramita

Conclusion

1. CHARITY

The meaning of Charity

The method of following Charity

- a. Practising Charity with the six Paramitas—Morality, Patience, Energy, Concentration and Wisdom.
- b. Practising Charity with the six Holy things—the Holy subject, the Holy possession, the Holy purpose, the Holy skill, the Holy dedication and the Holy purity.
- c. The four actions:
 - i. dedicating,
 - ii. protecting,
 - iii. purifying, and
 - iv. increasing.

The divisions of Charity

- a. The Charity of Dharma.
- b. The Charity of fearlessness.
- c. Material Charity:
 - i. object: living being;
 - ii. motivation: the necessity, the possessions, the object.

What should be done in the practice of Charity

- a. What thoughts are evil and to be abandoned when Charity is made?
- b. With what actions should Charity not be made?
- c. With what actions should Charity be made?
- d. Actions that help others make Charity.
- e. With which materials should we make Charity and with which should we not?
- f. What should we do if unable to make Charity because of miserliness?
- g. How should we practise the remedies that destroy interruptions to making Charity?

Conclusion**2. MORALITY****The meaning of Morality****The method of following Morality****The divisions of Morality**

- a. the Morality of abstaining from vices.
- b. The Morality of the totality of all virtue.
- c. The Morality of working for all other sentient beings.

What should be done in the practice of Morality

- a. Practising Morality with the six Paramitas.
- b. Practising Morality with the six Holy things.

Conclusion**3. PATIENCE****The meaning of Patience****The method of following Patience****The divisions of Patience**

- a. The Patience of having compassion for the enemy.

- b. The Patience of voluntarily bearing suffering.
- c. The Patience of definitely thinking about the Dharma.

What should be done in the practice of Patience

It should be practised with

- a. the six Paramitas, and
- b. the six Holy things.

Conclusion

4. ENERGY

The meaning of Energy

The method of following Energy

The divisions of Energy

- a. Dauntless, armour-like Energy.
- b. The Energy of the totality of virtue.
- c. The Energy of working for other sentient beings.

What should be done in the practice of Energy

Remedies to the three kinds of laziness?

- a. That causing procrastination.
- b. That resulting from attachment to samsaric work and pleasure.
- c. That of discouragement.

Meditation on the three prides:

- a. Pride of action.
- b. Pride of capability.
- c. Pride of delusion.

Practise with:

- a. The six Paramitas.
- b. The six Holy things.

Conclusion

5. CONCENTRATION

- a. The Concentration of worldly beings and of beings beyond the world. Samadhi and penetrative insight co-operate together in practice. From the action of Concentration the body and mind are brought into the bliss stage.
- b. The Concentration to make one fully achieve All-Knowledge.
- c. Concentration for the benefit of sentient beings.

6. WISDOM

- a. The Wisdom realising Absolute True Nature, the ultimate reality.
- b. The Wisdom realising relative nature.
- c. The Wisdom realising how to work for sentient beings.

THE PRACTICE OF THE FOUR ESSENTIAL DIVISIONS FOR RIPENING THE MINDS OF OTHERS (II.1.b.)

1. Giving to satisfy the temporal needs of others.
2. Talking sweetly.
3. Working in Dharma as asked to by others; living in the practice of Dharma as we show it to others.
4. The way of practising the last two Paramitas; Samadhi, mental quiescence, and the essential concentration of the essence of Wisdom.

FOLLOWING THE LAST TWO PARAMITAS ESPECIALLY (II.2.)

1. Concentration: See Meditation Eight.
2. Wisdom: to be added to this book at a later date.

Details of the practice of the first four Paramitas follow this section.



Figure 11—Snow Lion

THE BODHISATTVA'S ACTIONS

Even though we try to meditate on Teachings such as the becoming stage of the Tantric Path, the Madhyamaka, the Mahamudra and Kundalini Yoga, with the expectation of reaching Enlightenment, if we do this without Bodhicitta, we cannot pass through the door of the Mahayana Path, let alone get closer to that supreme and perfect goal. Therefore, Bodhicitta should be the main point in the practice of all practitioners, those who thirst for the most supreme happiness. After numberless eons of observation, even the Buddha's all-knowing Holy Mind could not find any door of entry to the Path nor any special method other than Bodhicitta.

I. TAKING THE BODHICITTA VOWS, WITH PRAYERS, IN THE PRESENCE OF A HOLY OBJECT

This has two aspects:

1. We receive the Bodhicitta ordination that was not received before.
2. We can keep the ordination received, without letting it degenerate.

II. HOW TO FOLLOW THE HOLY BODHISATTVA'S DEEDS AFTER RECEIVING BODHICITTA

Merely receiving Bodhicitta is not enough; it must be put into action, just as merely having the will to go to some country and save living beings suffering there from some epidemic disease is not enough—it is necessary to act by going there with the required equipment. Therefore, to benefit the innumerable, different, suffering living beings through being Enlightened, it is necessary to achieve the two Kayas: Rupakaya and Dharmakaya. To achieve these two results, it is necessary to follow the inseparable path of Method and Wisdom. All the Buddhas' deeds are included in "Method and Wisdom": the first five Paramitas are the Method and the last Paramita, the penetrative insight, is the Wisdom.

How to follow the Holy Bodhisattva's deeds has three divisions.

1. Following the general deeds of the Bodhisattva which has two parts to show how this is done.
 - a. Following the six Paramitas, to ripen our own mind.
 - b. Following the practices of the four virtuous collections, to ripen the minds of others.

2. Following the last two Paramitas especially.
3. Following the Vajrayana Path.

THE PRACTICE OF THE SIX PARAMITAS (II.1.a.)

There are five headings under which each Paramita can be considered.

The meaning of the Paramita

The method of following the Paramita

The divisions of the Paramita

What should be done in the practice of the Paramita

The Conclusion

1. CHARITY

The meaning of Charity

Practising Charity means having the will to dedicate body, possessions and merits to others, and making the actions of body and speech with such virtuous impulse.

The method of following Charity

The way to practise the Paramita of Charity is to develop the will to give in many ways. The destruction of miserliness in only the body and possessions is not called the Paramita of Charity. Miserliness is part of greed, so even the lower Arhant has to avoid completely even the seed of it. Therefore, as well as destroying the clinging miserliness which interrupts Charity, it is also necessary to arouse the will to give from the heart even all the results received from virtuous actions.

To be able to make Charity, we should follow the method of making meditation on the shortcomings of miserliness and greed, thinking how the body and possessions are trivial and betray those who seek to gain peace. We should cut attachment to our body by seeing it as illusory, a magic creation or a dream, and by thinking that it is dirty, a collection of impurities.

We should think like this: I am foolish not to train my thought in the way that brings countless and boundless successes to myself and others—dedicating the body, that which is trivial and has to be left, no matter how much good care I take of it." By thinking in this way we should try to arouse the thought of giving to others as much as possible.

We should also remember Shantideva's words:

*One passes into Nirvana by dedicating all; one's mind
achieves Enlightenment at the same time leaving all. So it is
best to dedicate to sentient beings.*

We should make Charity of whatever merits are created, great or small, dedicating from the heart to obtain the greatest peace for sentient beings: temporary peace and ultimate peace. Hence, we complete an infinite accumulation of merits quickly, because we receive merits from each of the numberless sentient beings.

In the Teachings known as *The Jewelled Rosary*, the great pandit Nagarjuna said:

If all the merits received from saying prayers such as the dedicating prayer became matter, they could not fit into even the number of universes equal to the number of grains of sand in the Ganges. This was said by Guru Shakyamuni and can also be realised logically: the world of sentient beings is infinite and so the benefits of the wish are that much.

After we have thought much about the benefits of giving and the shortcomings of keeping, and of the Bodhisattva's Holy Actions of making Charity, the thought of giving can arise spontaneously in us. Whoever destroys the craving for possessions and trains in the thought of giving to others is called a "Bodhisattva." It is also necessary to train in the thought of dedicating the body, but although the body is completely dedicated to others, it does not actually have to be sacrificed now; it can be, once the will has become ready and powerful enough. On the contrary, to sacrifice the whole body physically before such a stage of mental development has been reached can interrupt our Dharma practice. And we should not think, erroneously, that it is hypocritical to sacrifice the body mentally without giving it physically. When we practise each of the six Paramitas it should contain

- a. all six Paramitas, and
- b. The six Holy things

a. Practising Charity with the Six Paramitas

If each Paramita is not practised with the others included, there will be much disturbance to the success of the Bodhisattva's actions, just as a soldier who does not protect the various parts of his body with different pieces of armour nor carry weapons to destroy others, runs the risk of incurring a fatal injury.

i. The Morality of Charity

When we make Charity with the Bodhicitta impulse, we should avoid all the vices of our body, speech and mind, for if we do not, we break the precepts of Morality, which will cause us to suffer in the lower realms.

ii. The Patience of Charity

Also, we must have Patience, and not get angry with those who react badly to our Charity by speaking harshly or by showing displeasure. Without Patience, there is the danger of anger destroying the merits.

iii. The Energy of Charity

Charity must be made with continual, strong energy; otherwise we are in danger of becoming lazy, thinking that we can make Charity at some later time.

iv. The Concentration of Charity

There is need of concentration, thinking one-pointedly of the benefits of making Charity and the shortcomings of not. If the one-pointed concentration that prevents us from falling under the control of delusions is not made, then our virtuous possessions are in jeopardy of being stolen by that thief, distraction.

a. The Wisdom of Charity

Finally, at the time of making Charity, it is necessary for the discriminating Wisdom to be checking, “This should be practised, that should be abandoned,” lest the practice be made incorrectly, with corrupt actions. But especially, Charity should be made with the Wisdom concentrating on the circle of the three—subject, object and action—in Shunyata; otherwise the practice will not become a pure, Bodhisattva’s action.

b. Making the practice with the six Holy things

- i. The Holy Subject: the Bodhicitta impulse.
- ii. The Holy Possession: always having the Bodhicitta impulse, not only when making Charity of other possessions, but even when Charity of a special object is made.
- iii. The Holy Purpose: making Charity to give temporary happiness to sentient beings to benefit for the ultimate goal.
- iv. The Holy Skill: possessed by the Wisdom of Shunyata.
- v. The Holy Dedication: dedicating the merits of Charity for the achievement of Enlightenment.
- vi. The Holy Purity: the purification of delusions and mental defilements.

Also, each Paramita should be practised with the four actions:

- i. Dedicating: dedicating our body to all sentient beings from the heart.
- ii. Protecting: having dedicated our body to sentient beings, we should protect it from being wasted in meaningless actions.
- iii. Purifying: making the charity of the body a pure practice by concentrating on the circle of the three in Shunyata.
- iv. Increasing: dedicating the merits of it to all sentient beings, equal to the sky, for their achievement of Enlightenment. We must not get shocked by thinking that if all is dedicated to sentient beings there is nothing left for me—it is a mental dedication, so there is nothing wrong with it. On the other hand, we cannot think that there is no point in dedicating mentally since there is nothing to receive.

The way to complete the Paramita of Charity is to complete the training in the thought of giving even the merits of virtuous actions, let alone abolishing miserliness in our possessions.

Completing the practice of the Paramita of Charity means neither completely eradicating starvation and thirst, nor satisfying the last beggar. If it did, then all the past Buddhas such as Guru Shakyamuni would have yet to complete the practice of Charity, having reached Enlightenment by mistake.

Those who have renounced the worldly life and are living in ordination should not put effort into collecting materials with which to make Charity if this interrupts meditation, listening to Teachings and leading a virtuous life. In this case, making material Charity is not so important; but if, due to past karma, many materials have been effortlessly received without interrupting virtuous practices, then material Charity is needed.

The divisions of Charity

a. The Charity of Dharma

This includes showing the Dharma purely, giving ordination, teaching handicrafts such as religious paintings and mandala construction, teaching letters, and saying mantras and prayers with the impulse of Dharma Charity, visualising ourselves surrounded by all sentient beings who are listening to it.

b. The Charity of fearlessness

This includes saving beings from dangers caused by humans, animals or the elements.

c. Material Charity

There is actual physical Charity and mental Charity. How should we make material Charity?

- Object: living beings.
- Motivation: what motivation is necessary?

- i. The necessity: We should think of the **necessity**: “Due to this action I shall complete the Paramita of Charity, becoming fully Enlightened.”
- ii. The possessions: We should regard **possessions** in this way: as the Bodhisattvas have dedicated everything to sentient beings and consider that all things are the possessions of others, we should think that anything with which we make Charity is the property of the other, and so should feel as we do when returning to its rightful owner something that we were given for safe-keeping.
- iii. The object: We should consider that the being to whom we make Charity is our Guru, helping us to complete the Paramita of Charity. If the object of our Charity is an enemy, we should make Charity with a loving thought. If the object is suffering and miserable, we should make Charity with compassion. If the object is knowledgeable, we should make Charity with a rejoicing mind. If the object is a friend, a temporal helper, we should make Charity with the equilibrium thought.

What should be done in the practice of Charity?

a. What thoughts are evil and should be abandoned when Charity is made?

- i. The erroneous conception that Charity has no result.
- ii. Pride: thinking that we are teaching the beggar, that we are competing with others, and that “I am so generous, others cannot give as I do.”
- iii. The thought of dependence should be avoided, that is, expecting to receive something, such as reputation as a result of having given the material.
- iv. We should not be discouraged by the difficult, extensive Bodhisattva’s Charity. Before making Charity the mind should be happy; while the Charity is made it should be calm; and afterwards, we should not regret having made the Charity.
- v. We should not have partial thought, but make Charity with impartial compassion for both enemy and stranger.
- vi. Without the slightest thought of reward for ourselves, we should think that the object of Charity is completely devoid of happiness and has no ability to remove suffering. “Without thought of reward” means that we must not think only of the results of Charity, such as receiving the perfect human rebirth or perfect possessions in future lifetimes, but that we should remember that possessions are trivial, and think of the benefits of Enlightenment which are received by making Charity.
- vii. At the time of making Charity, we should not feel afraid of becoming poor in the future, nor have treacherous thoughts of betraying the object of Charity.

- viii. If we perceive that the object of our Charity has certain faults, we should not have the evil thought to announce what we have seen.

b. With what actions should Charity not be made?

- i. We should not give small amounts or inferior articles, justifying such actions by reminding the other how much we gave before or how generous we are.
- ii. We should not make Charity by compelling the other to perform evil actions such as killing or destroying, or to carry out very hard work such as that usually done by animals.
- iii. If we became a king we could not deprive one family of their son or daughter and make Charity of the child to another.
- iv. We should not make Charity of materials taken by force from our parents or servants.
- v. We should not make Charity with the intention of harming a third party.
- vi. While making Charity we should not frighten the object with harsh words, e.g., abusing a beggar for not working.
- vii. We should not make Charity by breaking precepts.
- viii. We should not avoid making Charity while accumulating possessions, making it only after collecting for a long time.

c. With what actions should Charity be made?

We should make Charity

- i. Without harming others.
- ii. By bearing difficulties and troubles as they arise.
- iii. By our own hand, with respect for the object.
- iv. With sincere words.
- v. With a pleased and smiling face it.

Each of these actions has its result.

d. Actions that help others make Charity

- i. If we have materials with which to make Charity, we can go to miserly people, those who have never made Charity with pleasure or good feelings, and tell them that we have such and such possession and need to complete the practice of Charity, for which a beggar is required, so that if they see any beggars could they please bring them to us.
- ii. We can give our possessions to another and ask him to give them to the beggar.
- iii. We can advise the miserly person to try and rejoice at our Charity.

In these ways, the seed to dispel miserliness is planted, and helping others in this way we create much merit.

e. With which materials should we make Charity and with which should we not?

- i. We should give whatever material brings the future benefit of following the virtuous path. But, if the material brings harm in the future it should not be given, even though it might result in temporal pleasure.
- ii. If the body is begged for and the time is not right, it should not be given; i.e., before we have highly developed great compassion that prevents the difficulties of giving the body causing us to feel upset. Or, if it is more beneficial for sentient beings that the body exist, then despite its being begged for, even a part of the body should not be given. We cannot make Charity of the body to the wrong object. It cannot be given to be killed or to be used for some other evil purpose, causing us harm. Neither can the body be given for killing another. Nor can we give it to those whose thoughts are evil because they are possessed by spirits or crazy. To give the body to such objects breaks the Bodhisattva's precepts.

Which possessions should not be given?

- i. According to time, e.g., obliging someone living in eight, thirty-six or two hundred and fifty-three precepts to take a meal in the afternoon.
- ii. According to the material object, e.g., obliging ordained people to take things they cannot, such as garlic, meat or wine, or to give them such things as food left on others' plates or dirty food.

Also, we cannot give statues, Holy Texts, etc. to those who do not have the sincere desire to know the meaning and do not have devotion, regarding such things as merely material. We cannot make Charity of our parents, nor of the monk's yellow robes.

Nor should poisons, weapons or similar things with the potential of harming living beings be given to those who plan to injure others with them, and we cannot teach techniques such as shooting to those who ask with the intention of harming others or ourselves with them. But if someone should beg for poisons, weapons, wines, etc., desiring to use them for the benefit of other living beings, then we can make Charity of such things.

If there are two beggars, one better off than the other, if we cannot fulfil the desires of both we should, with a pleasant expression and a sweet tone, tell the former that "This portion has already been dedicated to this poor man, so please do not think that I do not care about you."

f. What should we do if unable to make Charity because of miserliness, although not wanting of possessions?

We should think in this way: “It is inevitable that this object and I shall separate—it will leave me and I shall leave it. Therefore, I make arrangements for death by taking the essence from it and making my mind joyful.”

g. How we should practise the remedies that destroy interruptions to making Charity

Such as:

- i. Not being used to making Charity, i.e., not wanting to make it even though we possess materials. We should realise that not wanting to dedicate to others is the result of having the same thought in previous lifetimes and that if Charity is still avoided, we shall be averse to it again in future lifetimes. Therefore, we should not allow ourselves to remain unused to making Charity.
- ii. Not wanting to give because of a paucity of material possessions. The remedy for this is to think: “Since I have suffered hunger and thirst, and many other unbearable samsaric sufferings, because delusion and karma have prevented me from benefiting others, rather than sending the beggar away empty-handed, it is better to make Charity, even should it cost me this life, which itself is the result of benefiting others. I can always live by eating plants, even though there is not the enjoyment.” Then we should make the Charity, accepting that trouble.
- iii. When the thought of giving does not arise due to our attachment to extremely beautiful things, it is necessary to remember the shortcomings of greed as quickly as possible, and that the wrong belief, that this suffering is enjoyment or pleasure, only brings continual suffering in the future.

The Charity of the greatly wise Bodhisattvas is mental Charity, the mental transformation of the extensive and varied enjoyments that exist, into infinite offerings. They meditate truly from the heart, that all are given to sentient beings with complete, pure Bodhicitta, taking more care of others than ourselves, without difficulty and with such skill that it creates incredible merits and brings endless benefits.

While this is a practice that can be made by those who do not possess materials with which to make physical Charity, it does not mean that the rich in possessions cannot also make this practice.

Conclusion

Whoever takes the Bodhisattva ordination should understand the importance of following the practice of Charity as explained, starting immediately, and should pray to be able to follow the hardest practices of Charity on the higher levels in the future. We should feel pleased to practise developing the thought of giving through

being detached from the body, possessions and merits, and displeased not to train in developing this thought. We should think that if the practice is abandoned, we are at present creating the negativities of breaking precepts, and in future lives shall find it extremely difficult to follow the Bodhisattva's deeds.

2. MORALITY

The meaning of Morality

Morality means giving up the thought of committing actions of body, speech and mind that are harmful to sentient beings.

Completing the practice of the Paramita of Morality does not mean making all other sentient beings devoid of harmfulness. If it did, then all the previous Buddhas would have yet to complete the practice of Morality. What it does mean is completing the progression of giving up the thought of actions harmful to sentient beings.

The method of following Morality

The way to practise Morality is to allow our minds to grow accustomed to giving up the thought of actions harmful to sentient beings.

Our generating Bodhicitta and making the vow to follow the Bodhisattva's deeds means that we promise to work for all sentient beings, that they might attain the ornament of the Morality to full Enlightenment, thereby attaining the true meaning of Morality.

Before that, we must develop the strength to keep pure our own precepts of Morality. If these degenerate and become impure, we fall into the lower realms and cannot even fulfil our own purpose, let alone that of others. Therefore, those who take the precepts, attempting to bring the success of others by leading others in Enlightenment, need to keep an extremely tight grip lest their precepts get lost, vigilantly protecting body, speech and mind from vices.

Keeping the precepts purely depends on adhering to the points of practice and avoidance as they were explained. This follows the strong wish and enthusiastic determination to keep the precepts, which arise from the understanding achieved through meditating long on the benefits of keeping precepts and the shortcomings of not. It is vital to be aware of the dangers, the suffering results, of breaking or not keeping precepts, and also to understand the need to avoid the smallest and lightest negativities, the actions forbidden by the Enlightened Being.

Those who observe the precepts in practising the Paramita of Morality benefit by the gradual transcendence of their mind—the level of the precepts in their mind develops to the same levels as those of the great Bodhisattvas, and they receive purely the Transcendental Wisdom, which has completely removed even the seeds of all vices.

If worldly, external ornaments are worn by the aged it looks absurd, but no matter who wears the ornaments of Morality, all other living beings are pleased. The smell of Morality is the best perfume, the sweetest of scents to apply. Morality is the coolest lotion to alleviate the suffering of delusion's heat.

If we observe precepts correctly all enjoyments are received spontaneously, without our having to make efforts to obtain them. Other living beings can be controlled automatically, without the necessity of threats or violence, and even those who have not received his help naturally love whoever lives in the Paramita of Morality.

In his Teaching, Guru Shakyamuni said:

Morality is even the best ornament of all and a cooling nectar to alleviate suffering.

Gods and men touch their heads to the footprints of the moral person with great respect.

The reason for observing the Paramita of Morality should be to lead all sentient beings into the Paramita of Morality, and we should destroy the thoughts that wish for release from only the dangers of the lower suffering realms, and expect the temporal perfections of the god and human realms.

The divisions of Morality

a. The Morality of abstaining from vices

The Morality of the Bodhisattva's ordination, taken on the basis of the Pratimoksha precepts.

b. The Morality of the totality of all virtue

The Morality of trying to receive in our mind the realisation of the Paramitas not yet received, and to steadily develop higher, without degeneration, those that have been. This includes all the virtue created by the Bodhisattva—that of living in the precepts and that of the efforts of creating meritorious actions, such as making prostrations and offerings, rendering service, listening, thinking and meditating on the Teachings, and explaining the Dharma.

c. The Morality of working for all other sentient beings, i.e., all virtuous actions of body, speech and mind, created with the thought of benefiting others

This includes Morality such as following the four total Bodhisattva's Actions, fulfilling the purpose of the present and future lives of sentient beings, with the eleven different forms of work and without the sinfulness of corrupting precepts. Saying that precepts such as the five, the eight, the thirty-six and the two hundred and fifty-three—the Pratimoksha precepts—are only Hinayana precepts, and to avoid their practice by saying that we are following the Bodhisattva's precepts, comes from understanding neither the basic points of the Bodhisattva's vow of Morality nor the Bodhisattva's training in Morality.

The first division of the three, “the Morality of abstaining from vices,” is fundamental to the second and the third, and mainly it means to follow the ten Moralities. Only if we train the thought in and are capable of keeping the basic ordinations, will we be able to follow the other Moralities.

What should be done in the practice of Morality

Morality should be practised with the six Holy things and the six Paramitas.

a. Morality with the six Paramitas

- i. The Charity of Morality: leading others in Morality by ourselves living in the precepts of Morality.
- ii. The Patience of Morality: while living in the precepts, not reacting to and having patience with the harmful actions of living beings.
- iii. The Energy of Morality: without following the negative mind as it arises, continually keeping Morality pure, the mind being pleased to do so.
- iv. The Concentration of Morality: without following the delusions as they arise, keeping the mind one-pointedly on the thought of avoiding vices by thinking of the benefits of doing so and the shortcomings of not.
- v. The Wisdom of Morality: while the precepts are being observed, constantly checking to detect violation and to keep them in the Shunyata of the circle of the three.

Conclusion

The root of successfully following Bodhisattvas’ actions such as the practice of the Paramita of Morality—the training in the higher Morality—is to increase without degeneration the Bodhicitta, and following this Morality is the most skilful method to stop causing harm to other living beings.

It is necessary to constantly remember to abstain from the actions that are forbidden by the precepts we have taken by knowing the prohibited actions as well as possible, and even the practice of the higher levels of Morality should be the object of our prayers. By praying in this way, because of the result similar to the cause, we can complete the Bodhisattva’s Training. If it is abandoned we continuously collect heavy negativities, making us incapable of following the Bodhisattva’s Training in future lifetimes. Therefore, we must make the effort, even from now.

3. PATIENCE

The Meaning of Patience

Practising Patience means having a tranquil mind with the antagonist, and compassion for him.

The completion of the Paramita of Patience does not depend on the cessation of sentient beings causing bother. Rather, it only depends on our fully developing the training of the thought stopping our angry reactions.

In the Teaching, Following the Bodhisattva's Actions, Shantideva said:

Bothersome sentient beings are like the infinite sky; but once the angry mind is destroyed, all enemies are destroyed. There can never be enough leather to cover the Earth, but with the amount required to make the sole of a shoe, it is as if the whole Earth were covered. Similarly, while I cannot dispel external phenomena themselves, I can get rid of them by dispelling the one disturbing mind.

The method of following Patience

The overall method is to understand the great number of benefits of Patience and shortcomings of impatience. The patient person creates the good karma to have less enemies in this and future lifetimes; he dies without worry, and is reborn in upper realms such as those of the gods. Thinking of the benefits of Patience, we should try to be patient.

Also, by praising Patience we should encourage others to be patient. It guides us from our enemy, anger, which destroys our merits and those of others, and which makes us abandon working for others when their actions are harmful. If we continuously practise Patience we shall not lose our happiness of mind, and besides keeping us happy during this lifetime, after death it closes the door to the lower realms, and also brings the ultimate goal, Enlightenment. Therefore, the present and future lifetimes are always in happiness.

In his Teachings, the great pandit, Shantideva spoke of the shortcomings of anger:

One second of anger can destroy all the entire accumulation of virtue, such as Charity and offerings made to Holy Beings, collected over a thousand eons.

Anger is the worst of the evil actions. If one who is not a Bodhisattva gets angry with one who is a Bodhisattva for only one second, then, as Shantideva said, it destroys the merits created in a thousand eons. If a Bodhisattva with less powerful realisations gets angry with a higher Bodhisattva, it destroys the merits created in a hundred eons.

It is necessary to practise Patience before anger arises as well as when we are angry, by thinking of its shortcomings. If we do not try to be patient, anger causes unhappiness and conflict for ourselves and others, and can even make us commit suicide. As we practise Patience, we find the greater the number of enemies, the more chance there is to practise. Therefore, we should consider each antagonist as a helper for our attainment of Enlightenment through the practice of Patience.

The great pandit, Atisha, always retained a very bad-tempered Indian assistant, and when asked not to, Guru Atisha said: "Through this I have completed the Paramita of Patience."

We should remember that even the followers of the Shravakayana, who mainly work to obtain their own Liberation only, do not get angry at antagonists, so that to do so is not fitting for we who appear as Mahayanists.

Of the temporal life's problems due to anger and jealousy, the great pandit, Shantideva said in his Teachings:

Those who hold the painful, jealous mind lose what peace there is and do not experience more: happiness and gladness will not be theirs. They cannot sleep and their minds are agitated and unsteady. Due to jealousy, the servant will kill even the kind master on whom he depends for material and other help. And even if Charity is made to the angry person, he does not remain free of hatred. All in all, while the angry mind remains, none can live in happiness.

Also, as Guru Shakyamuni said in his Teachings:

When the fire of anger colours the face, even the well-decorated person cannot be attractive. Even if one lies on a comfortable bed, the pain of hatred makes the mind suffer. Anger makes us forget to do the work which benefits ourselves, brings us suffering and forces us to take the evil path. The angry person either loses fame or cannot achieve it. Having understood anger as the inner enemy, who will tolerate being under its control and getting angry?

The divisions of Patience

a. The Patience of having compassion for the enemy

When living and non-living things become harmful antagonists, we should remember the shortcomings of anger and try to be patient.

Once there was a disciple who was beating a thief, and no matter how his Guru tried to separate them, he could not. Finally, he wagged his finger under the disciple's nose, saying, "Patience! Patience!" Then, remembering Patience, the disciple replied, "What are the benefits of pretending to be patient once the whole angry episode has ended?" Although the practice of Patience is difficult at first, by training our mind in the thought of being patient we get accustomed to it, and then in all situations meditation on Patience becomes easier.

There are reasons showing why we should not get angry with the enemy. For example, we are hit on the head by a stick wielded by somebody else: instead of being angry with that person, we should check up like this: "To be angry with the object causing me pain means I should be angry with the stick. But the stick itself is not

responsible for this; it is under the control of the person and has none of its own. Also, the person wielding the stick has no control—he is obliged to do so by his deluded mind. How can I get angry with the person? I cannot. Being struck by the stick was the temporal co-operative cause of my misbehaviour, but the principal cause of this suffering result is my past karma, such as harming other beings—it is the fault of such karma. Therefore, why should I get angry with the result of karma created by myself when it ripens on me? I should try to dispel the other person's delusion without getting angry with him: he has no control and has become crazy with delusion. This is the same thing that a father would do if his son became crazy and started to beat him—instead of fighting with anger, the father would try to cure his son of the disturbance. And also, doctors try to cure their psychotic patients, even though attacked by them.”

We should also think like this: “When the fire burns my hand it is my fault for touching it—I cannot get angry with the fire. Just as I cannot get angry with the person, the outer enemy, because it is my own fault that he is obliged to harm me. Just as the nature of fire is burning hot and so I do not get angry with the fire when it burns me, if the nature of the person who is my enemy is to give harm, I cannot get angry with him, the living being.”

Then, the thought may arise that although we should not get angry with the enemy because it is his nature to harm, since it certainly came from him, perhaps it is worthwhile to get angry after all. This thought should be questioned thus: “If hail suddenly comes from the sky, is it worthwhile getting angry with the sky?” This is meaningless; therefore we cannot get angry.

When our body and mind suffer from physical and verbal assaults of others, we should not retaliate, again creating the cause for rebirth in the three lower realms, but instead should practise Patience, the remedy to anger.

As the great pandit, Shantideva said:

If I cannot tolerate even this present level of suffering, why don't I get angry with the cause of the narak suffering and destroy it?

b. The Patience of voluntarily bearing suffering

When there are difficulties in the Dharma practice these should be borne, and such things as sickness and undesirable enemies and even the suffering in the dreams should all be made helpful for the Dharma practice, turning all these problems into treatment by not being attached to temporal comfort.

While experiencing trouble with enemies or non-living things, we should think that the main cause of such situations is our own past lives' karma and delusion and it is our own fault that we suffer them. If this were not true, then those who had escaped from delusion and karma would still have enemies—but they do not. We should also try to feel unbearable compassion for the enemy, as he is creating extra negative karma while thinking that his actions are the cause of peace.

It is necessary to think about these samsaric sufferings that we are experiencing in the way shown in the Equilibrium Meditation. We should try to remember and feel pleased that through this practice the compulsion for our having to experience future sufferings such as those of the three lower realms is finishing. That is, just as someone who is to be executed does not mind cutting off his hand to escape from prison, so when we experience some trouble and difficulty without Dharma practice, we should feel that it is good to forebear these as it thereby finishes so much suffering in the three lower realms. At such times it is also necessary to remember the knowledge of the sufferings. Remembering our creation of negative karmas, we feel upset, and we lose the pride with which we think, "I am faultless, I am perfectly good, I am not stupid." And this also helps us to see how other people are suffering in the same situation, so that compassion can arise. All in all, it is very helpful because it makes us conscious and aware, careful to avoid sinful actions and happy to create virtuous ones.

Those with ordination, monks and nuns, voluntarily take on the suffering of lessening desire, being content with simple food, clothing and place of abode, even if there are difficulties. But the person who does not live in that situation, especially mentally, is always concerned with satisfying the desire that constantly wants more and better. As he always works for that without thinking of the Dharma, so his life is wasted.

For example, Guru Shakyamuni, when he was in the form of a monk, and the ancient great pandits and Tibetan saints—yogis such as Milarepa, Guru *Tzong.k'a.pa* and *En.sa.pa*, who achieved the Rainbow Body in their lifetime—voluntarily experienced deprivation to enhance their Dharma practice. When Guru *Tzong.k'a.pa* went into solitude with eight disciples to make purification and to create merits, they had only eight copper coins between them. In this way they tried to be content and have less desire.

Another example of this type of Patience is that of voluntarily making offerings to the Triple Gem. Also, there is the Patience of voluntarily suffering by avoiding the actions of the fastidious mind, even if the body is ugly or the clothes bad, the Patience of voluntarily taking the sufferings of exhaustion resulting from making efforts in virtue, such as bearing the difficulties of keeping precepts, and such Patience as that required for voluntarily bearing suffering if we have to experience trouble in leading others from life dangers, or if we experience trouble in avoiding making business.

c. The Patience of definitely thinking about the Dharma

This includes trying to learn by heart the words and understand the meanings of the Graduated Path, having knowledge of the Triple Gem, the path to Enlightenment and Shunyata, making observations in profound, extensive Teachings and trying to discover the realisations through meditation.

What should be done in the practice

Patience should be practised with the six Paramitas and the six Holy things. For example, the Charity of Patience—leading others to practise Patience by

teaching the Dharma, and so on. (For the other Paramitas and the six Holy things see the previous explanations.)

Conclusion

If we are following the Bodhisattva's actions, remembering and meditating on Bodhicitta are the main factors bringing the desire to lead all sentient beings in the Paramita of Patience. To progress we should train by praying to reach even the highest levels of Patience, and beginners who are fully following the practice of Patience need to confess any violation of the discipline. If we give up during our practice of Patience, we continually create much negative karma, making the practice of the most exalted Bodhisattva's actions in future lifetimes extremely difficult.

By considering such practices as the most important aspects of the path, trying to practise what we are capable of practising and training our mind in that which we are not, we shall be able to complete the Paramita of Patience with few sufferings or difficulties.

4. ENERGY

The meaning of Energy

Practising Energy means being pleased to perform virtuous actions.

The method of following Energy

We should be spontaneously aware of the greatly numerous benefits of practising Energy and the shortcomings of not.

Energy dispels all sufferings. Its practice is fundamental to the avoidance of suffering in the lower realms, and through it we receive both worldly realisations and transcendental realisations, those beyond the ordinary. Only Energy can be called the main and best cause for the complete attainment of all virtue. Through Energy we achieve the most sublime Enlightenment.

As it says in the Teachings:

If we have great Energy and do not get upset, there is nothing we cannot achieve.

Human and non-human beings alike all are pleased to help the energetic person; he receives realisations, both day and night he brings result, and his knowledge never decreases.

Totally, Energy is the most important thing. If it is spontaneous, the life is made greatly meaningful, whether of long or short duration. And how quickly Enlightenment can be received also depends on Energy. It is the main thing that keeps us from life's distractions, laziness and sleep.

The Buddha said in his Teachings:

*The lazy person is far from Enlightenment.
He does not practise the six Paramitas, from Charity to
Wisdom, and does not work for others.*

All in all, if there is no Energy and we are under the control of laziness, we lose all the white actions, all chances for the success of temporal work, and cannot fulfil our ultimate purpose.

The divisions of Energy

a. Dauntless, armour-like Energy

When the Bodhisattva practises Energy, before any action he dons the mental armour of the pleased mind. This is the mind that is happy to try to achieve Enlightenment for the sake of extinguishing the suffering of just one sentient being, even if it means being in only the narak stages for a million million times the number of three countless great eons equal to the number of whites (*thang.chig*⁸) in the number of days in one thousand great eons.

From the Teaching, *Following the Bodhisattva's Actions*:

*Because sinfulness is avoided, there is no suffering. Because
skilful work is done for sentient beings, with Wisdom in the
evolution of karma, there is no unhappiness.*

Even if he has to suffer in the narak stage of unceasing suffering for the sake of sentient beings, the Bodhisattva purifies his sinfulness and has no suffering. He chooses to go there gladly, as he would to a paradise, and feels no unhappiness.

b. The Energy of the totality of virtue

This is practising the six Paramitas in order to fully attain them all, by such means as making offerings and purification.

c. The Energy of working for other sentient beings

By such means as following the practice of the Energy of the total actions of the Bodhisattva.

What should be done in the practice of Energy

The practice to receive Energy is extremely important—it is the most important thing, because receiving all the white dharmas and all progress depend on it. To arouse Energy it is first necessary to avoid its opponents. To do this they must be recognised and then the skilful methods to avoid them followed.

There are three kinds of laziness which prevent us from following the path, even though we see that we are capable of doing so, and a remedy for each.

⁸ There are sixty-five instants in a finger snap. Sixty times one hundred and twenty of those is one while (*thang.chig*), and thirty of these is another while (*yud.dzam.chig*). Then thirty of these is one day.

a. The laziness of putting off the practice by thinking that there will still be time.

The remedy for this is to meditate strongly, with deep feeling, on the fact that the human rebirth we have received decays very quickly and, falling into the lower realms after death, it is extremely difficult to receive such a perfect rebirth again. By means of this meditation we should arouse the worry that our time is so short.

b. The laziness arising from attachment to performing lower, worldly work and being under its control.

This results from attachment to ordinary, samsaric pleasures, those received through the objects of the five senses or sleep, and from not having aversion to samsara. Such is the attachment to receiving respect and materials, to idle chatter, to work like farming or business, to travelling, all of which are done for the comfort of this life. Doing these evil things and bearing whatever difficulties arise is all negative energy, and is not called Energy from the Dharma point of view.

The remedy for this is to meditate on the fact that Dharma practice is the source of infinite happiness in the present and future lives and the way to decrease suffering. Meaningless actions such as unnecessary talk and scattered thought destroy the great meaningfulness of this life and cause innumerable meaningless sufferings to arise. It is necessary to try to feel like this: "Why are you pleased to create the cause of suffering, such as scattered thoughts, and distracting actions, avoiding the Holy Dharma from which arises the most supreme happiness?"

c. The laziness of discouragement

Saying, "If the result, Buddhahood means the complete cessation of every single defect and the complete accumulation of all Knowledge, then there are too many levels of realisation to achieve and too many different practices and things to study. For me it is too difficult to receive each Knowledge and to correct every mistake. How can someone like me be capable of achieving that result, Buddhahood?" Should thoughts of discouragement arise like this, we create great negativeness because we abandon the Bodhicitta.

The remedy for this is to think, "The true, Holy Being tells only the truth, makes no mistakes and never lies. So if he says that even flies can reach Enlightenment, being born human with the capability of observing practice and avoidance, if I don't give up Energy why should I not achieve Enlightenment?"

We should also think. "The past and present Buddhas, and also those who will reach Enlightenment in the future, did not achieve the path by already being Enlightened. So I too must have such Energy that, even if it takes me my whole life to realise only the meditation on the Perfect Human Rebirth and the difficulty of finding it, I shall do it, for they all achieved Enlightenment by following such a path, in such a way, with such Energy."

Instead of feeling discouraged when we think of these high Bodhisattva's practices, such as making Charity of the body or its parts for the attainment of Enlightenment, we should think as follows: "Not living in the Bodhisattva's actions, I

have been circling in samsara, experiencing unspeakable sufferings, such as the body being chopped and cut and burned, and none of this has helped to accomplish even my own purpose. But suffering, bearing the difficulties for the achievement of Enlightenment is never the same as the other. Also it is necessary for bringing my own and others' success. In samsara, the body can be cut into pieces or burned countless hundreds of millions of times without the achieving of Enlightenment, but when these sufferings are experienced for the sake of achieving Enlightenment, their number has a limit. This is experiencing the temporal discomfort in order to cease those innumerable sufferings, just as patients experience the discomfort of surgery as doctors cure them of their illnesses."

When the power of great compassion is strongly developed, Charity can be made of the body. This becomes greatly meaningful, and there are no difficulties experienced while making such Charity.

Shantideva said:

At first the Lord trains us to make Charity of vegetables and suchlike. By training slowly from this we can eventually dedicate our own flesh. When we consider the body as we do vegetables, then there is no difficulty in dedicating our flesh.

Although it is necessary to completely accumulate infinite collections of merits in order to achieve Enlightenment, we must not be discouraged by thinking that it is extremely difficult and that we are incapable of doing so. When we observe ordinations motivated by the thought of accumulating infinite merits, that we might achieve the infinite Knowledge of Buddha to benefit infinite sentient beings, as long as we observe correctly—during the time of sleep and the time awake, the mind distracted and the mind not distracted—there is always the creation of merits equal to infinite space. Hence, there are no difficulties in accumulating infinite merits.

It is wonderful to arouse the thought of achieving Enlightenment for the sake of sentient beings in a short time, through the arousal and development of extremely great love and compassion. But if, when seeing the necessity for innumerable austere practices and from following the infinite practices of the Bodhisattvas for a long time, we think, "Who could be capable of that?", our mind not the least part of that great Bodhicitta, this indirectly disturbs the Bodhicitta will, and directly disturbs following Bodhicitta. Such ideas put a great distance between ourselves and Enlightenment because they disturb the wide development of the power of the Bodhicitta.

If we think that the desire to follow the Tantric path, the short-cut to Enlightenment, is a disturbance, the difference between these two minds is as great as that between earth and sky. For such motivation is based on the fundamental Bodhicitta thought: "For each sentient being I can experience suffering in the narak stages for eons equal in number to the drops in the ocean," and on the feeling that each second of suffering of sentient beings is a very long time, which is like the strong feeling of compassion that a mother has for her dearly beloved only-son who has been taken by a river.

Living with pessimistic mind brings no benefits and only makes us more discouraged. But if our thoughts are optimistic through having fully understood the methods of attaining Enlightenment, it is as if the attainment of all success is in our hand.

The Buddha said:

Feeling discouraged only results in loss and doesn't benefit for gaining Liberation.

So, if, without feeling upset, we follow the Wise One's method for the attainment of all necessities and release, even the greatly difficult practices become easy.

We should not be satisfied with limited knowledge of Dharma, even if we have achieved some part of Dharma Knowledge. If we find some subjects in the Teachings of certain meditations complicated or unintelligible and then feel discouraged and give up, instead of trying to understand them, it is a great loss of opportunity and a chance not regained for lifetimes.

For Energy to arise continuously, we must have the wish. How does the wish arise? The wish depends on our making checking meditation on the way that good and suffering results from white and black karmic actions respectively. The wish and Energy to observe the practice and avoidance come from this meditation, particularly that on the benefits that come from practising the Bodhisattva's deeds and the shortcomings that result from breaking the Bodhisattva's precepts, besides that on general karmic consequences. Our practising with the desire to enter the door of the Mahayana and complete the Mahayana Path means that we promise to eradicate all negativeness and shortcomings in ourselves and others and to attain all Knowledge. It is necessary to persuade ourselves by thinking like this: "It requires innumerable eons of training to completely achieve each Knowledge and purify each shortcoming and its impressions. Now I don't possess even a part of the Mahayana Energy required to achieve All-Knowledge and to purify all shortcomings—instead, I use my energy in a meaningless way."

It is necessary to generate the Energy to comprehend any subject without flagging, but first we should check it carefully rather than attempting just any of the Bodhisattva's deeds. If we are capable of following that, then we should do so; if not, then it is better to avoid taking it on, rather than trying to do so and later giving it up. The reason for this is that as we give up what was promised, this becomes a habit and increases even in future lifetimes because of the result similar to the cause—giving up practices such as following precepts. In this lifetime also the negativeness created by this increases. Also, the suffering result of that karma increases in other lifetimes; the complete result cannot be received because the previous practice—following the Bodhisattva's deeds—was not completed, and the achievement of other practices is also interrupted.

Therefore, to complete the promise, we should meditate on the following three prides:

i. Pride of action

Thinking of achieving the path by ourselves alone without depending on any helper.

In his Teaching, Nagarjuna said:

Liberation depends on oneself—there is no such thing as another helping in this.

Our thinking to achieve this by ourselves, without expecting others to help, is akin to pride, so it is called pride.

ii. Pride of capability

Since sentient beings cannot achieve even their own self-support through being under the control of delusion, we cannot even talk of their achieving that of others. We should practise by thinking, “I am capable of achieving the purpose of myself and others.”

As Nagarjuna said:

The worldly beings, sentient beings who are not free of delusion, are incapable of achieving their own purpose, and acting as I do. Therefore, I shall follow this.

We should also practise by thinking, “Even if sentient beings do not stop performing their lower, evil work, why should I not continue generating Energy to achieve that work which has perfect result? How can I live without doing this?” This does not mean that these two practices should be done with pride, giving up other beings. It is necessary to make the practice free of pride and without losing the thought of benefiting sentient beings. The thought that “I can do it and other sentient beings cannot,” is similar to pride—that is why it is called pride.

iii. Pride of delusion

We must arouse the courageous thought and make the firm resolution to destroy the negativities by thinking, “I must win the battle with delusions by avoiding them, and I must never allow them to win over me.”

As Nagarjuna said in his Teaching:

If a dead snake is encountered, even a crow flies high as a garuda. If I am weak, I am harmed by breaking even small precepts. Does he who is discouraged and gives up Energy win Liberation? His only result is loss.

If we have this pride then even the great opponents, evil actions and delusions, cannot hinder us. Therefore, it is necessary to arouse such pride.

Nagarjuna said:

By arising pride with Energy, it is difficult to be controlled by great opponents. If the mind is firm, the moral falls are prevented.

The practitioner who does not do this and does not desire to conquer the delusions of the three worlds, loses to the moral falls. Through the faculty of the strong wish we receive the Energy that has not been received, and through the faculty of pride we make firm and do not lose the Energy that has been received. When we follow, at first we do so with a happy mind, and while creating the action we do so not wishing to break it, a feeling dissatisfied and not doing better. This is the faculty of happiness and it is necessary to arouse it.

How should we arouse dissatisfaction in the work of the practice?

This is similar to the dissatisfaction that playing babies experience when the actions they create to bring pleasure do not satisfy them. It is necessary to think, “Ordinary beings still try for happy results despite the doubt of achieving them, so why should I not do the same? And as ordinary beings are not satisfied by enjoying the beautiful qualities of objects of the senses which, despite giving momentary pleasure, are the cause of extremely great sufferings, like honey on a sword, why should I be easily satisfied by the avoidance of vices and the creation of merits, actions which grant infinite happiness, present and ultimate?” By thinking like this we should arouse thoughts of dissatisfaction.

If our body and mind get tired through our having exerted much energy, or if there is a danger that tiredness will make us unable to continue in the future, it is necessary to take a short rest. On recovery we can resume our practice of Energy. As we achieve certain realisations we must continue the practice to reach higher levels.

How to put Energy into our practice.

Our attempts should lie between the two extremes, being neither sloppy nor fanatical. Also our practice should be steady and continuous, like the flow of a river, or like the crawling of a louse, which reaches its destination before the flea, which moves with jumps and pauses.

What should we do in the practice of Energy which avoids prohibited actions?

We should act as does the skilful veteran in combat—he doesn’t plan only to destroy his opponents, but also expertly protects himself from the injuries their weapons might inflict. So the practitioner who plans to fight delusion, besides being skilful in the use of remedies against delusion, should take care lest they wound his mind. If he does not, while trying remedies to stop one kind of delusion, others may disturb his merits, making it difficult to progress in virtuous work.

For instance, if we practise Dharma, thinking that Knowledge is important, that just understanding the Dharma is the essential thing, and that ignorance can be dispelled merely by hearing, but are not careful to eradicate other delusions, during that time our mind develops so much negativity. So the main thing is the necessity to

meditate thinking that subduing the mind is more important than mere intellectual understanding.

If a soldier drops his weapon while fighting, he picks it up immediately out of fear of being killed. If the practitioner drops his weapon—remembrance of the correct way to practise—he should recall it out of fear of falling into the lower realms. The object of remembrance should be clearly discriminated by Wisdom and held firm by remembrance.

How should the object of remembrance be discriminated by Wisdom?

We should know well all the points of the way to follow and what to avoid that the Holy Teachings explain; specifically the permitted and prohibited actions that we vow to observe in ordinations.

Knowing these well, we should remain conscious of them, and thereby we can complete our Dharma practice. But nothing can be completed by just remaining conscious, the mind focussed on one object only.

A soldier should try from the first not to drop his weapon, but if he does so he should pick it up instantly, with not just the word “fear” but with heartfelt terror of death. Like this should the meditator try not to lose his remembrance, being vigilant in observing the permitted and prohibited practices, so that the moment it is lost he instantly regains it. With fear that is not merely the word but is the unbearable fear of falling into the lower realms, the result of breaking precepts. This depends on observing karma as the most important thing. If we do not consider that such subjects as ordinations and karma are amongst the profound Teachings, for us the root of the Knowledge of attainment is cut, a leg to follow the path is broken.

It is necessary to purify immediately, having great fear of the negativeness created by even small vices and the breakage of even smallest precepts, and we must be determined not to continue to do so. Why is this necessary? Because just as a poison-tipped arrow may inflict a wound that is only superficial but causes grave danger because of the poison spreading throughout the whole body, so that even that wound must be excised immediately, similarly, the negativeness due to breaking even a small precept, which causes a small wound to the mind, may spread through it becoming great and, therefore, has to be purified immediately. So it is necessary to prevent such breaks from ever occurring; but should they happen to do so they must be purified immediately.

We might think, “How can remembrance and consciousness be retained, in order to win the war against delusion?”

A Teaching says:

He who is living in the ordination should be as vigilant and afraid as he who has to carry a pot, brimful of liquid butter, while another holding a sword threatens to kill him should he spill even a drop.

Being thus vigilant, at the first sign of laziness or sleep we must dispel them, as given in an example from the Teachings:

If sleep and laziness arise, dispel them quickly, just as one moves away from an approaching snake.

As vices are found we must arouse dislike for them, reasoning that we have been wandering in samsara since beginningless time, and that as we took precepts and are trying to live in the opposite actions it is ridiculous nonsense to do such things, and we must vow not to break them again. It is necessary for us to strive to be as careful as possible in maintaining continued powerful remembrance. This can be helped by such things as living with holy friends and Gurus, or listening much to Teachings, often hearing the subjects that cause continued powerful remembrance.

How can we bring the mind and body under control? In Sutra Teachings the Enlightened Being has explained that to build the faculty of control we must think of the necessity of following the Bodhisattva's trainings, and of the great shortcomings—the creation of great negativeness—that result from not following as we vowed. We must consider delusions as our enemy and see any difficulties in our practice as ornaments. But to build this faculty of regarding obstacles in our practice as ornaments, not being bothered by them, it should be meditated upon before the Bodhisattva training is undertaken. Thus, by lessening the bother of interruptions to following the Bodhisattva's deeds, the mind and body will be prepared and therefore more able to do so.

By trying this, what kind of Energy do we receive? When the power of happiness in performing virtuous work controls our mind and body, like the wind controls the cotton bolls which sway to its command, we receive strong Energy, through which all accumulations can be quickly achieved.

How should we practise Energy while in the training? Whatever Energy is generated we should practise it with the six Paramitas and the six Holy things. For example, Charity of Energy is, while being in the practice of the Paramita of Energy ourselves, also leading others in its practice.

Conclusion

The meditator who follows the Bodhisattva's deeds persuades himself to practise the Paramita of Energy by frequently remembering and meditating on Bodhicitta. That is, to practise it to lead other sentient beings in the Paramita of Energy and also to increase the practice of Energy, training by praying to achieve its higher levels.

We should try to follow the lower forms of practising Energy according to our capability, with special emphasis on trying to prevent the opponent of Energy, laziness, from arising.

We should also try to train our thoughts in the armour-like Energy that is pleased to experience infinite austerities and to achieve infinite accumulations of merit over great lengths of time in order that the suffering of sentient beings will be

ceased and that they will achieve Enlightenment. We should also remember the infinite merits that result just from generating that great thought.

If such practice is not made, the Mahayana Knowledge power cannot develop and we always create many vices. In future lifetimes we shall find it difficult to follow the Bodhisattva's deeds.

Even though we cannot fully practise in this way, by understanding these points well we can project our mind in this direction, trying to generate as much Energy as possible. Then, in future lifetimes we shall quickly complete the Paramita of Energy with less suffering and less difficulties.

MEDITATION EIGHT

THE FIFTH PARAMITA: THE PARAMITA OF CONCENTRATION: SAMADHI MEDITATION

The following conditions are necessary for us to achieve the fifth paramita, the perfection of Concentration (Tib., *Sam.tan*)

1. We should be in a well-contained place.
2. We should have little desire.
3. We should be satisfied with sense objects.
4. We should avoid distracting work.
5. We should be morally pure.
6. We should avoid the superstitions that make us attached to sense objects.

As there has not been time to complete this section of the Meditation Course book, the following has been copied from *The Opening of the Wisdom Eye* by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Madras, for the information of students.

THE TRAINING IN SUPREME COLLECTEDNESS (Adhisamadhi-siksa)

Only the person trained in virtue can train in collectedness. Usually the mind (citta)⁹ does not remain fixed for long upon one object since it is flickering here and there, being engaged with the objects of the various sense-fields, but through this training it can be made one-pointed or perfectly concentrated. When the mind is concentrated upon a skilful object and not disturbed, then that one-pointedness of mind is called “samadhi.”

Samadhi or collectedness¹⁰ may be analysed into various levels of mental absorption (dhyana). These are preceded by access collectedness (upacara-samadhi) in which the five hindrances (nivarana)¹¹ commonly arising in the lower planes of

⁹ Usually the term “citta” is translated as “mind” but it really means the total mental-emotional experience of which one is aware as well as that of which one is not aware. It embraces: feelings (pleasant, painful, and neither); perception, memory (of objects: visual, audible, smellable, tasteable, tangible and mental objects); volitional activities (such as those associated and disassociated from consciousness); and consciousness. When we translate “citta” as “mind” this implied Buddhist significance should be remembered.

¹⁰ Sometimes translated as “meditation” which however is too vague a word in English for use in Dharma.

¹¹ Nivarana—the five hindrances: sensual desire, ill-will, sloth and torpor, worry and remorse, scepticism, all of which are obstructions to the attainment of the absorptions (dhyana).

desire are suppressed; but when the factors of absorption (dhyana) arise, this is the level of attainment collectedness (arpana-samadhi). Collectedness is of two kinds, worldly and transcendental. The worldly variety is also of two sorts: pertaining to the form realm or else to the formless realm and within these two realms there are eight levels (bhumi), four in each realm. If by correct practice one has attained the absorptions both of form and of formlessness, then one has fulfilled the perfection of collectedness (samadhi-paramita).

As we pointed out above, collectedness is classified as either worldly or transcendental. Here, by “world,” one should understand, are meant the three world-elements (loka-dhatu) within which all living beings are found¹². Thus worldly collectedness is that which has worldly objects and produces a worldly result, that of calm and happiness in this life and for the next, gives rise to a celestial birth (the experience of “heaven,” “paradise,” etc.) Unworldly or transcendental means that this sort of samadhi is aimed at freedom, its objects being essence-lessness and not-self-soulness (nihsvabhavata, anatmata). In order to achieve worldly and transcendental absorptions, one should first develop calm and insight (samatha-vipasyana). Although at first one may seem to develop these aspects of samadhi separately, finally one must develop the collectedness in which they are yoked together¹³. The aspect of collectedness which pacifies the fickleness of the mind is called “calm,” while that wisdom which penetrates to the three marks (of existence)—impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and not-self-soul—is called “insight” (vipasyana, literally: deep insight).

¹² The world-elements (dhatu) of sensuality, form and formlessness. The first of these comprises, from the “lowest” (spiritually) “upwards”: the hells, animals, hungry ghosts, men and celestials of the sensual realm. In the form world-element are found the celestials of Brahmaloaka (the Brahma-gods), as well as those now in their last birth as non-returners (anagami) who attain Nirvana in the Pure Abodes which are the highest planes of this world-element. The formless world-element comprises four states of existence known as infinity of space, etc. Birth in these realms is strictly in accordance with one’s karma, i.e., if one allows one’s mind to become dominated by lust, birth follows as an animal, if one keeps the Five Precepts one is a man and will be born as one, and if one makes efforts with training, then one will be born upon the level to which one has been successful in training the mind. Only by right application of Wisdom can one go beyond the three world-elements (lokadhatu) scattered throughout space. In modern terms these would be called galaxies except that the modern and materialist term takes no account of the great range of possibilities for life known to Buddhists.

¹³ It is important to note this point and to beware of meditation teachers who stress that “insight” only is enough. Some of them offer “methods” which “guarantee” Enlightenment, insight, etc., within a limited time of practice, and some offer a graded series of stages and “interpret” a disciple’s progress by his little experiences as representing this or that insight-knowledge (vipasyana-jnana).

The order of development regarding these two aspects of collectedness in the mind is first calm (samatha) and then insight (vipasyana), or as they may also be termed: mental development (bhavana), and that including thorough examination. Once the mind is well established in calm, the development including examination which yields insight becomes possible. Samatha is the calm and serene pond in which the fish (the faculty of deep insight) moves in examination. This is so because the mind at that time is fixed strongly upon its object and not easily disturbed¹⁴. This state is very important and the skilful karma made while dwelling in it, is very powerful and of great fruit.

There are five obstacles¹⁵ to this development of calm which are sources of disturbance and stand opposed to tranquillity. They are:

1. Mental slackness (kausidya) creating discouragement so that the mind is not interested in the practice of collectedness. This is opposed by the mental factor called "determination" (chanda).
2. Lack of mindfulness (musitasmrtita) in achieving collectedness, for if this is to be experienced there must be constant mindfulness to ensure that the mind is established with concentration upon its object. Through lack of mindfulness the object of collectedness disappears from mind. This factor, therefore, is opposed to perfect (or right) mindfulness (samyak-smrti).
3. Next comes sinking and scattering of the mind (nirmagnatauddhatya). "Sinking" means that the mind becomes submerged without awareness in the object, a state which bars further progress. It is necessary during meditation to be mindful of the object, while at the same time the mind should not sink into it. "Scattering" is a kind of fickleness of the mind because of which the mind cannot remain fixed upon its object. This pair of obstacles oppose clear comprehension.

¹⁴ Insight (vipasyana) is developed with the five heaps (skandha) as one's basis and with some aspect of them as one's object. The states of absorption and their approaches tend to produce in a meditator all sorts of visions, ecstatic experiences and unsurpassed powers, etc. These things easily lure him off the practice path which for a Buddhist leads inwards to the nature of the five heaps and not outwards to these distractions. A meditator has to give up all these experiences and use his concentrated mind to penetrate to the marks of the five heaps: impermanence, dukha, no atman, voidness.

¹⁵ In Theravada Tradition, the five hindrances oppose entry upon the absorbed states but are in turn opposed one for one by the Five Posers, thus: trust (sraddha) opposes sensual desire (kamachanda); energy (virya) opposes ill-will (vyapada); mindfulness (sati) opposes sloth and torpor (thinamiddha; Skt., styanamiddha); collectedness (samadhi) opposes worry and remorse (uddhaccakukucca); wisdom (panna) opposes scepticism (vicikiddha).

4. Association with the above pair of obstacles (samskarasevana) is itself counted as an obstacle to collectedness. In this case one knows that the mind is overpowered by sinking and scattering but still one does not make an effort to develop those factors which oppose them and are able to cure the mind.
5. It sometimes happens that having made this effort and produced the counteractive factors, one goes on practising them at a time when they are not needed (samskarasevana disassociation). This is an ignorant way of practising and shows that the mind is not fully aware or focussed upon its object.

It is impossible to achieve the perfection of collectedness unless one puts away these five opposing factors.

For training the mind to avoid these five there are eight dharmas which stand in opposition. They counteract the obstacles in this way:

1. Trust (sraddha) opposes mental slackness.
2. Determination (chanda) opposes mental slackness.
3. Perseverance (virya) opposes mental slackness.
4. Tranquillity (prasrabdhi) opposes mental slackness.
5. Mindfulness (smrti) opposes lack of mindfulness.
6. Comprehension (samprajanya) opposes sinking and scattering.
7. Investigation (samskaracintana) opposes association with the above.
8. Equanimity (adhivasana) opposes non-association.

Calm should be developed by the growth of these eight qualities. Now we shall go on to discuss the nine states of mind, the six powers and the four mental activities and how, due to them, collectedness is achieved.

Nine states of mind

1. **Cittasthapana**. This is the state in which the mind first becomes unaffected by outer objects and fixes in the meditation object.
2. **Cittapravahasamsthapa** is the establishment of the stream of mind, meaning that the mind is fixed upon the object for some time by compelling the mind to consider again and again the object of concentration.
3. **Cittapratiharana** is the state when, the mind being disturbed, one “brings back” the mind to the concentration-object.
4. **Cittopasthapana** is the state in which the mind is expanded while exactly limited to the object.
5. **Cittadamana**—“mind-taming” which is done by seeing the ill results of distracting thoughts and defilements, also perceiving the advantages of collectedness, so that one makes efforts to put away the former while establishing the mind in the latter.
6. **Cittasamana**—“mind-calming” in which feelings antagonistic to the practice of collectedness are quelled. If boredom arises regarding collectedness since the mind is still hungry for sense objects, then it is thoroughly pacified at this stage.
7. **Cittavyupasamana** or the subtle pacification of mind. Even the subtle stains of mind are set aside here.
8. **Cittaikotikarana**. The mind here becomes like one undisturbed stream and continues to flow along one-pointedly.
9. **Samadhana**. When this state is reached, there is no need for effort since the mind is naturally one-pointed.

Six powers

1. **Srutibala**: Listening to a teacher or else reading books on the method of fixing the mind, such is meant by this first power.
2. **Asayabala**: By the power of repeated thought one establishes the mind in the way of collectedness.
3. **Smrtibala**: If the mind becomes distracted by some other object, it is by this power of mindfulness that it is returned to the meditation-object and established therein.
4. **Samprajanyabala**: By means of this power of clear comprehension one comes to know the evil results of the mental stains and the beneficial fruits derived from collectedness thus making one delight in the latter.
5. **Viryabala**: This sort of skilful energy ensures that the mind is not influenced by the stains.

6. **Paricayabala:** The natural and thorough acquaintance of the mind with collectedness, forced application of mindfulness and clear comprehension being no longer needed.

Four mental activities

1. **Manonivesapravartak-manaskara.** By means of this activity the mind enters into the object.
2. **Vicchinnapravartak-manaskara.** Although the mind may in the beginning remain in concentration for some time, every now and then distraction will arise from the obstacles of sinking, scattering and so forth. This activity returns the mind to its object.
3. **Avicchinnapravartak-manaskara.** Through this activity the mind is established in the object for a long period thus giving no chance to distractions.
4. **Ayatanapravartak-manaskara.** When all the hindrances to collectedness have been set aside, it is through this activity that the mind is held effortlessly upon its object.

The successive attainment of collectedness¹⁶

Now having given an outline of the various factors involved in the approach to collectedness, the subject to be explained here will be the progress through the nine states of mind and the hindrances which are encountered in them and how the various powers and mental activities bring them to an end.

As I said above, the first power consists of listening to the teaching and making the mind learn about the objects of concentration. Those who have heard this kind of teaching and who desire to experience collectedness, do not allow their minds to stray upon exterior objects. When the mind begins to be established in this object, it is called the first state of mind. Although the mind begins to be established in the object, it fails to be concentrated upon the same object for a long time. Thoughts pour from the mind like water in a waterfall and it seems as though a veritable flood of thoughts arise. The truth is that the mind has always been in this state but never before was one aware of it, since one had never turned one's gaze within before. Now that the mind is turned inward because of the practice of mindfulness and clear comprehension, these thoughts become known. Just as upon a great and crowded highway, a careless person may not be aware how crowded it really is unless he examines carefully to see the different sorts and numbers of people, so in the same way the mind begins to know the variety and range of thoughts comprising it. This should not be regarded as a fault of practice but quite a natural experience for one beginning to take up concentration.

¹⁶ For this process clearly depicted see the large illustrated sheet prepared by the Council for Cultural and Religious Affairs of H. H. the Dalai Lama (reproduced p.184).

While experiencing the first state of mind, it is by means of the second power that the mind is repeatedly established upon the object. In this way the mind becomes restrained for some time by this power and so reaches the second state of mind. Here thoughts sometimes arise and disturb the mind after which they die away and it is then that the meditator realises for the first time the stopping of thoughts. Two faults are commonly found here: sinking and scattering. If the former then the mind sinks gently into the object and a sort of sleep is the result, while the latter makes the mind fickle and run after other objects. The result of these is that one's collectedness loses power and force. When this occurs, one should fix the mind unwaveringly upon the object and where this occurs, it is known as the first mental activity.

However, if after the mind has been earnestly tied to the object it is continually being disturbed by other objects, then it must be established again upon the object of concentration by the third power (of mindfulness). One will then reach the third state of mind.

As I said above, whenever the mind is not energetic and hence gets discouraged due to the faults of sinking and so on, then it is directed by the third power to return to the concentration-object. Likewise, this power of mindfulness is needed to limit the mind when expanded, from straying to other objects. This is the fourth state of mind.

While practising concentration, thoughts and stains appear repeatedly and this is because the meditator does not know the unskilful and distracting results to be expected from them, nor does he realise the skilled fruits of collectedness. When by way of the fourth power (clear comprehension) one notices and comes to know these faults, then they can be properly dealt with by means of this power. This means that stains already arisen are cut off, the mind being well established in the object, and when this occurs it is known as the fifth state of mind.

From time to time the mind is liable to become dissatisfied with concentration so that from the arising of boredom there is the experience of scattering. By means of the power of clear comprehension the bad fruits of this scatteredness are known thereby not permitting the mind to entertain boredom. This is called the sixth state of mind.

As far as this stage of practice is concerned, although faults and stains have been suppressed by reflection upon their unsatisfactory results for the future, this does not mean that they will not arise again. For this reason the meditator should beware. Whenever these stains become manifest in the mind, then the real value of awareness may be seen for whatever the stain, whether greed, lust, singing, and so forth, and whether arising in a gross or in a subtle form, it can be ended with this awareness where it is supported by earnestness and effort. This is the seventh state of mind.

Although from the third up to the seventh state the mind has been concentrated to a greater or lesser extent, even when well established in the object, stains such as sinking and scattering and so on will cause distraction from time to

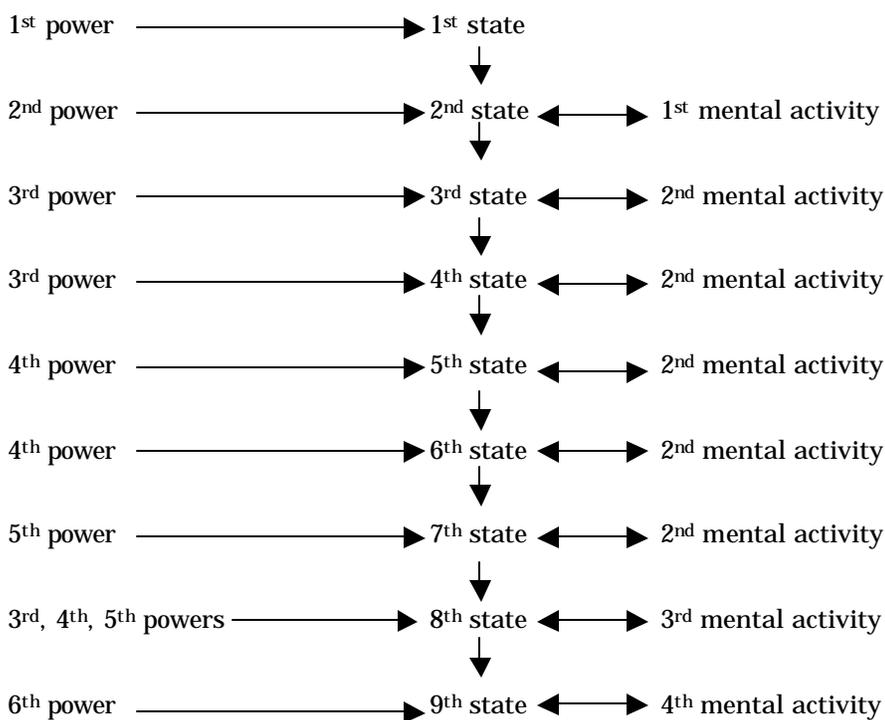
time though perhaps only after long intervals. This results in one's collectedness being broken and at such a time this is restored by the second mental activity. This activity has its application in all states of mind from the third to the seventh.

If the meditator develops both the third and fourth powers to counteract scattering and the fifth power against sinking, then these two stains will not arise as hindrances to collectedness. As a result of this, one's practice proceeds like an unbroken stream, this being the eighth state of mind.

While experiencing this state if one makes an effort carefully and persistently, then these two stains have no power to break into collectedness so that it proceeds unbroken and quite undisturbed, the third mental activity thus being found in this state.

Persistently and continuously developing collectedness, it is through the sixth power that the object becomes very clear. In this state, the mind is effortlessly concentrated on the object without the support either of mindfulness or of clear comprehension. One has then reached the ninth state of mind. Just as a man who has learnt the scriptures well may, while chanting them, let his mind wander elsewhere, yet there is no hindrance to his chanting, so the mind which has been previously well established in the object is now fixed there effortlessly and without any hindrance. The current of collectedness is now able to flow for a long time without effort made by the practitioner, this being the fourth mental activity. The ninth state of mind is also called "access collectedness" (upacara samadhi).

Diagrammatic summary of progress through the nine states



Calm is found even in the mind of a meditator who begins to practise for the attainment of collectedness. As the strength of calm increases so stiffness both of mind and body decrease. This stiffness, dullness or unworkability of mind is associated with heaviness and mental inactivity, all of which are aspects of that root-cause of the mental stains, delusion (moha). When we say that calm stands opposed to stiffness, we mean that this calm or samatha is accompanied by lightness both of mind and body¹⁷. In a calm mind, joy (priti) arises and because of this the mind becomes established in the meditation object. The calm of mind also gives rise to a tranquil and relaxed body, such bodily peace being very helpful to the meditator.

As one progresses with collectedness this joy tends to decrease while equanimity (upeksa) replaces it, the mind being established in the object with greater stability, an experience known as samadhi-upacara-acala-prasrabdhi (literally: the unshaken tranquillity of access to collectedness) and with it one enters a state very close to the first absorption (dhyana).

By continuing one's practice in this way, one does in fact reach the first absorption. We have already said that there are three great levels (bhumi),

¹⁷ Called "lahuta" (Skt., laghuta), lightness, and grouped in Theravada Abhidhamma with tranquillity, softness (pliancy), adaptability, proficiency and uprightness of both bodily and mental factors.

sometimes called world-elements (dhatu) but these may be further subdivided to make up a total of nine levels:

1. Sensuous-existence level (kama-bhumi).
2. First absorption level (prathama-dhyana-bhumi).
3. Second absorption level (dvitiya-dhyana-bhumi).
4. Third absorption level (tritiya-dhyana-bhumi).
5. Fourth absorption level (caturtha-dhyana-bhumi).
6. Sphere of infinite space level (akasanantyayatana-bhumi).
7. Sphere of infinite consciousness level (vijñananantyayatana-bhumi).
8. Sphere of no-thingness level (akincanyayatana-bhumi).
9. Sphere of neither-perception-nor-nonperception level (naivasamjñā-nāsamjñāyatana-bhumi) also called the summit of becoming (bhavagra).

These successive levels are attained by having no attachment for them and by seeing the advantages of the levels higher than those already attained together with the disadvantages of those already reached.

These absorption-attainments (dhyana-samapatti), that is the last eight of these nine levels, are causal factors since by means of their attainment (when a man) one may be reborn among the celestials of form or formlessness (according to the type of absorption reached).

His Holiness then goes on to describe the method for the attainment of the absorptions, the fruits of accomplished absorptions, the four formless absorptions and special virtues and knowledges.

SAMATHA (QUIETUDE) MEDITATION (*Zhi.na*)

1. The first is the force of hearing. The first stage of meditation is attained through the force of hearing.
2. Fixing the mind on the object of concentration.
3. The force of recollection (mindfulness).
4. The force of consciousness (clear comprehension).
5. From here until the seventh stage of mental absorption will be found a flame decreasing in size at each progressive stage until it becomes conspicuously absent. This difference in size, absence and presence of the flame denotes the measure of effort and strength of recollection and consciousness.
6. The elephant represents mind, its black colour the mental factor of sinking.
7. The monkey represents interruption (distraction), and its black colour the mental factor of scattering.
8. The force of reflection. This achieves the second stage of mental absorption.
9. Uninterrupted and continuous absorption on the object of concentration (lengthening of the period of concentration).
10. The five sensual desires are the object of the mental factor of scattering.
11. From here the black colour, beginning from the head, changes into white. It denotes the progress in the clear grasping of the object of meditation and prolonged fixing of the mind on the object of concentration.
12. The force of recollection. The attainment of the third and fourth stages of mental absorption is achieved through the force of recollection.
13. To return and fix the strayed mind on the object of concentration.
14. The hare represents the subtle aspects of the mental factor of sinking. At this stage, one recognises the distinct nature of the subtle and gross aspects of the mental factor of sinking.
15. Looking back means that having perceived the diversion of the mind, it is again brought back to the object of concentration.
16. Maintaining a clear conception of even the minutest details of the object of concentration.
17. The force of consciousness (clear comprehension). Through this is attained the fifth and sixth stages of mental absorption.
18. The arising of the mental factor of scattering preceding the actual state of absorption is greatly reduced.

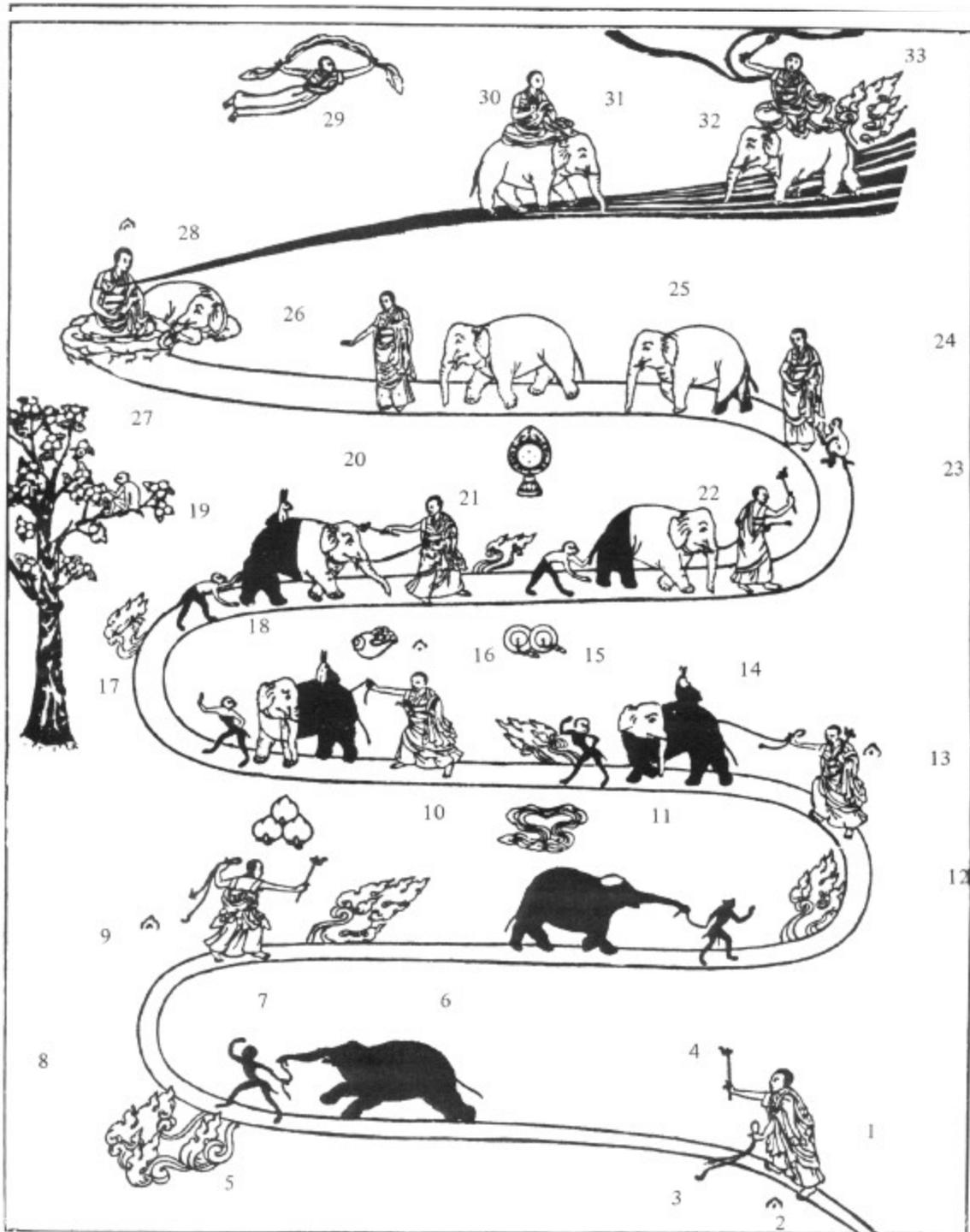


Figure 12—Progress on the path of Samatha meditation

19. At the time of Samatha meditation, even though thoughts of virtue arise these have to be eliminated and the mind tenaciously projected on the object of concentration. The reason is that such thought, in spite of its virtuousness, will act as interruption. Such elimination is not necessary when one is not doing Samatha meditation.
20. The force of consciousness (clear comprehension) arrests the mind from drifting astray, and because of its sheer loftiness, the mind is drawn towards absorption.
21. The mind is controlled.
22. The mind is pacified.
23. The force of mental absorption are accomplished through the force of mental energy.
24. The mind becomes perfectly pacified. At this stage the arising of the subtlest sinking and scattering will not be possible. Even if there occurs some, it will be immediately removed with the slightest effort.
25. Here the black colour of the elephant has completely faded out, and the monkey has also been left out. The meaning represented is: bereft of the interrupting factors of scattering and sinking, the mind can be settled continuously in absorption (on the subject of concentration) with perfect ease and steadfastness, beginning with the application of a slight amount of the forces of mindfulness and clear comprehension.
26. One-pointedness of mind.
27. The force of perfection. The ninth stage of mental absorption is attained through the force of perfection.
28. Perfect equanimity.
29. Ecstasy of body.
30. Attainment of mental quiescence of Samatha.
31. Mental ecstasy.
32. The root of samsara or becoming is destroyed with the joint power of Samatha and the direct insight (vipasyana) with Shunyata (void) as the object of concentration.
33. The flame represents the dynamic forces of recollection (mindfulness) and consciousness (clear comprehension). Equipped with the power, one examines the nature and the sublime meaning of Shunyata (void)—the knowledge of the ultimate reality of all objects, material and phenomena.

PRAYER TO BE SAID AFTER MEDITATION EIGHT

From the Profound Tantric Text, Guru Puja

With this prayer visualise:

Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara, the Infinite Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhants, Dakas and Dakinis, many other Tantric Deities, the Protecting Deities, and all the Holy Gurus in the direct and indirect Lineage of the Teachings, sending much light to me and to all sentient beings, who are visualised as surrounding me.

This light is absorbed into me and into all sentient beings, purifying all negativities and obscurations, and bringing all Knowledge—especially the Knowledge of how to abandon mental dullness and mental agitation that I may accomplish the Perfection of Concentration by single-minded concentration on the ultimate nature of all things.

J'ING.GÖ NAM.PAR YENG.WÄ KYÖNG.PANG.NÄ
 CH'Ö.KÜN DEN.PÄ TONG.PÄ PÄ NÄ.LUG.LA
 TZE.CHIG NYAM.PAR JOG.PÄ TING.DZIN.GYI
 SAM.TÄN P'AR.CH'IN DZOG.PAR J'IN.GY'I.LOB

(By abandoning the faults of mental dullness and mental agitation, please bless me to accomplish the perfection of concentration, by single-minded meditation on the ultimate nature of the voidness of all things.)

After this prayer, complete the visualisation as described on pp. 16-18 and dedicate the merits with the prayer on the last page.

