

COMMENTARIES ON:

THE SIX SESSION YOGA

THE SHORT SADHANA OF THE
SOLITARY HERO VAJRABHAIRAVA

THE SHORT SADHANA OF
VAJRAYOGINI

by

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Only to be read after having obtained a highest yoga tantra initiation



A Jewel Heart Transcript

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This is mainly the transcription of the Ann Arbor vajrayana weekends may and June 1996. Rinpoche then gave an explanation of the short vajrayana practices that nearly everyone in the vajrayana sangha has a commitment for. Added to that are additional teachings given during the winter retreat 1997/1998.

These short teachings help to understand what one is doing as long as one hasn't yet received a complete teaching. It also is an easy stepping stone to the more detailed teachings. The teachings are to be read only by those who have received an initiation in one of the *maha anu yoga* tantras.

The transcription was done by Hartmut Sagolla; the drawings of Buddha Vajradhara and of Yamantaka are by Marian van der Horst; the drawing of Vajrayogini has been received from Gelongla Thubten Chöpel.

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Buddha Vajradhara

I

THE SIX-SESSION YOGA

Refuge

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

The text starts with taking refuge and generating bodhicitta. While doing that, you generate the refuge field in front of you, which is Sakyamuni Buddha. When the text says, 'In my heart I turn to the Three Jewels of Refuge', it does not mean that you visualize the object of refuge in your heart. When you visualize Buddha Sakyamuni you think that his mind is buddha, his speech is dharma, [his body is sangha].

Speech is communication and where does that come from? Where do his teachings come from? They come from his internal spiritual development. In order to communicate, you [need] experience. His experience is his spiritual development. Therefore it is dharma. In visualization the dharma is often represented by a book. The book can represent dharma, but itself is not dharma. It is knowledge. However, you can write a book based on your own experience. That's why the true teaching of Buddhism has to be personalized, has to be experiential. Otherwise it is just book knowledge.

Traditionally, nobody dared to write a book unless they were really sure what they were talking about. Today, everybody writes anything regardless of understanding. These days it is a big question whether book knowledge is really true spiritual knowledge. Many authors of today's spiritual books probably don't know much about the subject, and it is anyway mainly put out by the editors.

In the Tibetan tradition they used to say that earlier in India, in the eighth and ninth century, any master who wrote on a spiritual subject had to undergo a review. In the monasteries they had an annual book review and if a book was judged to be bad, they would tie it to a dog's tail and let the dog run around with it and the author had to follow. That's how they disgraced the authors at that time. The reason why they did this was not to disgrace the authors but in order to maintain the purity of the written word. The Tibetan tradition will tell you that. Atisha wrote his famous text *Lamp of the Path* in Tibet for the Tibetans, but he also sent a copy back to India for review. And everybody [there] is supposed to have praised it and at that point the teaching tradition tells you that if it had been a bad book they would have tied it to a dog's tail and let the dog run around with it.

Nowadays, we don't have this system. We do have book reviews, too, but the critics don't know what they are critiquing, particularly in the field of Tibetan literature. Whether it is in the field of politics, economy, history, culture or religion – the critics have no idea. So we lamas have been lucky enough. Sensible critics will restrain themselves, because they are afraid of rebuffs. They let you do whatever you want, except for Bob [Thurman]. The critics have no idea about crazy wisdom either. That's why we have freedom. That's the true situation. We always get good reviews, because the

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critics don't know much about it. It would be good to get some healthy criticism, but the critics don't know what to say.

The easy way of visualizing here is the 'jewel system'. This combines all the three refuge objects in one figure. Buddha's mind is buddha, his speech is dharma and his body is sangha.

If someone, instead of visualizing Sakyamuni Buddha at this point wants to visualize the refuge tree, there is no objection to that. The refuge tree may be a little complicated here. When you practice the *Lama Chöpa* it is easier, because the text leads you through the visualization of the [merit] tree, step by step. When you are saying the words it is easy to generate the picture in the mind. To instantaneously generate a refuge tree might be a little difficult. However, if you are used to it and see it clearly, okay. If you can't, simply thinking it is there and just seeing some little red and green dots, will probably do.

Here what is expected is either Lama Lozang Tubwang Dorjechang or Buddha Sakyamuni's form. Preferably, the refuge is focused on Buddha Sakyamuni. He *is* the most important guru of ours. Whether he is alive or not, the teachings we are following are his teachings. So Buddha is the most important guru of the buddhists. Your own guru may be kinder than Buddha [as the *Lama Chöpa* says] to you as an individual, but that does not mean that your guru is more important than Buddha. So it is a very good idea to focus on your guru as inseparable from Sakyamuni Buddha. That is more important [at this point] than [focusing on] Lama Lozang Tubwang Dorjechang, although that is also perfectly okay, because you have Sakyamuni Buddha at Lama Lozang's heart level. Buddha Vajradhara is Buddha, there is no difference. But the physical appearance of Buddha Sakyamuni is the historical appearance, more or less. I don't believe he really looked like that, with a little lump on the head, but still, very similar to that. The 32 major and 80 minor marks, I don't know how much that refers to the psychic level and how much it is the real physical appearance. Probably it is 50%-50% mixed. That is my presumption. Nobody in traditional teachings has said that. It is my presumption. So Buddha Sakyamuni is recommended here. Vajradhara and Sakyamuni are both nirmanakaya [here]. Don't make it more complicated than you need to. Just focus on Buddha Sakyamuni. But if you want you can also visualize the *Lama Chöpa* tree or buddha Vajradhara or your own guru's form, everything is fine.

So much about the object you visualize, in this case Sakyamuni Buddha. When you say the line for the refuge you have the visualization and you know what refuge means, so you have to apply that. If you can't do that six times, then at least do it once and the other five times just simply say the words, that will probably do. In the next line you apply the refuge.

Generating bodhimind

May I free suffering beings and place them in bliss.

Here you are building a commitment to free all beings from suffering.

Audience: The idea to promise something that you cannot fulfill is an ethical problem for me.

Rinpoche: I don't think so. The fourth line says, 'that I may complete the enlightening path'. So, you want to complete the path *in order* to fulfill your commitment.

Anyway, what makes you think that karmically you cannot complete the path in this life? What makes you so sure? You would be underestimating yourself. Whenever you have such thoughts you actually are deciding that you are incapable of obtaining enlightenment for yourself, therefore you then think how is it possible to make a commitment you cannot fulfill and then you conclude that it would be ethically wrong to promise that. So the problem really is that you are underestimating yourself. In contrast to this self-defeating position buddhas and bodhisattvas are making statement after statement that each one of us is capable of obtaining enlightenment within our life-time. Don't underestimate yourself. Don't take that personally. I say all that to your face, but even then don't take it personally. A

dharma teaching is such a thing – you have to pinpoint where the problem is. If you take that personally, while I am addressing everyone, then it becomes a problem. So don't take anything personal, but on the other hand, do take everything personal, too!

Every way and means of becoming a fully enlightened buddha in this life is available to us. Fortunately or unfortunately, it is right in our midst as a ready-made TV-dinner. It is there. Whether you take it out of the fridge and put it on the oven, whether you take the trouble to open the packet and pick up a spoon or chopsticks, whether you make use of it or not, is up to you as an individual. Underestimating oneself and laziness is what makes it impossible to eat that TV-dinner. I strongly recommend not to draw such a conclusion before anything has happened.

Also, by putting in a few short periods of time, what do you expect? It says in the *Lam Rim* that if you work with the dharma for a period of sixty years, the actual amount of time you put in is only five years. So, if we ourselves put in an extremely short period and don't get a noticeable result straightaway, I don't think we should view that as a setback.

At the same time, thoughts of underestimating your capacities and undermining yourself come to the individual because of self-centeredness. Think about it. You always tell yourself, 'I am not good enough, I can't do that, I am not clear, I am confused, I am this and that', and if you keep on doing that, then after a while you think that you can't do it, that you are incapable. So for a change, think, 'I will free suffering beings and place them in bliss'. Just change the focus once, look to the other side and keep on thinking of other people – really all the time! Why do you think those older Tibetans, like us, are so happy-go lucky! Because self-concern is not very much there, not because we have meditated and have been trained, but because we were born in that manner and brought up in that way – born again bodhisattvas! I am just joking!

However, instead of self-centeredness, you could focus on others – not thinking that, 'If I had compassion, I would feel better', or 'If I had compassion, I would become a buddha', because what is happening in that case is that you are still not letting go of the self-centeredness.

If you really let go of that self-centeredness, then not only will you gain a tremendous amount of merit, you will gain a tremendous amount of spiritual development. You are also taking a big step for yourself to become free from depression!

It is really amazing. The other day, Dr. Choktsin came to see Daggyab Rinpoche and myself and we sat there for two hours talking with him. He did not have any buddhist knowledge whatsoever. He did not know what the Three Jewels are. He is a neuro-surgeon. The way he was talking was purely from a neurological perspective and he was stating that if you are not self-centered there is no way you can be depressed. He was quoting a lot of other doctors in that field. And I was sitting there thinking – and later I agreed with Daggyab Rinpoche – that Buddha has taught 2500 years ago to move out from self-centeredness into compassion. He has been saying that for 2500 years and we did not hear it – we need a neuro-surgeon to come and tell us what to do! Compassion is definitely the antidote to depression. Now it is not only proven from the spiritual point of view, but even from the neurological side. So why don't we take advantage of it?

It is right in front of us. In every practice we are doing it is included. It is right in front of us this moment and yet we cannot let go. We do the practice for our own benefit. We are not admitting it, but we do. We feel guilty to break our commitments, not because we have failed our promise to the other beings but because we think that we may get punished or go crazy or go to hell. And that is still self-centeredness. The moment you let go of self-centeredness, I believe there will be no more depression.

So with that in mind say the words 'May I free suffering beings' which is compassion, and 'may I place them in bliss' which is love. This is one of Buddha's greatest gifts to society, to mankind.

**May the compassionate spirit of love grow within me
That I may complete the enlightening path.**

That is the way of the bodhisattvas. In Tibetan these are the *gyel se*, the children of Buddha. So the bodhisattvas promise to play the role of children of the Buddha. You pray that you may be able to function like that in order to obtain enlightenment. Obtaining enlightenment is the self-interest and doing it for the benefit of others is the compassion. The emphasis is on the benefit for others. That's

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why high bodhisattvas are even willing to sacrifice their own final enlightenment for the sake of others.

Like Tsong Khapa for example. He could have become a fully enlightened buddha in his life-time. We know that Tsong Khapa was originally a manifestation of Manjushri –that is a different story. As a life-long practitioner he was ready to become fully enlightened in his life-time, but for the sake of the rules of the monks and nuns, for the sake of the *vinaya*, the ethics of practitioners, he chose not to become fully enlightened in his life-time. He waited to take advantage of death as the vehicle for creating his illusion body, rather than using sexuality to build the illusion body. This shows that the benefit of others has priority over attaining enlightenment for oneself.

It is so important. At least, try to train your mind to think early in the morning that whatever you have to do this day, whether it is eating or shitting, may be a cause to benefit other beings. I am using extreme examples, but it really means that all activities may be for the benefit for all beings. Try to make that your practice. Try to feel it in your heart. You know, sometimes you feel that your heart is going out or is pulled out. Go up to that level and do it! With that you can say ‘good-bye’ to your depression. That is the key. It is in your own hand, right here with you. That is what love and compassion does.

Audience: If we do six sessions a day, and the first visualization is that of the refuge object, do we switch the visualization each time?

Rinpoche: That may be a little difficult to do. Maybe for the first session, generate buddha Sakyamuni and thereafter generate in the space before you the buddha Vajradhara and from then on stay with that visualization. It is really not a big deal. The reason why I recommend this is that even in the *Lama Chöpa*, before you generate Lama Lozang Tubwang Dorjechang, you have the visualization of the refuge tree which has buddha Sakyamuni as the principal deity. The refuge tree is very similar to the *Lama Chöpa* tree but it has Buddha Sakyamuni in the center instead of Lama Lozang. The *Lama Chöpa* tree is sometimes also called *lamrim* tree.

Visualization of the field of merit

**In the sky, on a lotus, sun and moon seat,
I see my Lama as Dorjechang¹;
Blue in color, holding dorje and bell,
Experiencing great bliss with his consort Yingchukma.**

In the space, just in front of you.... Why space? It represents emptiness. You know the expression ‘space-like emptiness’. Space is empty, we can move. It is open. There is freedom. You can do anything – you can put your head down and your legs up or your legs down and your head up, you can lie down horizontally or stand up, whatever you want to. Space allows you to do so. Without space you could not do that. Like that, emptiness is freedom. You can move, everything is possible.

*kala tongpa nyi rong wa dela tamche ro wa gyur
kala tong nyi mi rong wa dela tamche to ming gyur*

*Who accepts emptiness, can accept anything
Who does not accept emptiness, can accept nothing*

When you cannot accept emptiness, nothing can be done. Then everything is static, permanent, real, indestructible, there are rigid rules and regulations, everything is packaged in boxes. But when you accept emptiness, anything is possible. You can lie down, stand up, stand on your head, you can drive, fly, anything. Because it is empty, there is freedom. The example for that is space.

¹ Dorjechang is Tibetan, Buddha Vajradhara his Sanskrit name. For an image see page 4.

So in emptiness you can create a lotus. Whether you literally cut a lotus and put it there, whether you visualize a lotus or whether you even rip out a whole lotus with roots and hang it up there, you can do all that, because there is empty space which allows you to do that. Here of course we are in the business of training the mind, so you mentally create a lotus- sun- and moon seat. Don't make me tell you the reasons for the symbolism of lotus, sun and moon. I taught it in the *Ganden Lha Gyema* teachings, so read these.

Above these, there is your guru as Dorjechang. From now on you really have to visualize Dorjechang up there, rather than Sakyamuni Buddha, because it is a vajrayana [practice]. Up to this level I recommend Sakyamuni Buddha, because in the beginning you focus on refuge. Even in the *Lama Chöpa*, although the main object of offering is Lama Tubwang Dorjechang, at the refuge level, it is recommended to have Buddha, because he is *the* teacher of buddhists. Here now you change to buddha Vajradhara, the buddha of vajrayana. He can be in the form of Heruka or Yamantaka, or whatever, but recommended is [the form of] Vajradhara. The text says that he is blue in color, with one face and two hands, holding vajra and bell. I don't think you need explanation here. If you want, you can look at a picture. But don't take the postcard up to your meditative mind. You visualize Vajradhara as an actual living buddha Vajradhara, three-dimensional, living and moving. Also not a video, it is more than that.

The text says he is experiencing great bliss with his consort Yingchukma. We ourselves don't have the experience of great bliss, so we just think that it is there. Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche always said that we don't know what real joy is and therefore we think that every change is joy. It is true. We do that. Every change seems to be joy, because we feel different. We think that is great, but we have no idea what bliss is. It is beyond our comprehension. So for the purpose of this meditation we just think it is there. That is good enough.

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



You visualize at his crown a white OM, at his throat a red AH and at his heart a blue HUM. Then from the HUM at his heart light rays 'call forth the Awakened from all ten directions, inviting them to him to melt into one'. Him or her, it depends. If you visualize Buddha Vajrayogini, it has to be 'her'. If it is Vajradhara, as recommended, it is 'him'. Even if you cannot visualize the three letters OM AH HUM clearly, then at least think that they are there. Then light goes out from his heart and invites all the wisdom beings of all the enlightened beings. As long as they are enlightened, it does not matter what tradition they belong to. Whether it is Buddhist, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Jain, it does not matter. The bottom line is whether they are enlightened beings. Not whether they have beards or not, whether they are male or female, black or white, human or non-human. So all these enlightened beings come in the form of whatever you can visualize – lights, stars or snowflakes – and dissolve to Buddha Vajradhara and become oneness. There is no separation. It is union. That is one of vajrayana's big goals.

The eight-legged praise of Heruka and consort: '*OM I prostrate to the Bhagavan, Lord of the brave ones, HUM HUM PHAT*' is definitely only for those who had female tantra initiation, Heruka or Vajrayogini, etc. In that case Lama Vajradhara must change into the Heruka form. Heruka is blue, his consort Vajrayogini is red in color. Then you say the eight praises. You can switch the forms of the objects in front of you, because in emptiness nothing is static. You don't have to perform genetic engineering.

I am not going to give you an explanation of the eight praises of Heruka and consort. Maybe we can do that another time. There are eight different lines for each. This is a common practice for those who have mother tantra initiation. The change from Vajradhara to Heruka can be done instantly. Time

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is not a factor here. That is the advantage of the mentally created body. Actually, the mental body and the illusion body, all of them are not subject to the time factor. You can have a beard or not, you can change instantly, you don't have to wait for it to grow. You can be bald-headed or not; it is also free of physical constraints. You don't have to drag your body around to get to some other place. When you say that 'Buddha is everywhere', it refers to his mind as well as to his body, because they function on the same frequency. That is on the extraordinary enlightened level. As an unenlightened person you cannot do that. On their level, as much as the mind can move and transform, the body, too can do anything. There is no limitation.

Praise

To your blue lotus feet I bow, Dorjechang

In Tibetan it says 'to your vajra feet'. The Tibetan text it says *dorje chen* at this point, not *dorje chang*. Dorjechen can mean Dorjechang, but not necessarily. The word *dorje* means 'indestructible' and also 'free of delusions and imprints of delusions'. Therefore it is free of destruction, so it is indestructible. The reference to the feet is because the feet are the lowest part of the body. You show respect by touching the highest part of your body to the lowest part of his body. In the Hindu tradition people always touch the feet of important persons. Touching somebody's feet shows the highest respect. Traditionally one touches the feet of the VIP with one's forehead. These days people touch their forehead with their hand and then with that hand touch the feet of the VIP. This is the Indian culture.

Making offerings

With oceans of clouds I make triple offerings

These are the outer, inner and secret offerings. You know that the **outer offerings** are whatever external offerings are laid. **Inner offerings** are offerings related to the inner parts of the body. That means you transform physical parts like flesh, blood and urine into an offering. **Secret offerings** are bliss-void offerings.

Audience: Aren't all offerings bliss-void offerings?

Rinpoche: It is true. All offerings have these three qualities: 1) in essence bliss-void 3) in aspect the various offerings. 1) the purpose of bringing bliss-void to the object to whom you offer.

The secret offering is actually the result of that. You can't say it is the offering of dakinis. What if the object of offering is a female? Do you still want to offer her dakinis? Do you want to make her a lesbian? I don't think it should be called 'dakini offering', because it could be male or female. It is the consort-offering. And that could be male too. And if you make a dakini offering to a lady that could be slightly suspicious – only joking. So with that you have the triple offering.

Audience: Sometimes you have a grouping of offerings where the suchness offering is also included.

Rinpoche: The suchness offering is here too. Naturally, when you make the secret offering, it brings bliss and void. Bliss is inseparable from void. This combination is the vajrayana specialty. Suchness is nothing but emptiness, which is the same as void. And void you have here in union with bliss. So without mentioning it, the suchness offering is understood. It is the same as with the *Migtsema*; in the version with four lines, the left-out line *dupung malu jomdze sangwedag* is understood implicitly – when you say that you have knowledge and compassion, power comes automatically. Just like that, when you make the offering of bliss, the voidness is understood.

Mandala offering

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

That is what this translation says. But in Tibetan it mentions the mountain, the land, all precious jewels, the precious vase, the sun and the moon. So the translation is not quite correct. Maybe in Chicago there are no mountains. Maybe they have already given them away to Michigan and Wisconsin. What is lacking also in the translation is the expression of ‘Samantabhadra offering’. These are offerings in the style of Samantabhadra which is as a multiplication. The translator must have misunderstood the meaning of the vase. It actually means ‘everything precious and the precious vase’. This vase brings fortune. It brings luck. It is not a vase decorated by jewels, but it is the vase of the eight auspicious signs, so the precious vase. If you look into Dagyab Rinpoche’s book about the eight auspicious signs you find the explanation in there.

This is a brief version of the mandala offering. If you directly translate the word ‘mandala’, it means ‘center’. It is the center of all existence, of the universe. So naturally, the land, mountains, and all the good things are included. You don’t have to mention the bad things, they are always there.

Guru devotion

Powers supreme and powers mundane Follow upon pure devotion to you.

These are the ordinary and uncommon achievements. Ordinary achievements are for example, flying in the air, walking under the ground, healing people, etc. Supreme power is the ultimate enlightenment.

Both powers depend on the practice of the individual. The practice makes the individual capable of materializing whatever is wished for. That’s really true. Power here really means the power to make it happen. You may call it ‘altering reality’. That is the real power, whether mundane or supreme. When vajrayana talks about power, that is what it means and it is the whole purpose of the visualization exercises.

Vajrayana is called result-oriented, because it totally tries to alter reality. The reality you are visualizing will materialize. When I say that things will materialize as you visualize, people are not surprised, they don’t raise their eyebrows. But when I say ‘altering reality’, everyone gets excited. The point of the result-oriented practice of vajrayana is actualizing what you visualize. That *is* actually altering reality. The reality that appears and is experienced as impure, full of suffering, etc. is transformed by this supreme practice, by the ‘power supreme’.

That is why vajrayana is called the ‘result yana.’ You are trying to function at the result level. You visualize every being as a pure being, every sound as mantra, every movement takes place within the true reality of emptiness and joy. Every feeling is blissful joy, every acknowledgment is in the nature of truth. Maybe it is ultimate reality.

The reality we are used to is the reality of dualism. Altering that into the supreme reality, that is what is called ‘power supreme’. That is really what the quality of a buddha is. But can the buddhas alter the reality of every being? No, they can’t. This would require the cooperation of the individual beings, their efforts, which is the practice we are talking about here.

When we talk about transformation, this is the true transformation. The dualistic reality which we perceive and acknowledge, is transformed into the supreme reality which is free of all negative actions and causes of actions – the negative neuroses.

The mundane power does not reach to that level, but constitutes whatever little you can achieve here and there. It could be the power that makes the merlin become a human being or the fantasies becoming reality, provided that these fantasies are not built on attachment for the goals of this or future lives.

I gave a nice, little talk in Chicago on the *Three principles of the path*. In the text it talks about the sign of mastering the first principle. Thurman calls it ‘turning off the interest for this life and future lives’. Glenn Mullin uses the term ‘fantasies’, which is great. Thurman’s translation is a bit too gross. It should say ‘being free of attachment to the fantasies of this life and future lives’. That is the beginning of achieving freedom. Even in vajrayana the fantasies cannot become reality if they are based on attachment. Simple – attachment will not be able to let it go. It is very easy for us to say ‘let it go’, but

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when we try to let go for a minute, we will get it back in the next minute, and then you may get out for another minute and back for another two minutes. Sometimes it is even so strong that you cannot move at all from it. Then it is huge like some kind of huge, heavy blanket that is pulled over you from head to toes and you are covered by it, you can't even move. That is how attachment works on us. Sometimes it is very juicy and nice and wonderful and sometimes it is heavy. Attachment always has two faces. Its sweet face is actually cheating the individual. When the sweet face does not work, then we experience that huge blanket feeling, covering you from head to toe. That is why even in vajrayana the principle is to cut down the attachment.

Attachment really is fantasies. That is a good translation. Fantasies of this life and if not this life, then of the future lives. In order to realize the nature of these fantasies one has to realize very strongly how short this life is and how precious and meaningful – and meaningless! You have to see all this together. There is so much purpose and it is so difficult to find. The whole *lamrim*, from the beginning up to taking refuge, is totally constructed in such a way as to gain strength to take away from attachment.

Life is precious, etc.,. If you look at all those *lamrim* subjects separately, you can isolate them and compartmentalize them. The western mind usually does that. But when you look at them together and unify them, reflecting on why it is recommended to analyze all this and spend time on it, you will recognize there is a purpose which is to defeat the attachment, so that you can let go of the fantasies of this life. We sort of go halfway through with that. We are not complete yuppies. That much we can do. But when you let the attachment to this life go, immediately you focus on the future life. So you are still within samsara. You are not letting go completely. So you have to go through the whole process of letting go of fantasies also with regard to any future lives. If you train your mind in that way, then it is very easy to shift from self-centeredness to compassion. That is how gradually your mind turns.

If you just try to straightway shift your mind from self-centeredness to compassion, it will never work. You will try to care for others but at once the thought will come up, 'but what about *me*, I need to go to the toilet, *I* need this, *I* need that' and with this the focus is shifted back to self-centeredness. And then, the more you try to think about how you could manage to be more compassionate, the more you actually are getting self-centered. That is the reality. Therefore the whole *lamrim* and vajrayana have to work together within the individual.

Lamrim does make sense to us in our daily lives. We have got to that level now. We are still not experiencing that vajrayana makes sense in our daily lives, because we are not at that level yet. However, if you link *lamrim* and vajrayana together you eventually will find that vajrayana has even much more reality in our daily life than *lamrim*. The vajrayana technique of materializing the fantasies cannot work as long as you have attachment, which is the total lack of having established the ground work.

If you have a strong ground work, you have no attachment and things will start to materialize easily. I am not talking about magic, but really powerful vajrayana people can alter the reality of individual people because of their power. That power is blocked by attachment, no matter whatever you may say, the attachment to the fantasies, whatever they may be. In a nice way you may call it 'the dream of our lives', but in a straightforward way it just fantasies. You can work on the fine detail of what is the difference between dreaming and having fantasies, but that's what it is. So vajrayana is very much linked with the *lamrim* level. Vajrayana is talking about the supreme reality of your daily life. When you are not at that level yet, you are not really connected. It takes time. We are still separated. To us it looks like building up some kind of separate fantasy. But in reality it is the antidote fantasy we have in our life. That is what we are really building. So that is 'power supreme and power mundane'.

We have to follow the practice, because practice makes perfect. When one is perfect one is capable of altering reality. Where does the practice come from? The root of all development is the guru-devotional practice. That is why the text says that the powers supreme and mundane 'follow upon pure devotion to you'. That is how it works. It is not simply that you are devoted and keep on praying to the guru and the guru does all the work! It does not work like that. A lot of people think on those lines.

They will tell you, 'I asked God to do this for me', or they will say, 'I have got a deal with this deity'. All of that does not work at all. What works is the work one does oneself, the spiritual development that builds up in the individual. The root of this is the guru-devotional practice.

Thus my body, life, and wealth I forsake

This really means your fantasy of body, of life, of wealth. You resolve not to follow that, but you determine to develop the other fantasy which replaces the dualistic mind, the mind of ego satisfaction, the mind which is working for ego-entertainment. That is the supreme fantasy of obtaining total enlightenment. To forsake means to give up. So here you give up the fantasy of body, life and wealth and fulfill the supreme wish of the guru which is the ultimate enlightenment. That is what is expressed by the next line.

And ask for your aid to only please you.

The thing that most pleases the guru, the buddhas and bodhisattvas, is the total freedom of ultimate buddhahood. So if you want to please them you become a bodhisattva, a vajrayana practitioner and become enlightened. That's how you think and visualize, that is how you mobilize the energy, when you say these words and say the sadhana.

Audience: When I say these words, I feel that I am not in a position to do that today. Only in a moment of religious fervor I can think that I really want to do that. Yet I have to say it six times a day, since it is my commitment. It seems kind of cheap

Rinpoche: I don't think it is cheap. I think it is exclusive and very expensive. A lot of people don't get to say that. A lot of people can't even think of that. A lot of people haven't even heard about it, they would not know what to think about it. It is very exclusive and very expensive. Right now, in this practice, you may be saying something that you don't mean. But I don't think it is a downfall. You are visualizing yourself in form of buddha Vajradhara, you are ready to become buddha Vajradhara. This is the result-oriented practice. Everything in vajrayana is result-oriented. That means when you will become a fully enlightened buddha, this is what you are going to do. It is some kind of road map for how to function as a fully enlightened buddha.

So even though you are not able to do it right now, you are pushing yourself in that direction. You are trying to utilize the exclusiveness of this practice in your life. It really is something fantastic, rather than throwing a few cheap words. If you think that you are just throwing around a few cheap words, plugging the holes, it is just a self-deprecating statement. You are forgetting that you yourself will be functioning like this, as an enlightened being. So even if you can't do that today, here you have the reasons, the inspirations which make you work for enlightenment. That's where you want to go, because there [at the enlightened level] lie the capabilities. So I don't think these are cheap words and I don't think what you do is cheating.

Dissolving practice

Now my Lama as requested comes to the top of my head

The long and short sadhana are at this point almost the same. The lama comes to the top of your head and blesses you so that you may only indulge in the path that pleases the guru buddha, which of course means to give up the attachment to the fantasies and to seek the total enlightenment. This is the principal goal you want to achieve, for the sake of the other beings rather than for yourself. And because you want to fulfill all these big commitments on behalf of the other beings, enlightenment is needed.

Recently I was reading in Panchen Sonam Drakpa's *Explanation of the four tantras* which Chodrak Rinpoche got from J.W. when he was in Indiana. In that work, Panchen Sonam Drakpa very clearly mentions that the bodhisattva has a two-pronged mind: the mind of seeking enlightenment himself, but

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for the sake of other beings. The aspect that does it for the other beings should be far more powerful, overpowering the aspect of the individual benefit of attaining enlightenment. Yet, without having the desire to attain enlightenment there is no way that one will work for it. One has to have it and that is how you get this two-pronged mind. However, the power of this mind actually lies in the altruistic dedication. This is very clearly stated in Panchen Sonam Drakpa's text I have been reading last night. That is why you say 'my body, life, wealth I forsake', that is the fantasies of body, life and wealth which is actually attachment. When Thurman says, 'turn off the interest of this life', he has got it wrong. He should say, 'turn off the attachment to the fantasies of this life and of future lives'. If he would say that, his translation of the *Three principles of the path* would be A-plus. Truly speaking there is nobody who translates. Everybody comments. That's the problem.

Audience: How can I turn off the fantasy of this or the next life, but at the same time, since I only have a dualistic perception of life, develop myself in the simplest way to be effective and altruistic, develop a fully functioning creative life that will be of use to me or anyone? I feel that I still have to fantasize how I would like to be and move in that direction. I don't understand the difference between fantasies and the attachments of this life and renouncing.

Rinpoche: Basically you don't have fantasies of this life. There are a lot of people who have fantasies of this life and there are a lot who don't. That is not necessarily great. Take Bob Dole. His fantasy in this life is to become President of the United States. If you have a fantasy of owning an apartment, this is only a limited fantasy, not a fantasy of life, since it is an essential requirement for life. That is not a fantasy. Perhaps you don't have a fantasy. It is actually not necessarily great not to have fantasies. If you don't have any fantasies there is nothing to turn off from. It is as simple as that. Some people don't have fantasies. But when you keep on building up your life materially and become more important, then you gradually build up your fantasies.

Audience: In Chicago you were talking about building fantasies for this or future lives and recognizing that you have to be responsible for yourself. It is really helpful to talk about how to create the balance between that.

Rinpoche: I try to build that up as one of my secular programs – how to integrate the spiritual practice with the everyday life. I have given a couple of talks on that and it looks like it is going very well. It is my goal to build that up in California. It is a delicate thing and when I have developed it you will be hearing it.

The problem is that many of us in the dharma practice, when we try to cut out the attachment... – when you look very carefully, many people don't have that. They may have attachment to the body or wealth, but some people don't develop fantasies to anything. They are pushed so far away and their self-deprecation has become so powerful that they don't build any fantasies at all. For them the attachment is not a big problem. The attachment *is* a deeper problem inside, but it does not surface, because the hatred is much more prominent. They build up a hatred of blaming themselves for not doing this and not doing that. And they think they don't look right and are not born to do this and that and are born in the wrong place and have the wrong mother and society is wrong. Everything becomes so terrible because the hatred fantasizes within the individual. For these people hatred is much more exaggerated than the attachment. Instead of building fantasies of attachment they create fantasies of hatred.

So some people don't build fantasies of what they would like to be, e.g. in terms of a profession, but [they build up fantasies] more in regard to feeling comfortable; some kind of comfort zone. It is actually building a cocoon in which you can hide. Some people fantasize about living on an island with nobody else around and the island is protected by crocodiles. Others may fantasize about having two airplanes at their disposal and summer and winter palaces, cars and apartments in every major city of the world.

Some people will have fantasies that the moment they die they will be sitting next to Tsong Khapa in the pure land, just zoom over there and there being a seat available for them where they can sit, be fed up with everything else, and have a lot of food around. That is the old Tibetan lama style. In

that style you don't do anything, you sit there and there will be a lot of food around and when you want to get dressed you just put up your hand and someone will dress you and you have to do nothing. Remember when Rizong Rinpoche came here and his attendants had to pull him out of bed and put his shoes on and put his hat on for him. It looked so funny, but we used to do that in olden times. You just sit there and someone will even feed you, push the food in your mouth. That could be my fantasy!

Audience: I have had trouble to even think about if I really want enlightenment. When I think that my impure perception will change into pure perception, will I just stand there for all eternity on a lotus in a particular position? Is that what I am putting in so much work in to achieve? It sounds very boring.

Rinpoche: A very similar question was asked by Louise a few years ago in Long Island. I was sitting next to a flower bed and Louise said to me, 'You said this morning that Buddha is a little bit like God.' and I said that I said that because that way people understand a little better. Then she said, 'I have no interest to become God for whatsoever, so then I should have no interest to become Buddha at all.' In that sense she is right. The relevance of becoming a buddha is the commitment. Earlier today the point came up that if we have no way of fulfilling a commitment like that, why then are we saying the words that remind us to do all that. You are saying it and committing and trying to find a way to fulfill these commitments and the chance to do that is at the enlightened level, because that is where the unlimited power is. So if you want to sit on a lotus cushion forever, you can do that. And while you are doing that, you can still at the same time be in every part of the world. It is unlimited. That state is free of the limitations of our imagination.

[If you have visualized the *Lama Chöpa* field of merit] all deities dissolve into the innermost figure, Lama Dorjechang. If you go into detail, Lama Lozang melts into Sakyamuni buddha who melts into buddha Vajradhara. In this case it has to be dissolved up to buddha Vajradhara. If you remember [at the end of] the *Lama Chöpa*, we had a very similar system of dissolution. Every part of the tree from the top down and from the bottom up dissolved and ultimately everything was dissolved to Lama [Lozang] Tubwang Dorjechang and in the *Lama Chöpa* he appears almost like your living guru. He then dissolves to your heart level and becomes oneness with your mind.

In this practice the Lama 'comes to the top of my head and dissolves until we both are one.' So it is almost the same thing and also perhaps you remember what I have mentioned about the great *mahamudra*. It is the original, primordial self which is like the lost child who has found the mother. So the primordial mind which was completely lost is now united. We even named the *Lama Chöpa* outlines *How to integrate the primordial enlightened mind*.

Here it is the same principle. For those of you who have an idea of the *mahamudra*, here it is the time to meditate on it. Also in the *Ganden Lha Gyema* it is the same thing at the point where the text reads: 'O glorious and precious root Guru, come take your lotus- and moon seat at my heart' or in the *Cittamani Tara guru yoga*, where it reads 'Glorious guru, come to my heart'.

Cittamani has its own little practice where Guru Cittamani comes through thirteen steps and dissolves. Many of you haven't got this Cittamani heart transplant teaching, only four people have. Even there the same thing. Once you begin to know how one of them works, then you know that everything else works in the same manner. In all of them the same principle is needed. It is amazing, the Tibetan teaching tradition is sometimes very funny. When you start reading let's say Pabongka's work and after a while you read a Changkya Rolpai Dorje's or Tukem Dharma Vajra or Gungtang Jampelyang or Tsong Khapa, it is almost as if the whole book has been duplicated, as if one has been copied from the other, page after page. Actually, the different authors have composed their works in a different way, but it comes across almost like copies of each other. The way the basic structure works, wherever you look, is the same.

And dissolves until we both are one,

So here the Lama comes to the top of your head and dissolves 'until we both are one.' So the dissolving is like being united with the primordial mind that we somehow had lost for many generations and lives, the joy and happiness of lost parent and child united. The example is small

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children united with parents. Not grown-up children – you wouldn't appreciate the example with grown-up children as much.

Audience: When you are saying that they are 'somehow' united together, what does that mean?

Rinpoche: There must be something that still has to be explained, maybe at the appropriate time.

In the vajrayana tradition, when you become fully enlightened you become enlightened in the nature of the mind of Lama Buddha Vajradhara. You will not become an independent buddha somewhere. That is why the guru yoga [is called] root of all development; it is somehow linked with that. Again, somehow. So the nature of your mind is almost joined to the primordial buddha mind. This primordial mind is inseparable from buddha Sakyamuni's primordial buddha mind and that of your root guru's primordial mind and the primordial mind of all the enlightened beings.

The question of the primordial mind is a very, very strong question. Even the two best disciples of Tsong Khapa have explained this separately. Gyeltsab Je says that when you become enlightened you become part of the big, huge, free primordial mind, yet you have a separate identity. Kedrub Rinpoche disagrees. He says that you will have a totally free enlightened mind independently, yet you have a very strong link to the general primordial mind which is completely separate. This is beyond our comprehension. So somehow, somewhere, there are ways and means of linking up. We will probably know that by the time we link ourselves with it. There is nothing we have to do. It will function by itself.

Anyway, here we think that our mind stream is merged with the main stream of the enlightened mind and becomes oneness, 'until both are one'. In Tibetan it even says 'we become of *one taste*'. This particular translation does not say it that way, but 'become of one taste' does give this passage more meaning than just saying that it becomes one. Becoming one and becoming one taste give different ways of understanding.

Rising

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

Dorje Sempa here does not mean the deity Vajrasattva, but in this case is synonymous with Vajradhara. So you become Vajradhara, rather than the purification deity Vajrasattva. Literally, Dorje Sempa means, 'one who has the mind of dorje'. When it says you are holding dorje and bell, it does not just mean the dorje and bell you are holding in your hands, although you do hold them. The long six session yoga says: 'While holding vajra and bell symbolic of the secret of great bliss simultaneous with the secret of voidness, free from mental fabrication of true existence.' This refers to the secret vajra and bell. The secret vajra is simultaneous born bliss, the great bliss. This bliss is recognizing emptiness. That emptiness is symbolized by the sound of the bell.

The fourth initiation in Guhyasamaja goes in more detail, but even though you don't hear the sound of the visualized bell, you know that sound travels through air. Sound represents emptiness. Sound cannot physically be pinpointed and held, yet you can hear it, you can perceive and acknowledge it. There is nothing to hold, no tangibility. So this is 'free from mental fabrication.' The moment you mention emptiness you have to be clear about what it is empty of, it has to be empty of something. So it is empty of the mental fabrication of true existence. True reality is free of this.

You only imagine at this point that you are experiencing great bliss, because you don't know how to actually experience it. If you don't know how to do it, you can give yourself an electrical shock and think that this is great bliss.[joke!] One thing: the great bliss is so powerful, it will not give you room to think about anything else. It is like an intense sexual experience. When you have a good sexual experience you don't think about anything else, at least at that moment. You are totally absorbed in it.

If you intensify that by ten thousand times, you get an idea what great bliss is. It is far better than any joy fabricated with marihuana or other drugs.

This intensely focused mind of bliss also acknowledges and recognizes emptiness at the same time. Acknowledging just means to acknowledge an object's existence. Recognizing is entertaining. When the chairman is recognizing some of the members everybody is listening. The whole focus of the mental state recognizes emptiness and at the same time it is in a state of bliss, so that you don't get bored. It is a great experience and you always want to return to it, even at the beginning level of the experience.

Many of those little funny experiences many of us had during the sixties and seventies due to certain chemicals, probably conveyed a glimpse of that kind of reality which is very different from our own reality. Unfortunately, people go completely out of their way to seek that reality by means of chemicals and then the balance of the body structure cannot take it anymore and they become addicted. In any case, it is almost a physical signal that there is another, different reality from the one we experience. You have to remember that Buddha has said that the chemical power and the spiritual power and mantra power, in other words material and enlightened power, are almost equal. One has the capacity to produce lasting results and all the others don't – that includes mantra power. Only the spiritual power is everlasting. That is what the *six session yoga* text refers to in 'powers supreme and powers mundane'. At the result level we are united with Chom Denma which refers to the union with the *inner* consort, within ourselves. Inner consort means that the illusion body within yourself will unite with the clear light. It is very similar to the prayer in the *Ganden Lha Gyema* where it says 'the profound and vast teachings may be given'.

In sutra 'profound' refers to selflessness or emptiness, and 'vast' refers to the method part, like love and compassion. In the lower tantras the profound, again, is the emptiness and the vast is the mandala meditation in all details and the difference between the yogas with and without signs. When you come to the *maha anu yoga* tantra, the vast is the development stage and the profound is the completion stage. Even later, the profound is the clear light and the vast is the illusion body. All that is expressed by vajra and bell.

Within the great bliss which acknowledges emptiness, you also indulge in the activities such as generosity.

Practice of generosity and morality

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

There is no hesitation, no limitation to any positive activities like generosity and morality. Morality here is the vows, as the last two lines indicate. Here you promise to keep the three kinds of vows and the three yantras. The three yantras are sravaka-yana, pratyeka-yana, and mahayana. Within the mahayana there are the four tantras.

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

You promise to uphold the dharma whether it is the information part or the spiritual development. You promise to not let it go, because you want to help all sentient beings. Doing this protects your vajrayana promises which tell you to do all these things six times a day.

Dedication

May the profound blessings of the Precious Three Jewels,

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

This verse is straight forward, it does not have any hidden messages.

Audience: Shouldn't that read, 'lead us to enlightenment's shore?'

Rinpoche: No, this is 'me', because *I* seek enlightenment for *them*.

You can either do three sessions in the morning and three in the evening or all six sessions in one sitting. It is your choice. For the first five times of the second part of the six session yoga you visualize a duplicate Lama coming from the main visualized figure in front. During the last recitation the Lama himself comes to your crown and dissolves to you. If you have the visualization of the whole merit field, then this shrinks and the whole thing comes down. You should visualize Vajradhara as comfortable in size. Huge is not comfortable, too small is also not comfortable, therefore it has to be a sort of reasonable size. In case you are doing three sessions in the morning and three sessions in the evening, you dissolve the Lama to yourself at the end of the third session each time. This is just common sense.

When you do your six sessions of the *six session yoga* in one sitting, it is recommended to do the first session with the long version of the text, then include the five shorter ones in the middle, before concluding with the rest of the long one. This is a nice way of doing it. However, you don't have to, the commitment is just the short one. Personally, I do the long one as the last session. I used to do the long one all the time, but not any more. So there are various ways of doing it.

Everybody says this practice by heart, so now at least you have something to think. This may make our lives worthwhile.²

Questions and answers

Audience: When you have done the dedication you are still in the visualized form of Vajradhara. Then, when you want to do another practice like Tara, can you just jump out of this form and into another one?

Rinpoche: '*Kala tongpa nyi rowa kala tamche rowa gyur*: if emptiness is accepted, anything can be done'. You don't have to jump off some kind of cliff, it is just a matter of where you put your mind. So you just forget that form. If you keep on thinking all the time that you are still in this particular form then you are in danger of experiencing what Locho Rinpoche quoted last time he was here. There was this meditator visualizing himself as Yamantaka with 34 hands and he went to the kitchen and the cook gave him a cup of tea. The meditator asked him, 'With which of my hands should I pick up the cup?' and the cook hit him on his right hand with a stick and said, 'Use this one'.

Audience: How can a buddha liberate all beings? I thought it depends on the efforts of the beings.

Rinpoche: If they give you cooperation, you can liberate them. If there is a will there is a way. So if there is cooperation, it will work and if there is no cooperation you can always look for it and work for it.

On idiotic compassion

All beings, everybody, including ourselves, have problems. Whatever relief one could give makes a difference. That should be the attitude. The commitment may be huge, but try to fulfill as much as possible of this commitment, whatever little you can do, and have the desire to do that all the time.

² Literature: Gelek Rinpoche, *Six session guru yoga*, Jewel Heart transcripts, 1992. Dargyab Kyabgön Rinpoche & Regine Leisner, *Das Sechsfache Guru-yoga*. Langenfeld, Chödzung, 1994.

That is the bodhisattva way. Keeping this as a principle in one's mind is the bodhisattva way, whether it talks about it in the *Bodhisattvacharyavatara* or not.

Idiot compassion is unintelligent compassion. You are doing things, but just for the sake of doing them. This attitude takes over everything and just starts functioning. If you think it is idiot compassion to try to liberate all sentient beings, you are wrong. This is not idiot compassion, because in time the opportunity will be there. Right now, even if you wanted to liberate all sentient beings, you could not do it. So there is no way of actually functioning that way and therefore the question of idiot compassion does not even rise. It is different from taking home a dog or a cat [and then giving up on it], because in that case you can do something and you may then not be able to carry that activity through. There is a big difference. You do commit yourself to liberating all sentient beings, but if you tried you would not be able to do it at all. So there is not even the question of idiot compassion. You are just doing it in the form of wishing and praying rather than acting. The only thing we can do is, whatever positive things we do, we dedicate them and hope that they will go towards that goal, rather than taking action into our own hands and just doing something. An action that results in taking you out of samsara can never be idiot compassion, but that does not mean that all actions that do not result in taking you out of samsara are necessarily all motivated by idiot compassion.

Idiot compassion is really lack of wisdom, not knowing what to do and what not to do. It is not a great thing, although it is compassion. On the other hand, if you follow the buddhist practice, although you also may not know what you are doing, since you are following in the footsteps of the buddhas, it cannot be wrong. Simply trying to do something without wisdom will be idiot compassion which neither helps the other person nor yourself and it does not have any good results. Also, by doing some little thing and wasting all your time on it, it misses the real opportunity. Even if it does help a little bit, it still is idiot compassion. Actually, the first to use the word 'idiot compassion' was Gurdjieff, the Checkoslovakian.

Audience: Idiot compassion is compassion without wisdom. Does wisdom in this case refer to the wisdom that recognizes emptiness and dependent origination?

Rinpoche: That may be the major wisdom, but it is also said that generosity and each of the other six paramitas should have all the six paramitas within them. Each of the six paramitas has its own way of using wisdom. In short, of course we should have as much as possible a practical application of the teachings.

This may be a setback with Tibetan Buddhism. We sometimes admire those Christian nuns who do a lot of great work everywhere. I don't know about the Fathers, but the nuns do a lot of work in education and development. But Tibetan Buddhism emphasizes mental training much more than physical activity.

Normally, anything you handle in spite of being incapable, is idiot compassion. Mental training is different. It looks to me more like making our mind greater and bigger, so that we can make a big commitment and thus something big can develop. Literally, physically, we cannot do that. So we train the mind, hoping to become enlightened or in other words, build up the capacity where we can create manifestations which then can help, etc. That way you can work. For example, look at generosity. The major thing is generating the mind of generosity, rather than actually giving away your body. That is the distinction between the idiot compassion and the literal practice [of what one is incapable of]. It is more a mind training and you leave the action until you are capable. When you are not capable, then you try to do something and you can't. There is this stupid expression 'being burnt out', but you have to entertain people and use this terminology, but actually it is a stupid statement in the sense that the willingness and the capacity of the individual is not there. Burn-out is the result of idiot compassion, I think. At that time, it is not possible for the individual to do what they have set out to do, mentally, physically and emotionally. You may call it burn-out, but actually in most cases it is emotionally impossible to do what is required rather than physically or mentally. You could be mentally capable of doing something, but then emotionally something comes up and you start questioning and wonder whether you should do it or not, thinking that it may or may not be right. You get all sorts of ping pong phenomena. It is just emotional. People have some funny principles in mind and these sometimes

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come up. I think some people have heard what I have said, others have not. So in other words, if you can handle it, do it, if not, leave it. It is very easy to say to someone, 'Get over your emotional hang-ups', but when you actually tell people that, they can't and their faces get even longer.

It is good to *do* whatever you can and to *think* much bigger than what you can do. I really admire what the Christian nuns do. It is a great cause for rejoicing, really, throughout the world, particularly in the third world they are doing great things, whatever their motives may be. Let them work hard, and we can sit here and rejoice.

Being self-centered is not necessarily the same as being self-important. It is continuously wondering 'How can I do that, what will that mean for me', in that sense it is always 'me, me, me'. If you can be a little bit happy-go-lucky, it is not that bad. You can't be completely irresponsible, but a little bit happy-go-lucky is a lot of fun and you will be amazed that you can still feel pain and suffering and misery, but it won't last very long, more like two or three minutes, maybe ten minutes maximum and then you will be already busy with something else. I begin to realize that this is really a state of joy. Just don't get stuck in problems. You feel them, you understand them, you shed your crocodile tears – it may sound terrible – but then you get over it and move on to the next. That automatically makes you a little less serious and conservative. It gives you a tremendous amount of joy and a lot of freedom in life. If you look around you see that people are incapable of accepting that or even conceiving of it, they are incapable of realizing that things are impermanent and will have to move and change.

On the many deity forms

Audience: Why are there so many different deities and even in one practice like the *six session yoga*, why does that deity change form so often? Is it intended to establish a connection with them?

Rinpoche: You can look at it in different ways. You can look at the deities as being part of enlightened society and you can then link up with them and so become part of it too, bridging that gap through the practice.

Audience: If I am going to attain enlightenment, the sole purpose of it is to benefit beings, and each of the beings that I am supposed to help has their own agenda, their own obscuration and the point is to make a connection which is meaningful to each of those beings. For example if I can make a connection to enlightenment with a person and that person's main delusion is sensual or sexual attachment, then manifesting in the form of Yamantaka might not make any sense, but manifesting as a beautiful, radiant, ruby-red goddess who has attained enlightenment in that form would make more sense.

Rinpoche: Because you are in love with a beautiful ruby-red goddess?

Audience: Exactly, because that person can understand and appreciate that enlightenment is possible within that form. Similarly, if someone is very fierce, wrathful and angry, what can they respect if not the most wrathful of the wrathful, something like Yamantaka?

Rinpoche: That may be true to a certain extent. I don't think we get a full answer to that question, but let's explore it some more. I am not sure whether or not you are building up a connection. What we are really building is our own reality. I don't think we are copying some existing society and thereby building some kind of connection with it. We are all building our own future reality which will really be shaped in that way.

Why so many forms? In a way, what you just said was the desire to understand the individual. But the true reality is, that on the ultimate enlightened level, whatever you have, body, mind and environment, everything is a pure being or object and all those pure beings and objects are right at this moment just different neuroses within ourselves. It can be attachment, anger or just physical existence, like bones, flesh or whatever, and all of them will become pure at the end and that pure part of so many of them together, like the pure part of the body, the mind, etc., all of them combined together will be the total

enlightenment of yours. Various mental faculties and certain elements as well. If you overemphasize the elements you might say that at death you leave all your elements behind, so what is going to happen? You still take the essence of your elements with you. You will always have one form after another, so there is always a continuation of elements, even though perhaps on a subtle level. The gross physical elements you do leave behind when you die, but ultimately not only your mind will become enlightened, but even every single aspect of your neuroses [will], otherwise you are not fully enlightened, something would be left out.

As aspects of our neuroses we have anger, attachment, jealousy and so on. When you practice mother tantra, the attachment will become pure beings, taking the physical form of Heruka and consort. This practice emphasizes the practice of transforming the attachment-related delusions towards the level of clear light. They strongly stress that aspect, much more than the transformation of anger. On the other hand, Yamantaka is not so strong on transforming attachment into a pure thing, but it is stronger in transforming anger-related delusions.

Not only that, it works with the mental as well as with the physical part. That's why there are so many deity-forms. We have so many mental faculties, so many personalities, so many aspects of one single being. Somehow, because of education and common sense and pure upbringing we don't experience much [different aspects], but we experience this as one human being and then we have ups and downs, because of our understanding and education. But if we slit or escape from that, then we somehow develop different personalities. If you don't stay on the correct path, if you get into trouble, if you slip up somewhere, if something goes wrong, then you can see a different personality in yourself, because you are controlled by some kind of neurosis. When you are really badly upset, some other aspect of your personality may come out. It may not be your everyday me, but some different me who is very upset. That is not a completely different being, not a spirit overtaking your personality, but a different personality is there.

We are capable of manifesting so many things. Think of multiple personalities and schizophrenia. All of those is actually one person, but when these aspects take over, it seems to be a completely different being, functioning differently. With multiple personalities, even the voice and the looks change, all because of the different neuroses we have. Each and everyone of us has that capability within ourselves, whether you like it or not. Luckily some kind of common sense holds us together. We don't show the multiple personalities. Not everybody exhibits them but everybody has the capability to do it. If somehow something goes wrong, the different neuroses can come out and then you get multiple personalities, which are not so many different persons, but all our neuroses. My belief is that the enlightened beings are opposing those things and therefore have so many different physical appearances and are specialized. It helps the individual to work with particular things. They are like specialized assistant beings put on the job. I believe that's what their purpose is – not to confuse us more.

Also we are conditioned by our background and culture. We don't have to think about a lot of different things if we believe that there is God up in the air, even we don't know where he is. We are not taught to think, and therefore look at life in a simplistic way and never deal much with our deeper neuroses. Vajrayana deals with these much more and that's why this practice is more complex. Our mind does have these complexities. We can see that clearly within ourselves. When certain emotions arise in us, our behavior will change totally. That is a clear indication. That is my thinking. Maybe I am wrong, but I don't think so. Think about it.



Solitary Hero Yamantaka

II THE SHORT SADHANA OF THE SOLITARY HERO VAJRABHAIRAVA [YAMANTAKA]

Preliminaries

Let's look at the shortest sadhana we have, the Extremely abbreviated sadhana.

Lineage prayer

O Pervading Lord Manjushri-vajra, the opponent of Yama,

Lord Manjushri-vajra. Manju – Sanskrit – means ‘soft’ and ‘glorious’. In Tibetan Manjushri is ‘*Jam pel yang*’. *Jam* means ‘soft’ and *pel* means ‘glorious’. You could almost say ‘sweet’ instead of ‘soft’. In Sanskrit it must be the division of his name into *Man* and *ju*, *man* being ‘soft’ and *ju* being ‘glorious’. That is the glory of his looks – majestic and powerful – his qualities, and mental capacity. Why is he called soft? You know, when you have a hundred percent cotton shirt, it becomes very nice and soft after you've washed it several times. Manjushri has smoothed out the roughness of the two types of delusions, the afflictive emotions [tib. *nyong mong*] and the imprint of these [tib. *she drip*]. Then, *shri* is a respectful form of address, like ‘Sir’ or ‘Lady’ in the British tradition. It is a polite, honorific suffix after the name. Then finally he is also called *vajra*. That means indestructible.

Pervading. Manjushri is here also called ‘Pervading Lord’. Pervading means everywhere. In Tibetan it is *kyabdag* and that means ‘one who is everywhere’ and also ‘one who owns everything’. So it is almost the projection of a creator. The vajrayana system is very interesting. Buddhism does not accept a creator God, but vajrayana has a concept that is very similar. Each and every mandala is the creation of the respective principal yidam. This is also regarded as inseparable from the guru. And then there are the dakinis and yoginis. (Actually, when we say ‘Vajrayogini’ and ‘Vajradakini’, it means the same thing.) They are all inseparable: one is the other. It's everywhere. In our ordinary human life we would say that is very messy. Truly speaking, they are all the same, yet have separate identities. That is the pervasiveness.

You need to know the meaning of ‘all pervading’ so that you have some force behind the meditation, otherwise your meditation would be meaningless. People like to sit there nicely, close their eyes and recite something nice, but without understanding the meaning there is no force behind it. At this point you are building towards achieving the ‘all pervasiveness’ and at the result level you become that way. That's why we can address that pervasiveness in the lineage prayer already. It is very simple. We don't have this achievement right now, so we fantasize about it as an external thing. Then we try to materialize it through the sadhana meditations. Our work, saying sadhanas, etc., is our effort to materialize these states. The sadhana is the building of the mandala. The sadhana is the material for the

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walls, the sadhana is the electrical wires, it is the copper pipes for the plumbing. You are collecting those materials and gradually you try to put them together and finally you build the house.

So, 'Pervading Lord' does not necessarily refer to Yamantaka or Manjushri or Vajrayogini or any single individual for that matter, but to all the enlightened beings, to whatever deity form you are emphasizing at this moment in your major practice. In this particular case it is Lord Manjushri-vajra, the opponent of Yama.

In vajrayana, the mandala is the total reality. It is nothing but the creation of whoever is the principal of the mandala. That means that when you as an individual attain that particular state of e.g. Yamantaka, which is the fully enlightened state, you will have the **three purities**: 1) pure environment; 2) pure inhabitants; 3) pure activities.

Where does that pure environment come from? It comes from your own positive karmic results. Remember the meaning of the mandala: the four doors are the four mindfulnesses, and also the house, the walls, the fence, the inhabitants, everything really comes from your own positive karmic results. Therefore it is your own manifestation. That is why Manjushri is called here 'Pervading Lord'. When you become buddha Yamantaka or Tara or whatever, your total environment is nothing but your own creation, in the sense that your collected karmic results, the trouble you have taken with all your complicated neuroses, at the result level become the environment in which you dwell. All that will become the pure mandala in which you live, and the pure retinue with whom you enjoy, and everything will be your activity.

Right now we are struggling with our neuroses. According to sutra we are trying to destroy them. According to tantra we are not doing that. Sutra has no way of handling the neuroses, so there it is recommended to get rid of them. In vajrayana we try to transform them. These complicated neuroses, once transformed, will become positive karmic results within us. When you become fully enlightened and you create your own environment, these things will become the doors, the trees, the rivers, the mountains, the courtyards or whatever. Our neuroses right now are like wild elephants and we are trying to train them.

Right now we meditate on the pure mandala. We visualize and think that the four doors are there. We don't have the actual four doors there, we simply don't have the material yet. It is like a fantasy now, but that fantasy will become reality once you have the material available. It is like when you want to build a nice house. You get the architect and make plans and perhaps make a model. So you can look at it and talk about it. Then, as soon as you have the money, you can build it. The sadhana is like the plan which the architect has drawn and you are looking at it and at this moment you are saving the money to build it.

Opponent of Yama. We have two strong obstacles. One can destroy our mind, the other our life. This is referred to as "Yama" which is equivalent to the devil. Yamantaka is the opponent of Yama. He is the destroyer of the destroyer.

Yamantaka is the wrathful aspect of Manjushri, therefore called 'Manjushri-vajra, the opponent of Yama'. You try to become that deity. The sadhana is for training the mind. In sutrayana – in *lamrim* – the opponents are the delusions. In vajrayana the opponents are ordinary perception and ordinary conception, which means that everything appears as you perceive it. In the normal American way of thinking it is crazy, but what you are trying to do is to alter [your] reality totally and make it a totally pure reality. So you try to become that Yamantaka. Since right now we are not enlightened, we pick one of those fully enlightened beings which Buddha shared with us. The texts about those are called tantras – as opposed to sutras. In the tantras the basic structure of the environment and the inhabitants and its function is described. We bring that blueprint to us and try to fit it to be our future pure place, beings and actions. Why Yamantaka, why not something else, that is a different question.

**O Lama Je Tsong Khapa, the father who embodies all Conquerors,
And your Sons together with the lamas of the lineage,**

Here in the lineage visualization of Yamantaka, on the top we have the thirty-four arm Yamantaka and below that is his consort Vajrazombini with a lion face. She is not to be confused with the Lion-faced Dakini [Simhamukha], but she has a lion face. That lion face is that of a snow lion. It is not a lion that lives in the dust and dirt of the plains, but in the crispy, white, clean snow. If you don't know what a snow lion looks like, look at a Pekinese. (Now I have done something. First I elevated the lion to a snow lion, and now I have brought it down to the level of dogs!)

Below her are the other lineage masters, all in the form of Yamantaka with one face and two arms and they sit in space, one above the other. But they are not sitting on each other's heads. If people in space can float and sit one above the other without crushing each other's heads, why not enlightened beings? When you read through the lineage prayer in the long sadhana, you find twelve separate beings in between the 'all-pervading Lord Manjushri-vajra' and Lama Je Tsong Khapa. Tsong Khapa appears then below that in the same form.

Je Tsong Khapa is addressed here as 'Father'. He is considered the embodiment of all enlightened beings. That includes Manjushri who is the nature of reality of all enlightened beings. He has taken the form of an ordinary human being in 1357. He is known as founder of the Ganden Kagyu tradition, also called 'New Kadampa' tradition. His 'sons' are his disciples. So father and sons means teachers and disciples.

Below Tsong Khapa you have all the other lineage masters down to Kyabje Ling Rinpoche, which brings the number of the figures to thirty-nine or so, all in the same form. In Yamantaka we have the lineage masters one above the other, it is a long column or tree rather than the football oval sort of formation, where they sit in a circle [like in Vajrayogini]. If you look at the *Lama Chöpa* thangka you also have certain lineages arranged in the tree fashion.

Please bestow the two kinds of siddhi.

You are bowing to all those lineage masters. Don't be surprised that this verse only talks about fathers and sons. This comes from a 2500 year old tradition which started in ancient India which was a male chauvinist culture. We can rewrite this as parents and children. When you are bowing to them, you ask them to bestow the two kinds of siddhi, the ordinary and the extraordinary achievements. Ordinary achievements are the ability to heal people, clairvoyance, etc. The ordinary ones we achieve when we overcome our neuroses and the extraordinary ones are the attainment of full enlightenment. In other words, you are praying that the short term and long term goals may be fulfilled.

Here, in the short sadhana, instead of naming the lineage masters separately, you just summarize them all in one verse.

By making this request, you receive light and liquid coming from the lineage masters. The light and liquid coming from their bodies purify all our negativities in general and in particular all the obstacles to our guru-devotional practice. There are three main obstacles: 1) not having profound faith or respect; 2) misunderstanding; 3) doubt.

All these obstacles are completely purified and washed out of our system, away from our toes, far away, below layers and layers of ground and they even disappear from the universe below you. You become pure and attain long life and fortune.

Finally, the lineage masters dissolve, one to the other and finally the root master above me, inseparable from buddha Yamantaka, is looking at me with tremendous happiness. He enters through my crown and, dissolving at my heart level, becomes one with me. I become inseparable from the all pervading Lord Manjushri-vajra and because of that I have tremendous joy within me. That joy actually consumes all existence, all blocks to reality and it becomes completely open, beautiful, space-like pervasive openness and this is known as 'my *dharmakaya*'.

Audience: During the practice I feel the deity is some kind of external thing.

Rinpoche: That is dualistic perception. This is a problem. You have to see it as oneness. If you read the sadhana, it says that everything is created as yourself. *You* are the one creating the mandala, the fence,

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then *you* become Manjushri and *you* become Yamantaka and *you* acknowledge it as *your* dharmakaya, sambogakaya and nirmanakaya. If you see that as separate, it is a problem. Try not to see it separately, because that is an obstacle here. In a sadhana like this you don't visualize in front of you. At the end, another duplicate mandala comes to you, that is different³.

Audience: The problem for some of us seems to be to think that everybody must be having tea and cookies with Yamantaka every day and we're just imagining something in front of us and do not feel connected to it. So we wonder whether that is wrong, whether there is something missing.

Rinpoche: There is nothing wrong with that. People do feel that way, that's true, because we don't have a connection with Yamantaka yet. So where is the missing link? Find that jigsaw puzzle piece which is missing! The missing link may be sitting right in front of your nose. True! The guru is the missing link, very simple here. To show that we have the example of the magnifying glass which brings the sun light to start a fire. We will talk more on that later, then we will get that link. There is zillions of people who have the same problem. One of you just happens to be the chatter box, articulating that. But everybody has those problems.

If you are happy-go-lucky, you may not notice those problems much. You may say, 'This is not fitting right here, but anyway, let's go on', so then you continue and sometime down the track you notice that it fits and you will think, 'I don't know how that happened but now it fits'. That's the advantage of being happy-go-lucky. The disadvantage is that you could miss the whole thing completely.

Refuge and bodhimind

**To the Three Gems I go for refuge,
All beings I shall liberate
And place in the state of Awakenedness.
The bodhicitta I shall fully generate (3x)**

Now the refuge taking. The lineage gurus, particularly your own root guru, are in the form of Yamantaka. His body is sangha, his spiritual development is dharma and his mind is buddha. That is the system of the objects of refuge being all in one.

Next you generate bodhicitta – as described in the sadhana. The bodhicitta seeks two things: 1) you commit yourself to be totally dedicated to generate the altruistic mind and 2) you seek enlightenment yourself, so that your promise will not be empty but you are able to fulfill it. This is the two-pronged mind.

If you haven't dissolved the lineage up to this point, you can definitely do it here. In the short sadhana that is what happens, or else, you don't even dissolve the refuge tree at all.

Instantaneous rise

**In one instant I arise in the form of the glorious Vajra-terrifier
With one face and two arms which hold a curved knife and a skull-cup.**

The sadhana reads: 'In one instant I arise in the form of the glorious Vajra terrifier...' It is actually not a completely instantaneous rise. It is not like a raw meat hamburger flipped over, being instantly cooked. Even that is only possible if you have a special chemical in there! The instant rise is done in every Tibetan Buddhist tradition. Mostly it looks like you are supposed to be a normal human one second, and next you are some blue figure with two horns. But Tsong Khapa has here a special contribution for beginners in vajrayana.

³ See page 26

In the *maha annuttara yoga* tantras of vajrayana, the most important processes take place in two stages, the development stage and the completion stage. This is the essence of the practice, You cannot do without these. With this process you transform yourself from common to uncommon. Now, Tsong Khapa says there is no point in just to imagine that you suddenly change from an ordinary person into Yamantaka. It serves no purpose. Tsong Khapa advises us to practice the essence of both, the development stage and the completion stage, which is known as the 'three kayas'. This means 'three bodies' in English.

The first is the *dharmakaya*, the 'body of Truth'. The next is the *sambogakaya*. What is the best English term for this? Enjoyment body, Beatific body, these are commonly used terms, but I am looking for something better. In Tibetan it is *long ku*, short or *long cho dzog pai ku*. *Long cho* refers to any material and mental comforts; *dzog* means complete. So it is the body who has complete enjoyment of material and mental things. But I would like to find a better word.

Audience: What about comfort body?

Rinpoche: And that lives in the comfort zone!

Audience: The Shambala dictionary calls it 'body of delight'.

Rinpoche: That is not bad. Whatever it is, it is very comfortable and exclusive, like a special club - only the people from 5th Avenue can go.

The *sambogakaya*, body of delight or enjoyment body, has five qualities.

1. *Time*. It is free of time, but not timeless. Once in Delhi, Situ Rinpoche interpreted the time limit of this body as having no past, present and future. An Indian professor in the audience was not happy with that and asked, 'So are you living in the past and in the presence at the same time and in the future too? That is not possible'. Situ Rinpoche had difficulty answering that. So actually, the time is limited to be always in the present. A further meaning of the quality of time is that the body of delight exists until all sentient beings are liberated.

2. *Place*. You always live in the pure land. So that is the comfort zone. Here in the human realm we may have comfortable places too, but the air condition can be too cold, or there can be mechanical and electrical failures and you can have all these problems. It is changeable suffering. Therefore this is not exclusive enough for enlightened beings. They only live in the pure lands.

3. *Dharma*. They only teach exclusive dharma, that is, only mahayana, both, sutra and tantra, but not the way of the Elders, i.e. theravada or hinayana.

4. *Retinue*. The members of the circle of followers all have to be extraordinary persons. In Sanskrit they are called aryas. These are spiritually extraordinary people.

5. *Features*. They wear the extraordinary ornaments and have the extraordinary features of the enlightened beings, like the 32 major marks and 80 minor signs.

These are the five qualities of the body of Delight. This corresponds to the bardo and on another level, to the dream state, whereas the Truth body corresponds to death and the deep sleep state.

The third kaya is the emanation body or manifestation body (skt. *nirmanakaya*). In English there are a lot of names for these three kayas. You can choose whichever you like, until we finally select one that we will stick to.

It actually works that way. For example, here I have an object which, when I shake it, makes a funny sound and people are telling me, "This is called 'bell'" and so I learn what a bell is. Earlier, in Tibet I was taught that the same thing is called '*dribu*'. So we stick a label onto everything that exists, and through that it becomes reality. That's why I say that the main points regarding the sambogakaya are the criteria of the five qualities and then you can label it as you like. You may call it enjoyment body, or body of delight, or fifteen other names and that is all fine. As soon as a label is commonly accepted, the object becomes that. I never knew that this object is called 'bell'. In my mind it was

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dribu. But now I have learnt that in English it is 'bell', so when I pick it up, I acknowledge it in my mind as 'bell'. I tell somebody not to forget their bell. So I don't have a problem if people use different terms for the one thing, because it is clear to me, that existence is based on certain perceptions and certain labels combined together.

The emanation body corresponds with birth and the waking state. Now, the major vajrayana practice is to train our mind to look at these three major phases in our lives and recognize them and make best use of them. At the beginning level, people can only use it to some extent and get some benefit. When you develop further, the three kayas have their own way of functioning. You will pick that up during your own development. When you actually realize the development stage, again, it functions in a certain way. Finally, when you get to the completion stage, you have again the same sequence or procedure, the same three kaya practice, which at this stage leads you to total enlightenment. The difference at the various levels is that it is first weak, then medium and then strong. You could say there are beginning, intermediate, advanced and ultimate levels. Actually, it is always the same practice. Therefore, it is extremely important.

The way Tsong Khapa teaches us the instantaneous rise is as follows. You first have to dissolve your ordinary form, you have to disappear into the nature of emptiness. Our physical body vanishes into thin air - gone with the wind. When we do not yet have a clear understanding of emptiness, we imagine it to be like space. Nowadays we get these beautiful satellite pictures of open space. You can think of these when you try to imagine emptiness. Everything is very spacious and open and wonderful. That will do to substitute emptiness for the time being. You think that you and every other being is now in the nature of emptiness. It is a space-like, intangible, empty state, without color, smooth, open, beautiful. Somehow in the corner of your mind you now have to acknowledge that this is your truth body.

Suddenly, from that state, a blue light appears. It is about the size of an elbow. It is a beautiful, crystal, shiny sapphire- or dark royal blue. This you have to acknowledge as your enjoyment body or body of delight. From that blue light in one instant you come out as Yamantaka, which is the emanation body. So rather than just flip from your ordinary body into the deity's body, you go through a process. Tsong Khapa's extraordinary contribution here is that we are training in the main principles of the three bodies even at this early stage in the sadhana.

Instant-rise three-kaya practice

In case you don't dissolve the refuge objects, you dissolve yourself into emptiness.

If you can, do this dissolution of yourself according to the dying process, if not, then simply think that you disappear. You disappear into thin air – gone with the wind, one with space, intangible, completely gone. If you have understanding of emptiness, you meditate on that.

The emptiness of that state indicates that you are gone, but somehow you are still there. When you disappear, there is open space and this is what you acknowledge as the total reality. The feeling is space-like and open. Feel that way and think that this is your awakened state of mind. Imagine this fantastic open freedom, like as if you enjoy the view from out of a spaceship, the beautiful, clean, clear air (rather than the cloudy, gray Michigan sky). Then you acknowledge this kind of pervasiveness and openness as your resultant mental state, your awakened mind, your resultant *dharmakaya*.

Suddenly you recognize that while you are floating in that wonderful space, nobody can perceive you or see you function and your commitment of helping all beings is then not possible. If you remain in that floating state, you can't benefit anyone, hence you have to take a form so that you can be seen and others can communicate with you. Therefore you would like to rise in some tangible form.

And instantly you become a shaft of blue light the size of a forearm [one cubit] of your own body. That is you. It is your first appearance as a physical being after that great revolution you went through. You acknowledge that as your resultant *sambogakaya*.

Then you think that this light is still not very accessible. It is very exclusive, only for the members of the exclusive club, not for everybody. It does not serve the purpose and therefore you must get out of that state and function in the world, go down there into the big world and function as a normal being. Because of thinking like that, the blue light shaft develops a head, then hands and legs and becomes a Yamantaka with one face and two arms and legs. You acknowledge that as your resultant *nirmanakaya*.

This whole process is called ‘instantaneous rise’. It is an opportunity to purify yourself and also it is an opportunity to find a beautiful cocoon in which you can hide if you want to. That’s why you rise as the deity twice in one sadhana. It is Tsong Khapa who has recommended to do this.

In other traditions there are different systems. For example in one system you have Vajradhara as *dharmakaya*, Vajrasattva as *sambogakaya* and Sakyamuni as *nirmanakaya*. Though there are different systems, the three kayas are everywhere. If you know one system well, you can apply it everywhere.

Blessing of the offerings

First comes the inner offering blessing. Traditionally, you use particular nectar pills. In the lineage these have been especially developed. Recommended is the Panchen Lama’s nectar pill. During the Fifth Dalai Lama’s period, in the 1600s the First Panchen Lama created a nectar pill. When he blessed it, the whole pill caught fire and kept burning for a while, after which the nectar pill was still perfectly there. So this nectar pill is called the ‘light blazing nectar pill’. In the traditional, old Tibet, in the 1700s up to the 1900s, everybody tried to get the Panchen Lamas’ nectar pills. In case you cannot get these now, there are a lot of other nectar pills too. In our tradition it is emphasized that out of these the pure Kadampa pill is the best. The simple reason is that in certain traditions practitioners might have literally used the substances mentioned in the inner offering blessing. In the Vajrayogini practice, the Sakya nectar pill is strongly recommended, even before the Kadam pills. Nowadays we have very limited amounts of nectar pills, so we soak them in whisky and distribute that solution to everybody.

Blessing the inner offering

OM HRIH SHTRIH VIKRITA NANA HUM PHAT.

OM SVABHAVA SHUDDAH SARVA DHARMA SVABHAVA SHUDDO HAM

All is empty.

From your heart as Yamantaka you generate wrathful deities and these drive away all evils, no matter what they are, whether they be material, obstructions to reality, etc. Also the object in front of you⁴ becomes empty thereby. That’s how you become purified.

As external inner offering substance we usually have a small bottle of alcohol with some inner offering material inside. Internally, in the meditative state, we have the five meats and five nectars.

From the sphere of emptiness appears YAM, from which arises air; from RAM fire; from the three letters of AH a tripod of three human heads, and above these from AH a white skull-cup, containing the five meats and the five nectars.

Suddenly, from emptiness, arises air, fire and above that three human heads. Above those, from AH comes a skullcup. The inner offering is visualized in a skull cup. Inside of that you have the five meats and nectars. The meats are that of a buffalo, dog, horse, elephant, and human. Can you imagine that some people would literally use those substances? It is not that great, that’s why we have those restrictions on the use of nectar pills. Then of course there are the five nectars: blood, semen, bone

⁴ The offering substances which you are meditating on and all phenomena become empty.

marrow, excrement and urine. You have a huge skullcup with the full body of those animals like elephant, horse, etc, and the five nectars in front of you. The bodies are already chopped up. It is like in Chinese cooking. You get a piece of pork which is chopped up, but put back together nicely, so that it looks like one piece. When you get to it with a chopstick, only the piece that you want will come out. In that manner all the meats are presented.

Above these are OM AH HUM.

These impure substances, these terrible, worst ever possible materials, have to be blessed and transformed into the best ever possible substance, nectar. The way to do that is simply with OM AH HUM. That mantra is very important. It is the body, speech and mind of all enlightened beings in the shape of these three letters. The letters are sitting above the skull cup. The skull cup itself is sitting on three outward looking skulls. If you look at a cowboy movie, or if you go camping, they start a fire, put a few stones around it, put their cooking pot above them and make their coffee. Just like that, three fresh human heads serve as stones. Underneath, you have a fire mandala and underneath that, in order to move the fire, you have an air mandala.

From the HUM at my heart light-rays radiate and strike the air; air moves, fire flares; all the substances in the skull-cup melt and boil.

The process is as follows. In order to activate the air, you send light from your heart as Yamantaka. It hits the air mandala, so the air moves, which makes the fire blaze and through that, the substances inside the skull cup melt and cook. So it becomes a soup. It is not like miso soup, but a thick stew-like soup. At this stage it is still not pure.

Light rays radiate successively from the three letters; they draw forth and absorb the three vajras⁵. (The letters) descend into the skull-cup and all melt.

HUM purifies all faults of color, smell and potentiality. AH transforms it into nectar, OM multiplies and increases it. OM AH HUM, OM AH HUM, OM AH HUM.

The heat of the fire rises up and reaches to the three letters above. First it melts the HUM, which drops down like a piece of butter falls into the soup. Then the melting HUM goes round three times and that purifies the substance. More steam develops and melts the AH which drops down and purifies the substance and makes it into nectar. Finally the OM drops down and makes the offerings inexhaustible. This is a different reality. You don't have to think how it is possible to be inexhaustible. Everything just happens that way.

When the American Buddhist teachers had a meeting with His Holiness a couple of years ago, the Dalai Lama gave some answers in relation to crazy wisdom. Crazy wisdom is supposed to be able to transform impure substances and activities into pure ones. That is based on the system of blessing, like the inner offering. If you can really do that, purify, make into nectar and make it inexhaustible, then you can handle anything else in the same way, without difficulty.

This is the blessing of the inner offering, not the actual offering. In vajrayana you do not offer anything without blessing it. The blessing makes it pure. You don't offer anything that is impure. Even the food you offer you should bless with OM AH HUM. Actually OM AH HUM is the essence of the body, mind and speech of the enlightened beings.

Sometimes, if you can't do your mantras, you can substitute them with a hundred OM AH HUM, except the ones for which you have a specific commitment to do a certain number. So the OM AH HUM is a very important mantra.

Now in your visualization you have developed the inner offering which is a powerful material to purify anything else.

⁵ Three vajras: vajra-body, vajra-speech and vajra-mind of the perfection state.

Blessing the outer offerings

The outer offerings are substances which have nothing to do with meats and bodily fluids, which are not directly connected with the being, like light, incense, flowers, etc.

OM HRIH SHTRIH VIKRITA NANA HUM PHAT.

With the action mantra OM HRIH SHTRIH, etc, you generate a lot of wrathful deities from your heart and they drive away all evil obstacles and spirits. Simultaneously here you also pick up some inner offering and throw it in their direction. This is done by just the simple gesture only of picking up some inner offering and sprinkling it away from you. You don't even have to actually use the inner offering. Then you dissolve the offerings themselves into emptiness by the mantra

OM SVABHAVA SHUDDAH SARVA DHARMAH SVABHAVA SHUDDO HAM – All is empty.

From the sphere of emptiness appears (eight letters of) AH and from these huge and vast skull-cups; inside of each is a hum. From the melting of the letters of hum, offerings with the nature of possessing the three specialties⁶ arise.

**OM ARGHAM AH HUM / OM PADYAM AH HUM / OM GANDHE AH HUM
OM PUSHPE AH HUM / OM DHUPE AH HUM / OM ALOKE AH HUM
OM NAIVIDYA AH HUM / OM SHABDA AH HUM**

Then from this emptiness, eight letters of AH appear, and from these come eight skullcups in which are eight letters HUM. These HUMs melt and become the various offering substances, like water, flowers, incense, light, food, music. Actually, I myself just visualize one AH from which comes one big skull cup with eight divisions for the eight offerings, like the Indian Thali plates. Both systems are correct. The most important thing is to recognize that in **nature** the offerings are empty, in **appearance** they are the offerings and their **function** is to deliver bliss and void to the object of offering.

As for the water, there are three different water offerings. The first is water for the mouth, *argham*, then water for the feet, *padyam*. This is according to the old Indian system in which people wash the feet of an important guest. The third water, *gandhe*, is often called 'perfume', but that is not exactly what it is. In the old Indian culture, when it is hot, people sprinkle water at your chest to cool you down. Even nowadays they are doing that. A lot of people don't wear shirts and so you can throw water at their chest and then use a fan to cool down the body temperature. This cooling water has some perfume in it. It may not be 'samsara' or 'poison', but it could be 'chanel No 5' or the smell of couscous.

Then you offer flowers, *pushpe*. It could be in the form of garlands. That is the Indian culture. The Hawaiians will also give you flowers. It does not have to be only garlands. Flowers are also used as hair ornaments. The Indian ladies put ratki rani in their hair. That is the 'night queen', a very nice, perfumed flower. All these Katakali dancers wear them.

Incense, *dhupe*, does not necessarily have to be in form of the Tibetan style incense stick, but whatever gives you a great smell. Remember, the mudra symbolizes the rubbing of the incense ingredients. Incense is a collection of a lot of scented materials together providing a special scent. That is the real incense, providing a good smell, whether it be in the form of incense sticks or powder or in the shape of a lump.

In that manner you mentally lay out the outer offerings. At this stage you are not offering anything, just mentally making sure it is all there. After this the actual sadhana begins.

⁶ Its nature is bliss-void inseparable, its appearance is whatever is laid out, its purpose is to bring joy and happiness to whom you make the offering.

32 *Three main short vajrayana practices*

Vajrasattva meditation

Those who would like to do the Vajrasattva recitation, can insert it here. If you do the Vajrasattva recitation, visualize him above your head, above five inches tall, white. If you visualize him too big, it may be uncomfortable having him on your head, and if he is too small, you may lose concentration. From Vajrasattva, light and liquid come down into your body, and just through the touch of the light and liquid, everything in your body is purified.

Audience: Am I visualizing myself as Yamantaka or in my normal body?

Rinpoche: You don't have to think, because if you don't think, you are automatically in your normal body. The purification happens in three ways. The first is from top to bottom, everything undesirable gets washed away out of your system, inside and outside. The second method is from bottom to top and the third and most effective is, the light comes in and like the sun light eliminating the darkness, this light immediately makes all negativities disappear. Then Vajrasattva tells you that you are pure and you have to believe that – at least for a short time.

2. The actual practice

Now, if you still have the refuge tree in front of you, you dissolve that with the next

**OM SVABHAVA SHUDDAH SARVA DHARMA SVABHAVA SHUDDOH HAM
Nature empty, everything pure, naturally pure, that's what I am.**

THREE KAYA PRACTICE

a. death as dharmakaya

This is the truth body. It is so called, because it is absolute truth, absolute reality. In this case your total environment, everything that exists, goes into the nature of emptiness. So all is empty, everything is pure. It is naturally pure, because whatever is there, is empty, that is natural, so naturally it is all pure. And that state is also your state at that moment. It is completely open, pervasive, pure, beautiful, like the view from a space-ship, no obstacles, no blocks. Everything is completely free. It is huge openness, spaciousness. For millions of miles it is all open, without walls and I am everywhere and everything is me. That is my ultimate reality. That is my pure state which is technically called dharmakaya.

If you can visualize the [eight steps of the] dying process here, you should do it. This is the time to train in the stages of death. At the time of death, we will have certain perceptions. Our body is disintegrating at this time, falling apart, and you do get signals, not only pains and aches, but also signals that you can see and hear. It is important to recognize those signals. These are based on the five elements, earth, water, fire, air and space which our body is made out of.

The first to give up is the **earth** element. It affects our vision and therefore we perceive a mirage-like appearance. We get that when we drive on the road sometimes. It looks like there is water on the road in the distance, but when we get there, there is no water whatsoever.

The second is the **water** element. You get a smoke-like feeling. It is as if one hundred people smoking cigarettes in your hospital room. So you know it is not true and it is one of the signs.

The third to give up is the **fire** element. You get the appearance like as if you are in a dark room and somebody comes in and throws a hundred lit cigarettes in the air – you would see a lot of sparks. That type of feeling you get.

The fourth to give up is the **air** element and its sign is the light of a flickering butter lamp. It is like when you are sitting in a dark room. There is a candle light, but you are not looking directly at that, but at the wall. There you will see the flickering reflection of the light.

The sequence of these signs is always in that order. The first four are hard to recognize at the actual death time, that's why we have it in our daily practice, so that, when the time comes, we will be able to recognize them.

Now follows the actual death. The first sign here is the **white** appearance. The Michigan winter sky is a good example for that. The sky is luminous, but you don't have direct sunshine, it is gray-white.

Then you will get some kind of **reddish** feeling. At sunset the sky is often red and you will see even the trees and everything pervaded by that red-ness.

The next is a completely dark, **black** period. You will not see anything. You will feel suffocated, you cannot even breathe and therefore you want to get out of the body. That is the time your consciousness is leaving the body.

Following that, you will see some kind of **white light**. The example is the beautiful moon light early in the autumn mornings. It is clean, nice, beautiful and crispy. You are not looking directly at the moon, but the effect of the light is everywhere around, wherever you are looking. This is called the death stage on the ordinary level.

You concentrate on each of the signs as they appear and recognize them for what they are and also keep up the resolution to make sure that: 'At the end of the process, when the clear light of death sign appears, I will transform that into the clear light'. You do that at every sign, eight times altogether, and finally, at the last time, you focus on the nature of emptiness.

This is trying to change the process of death into the path. If you don't do this as your regular daily practice, then to wait until the death time and then meditate on emptiness will not work. That's why a number of us will not believe that it is sufficient to just hear somebody read the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* to you and you will be liberated. It is easy enough to hire someone who can read that to you, but that won't do. I personally think that way. If you put a lot of efforts in during your life time and then, if somebody reads the text to you, it may help.

At the last sign you concentrate on the nature of emptiness. If you don't know enough about emptiness, concentrate on the space-like empty feeling, as mentioned earlier. You also have to recognize that this is the truth body, *dharmakaya*. The mind giving this recognition also has to be joyful in nature. You have to keep concentrating on this for a while and if you look at the statement at the beginning of this section *Nature empty. Everything pure. Naturally pure. That's what I am* you will know what to think.

The purpose is to train your mind. Therefore you can visualize these eight appearances one perceives during the death process: the mirage, the smoky feeling, the sparks, the light, the whiteness, the redness, the blackness and then that beautiful spaciousness. If you can do that, wonderful, you should do it. When you train your mind in this way and all of the sudden death comes, you will know what to think and what to look for –the nature of reality, this joyous state.

The moment your neuroses are starting to rise within this joyous state, you must wake up immediately, because you don't want to spoil that beautiful cocoon. In other words, you should not spoil that naturally pure state. Keep it pure. So when neuroses arise, get out of that state. Otherwise, the next time you do that meditation you will almost expect your neuroses to be there too! Then your naturally pure state will be destroyed. So don't stay too long, stay there for a little while and then think of rising.

b. bardo as sambogakaya

From the sphere of emptiness appears the vajra-earth, fence, tent and the ceiling and mountain of flames, inside of which is the inconceivable mansion with four corners and four doors.

34 *Three main short vajrayana practices*

It is no doubt wonderful to be floating in space in the truth body and everything is wonderful and quiet and in harmony. However, you will only be accessible to enlightened beings. You have no physical form. You need an identity and therefore you think:

I would like to rise from that state and have my own pure land, my own environment and my own inhabitants in that.

So you rise from the sphere of emptiness and your pure land starts to appear. The four **elements** appear. First, the air mandala comes, above that, the fire mandala, then the water mandala, then the earth mandala. Everything builds up in correspondence to its seed letters.

From here onwards, if you are meditating in the development stage, you have to focus carefully. Until you get a good picture of the air mandala, you don't want to add the fire mandala and until you get a good picture of the fire mandala, you don't want to add up the water mandala, and so on. There are marks and banners and so on – you can get the details from the commentary on the long Yamantaka sadhana⁷. You don't want to start on the vajra surface, until you have a good picture of all the elemental mandalas.

Once you have the ground, you add the **common protection wheel**. This is the vajra ground, the vajra fence, and vajra roof. Vajra means indestructible. So the walls are indestructible. When you look at a vajra, you have empty spaces in there. But each of these empty spaces has a smaller vajra inside, which again has yet a smaller vajra inside and so on, until finally there is no space left inside at all. The same happens with the ground, fence and the ceiling. Between the ceiling and the wall there is also an empty space. The description is based on the structure of the traditional Mongolian and Tibetan tents. These have a gap between the wall and the roof. The gap has been left purposely, so that additional decorations can be added. Correspondingly, the common protection wheel also has this gap which is filled by what is called 'vajra ceiling', for want of a better word.

Outside that protection wheel, there is a huge **fire wall**, actually a fire ball. That's what it looks like from the outside. It has five different colors. When you have a blazing fire, you can see different colors in there, from yellow to orange and red, and even blue and green and white. Likewise there are five different colors in this fire ball.

The short sadhana does not have the uncommon protection wheel, but the medium one does. The **uncommon protection wheel** is located inside the common protection wheel. The traditional example is an ice-cream cone, but actually it is easier to imagine the space ship from star trek or from deep space nine. It is also called *kai korlo*, which means command wheel, so it is the command bridge. You yourself become *Ngönje Gyelpo* or **Sumbharaja**. And there are the ten wrathful deities surrounding you. (You can find drawings of them in our big Yamantaka commentary. One is missing, because it was impossible to find a drawing of him.)

The central figure of the ten wrathful deities is changeable according to the purpose of the meditation. In this case the guy who sits underground has been put up in the center. He actually keeps his usual space and a duplicate takes up the central seat as well. So you would take up the responsibility of being in command in addition to whatever other responsibility you have. You don't want to leave your post, so you duplicate yourself.

Now Sumbharaja goes into union with his consort and the sound of that joy completely fills up the space and draws a lot of attraction from the neighbors, in this case the buddhas and bodhisattvas. They come near and enter into the body of Sumbharaja, melt into his heart level by the force of their great desire and descend as ten different drops, but in the form of letter HUMs, into the lotus of the consort of Sumbharaja. Here they are purified and initiated. This last step is not even written in the long sadhana.

⁷ Gelek Rinpoche, *Solitary Yamantaka teachings on the generation stage*

The following process can be done according to two systems. The lower tantric college system has it, that after the initiation, while you saying the syllable HUM, the ten wrathful deities come out of the lotus of the consort – just like a mother is giving birth. Pabongka accepts this system and uses it. But both, Kyabje Ling Rinpoche and Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche followed the upper tantric college system. According to this, from the lotus of the consort the ten drops come back into your vajra. From there they ascend to your heart level and from there the ten wrathful deities come out and take their seats in the ten directions. You can use either of these systems or you can rotate them, it is entirely your choice. In our medium sadhana it is left open, it only mentions that the deities emanate from the lotus. The Tibetan text does the same and only the Gyume text will say specifically ‘from the lotus of the consort’. It is really just a technicality. So the deities settle in their respective areas.

Now, in the center of this uncommon protection rim, still outside the future mandala house, from Sumbharaja, you switch into **Vajrasattva** and he becomes a triangular **reality source**, which is actually a tetrahedron. The upper part is open and the lower part is closed. From the lower corner somewhere comes a **lotus flower**. In the center of this, you arise as Buddha **Vairochana**, who embodies the purity of form. Everything you imagine now is form, so it is the purity of form. Actually Buddha Vairochana comes from a **crossed vajra**, at the hub of which you are going to build the mandala house! That’s why you have to take care to visualize the whole protection wheel and everything big enough. The hub of the double vajra has to contain the mandala house. In the end Vairochana becomes the **celestial mansion**.

Thus we have completed the meditation on the truth body, which includes the building of the outer and inner protection wheel and the mandala house which is the environment.

At the center of this mandala, you would like to rise as Manjushri. That means that you have to think,

I must rise in a physical form, so that I will be tangible and accessible.

With that mind, you become Manjushri. Actually, there is a sequence here as well. There is the air mandala, and the seed syllable DHIH [and the sword], etc. Once you are Manjushri, you recognize that as the body of delight, *sambogakaya*. This is the causal Vajraholder, Manjushri. You are still at the causal level.

**At the centre of this is the causal vajra-holder in the form of Manjushri,
on a seat of a variegated lotus and sun and moon discs.**

This time, when you rise, instead of a blue light, you become Manjushri, because this is father tantra which tries to give you a figure or an image as the *sambogakaya*. The father tantra gives you a physical form rather than a syllable, as the mother tantra does. Vajrayogini, for instance, emphasizes the clear light, therefore there are fewer figures to visualize. In mother tantras you just get initials or seed syllables, whereas father tantras emphasize the majestic body. That is why they give you physical appearances as *sambogakaya*. In this case here it is the youthful Manjushri. You become that Manjushri, and no matter how old you may be, think he is sweet sixteen, matured enough, young, intelligent and with fresh blood. That is the causal vajra holder.

Of course, you also try to visualize the mansion and surrounding areas. The details of these are mentioned in the long sadhana. From now on, you are supposed to build the mandala, adding details without losing what you have visualized so far. You have the earth mandala, the fire mandala, the vajra ground, vajra fence and vajra ceiling and then the mansion and all that is inside. Our mind is not very well trained and therefore we follow the words in the sadhana, but we have to think that all these things are there and build them up and get them complete. That is the development stage. You are building up the mandala, first the foundation, then the environment and then the inhabitants.

So, inside the mandala, on a seat of variegated lotus, sun and moon discs, you visualize yourself as the causal vajra holder Manjushri. You now acknowledge that this Manjushri is yourself, you

recognize yourself as Manjushri, you don't look at an external Manjushri. This particular mandala, from the air,- water,- fire,- and earth mandalas to the vajra ground, fence, tent, ceiling, etc. is all you. You have to think that each and every one of them is part and parcel of yourself, of your mind, your body, yourself. Even that Manjushri inside is yourself. He is your causal level Manjushri. Even the ground and every particle of the mandala is yourself. You think, 'This is my reality, this is my pure land, it is me and mine'. That is where the pervasiveness comes in. It is your own creation. It is almost like the parents acknowledging that their children are part of themselves. They will not say, 'My children are me', but will say that their genes are in their children. And this is more than that. The whole creation *is* you. So here you have Manjushri, the causal vajra holder, as the master of the mandala.

c. birth as nirmanakaya

Visualizing oneself as this hero Manjushri, emanate lights from the heart, inviting all the Tathagatas in the form of the Vajra-terrifier; they dissolve into me.

From this complete transformation I arise as the resultant Vajra-holder, the glorious and mighty Vajra-terrifier, with a body of dark azure color, nine faces and thirty-four arms and sixteen legs of which the right are drawn and the left extended.

If you remain just in the sambogakaya, you still have limitations. You will only be accessible to pure beings. Therefore you decide to take a form which is more useful to all beings, of more benefit, and so you manifest another form and that is the nirmanakaya, the emanation body. In this case it is the complete Yamantaka with nine faces, thirty-four arms and sixteen legs, also called Vajrabhairava or Vajra Terrifier. You have to acknowledge this as your *nirmanakaya*.

At my heart is the wisdom being, the youthful Manjushri, whose heart is marked with HUM, the absorption being. At my crown is OM, throat AH, and heart HUM.

Not only do you become the *nirmanakaya*, but that also includes the three beings: the essence of Yamantaka is Manjushri, the essence of Manjushri is the letter HUM.

That letter represents the five wisdoms. In other words, the combination of the five wisdoms becomes the letter HUM. The five wisdoms at our ordinary level today are our neuroses, like anger, attachment, ignorance, etc. When these become pure, they become the five wisdoms, like mirror-like wisdom, discriminating wisdom, wisdom of equality, all-accomplishing wisdom and the dharmadhatu wisdom.

The neuroses are also the seeds of the five buddhas. That's why, if you have noticed, during the initiations it is said, 'Through this you have purified all your hatred, which becomes the mirror-like wisdom and you have obtained the state of Vairochana buddha'. So the initiation of the highest vajrayana, the *maha anu yoga* tantra, is based on yourself becoming the five Dhyani buddhas. Actually, these five buddhas are the five aggregates. These are not just the physical form, the flesh and bones which we leave behind when we die, but the essence of the parts which, combined together, give us our identity. These become transformed and become the five buddhas and five wisdoms. The HUM represents the union of these five things together. The union is also the reason why buddha Vajradhara appears in the hugging mudra. It gives you the double message of mental, emotional and physical joy, [and of] sexual union. This is *mahasukha* which means 'greatest feeling'. Sexy Italian girls have that sort of mudra; it is the reminder actually of the HUM. In that way HUM is the seed of the wisdom of all the buddhas. It is also called 'absorption being', in the sense that the wisdom of all the buddhas has been absorbed in it.

From the HUM at my heart lights radiate forth, inviting the wisdom beings and empowering deities from their natural abodes.

The wisdom beings are absorbed (into me). The empowering deities grant (me)

empowerment. Akshobhya adorns the crown of my head.

This is easy to visualize. If you can't visualize, then at least think that what you are reading is actually happening. Then it will not break your commitment.

With this we have covered the explanation of the three bodies: the truth body, the delight body and the emanation body. Who is acknowledging these? I. I acknowledge myself. I, the nature of reality, acknowledge my physical appearance. I acknowledge and accept this identity.

Offering to the self-generation

The **outer offerings**, which you had blessed in the beginning of the practice, are now offered to you. Who brings them to you? You manifest somebody from your heart, a figure that you like, with a physical appearance you admire. It can be a male or a female, a daka or dakini, doesn't matter. He or she comes out from your heart, picks up each of the offerings one by one and dances while doing that. The dancing should be elegant, not like what Wangchukla said about our dakini dances when he said, 'These are tree dakinis'. The Tibetans will say they have to have *demdem chukchuk*, willowy movements. The whole idea is the sexuality here. The energy of the rising sexuality is the energy of joy that we can relate to. That's why the dachas and dakinis present the offerings with all these willowy movements and winking of their eyes. This sexiness rouses the sexual energy which for us represents joy. In fact, you are *not* raising the sexual energy, but the *mahasukha*, the greatest bliss. *Sukha* is joy in Sanskrit, while *dukha* is suffering.

In short, you generate all these Cinderella's and Prince Charmings from your heart, and they go and do the work for you. They pick up each of these offerings and bring them to you with willowy movements, like Michael Jackson or whoever.

OM YAMANTAKA ARGHAM PRATICCHA HUM SOHA

With these words they are giving you water for the mouth. You accept it. Drinking that pure nature water not only quenches your thirst, but also gives you tremendous energy and strength. It is better than taking vitamins. It is better than miracle water. A collection of suitable, energizing materials are provided in this water, which is nectar. It is served to you by this admirable figure with the willowy, dancing, sexy activities. Taking this builds up all the energies within you and also reminds you of the close connection to the great *mahasukha*. (It is better to say *mahasukha* than just 'bliss').

OM YAMANTAKA PADYAM PRATICCHA HUM SOHA

The same daka or dakini picks up a vessel of water and pours it over your feet. That movement is shown in the mudra for *padyam*. The reason why you do the lotus mudra within the mudra for each of these offerings is to represent the willowy movements of the offering deities.

You can have these deities with either two or four hands. If you have them with four hands, then two hands are doing the job and two hands are holding the vase. If you have them with two hands, then one hand could be holding the vessel and the other moving around freely.

OM YAMANTAKA GHANDE PRATICCHA HUM SOHA.

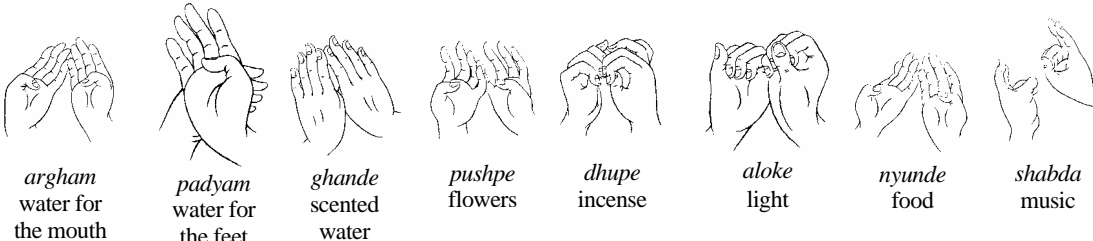
OM YAMANTAKA PUSHPE PRATICCHA HUM SOHA.

OM YAMANTAKA DHUPE PRATICCHA HUM SOHA.

OM YAMANTAKA ALOKE PRATICCHA HUM SOHA.

OM YAMANTAKA NAIVIDYA PRATICCHA HUM SOHA.

OM YAMANTAKA SHABDA PRATICCHA HUM SOHA.



In the same way you offer the flowers, incense, light, food and finally *shabda*, music, the best sound which will bring joy and happiness. The quality of the music should be that it is coming from many different instruments and combines into a soothing, smooth sound which brings you pleasure and joy. Just hearing it alone can give you relief of the sufferings of body and mind. So it is not the sort of music which gives you an ear ache, nor should it be the sort of music that puts you to sleep. It should be music that rouses you and brings you joy, relieving the pain and suffering of body and mind. It should not depend on how loud it is. It is not a competition between the human voice and the beating of drums. It is not poking your ears. That is not considered great in the Vajrayana tradition at all. You know better than I – there are a lot of musicians here. With each offering you do the appropriate mudra. Afterwards, the offering deities dissolve back to you.

OM YAMANTAKA HUM PHAT. OM AH HUM.

This is the **inner offering**. That is the essence connected with the five meats and five nectars and [symbolically] you offer it from between the thumb and ring finger of your left hand. These touch and you should visualize that from an ocean of nectar you are picking some up with a Mt. Meru type of finger and then throw it. You can also just offer a skullcup and buddha Yamantaka puts in his elephant trunk-like tongue and sucks the offering material in. In reality it is offering the materials connected to the inner being. The five meats and five nectars are our neuroses, mental obstacles and physical illnesses purified and made into nectar, offered to yourself as Yamantaka. You accept them, digest them and that builds up your strength.

If you look at the long sadhana, this offering is made to the root and lineage gurus, the yidams and everybody else. But in the short sadhana the offering is just to Yamantaka.

Praise

**Supreme Form, Extremely Great Fury,
Intrepid One, Enjoyer of Supreme Objects,
Who acts in order to tame the hard to tame,
To the Vajra-terrifier I bow down.**

If you need an explanation, you can look at the long commentary. It is in there.

Mantra-recitation

**On the sun mandala at my heart is a letter HUM,
and around the circumference (of the sun) is the mantra rosary.**



Having contemplated thus one should recite:

OM A RA PA ZA NA DHI (...x) DHIH (100x)

In the Yamantaka sadhana you find here the Manjushri mantra, because here the peaceful and the wrathful Manjushri are combined together. One of the five qualities of Yamantaka is that by practicing the peaceful Manjushri you develop the wrathful Yamantaka automatically and by practicing the wrathful Yamantaka as a sort of side effect you develop the peaceful Manjushri.

Visualization with the Manjushri mantra

When you say the A RA PA TZA NA DHIH mantra, there is a set of visualizations, which is described in the long Yamantaka transcript. Just briefly, the usual visualization:

You are in the form of Yamantaka with thirty-four arms and sixteen legs, at your heart Manjushri, and at his heart a sun disc with a letter HUM on top. However, when you say the Manjushri mantra, you switch the HUM to a DHIH, which is Manjushri's seed syllable.

In mantra style, you can visualize it as a **D** which an **H** in it and an **I** on the top. A seed syllable is like a sign. It is like when you put your initials on a legal document.

At the heart chakra you also visualize a flat, six-spoked chakra. Above each of the flat spokes stands one syllable of the mantra, so OM A RA PA TZA NA. At the center you have a vertical spoke, on which stands that letter DHIH. This is a wheel of swords.

When you say the A RA PA TZA NA mantra, light comes from the letters and from the chakras, fills your body, and purifies all negativities, especially ignorance. The ultimate ignorance is that related to the ego. It is like when you switch on the light and the darkness disappears.

You could do the same visualizations here as in the *Ganden Lha Gyema*, where you do them with the MIGTSEMA mantra. So, you can do the meditation on developing the seven wisdoms, the profound, vast and quick wisdom etc. I am not going to go into that detail now⁸.

Visualization with the DHIH

At the end of reciting this mantra a number of times you say hundred times DHIH in one breath. And you visualize that

Manjushri's hand implement, the sword, is sitting in your throat with the sharp tip facing downwards. From its tip one hundred DHIHs are dripping down towards your heart chakra, one at a time.

Every time a DHIH drips down it is like oil dripping into a fire and that means your wisdom fire is burning much more. Finally you dissolve the sword within you. There is no doubt that this practice will counteract Alzheimer's disease.

Usually, in the vajrayana tradition, we like to be very ambiguous. But in the Western world, it is demanded, that one be as clear as possible. Sometimes you cannot give one clear explanation, because a certain context could have a hundred different meanings, it could twist a hundred different ways. If you always try to provide the clearest possible explanations, sometimes it may be good, but sometimes it could become a dis-service. A lot of the possible meanings would be left out.

Then you have the next mantra [the root mantra]:

Dⁱ_h^o

**OM YAMARAJA SADOMEYA / YAME DORU NAYODAYA /
YADAYONI RAYAKSHEYA / YAKSHEYACCHA NIRAMAYA /
HUM HUM / PHAT PHAT SOHA (...x)**

Remember, your main form is that of Yamantaka with nine faces, thirty four arms and sixteen legs. Basically, at the heart level of yourself as Yamantaka is Manjushri and at his heart the letter DHIH changes back into the HUM.

Visualizations with the Yamantaka mantras

You have the mantra-mala of this mantra at your heart level; then inside of that you have the mantra mala of the activity mantra: OM HRIH STRIH VIKRITA NANA HUM PHAT. Then inside of that you have the mantra mala of the essence mantra: OM YAMANTAKA HUM PHAT. Inside of that is the letter HUM. These mantras are living mantras, not drawings or postcards. [The letters are arranged clockwise.]

⁸ See Gelek Rinpoche, *Ganden Lha Gyema; the hundred of deities of the Land of Joy*, chapter v: Praying and requesting.

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Actually, the mouth of the principal face begins to recite the OM YAMARAJA mantra. Then all the other faces fall in and recite the mantra. That makes a huge sound.

1. *Purifying sentient beings*

Light rays radiate from the mantra-mala OM YAMARAJA. These reach out to all living beings and through that all environments become pure and the beings therein become pure. You keep on saying the mantra while you visualize all this.

2. *Placing sentient beings in the state of Yamantaka*

You generate Yamantakas from your heart. Millions of them go out from your right nostril, reach to all the sentient beings, purify them, make them enlightened and then the Yamantakas dissolve back into your heart [entering via the left nostril].

3. *Burning the obstacles*

Light radiates from HUM and the mantra mala and fills up our whole body. All our illnesses and obstacles, bad karma, any particular difficulties we may have in order to practice Dharma and achieve our desires, are all burned up by the power of that fiery light.

4. *Yamantaka mandalas*

I would like to give you one more visualization for the Yamantaka mantras. Before you do the mantra recitation, you bless your mala into the form of a skull mala. When you use your mala, no matter if the beads are bodhiseed beads or otherwise, you visualize them as skulls.

On the forehead of each of the skulls of your mala you visualize a complete Yamantaka mandala. You will not be able to visualize that in detail, but you think that it is there.

Every time you say the OM YAMARAJA mantra, you visualize that this mandala comes out from the skull and dissolves to you. When you are saying your mantras very fast, you can't do that visualization with each bead of the mala, but in any case, you think that a complete mandala dissolves to you.

You can do the same visualization with the other mantras – OM HRIH SHRITH and OM YAMANTAKA HUM PHAT.

The commitment for the number of mantras should be small, make it seven or twenty-one. The number should be low, because otherwise, when you break your commitment, you have to double the number, and when the number is already high, it is going to take a long time. I tried once to minimize a mantra commitment. That was during a Vajrayogini initiation I received from Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche⁹. He asked me how many mantras I had committed myself to and I was too embarrassed to say the number and held up my mala instead, indicating a single bead! Kyabje Rinpoche said, 'No, no, don't do that, you should say at least seven!'

OM HRIH STRIH VIKRITA NANA HUM PHAT (...x)

After the recitation of the root mantra, that mantra-mala OM YAMARAJA dissolves into the OM HRIH SHTRIH mala and you visualize the same process again.

Light rays come out from that mantra, reaching to all environments and beings and making them pure just by touching them.

The lights also reach out to all the fully enlightened beings, make offerings to them, which reminds them of their great bliss. They accept and enjoy the offerings and send their blessings in form of mantra malas of the various Yamantaka mantras and also in form of Yamantakas,

⁹ For the story see Vajrayogini transcript.

millions of them, and they dissolve to yourself, giving you the strength of all the enlightened beings.

OM YAMANTAKA HUM PHAT (...x)

Now the OM HRIH SHTRIH activity mantra mala dissolves to the mantra mala of the essence mantra OM YAMANTAKA HUM PHAT which is doing the work now.

This mantra mala is making offerings, collecting blessings, purifying and liberating everybody. Finally even this mala dissolves into the letter HUM which is the essence of your consciousness.

At the end of the recitation of each particular mantra you visualize that that mantra mala dissolves to the next one, in other words, the OM YAMARAJA mala dissolves to the OM HRIH SHTRIH mala, and when you have finished reciting this, it dissolves to the OM YAMANTAKA HUM PHAT mala. This finally dissolves to the letter HUNG. The mantra malas are not revolving, but you can see yourself inside, watching them.

Audience: What do you visualize exactly during the mantra recitation?

Rinpoche: When you are visualizing that all beings and environments get purified you imagine that the light from your heart reaches there. It does not even have to reach there, it shines there, and the speed of light is instant. Wherever the light shines, it immediately purifies environment and inhabitants. You don't have to purify the environment first and then the beings. Environment and inhabitants are purified simultaneously. It is like the sunshine in the morning which makes the darkness disappear. You visualize this process with all the three mantras. The same visualization is repeated.

A normal American educated person will probably ask why you have to use three mantras to do the work through this process. Wouldn't one be enough? The answer is that we only visualize that these things have been done, but in reality they haven't. Therefore you do it more and more. As there are three different mantras – the root mantra, the activity mantra and the essence mantra – you do it three times. I don't know why there are three. And of course, before those three you also have the OM A RA PA ZA NA DHI mantra.

Explanation of the mantras

What is really mantra? It actually means protection of mind. By the power of the mantra people become free from mental suffering. So it is relief for the mind. At the beginning it is a little difficult, but when you get used to it, it is like an aspirin for the mind. It is your wonder drug. The essence mantra in this case is the OM YAMANTAKA HUM PHAT. Essence here means wisdom and concentration combined. In the lam rim we combine analytical and concentrated meditation. The root mantra, OM YAMA RAJA, is wisdom and compassion combined. Why do we say so many mantras? Through that, we attract the attention of the particular yidam we are meditating on. The mantra makes this process work better. The root mantra in this case is addressing the deity by name. The activity mantra OM HRIH SHRIH VIKRITA NANA HUM PHAT brings you closer to the yidam. With OM YAMANTAKA HUM PHAT, the essence mantra, you are also calling the yidam.

Now I would like to explain some of the meanings of the mantras. First the **root mantra** OM YAMA RAJA, which is extremely difficult. It is calling Yamantaka 'King of yamas'. The King of yamas is the Lord of death. Our bodies get destroyed through death. Our mind gets destroyed when ignorance has the upper hand. So we die and take rebirth and go on like that for better or worse. The King of yamas has the ability to control all those who have control over our body and mind. You are calling him the master of destroyers. Then you address him,

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I and others, who suffer from destruction of body and especially of mind, ask you to help and protect us and give us fearless strength, blessings, completion and siddhis.

This is the essence of the mantra you are saying. Our big fear is losing our body and our mind. Every fear means fear of losing something, not getting what we want, not getting enough. In jail for example you are afraid of getting bashed and of not being able to move freely.

The **activity mantra**, OM HRIH SHRIH VIKRITA NANA HUM PHAT talks about the ‘Wrathful one, who has terrifying fangs’. This is more terrifying than Drakula, it has got to be, otherwise we would be in trouble. Yamantaka’s name in Tibetan is also *Dorje Jigje*. *Dorje* stands for method, including compassion, love and everything that is not directly emptiness-related. All these methods are then enjoyed by mind which is in the nature of joyfulness. You are not forcing yourself to apply these methods but you have joy, and that is the meaning of *Dorje*. It is emptiness-oriented method. The true Yamantaka is the combination of wisdom and compassion which is perceived and projected through bliss. That is the absolute Yamantaka. That very compassion-natured wisdom is getting mad at the people’s ego and therefore is taking the form of the powerful destroyer of ego. This form is the relative Yamantaka. So when we are saying the action mantra, we are saying,

I know you, you are the compassion-essence of wisdom, who has taken a wrathful form in order to destroy ignorance. Please destroy the first two noble truths, the truth of suffering and the truth of the cause of suffering.

Now the **essence mantra**, OM YAMANTAKA HUM PHAT. The meaning of this is ‘The one who drives away the lord of Yama’. Ignorance has a lot of manifestations, outer, inner and secret ones. So we are saying,

Yamantaka, you who have taken a wrathful form in order to destroy ignorance, please destroy the outer, inner and secret manifestations of ignorance completely and once and for all, right now.

Then, just before you finish a session of mantras, you generate a lot of white light, which fills up your whole body and purifies all negativities in general and in particular all mantras which were incorrectly said or insufficiently said, etc, . You want to purify any mistakes you may have made during the recitation of these mantras. After all, these are the root mantra, the activity mantra and the essence mantra of the great deity Yamantaka. If you do something wrong here it is bound to have grave consequences. So you purify all of these with the hundred-syllable mantra of Vajrasattva:

OM YAMANTAKA SAMAYA / MANU PALAYA / YAMANTAKA TENO PA / TISHTA DRIDO ME
BHAVA / SUTO KAYO ME BHAVA / SUPO KAYO ME BHAVA / ANURAKTO ME BHAVA /
SARVA SIDDHI ME PRAYACCHA / SARVA KARMA SUCHA ME / SITTAM SHRIYAM KURU
HUM / HA HA HA HA HO / BHAGAWAN / YAMANTAKA / MA ME MUNCHA YAMANTAKA /
BHAWA MAHA SAMAYA / SATTVA AH HUM PHAT.

You visualize that purification deities appear, initiate you and any impurity is eliminated.

In general, when you do any tantric meditation, it is important to develop **pride**. That pride cuts through the perception of oneself as hopeless and helpless. The other factor is **clarity**. Pride cuts the ordinary conception and clarity works against ordinary perception. These are necessary to get to enlightenment. The ordinary perception and ordinary conception are anger, hatred, attachment, ignorance, jealousy, etc, combined [and is what we are up against] in vajrayana. When you are meditating yourself in the form of a yidam with many heads and arms, you are projecting that you are that person and you are trying to perceive that. By doing that, you cut down your usual perception [and conception]. That is the way to transform ourselves from our terrible state into the state of a pure being. When you are doing that, your ego naturally will get hurt. It will hurt badly. You have to make sure that you do not identify yourself with the ego. We are so used to identifying ourselves with the

ego. So when the ego gets hurt, we think we are getting hurt and start crying. But that is not right. You are not getting hurt at all, just the ego is. And that is what you want. When the ego loses control, the beginning of freedom is there.

Thanksgiving offering

Again you make outer and inner offerings and say the same praise as before.

**OM YAMANTAKA / ARGHAM / PADYAM / GANDHE/ PUSHPE / DHUPE / ALOKE / NAIVIDYA
/ SHABDA / PRATICCHA HUM SOHA**

OM YAMANTAKA HUM PHAT / OM AH HUM.

Praise

**Supreme Form, Extremely Great Fury,
Intrepid One, Enjoyer of Supreme Objects,
Who acts in order to tame the hard to tame,
To the Vajra-terrifier I bow down.**

3. Conclusion

Blessing the tormas offering

OM HRIH SHTRIH VIKRITA NANA HUM PHAT.

OM SVABHAVA SHUDDAH SARVA DHARMAH SVABHAVA SHUDDO HAM – All is empty.

**From the sphere of emptiness appears YAM, from which arises air; from RAM fire;
from the three letters of AH a tripod of three human heads, and above these from AH
a white skull-cup, containing the five meats and the five nectars. Above these are OM
AH HUM.**

**From the HUM at my heart light-rays radiate and strike the air; air moves, fire flares;
all the substances in the skull-cup melt and boil.**

**Light rays radiate successively from the three letters; they draw forth and absorb the
three vajras. (The letters) descend into the skull-cup and all melt.**

**HUM purifies all faults of color, smell and potentiality. AH transforms it into nectar,
OM multiplies and increases it. OM AH HUM OM AH HUM OM AH HUM.**

With this visualization practice you purify the food offering you are going to make to the Yamantaka mandala. Whatever you offer has to be pure. For that purpose you use exactly the same technique and the same visualization as for the inner offering. Actually it is exactly the same for anything you bless. A lot of people call it 'inner offering', but that is not the case. All blessing rituals use this process, even the fire puja.

Earlier we have used this visualization to bless the inner offering, now we use it to bless the food you are going to offer to buddha Yamantaka. As your material you use the yearly supply of biscuits which you keep for that purpose in your cupboard somewhere. From the angle of the material you are using these biscuits, but in your visualization you are cooking a huge amount of real good food. Not Kentucky fried chicken but real good food.

You can also use this practice when you want to bless your food – whatever you eat every day.

The complete supporting and supported mandala of the Solitary Hero Glorious Vajra-terrifier appears before me in a single instant.

After the blessing what do you do? Although you are in the form of Yamantaka, there is an entity called Yamantaka, to whom you can make collect calls from the desire realms¹⁰. Yamantaka kindly accepts the calls. So once again, we invite Yamantaka as our dinner guest.

The actual offering is made to the complete mandala of buddha Yamantaka. You instantaneously generate a complete duplicate mandala of Yamantaka just like you have generated a mandala for yourself before. You generate this second mandala because you are inviting the external Vajra terrifier to give him a feast.

Inviting the guests

Light-rays from the HUM at my heart shine forth, inviting the mandala of the wisdom-beings of the Glorious Vajra-terrifier together with its direction-protectors. DZAH HUM BAM HOH, the wisdom beings merge with the commitment beings.

The invitation card we send is actually light. It is delivered instantly. And when you send this out, Yamantaka also arrives instantly. There is a story that can illustrate this. It happened in Buddha's time. There was a lady who had married a king in a far away land. She was a devoted follower of Buddha and in that land she missed Buddha and one day she went onto the palace roof and prayed to Buddha. Buddha received this prayer immediately and asked who of his entourage would accompany him to visit this lady. He said to his monks, 'Those of you, who can fly, can come with me.' They used to indicate their decision by picking up a certain piece of wood. So many of them picked up the wood and they all flew to the lady's palace and by the time she finished the prayer, they had all arrived there. Of course, only those, who had magical powers and could fly, went there. The verse that tells this story is considered important and has therefore been carried throughout the lineage.

So this lady invited Buddha and he came immediately. Likewise, when we invite Yamantaka, he is instantly here, because there is no barrier. The guests come with the complete mandala. First there is you and your whole mandala and then you invite the guests with their complete mandala. It is like a flying saucer comes and lands in your courtyard. So you have got two mandalas, the original and the guest-mandala of the wisdoms-beings, facing each other.

Then it goes DZA HUM BAM HOH. That means the commitments beings and the wisdoms beings become inseparable. They melt and become one. Their mustaches become the same mustache, the eyebrows become the same eyebrows, it is like an unfocused picture becoming focused. They merge, they become oneness.

The tongue of each guest becomes a HUM, which transforms into a single-point vajra having a hollow reed of light by which the essence of the ritual cake is extracted and enjoyed.

Yamantaka partakes of the offering by generating a light-natured white straw which he sticks into the soup that you have generated. What he takes from there is the essence, not so much the quantity but the quality. That straw comes out and will suck up the essence of whatever you are offering.

Torma offering

**OM HRIH STRIH VIKRITA NANA HUM PHAT
VAJRA BAIRAVAYA ATHIPADI IDAM BALIMTA KA KA KAH KAH.**

¹⁰ This is alluding to a performance by Jewel Heart members in between sessions winterretreat 1997/98.

Again you make mudras: the mudra which symbolizes generating offering deities¹¹, and the lotus mudra [symbolizing] the dancing offering deities. Then you make the torma offering. The torma is offered with the Yamantaka mantra OM HRIH SHTRIH VIKRITA NANA HUM PHAT VAJRA BHAIRAVA ATIPADI IDAM BALIMTA KHA KHA KAH KAH . This is the Gyüto system. In the Gyume system they add HUM PHAT SOHA at the end. When you snip your fingers at the end of the mantra, it means that the offering deities dissolve back to you¹².

External offerings

After that, you have the outer offering again, followed by the inner offering OM AH HUM. This works the same way as for the external offerings we had before.

OM YAMANTAKA ARGHAM / PADYAM / GANDHE / PUSHPE / DHUPE / ALOKE / NAIVIDYA
/ SHABDA / PRATICCHA HUM SOHA.

Inner offering

OM YAMANTAKA HUM PHAT OM AH HUM

Praise of Manjushri

O Manjushri, whose being is non-dual, exclusive and all-pervading,

This praise is very important! In Tibetan it starts with *nyi me*, which means non-dual. Then the sadhana describes him as exclusive and all-pervading. *Nyi me* can be explained from the *dharmakaya* point of view and also from the *rupakaya* point of view. The *dharmakaya* is the mental aspect and the *rupakaya* is the physical aspect, so the mental body and the form body. So we are talking about the oneness of the ultimate mental and physical qualities. Whatever your physical aspects are [at that level], they're also your mental aspects and vice versa. That is why there is no need for an invitation. As soon as they think of coming, they are here. It is the exclusive quality of the enlightened beings that their mind and body are not separate, but function on the same frequency. The mind knows all and their body is everywhere. I very often use that logic to explain why God is everywhere.

Actually, the ultimate mind is the clear light and the ultimate body is the illusion body. Combined together it is the ultimate non-duality, no separation.

By acting equally with everything, you are the father of all the Conquerors,

The Tibetan here says *kula nyom dzä*, which means equal to all. Before the generation of the bodhimind we have to develop equanimity. This particular equanimity causes you to appreciate all beings without any differentiation, whether it be your friends or enemies, whether you love or hate them. There is the equanimity of the seven stages of development of the bodhimind and the equanimity of the exchange stages of development of the bodhimind. These are slightly different. The combination of these two together is indicated in the expression *kun la nyom dzä* - equal to all. This mind is the basis for creating enlightened beings. There are no enlightened beings without such a mind. Therefore such a mind is like a father - the father of all enlightened beings.

As the dharmadhatu you are the mother of all the Conquerors,

The dharmadhatu is the true wisdom. This includes the one who enjoys the wisdom. The perceiver of the wisdom is in the nature of joy. Just like you need the father – in this case the equanimity, love and compassion, which is the cause of enlightenment – you also need the mother to give birth. The mother is the emptiness and wisdom which is in the nature of joy.

¹¹ The mudra of generating or sending out deities from your heart is a fingersnap outwards at your heart level. The lotus mudra is a very gracious movement of both hands with detailed symbolism.

¹² The mudra of collecting the offering deities back is a fingersnap inwards at your heart level.

As a wisdom-being you are the son of all Conquerors.

Then you have the children. The responsibility of the child is to carry on the family lineage and to become the head of the family. So when you become fully enlightened, you are still motivated by compassion. You are driven by compassion even more than the bodhisattvas. That is why it says, ‘As a wisdom being, you are the son of all Conquerors’.

I prostrate myself to Manjushri, who is complete in glory.

All of this is Manjushri, father, mother, child.

**Though dharmakaya neither loves nor hates,
by the enactment of your compassion the presence of a King of Fury
is revealed, in order to control all evils in the triple world;**

In the Tibetan it says that there is no talk of hate, because the question of hate does not rise at that level. You also do not have to doubt love, because the enlightened level is in the nature of love. There is no coming and going. However, in order to conquer all the different evils of existence by the great method of compassion manifesting in wrathful form, Manjushri appears as *Jigje*, the opponent of Yama, in other words, Yamantaka.

**I prostrate myself to Bhairava Yamantaka,
the Terrifying Opponent of the Lord of Death.**

Yamantaka is the destroyer of the destroyer called Death (Tib.: *Shin je*), who destroys me in terms of my body and of my mind. Yamantaka therefore protects from physical as well as mental obstacles. Mental obstacles stem from ignorance.

This verse is important and I am happy to share that today. This is one way of explaining it. There are other ways of explaining it. Here with regard to rupakaya and dharmakaya, I have given you the point of *dharmakaya*. With regard to relative and absolute, I have given you the point of the absolute. Out of direct and indirect explanations, I have given you the direct explanation. If you hear the relative, indirect or *rupakaya* explanation, don’t be too quick to say that this is wrong.

Offerings to the directional protectors

Next you make offerings to the directional protectors. You did invite the complete supporting and supported mandala¹³ which means there are a lot of retinuees. There are all the kings and queens and minister and rulers and presidents and executive administrators of all the multi-national devil systems in all existence. To allow them to eat something, Yamantaka has to give them permission. You are seeking permission to give them flesh and blood, from which they are normally restrained by Yamantaka. They are usually all vegetarians. Yamantaka gives the permission through the recitation of the root mantra.

There are two ways to visualize that. One way is that Yamantaka gives permission by dipping his tusk into the offering and throwing it everywhere, thereby indicating that now everybody can partake of it. Another way is to visualize the letters of the root mantra sitting on the edge of the skull cup and, while you recite the mantra, they fall into the skull cup and thereby permission is given. Both systems are correct. One is the *Se gyü* system, the other it the *Ensa nying gyü* system. You can also rotate these.

**OM YAMARAJA SADOMEYA YAMEDORU NAYODAYA
YADAYONI RAYAKSHEYA YAKSHEYACCHA NIRAMAYA
HUM HUM PHAT PHAT SOHA**

After giving that permission, even the untamed, wild ghosts and spirits will remain restrained. So the action mantra OM HRIH SHTRIH VIKRITA NANA HUM PHAT and the essence (or name-) mantra of

¹³ Supporting mandala means the environment and supported mandala means the inhabitants of the mandala.

Yamantaka OM YAMANTAKA HUM PHAT are interlinked with the names of the guests to make sure that they behave themselves and do not create problems. and the essence mantra. That is why that mantra goes:

**OM BU CARANAM YA PATALA CARAYA MAN KECHARAYA TA PURBA NIGANAM KA
DAKSHINA DIGAYA HUM PAKSHIMANAM PHAT UTTARA TIGAYA OM I HRIH YA
SHTRIH VA VI KSHI KRI KO TA E NA A NA DE HUM BHAYOH PHAT SARVA BHUTE
BHYAH**

The other letters are the names of the outer and inner guests. These guests include all possible ghosts and spirits, worldly ghosts, those in the woods, in the water, fire, air, etc, and the names in the mantras are those of their leaders. Combined with Yamantaka's mantras they maintain discipline and we give them offerings which include flesh and blood and alcohol, which could drive them wild. Therefore it is necessary to maintain control. So, these are the torma-offerings to the fifteen worldly leaders plus the seven inner guests.

**OM DASHA DIKA LOKAPALA SAPARIVARA / ARGHAM / PADYAM / GANDHE/ PUSHPE /
DHUPE / ALOKE / NAIVIDYA / SHABDA / PRATICCHA HUM SOHA.**

OM DASHA DIKA LOKA PALA SAPARIVARA / OM AH HUM.

This is the offering to the world protectors, in Sanskrit DASHA DIK. The translation of *Dashadik lokapala sapariwara* is 'those who are the spirit leaders in all existence'. You make outer and inner offerings to them.

Request

Then the verse addressing those protectors:

**O Karma-Yama, ogresses, dakinis and zombies,
All of whom are sworn as outer and inner protectors,
Who in the presence of the subjector and dharma-lord Manjushri
Pledged to tame all demons and to protect the doctrine,
O, with a wishful mind I bow and turn to you.
O directional protectors with your entourages
Help me to complete my virtuous actions and clear all interferences.**

Audience: Where are all those wisdom beings and what do they really look like?

Rinpoche: You don't really have explanations on that, really true. Here [in the short sadhana] we have the Solitary Hero. All the fifteen Directional Protectors and the seven Inner Guests are not inside the mandala house, but outside of it, in the courtyard. The Solitary Hero has no retinue, the Guests become his retinue. When you visualize making offerings to them, you don't have to think that you have to go out there; they don't have to be contacted physically. The whole mandala is just there and you generate offering goddesses and they make the offering. You have to think it is like the ultimate modern development. You just push a button and it all pops up.

Dissolving practice

**The guests of the ritual cake, together with their entourages return to their own
abodes. The cemeteries are absorbed into the inconceivable mansion.
The inconceivable mansion is absorbed into me. I am absorbed into the wisdom
being. This is absorbed into the HUM, the absorption being; this is absorbed into clear
light, emptiness.**

After the Karmayama verses you say 'good-bye' to the guests, VAJRA MU, and then you dissolve the whole mandala into yourself as the sadhana describes. You can sometimes leave the protection rims

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and only dissolve the cemeteries to the mansion. Normally you dissolve the cemeteries to the outer protection wheel, which dissolves to the inner protection wheel, which dissolves to the mansion, which dissolves to yourself as Yamantaka. You dissolve into your heart level into Manjushri, who dissolves into the letter HUNG. This dissolves into its head, which is the HA, this into the crescent moon, this into the drop, this into the squiggle, which disappears and becomes empty. If you look at that, the dissolution of the letter HUNG takes place in eight steps, which corresponds to the eight death signs which I mentioned earlier¹⁴.

Rising as the activity deity

**In one instant I arise from the sphere of emptiness as the Vajra-terrifier with one face
and two hands and with the three seeds marking the radiant places.**

Then, from emptiness you rise again, in the activity form of Yamantaka. This only has one face and two arms, ready to work. The sleeves are rolled up. He is marked by the letters OM AH HUM at the three places to remind you of the enlightened body, speech and mind.

Dedication prayer

**By the virtue which has arisen from the effort
Made with pure thoughts in this practice,
May the limitless beings in life after life
Not become separated from but be cared for by
The peaceful and wrathful aspects of Manjughosa.**

**May I, having actualized the state of the seven kisses
Which has the nature of the five bodies eternal as space,
Easily lead all beings to that very state in a single moment.**

**May there be the good fortune of the root and lineage gurus
May there be the good fortune of the yidams and the hosts of deities;
May there be the good fortune of the nymphs and dakinis;
May there be the good fortune of the protectors and guardians of the Dharma.**

Thus we have completed the explanation of the shortest form of the Yamantaka sadhana. Now, when you say your sadhana, you can, while saying the words, put some thoughts in.

Carrying the sadhana into daily practice

By taking the Yamantaka initiation, doing the retreat, saying mantras, etc, we are trying to become better human beings, better persons, to come closer to enlightenment, actually trying to become enlightened within this life time. When we are committed to such a goal we should be free of all these little irritations and little problems, and we also should not be superstitious. This will be the first step to enlightenment. Enlightenment is beyond all these. So don't carry around your temper tantrums – leave them at the totem pole.

Just being connected with this type of practice is extremely fortunate and wonderful. By itself it will take care of it tremendously. Dagyab Rinpoche mentioned it also the other day, saying that it is like the rainfall. It just falls from the sky and dissolves into the ground. This means that it manifests from the *dharmakaya* and will dissolve back into it. That is what he really meant. That might not be our level, but still, this practice is very effective for the individual. If you can put in efforts, then of course it is wonderful. But even if you can't put too much in, just by the touch itself it is a great deal. So just relax

¹⁴ See page 32.

and don't push too hard. That is very important. But also don't completely forget about it. You should go in a very relaxed manner. When it is raining very hard and a lot of water comes down the river, it is not necessarily very good, it is a lot of trouble. On the other hand, if the river dries out completely, that is another problem. When it is running smoothly, not too much and not too little, then it is very suitable and gives help to all the sentient beings around. Our practice should be like that. It should not go wild, as if a dam has suddenly burst and after a while there is nothing left. This is true for every level of practice. In other words, there should not be too much of an emotional swing. Don't let the emotions sway you.

You try to create a habitual pattern. If you push too hard, then instead of building up a habitual pattern, your mind will reject it. If you do it too slowly, you will lose it completely. You have to make your own judgment. Try to make it not too severe, but also not let it completely dry up. It depends on the individual. We cannot say that one particular level is the exact middle. Gradually, the individual will come to the point where virtually everything they do will be positive karmic work and that's why in these sadhanas, even after you have dissolved the whole mandala, you are then left with a visualization of yourself again as the yidam and the whole environment as pure. This is trying to tell you that you have to build up a pattern in which you function in your daily life, within your daily chores. But again, that does not mean that while driving your car you should suddenly think, 'Oh, I am supposed to be Yamantaka.' The sadhana practice will leave you with an imprint and that is there within the mind and because of that, whatever you do, will become positive.

In the same way, when you do the yoga of sleeping¹⁵, the whole period of sleep will become a positive activity. That is how you transform your whole twenty-four hour day into spiritual vajrayana practice, rather than trying to think, 'I am Yamantaka, you can't tell me what to do.' So when you look carefully, the sadhana itself tells you how you can use all twenty-four hours of your day to do something positive, no matter what you may be doing. Whatever your job may be, making a hole into a piece of metal or building a house, fighting a court case, treating a patient or even doing your laundry – everything has to become dharma practice. Going to buy groceries can be dharma practice, standing in line in front of a teller machine has to be dharma practice. That does not mean that you should carry a big mala around everywhere and mumble mantras all the time. For you it may look like absolutely normal daily life. You may be working in the office, you may be preparing a court case against your opponents, trying to destroy them. That also should be dharma practice. I am going to that extreme. It should really be dharma practice.

Basically, lawyers are supposed to bring out the truth. So if you bring out the truth you destroy what is not true, which is ignorance. In that manner, with that mind, with that motivation, you prepare your case and make it as sharp as possible, as harsh as possible. Do not let idiot compassion intervene. Even if you are a business man, that is how you should do it. Feeding children, taking care of them, giving them an education, showing them a good way which is acceptable to that mind, is positive by nature and makes it a vajrayana practice. It is even easier to do it than by other means. If you count dharma practice only as saying mantras and doing formal meditation it would mean that we would never be able to do it. If you have sixty years of life, even if you meditate three hours every day, the total would come to less than five years. That is why vajrayana is so great. Every aspect of life becomes dharma practice. Earning your living has to become dharma practice. Vajrayana is supposed to be like that. If you follow the theravada tradition, then practice means formal meditation.

The point here is that everything you have to do in your life has to become dharma practice – with the exception of work that by virtue of itself is negative. For example if you work for Mc Donald Douglas which makes the B1 bombers. But even then, this company produces non-military things as well. So, unless you are involved in making bombs.... Indirect contribution to the military should not worry you

¹⁵ See Gelek Rinpoche, *Solitary Yamantaka teachings on the generation stage*, chapter x.

too much. It is nice that people think about it. In the sixties and seventies and even now, some people have an issue with paying taxes. For some it is just an excuse, because they want to avoid paying taxes, saying that they don't want to be involved in making bombs. It is good to be concerned, but if you don't pay your taxes, the tax department will catch you. So it is better to pay them. Also you have to think that the taxes support a tremendous amount of social programs too.

Questions and answers

Audience: When I tried to do this practice, I thought it was designed to destroy the ego, but when I tried to locate my ego, I could not find it, because I was meditating on myself as the yidam - so I was the yidam.

Rinpoche: I think you did great. Since you were the yidam, you could not find your ego. But, if you are not meditating on the yidam, can you find the ego then? That is the point.

Audience: I tried to alternate focussing on myself as the deity and functioning as the deity, and focussing on myself as myself and then doing purification, etc. and accepting myself as who I am and getting in touch with myself.

Rinpoche: Actually, you are supposed to remain as the deity at all times, but since we are not enlightened, we cannot do that. Therefore we do it alternately. That is our limitation. So it may help at certain times, to project your own ego. In order to develop compassion for yourself, you can still do that while being Yamantaka, for example. As Yamantaka you can have compassion for all living beings. Yamantaka's compassion is the temper tantrum type of compassion, not the sweet, positive version.

Audience: Tough love.

Rinpoche: When you get to a certain stage, you will be able to do a lot things simultaneously. Enlightened beings can simultaneously be in the North, West, South and East, as well as above and below, etc. They don't have any limitations. The law of gravity does not apply to enlightened beings, but it does to us. Don't think it works, just because you are visualizing it. These things have to be trained in, and if you become perfect, it does work, but not before that. Some people in the 60s, who heard about these things and thought it would immediately work, go into a lot of trouble. Also with emptiness, I don't know if it is true, but the Taktser Rinpoche, the Dalai Lama's brother, once told me that he met some people who tried to buy airplane tickets with pebbles, saying, that, because in emptiness everything is the same, it did not matter, what they put on the counter, pebbles, green dollar bills or gold.

Audience: How does Yamantaka transform anger into the path?

Rinpoche: Yamantaka does not transform anger, but the Yamantaka tantra does. If you look at the five buddhas, what are they? Nothing but the pure parts of our five skandhas. The five wisdoms are the five consciousnesses we have. All of these transform into the five Dhyani buddhas. The Yamantaka method is more specialized to transform hatred into wisdom; Heruka and Vajrayogini are more specialized in transforming passion into pure wisdom.

The question is: How does that happen? I don't think there is just one answer to that. From the beginning of the practice onwards, from the daily sadhana recitations, all the concentrated and analytical meditations are working within you. I don't think there is one single button which you can switch on and it all happens. That would be a miracle or magic. It is the build-up of the whole practice which works. First you are getting familiar with the practice, and later when you get used to it, you begin to pick up certain visualizations about the environment and the inhabitants of the mandala. Then you start coordinating these together. After that you build the pride of the deity and work more on the clarity. Then you put all that through the process of 'OM SVABHAVA SHUDDHAH SARVA DHARMA SVABHAVA SHUDDHO HAM - *Everything pure, naturally pure, that's what I am*'. That is the process. You don't have to die in order to go through that process. The process is like when you put a white cloth in yellow color and it comes out yellow. Any sadhana text you open, will have the OM

SVABHAVA at the beginning, right after the guru devotion. Even when you purify the ordinary material for the inner offering, in this case it is whisky, you use this process. As long as we have the ordinary perception and conception, you can do nothing. That is our problem. Why? Because we are under the control of ignorance.

One of the great teachers once asked another teacher why this OM SVABHAVA was always said in the sadhanas. The other teacher said, 'In order to be pure'. The first teacher then replied, 'That is true, but more importantly, my feeling is that, if we do not dissolve ourselves into the nature of emptiness, our ego is too powerful [to let us do anything else]'. That is why we have to go through this process all the time, whether we bless inner offerings or tormas, generate ourselves in the form of a deity, make tsok offerings, or even bless our ordinary daily food. It is all because our ego/ignorance is so powerful and controls all our five skandhas and five wisdoms. The emptiness cannot necessarily be seen with the naked eye. You have to go slowly, think a little bit about it, but not too much and build up merit. Unless you are lucky, you will never be able to see emptiness. Also the essence of the compassion must be there. *Tong nye nying po nyingpo che* – the essence of the emptiness must be compassion, otherwise that emptiness is only good for nirvana. Love and compassion and the altruistic mind are necessary to take the practice to its fullest potential.

Audience: How do I visualize and say mantras at the same time?

Rinpoche: You can. From the tip of your mouth you pronounce the mantra and at the same time, independently, you do the visualizations.

Audience: When I say the Yamaraja mantra, it goes in a clockwise circle. Should that join up at the end to form a circle?

Rinpoche: Do it and see what happens. If it does not exactly join up, it does not matter, you can have a little tail sticking out.

Audience: When I meditate on myself as Yamantaka, in which direction am I facing?

Rinpoche: South.

Audience: In the initiation, what did it mean, when the flower fell into the northern quarter of the mandala?

Rinpoche: A mandala is divided into the four directions. The flower had to fall somewhere and that happened to be the north. Some years ago, in an initiation, the flower fell into the south, which is linked to prosperity. At that time we were in a semi-recession and I was joking that now we were probably moving out of the recession. That was during the Bush presidency.

Audience: So what does north mean?

Rinpoche: North stands for activity, so there will be a lot of work.

Audience: While I recite the mantras of Yamantaka, what is my relationship with the guru at that point?

Rinpoche: Since you are doing the whole practice in the framework of guru yoga anyway, you don't have to think all the time where the guru is, but if you want to include him explicitly, in the Yamantaka practice the guru sits in between the horns of the main face of Yamantaka, in front of the red face. Since Yamantaka is enlightened, one does not block the other, you can see both of them clearly, better than if they were transparent.

Audience: What is self-initiation and who is qualified to carry it out?

Rinpoche: Very relevant question. Self-initiation means that you don't take the initiation from another person, but do it yourself. Everybody who completes this retreat¹⁶, will be authorized to do this. The benefit is that it can purify all your negativities, particularly broken commitments. If people die after taking self-initiations, it is almost guaranteed that there will be no difficulties like going to lower realms. However, when you want to do Yamantaka self-initiation, for example, you must have a mandala; not necessarily a mandala house like the one we have here, but you must have something. The minimum you should have, is the printed picture of the mandala. Also you have to know what you are doing. When you do a Yamantaka retreat, though, you are not qualified to do self-initiation of Vajrayogini. You must do a separate retreat for that. And there is no such thing as a self-initiation of Tara.

Audience: It strikes me as odd that a figure like Yamantaka, who is supposed to be so wrathful that all other wrathful deities drop their hand implements at the sight of him, needs to be secured by two different protection wheels. I understand that perhaps the Emperor would need the confined space of a palace for safety reasons, but the warrior should be out there.

Rinpoche: Very good point. I don't have any comment for that.

Audience: Is there a danger that all the sharpness of Yamantaka could be used as a defense of the ego rather than as a weapon against the ego?

Rinpoche: No. That's why the compassion and the understanding of emptiness as the basis of all the vajrayana functioning is extremely important. For example, at least the way we perceive it, as long as all those nuclear weapons are in the hands of the United States government, controlled by the President, who is elected by the people of the United States, they are safe. But if they are in the hands of some loose cannon in the Middle East or in Bosnia or somewhere, then we consider it unsafe.

Audience: I find it difficult to visualize the dissolution of the mandala and at the same time simulate the death process with the various signs. Does that become easier with practice? Do the signs really appear after some time?

Rinpoche: At death time you really experience those signs. It is almost some kind of physiological and psychological thing happening. So all the teaching is doing is telling you that those are the stages you are going to go through. Unfortunately it is not scientifically proven that this is really the case, because nobody has come back and told the scientists what they experienced and so the scientists don't accept this. Dr. Sheldon from Harvard University accepts the explanation as the most likely but says that as a scientist he would need more proof.

At the end of the death process, experienced meditators try to use the point of death itself as one of the most important focal points, because at that time the mind itself becomes so subtle, that it is unable to swing. It will remain focused on one thing, whether it be good or bad or neutral. Mind itself at this stage becomes neutral, neither virtuous nor non-virtuous. So whatever focus one develops just prior to that is the most single-pointed and most important focus one can ever have. The whole point of the meditation on the death process is to lead the practitioner to that final focal point and during the practice to introduce this point and learn to recognize it as a great opportunity that should not be missed. The whole exercise is nothing but training the mind in those focal points. You always have to remind yourself and acknowledge each of the stages and see them in the context of the last few steps where you really have to focus, so that when the actual opportunity comes you don't miss it. Therefore it has become part of the sadhana which you do every day, so that it becomes a habitual pattern for you. Then when it really happens you notice and recognize it.

For us, the chances that we will develop to that level in our life-time are quite low, but on the other hand, it did already happen. Kyabje Song Rinpoche told me that he once visited the West and one of Geshe Kelsang Gyatso's students did this practice and started to see all these signs, but in the

¹⁶ Referring to the eight-days Yamantaka retreat Camp Copneconic, Michigan, USA, winter 1997-1998.

wrong order. Song Rinpoche said that probably he had the order wrong during the practice and subsequently the signs appeared in the wrong order. It does not matter that much though, because the main point is the ultimate level, not so much the procedure, like which phase follows which. What really makes the difference is awareness. That does not mean, however, that you should not follow the order at all! But don't worry too much.

Actually, all the practices are like that. Don't over worry and don't be too relaxed either. It is not good to be too overcautious and tight. Do your practice in a very relaxed manner. That is applicable to almost all the practices. When you have great difficulties, when you sometimes miss some of your commitments, when you do a few less mantras, then don't over worry, just do it the next day. But don't think that now that you have missed something, you might as well stop altogether. Definitely try not to miss the *six session yoga*, because it contains the very important commitments to the five buddhas.



Vajra Yogini

III

THE SHORT SADHANA OF VAJRAYOGINI

This is not going to be a complete teaching – just explaining the daily practice. The same goes for what we have done with the *Six-session yoga* and the *Short Yamantaka sadhana*. For a teaching to be complete, tormas would have to be prepared, rituals said, offerings made. So regard this as an unofficial teaching. Normally, a Vajrayogini teaching has the commitment of saying the sadhana, but since we don't do that here, there will be no further commitment.

Earlier we were talking about using our whole day for vajrayana practice and even the night. That is where the Vajrayogini practice starts. It is generally following the eleven yogas and the first yoga is the yoga of sleeping. I will talk here on the basis of the eleven yogas.

Changing your day and night into a very positive dharma practice, without putting much extra efforts in, what else could you want? What better could you even do? If you would sit up all night saying mantras, you would be thinking a zillion different negative thoughts. You would get angry and frustrated and so many different things would cross your mind, anything from going to the discotheque to going to bed. So here you change the whole period of sleep into vajrayana practice. Although we are not yet in the position to change sleep itself into the clear light, nor we are in the position to change the dreams into the enjoyment body [*sambogakaya*] or the waking period into the emanation body [*nirmanakaya*], still there is a method of changing the whole sleeping period into dharma practice, even if you have nightmares in between. That is very positive.

I am not going much into detail on the reasons why sleeping yoga comes first. Just briefly, Vajrayogini is a mother tantra and in there the night is considered more important than the day. That does not mean that you don't go to bed before midnight and then don't get up in the morning!

I have to mention some general things about Vajrayogini. She is the inner consort of Heruka Chakrasamvara; inner consort in the sense that she is a manifestation of Chakrasamvara's inner clear light, the nature of emptiness, the nature of reality. The emptiness inseparable from Chakrasamvara's mind manifests in the physical form of Vajrayogini, the Solitary Heroine. You can find different appearances of her. There is the Indrapa style, the Maitripa style, the Naropa style and there is Dorje Phagmo or the pig-headed Vajravarahi.

I would like to share with you that I always consider myself fortunate that not only my father was considered to be a living Heruka, but also my mother is considered to be Dorje Phagmo. She has repeatedly proven that during her death and thereafter. This has also been confirmed by Takpu Dorjechang.

So there are a lot of different manifestations of Vajrayogini. The Sarwa Buddha Dakini is the Naropa Dakini, [literally] 'the dakini of all buddhas', also called 'sky goer'.

Audience: You said that Vajrayogini represents Guru Chakrasamvara's mind inseparable from bliss. So what does Guru Chakrasamvara represent?

Rinpoche: He represents all enlightened beings.

Naropa has given this practice particularly to the Pamtingpa brothers. I am not going into detail here, if you want to know more, there is our own commentary available¹⁷, and also the *Guide to Dakini Land* by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso. In any case, Vajrayogini herself has given the teaching to Naropa who passed them on to the Pamtingpas and from there it went into the Sakya tradition in Tibet. The Sakyapas consider this as one of their golden dharmas. They had thirteen particular teachings for which they made certain restrictions. No lama was allowed to give these initiations and teachings outside the boundaries of Sakya monastery. Also, these teachings were not given to anyone unless they made an offering of thirteen gold coins. Therefore they were also known as the thirteen golden dharmas. This was not done in order to make a lot of money, but in order to restrict these teachings.

This went on for quite a long time, until the period of Tsarching. There are three sub-sects or schools in Sakya like Sakya, Ngor and Tsarpa. In the Tsarpa tradition there was one master called Tsarching Chogye Gyalpo. Rilbur Rinpoche said that within the Sakya tradition Tsarching is considered a little wild and crazy, slightly unstable. In the other traditions, however, he is considered great, kind and compassionate, because it was he who broke those Sakya rules of not giving the teachings outside the boundaries of the monastery, etc.

From then on the lineage came into the Gelugpa tradition, through various masters up to my late masters, Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche, Kyabje Ling Rinpoche, Kyabje Lhatsun Rinpoche and Gomo Rinpoche. There are many practices which are not spelt out in the sadhana – I refer to them as methods. A lot of these have come through the Sakya tradition. On top of that, Tsong Khapa's methods of the mother tantra have been added. That's why it is said that the Vajrayogini teachings are like a blanket that has been woven from two threads, the methods of the Sakya – the warp – and Tsong Khapa's method – the weft.

1. The preliminaries

Basically, in order to practice this teaching the **common training of the mind** is required. This is needed everywhere, it is fundamentally important. The fundamental dharma practice for the individual is the three principles of the path, the *lamrim*. Even if you don't understand the high teachings, it does not matter, the basic teachings are very important.

When Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche was alive, there was a Loseling Geshe who lived in Bomdilla in Assam. He used to write letters to Kyabje Rinpoche almost every week, asking questions about sadhanas and tantric practices. Kyabje Rinpoche was always very polite, so he answered all his questions, but somehow they were always leading to the three principles. After many such exchanges he wrote back to him clearly, 'All your questions are wonderful, but I wish you had a proper dharma practice'. He referred him to the teachings of the Kadampa lamas like Dromtonpa who answered questions like 'Should I do circumambulations?' with statements like, 'That is great, but I wish you could do a proper dharma practice'.

So dharma practice does not rely on the sadhanas, but on the foundation. The *Foundation of Perfections* is dharma practice. The *Three principles of the path* and the *Lamrim* are fundamental dharma practice. If you are shaking there, you will get totally lost. If you don't shake there, it is okay, even if you don't get round to saying a lot of mantras. That is the main point.

In addition to these basic teachings, one should have a prior **initiation** into one of the mother tantras, if possible, the Heruka mandala. On top of that, one should then receive the **blessing of Vajrayogini**. Initiations in the case of Vajrayogini are actually called 'blessings'. Therefore nobody can receive the

¹⁷ Forthcoming Vajra Yogini transcript.

Vajrayogini initiation without having already received another initiation into one of the highest yoga tantra yidams, preferably Heruka. People who think that they have received Vajrayogini initiation without having received a *maha anu yoga* tantra complete initiation, have actually not received it, even if the lama giving it has allowed them to sit in the initiation. The reason is that the Vajrayogini blessing does not carry the five buddha initiations.

One time, when I gave the Vajrayogini initiation in Thurman's house and I totally relied on Thurman to make the selection of people, I realized much later that he actually made some of the selections on the basis of the cheque book! That does not work.

So in order to practice Vajrayogini one must have received the prior initiation into the Hevajra or Heruka mandala or any other mother tantra mandala or if not, then into a father tantra like Yamantaka. In addition to that, one must have received the perfect blessing into the *sindhura* mandala. That is what the Vajrayogini mandala is known as. Sindhura is a Sanskrit word for a particular type of red mud. Lately the Indian type [of colored sand] is being used, but originally it was actual mud which was collected from one of the 24 holy places of Heruka. Officially most of these were in India. A number of contemporary teachers also have collected this mud in Kulu tara in the Kulu area of India and also from Jalandhara.

A number of you have the mandala with you and quite a few of you have done the retreat and fire puja. Occasionally you [who have completed the retreat and fire puja] should do a self initiation. That is very good to do. Otherwise you will get a lot of downfalls. Every downfall one gets which is associated with an initiation, can only be purified by taking another initiation. Whenever we do a full initiation, try to attend it. It is very beneficial, even if you have received the initiation before. It is the only opportunity for you to purify. In the case of Vajrayogini it is no question that a self-initiation will purify the downfalls connected with Vajrayogini. But I am not sure whether the Vajrayogini self-initiation purifies all other downfalls. Other [self]-initiations like the full-fledged Heruka, Yamantaka or others will definitely purify all downfalls, including the Vajrayogini-related downfalls as well.

One of the most important points is that when you are about to die and you manage to die in a pure state – that means without downfalls – there is no question that you will take a perfect rebirth. That is why In Tibet it was the usual practice to take self initiation just before death. Taking the self initiation will help the dying person to become pure, especially if the person has been practicing that tantra. It is one of the best ways to assure a person to go to a pure land, more certain than doing a *phowa* or other methods. [That is] if you keep yourself pure. And if you are not sure of becoming a fully enlightened being in this life time, you should try to remain as pure as possible. Taking initiation or self-initiation is the best way to make sure you are hundred percent pure. Normally, the Vajrasattva purification is considered the best method, but taking self-initiation and generating the bodhimind is the best way to remain pure. We have not reached that level yet. The *Bodhisattvacharyavatara* says,

Hence virtue is perpetually feeble,
the great strength of evil being extremely intense,
and except for a Fully Awakening Mind
By what other virtue will it be overcome?

This is referring to the practice on the bodhimind, here called 'fully awakening mind'. That is actually one of the best ways of purification, especially for us, the twentieth century people, who don't have time to say zillions of Vajrasattva recitations – which should also be accompanied by the proper thoughts. If you don't think, only say mantras by mouth, it does not mean anything, just [only] the positive karma of actually saying the mantras [will be obtained].

Such a person who remains pure [can practice]: 1) during the session; 2) in between sessions. This division has been created to demonstrate that the practice continues for the 24 hours of each day. It focuses on what you do in the sessions and then tells you what you can do in between.

Further it is recommended to have a **Vajrayogini image**, photo, statue, thangka or whatever, something that has a Vajrayogini picture. If it is a statue, it should be properly filled. If it is a thangka, photo, etc., it would be nice to write the Vajrayogini mantra on the back of it. It could be in any language, but preferably write it in English letters, because that is the language you speak [and you can visualize]. You may think that Tibetan is more authentic, but English is also authentic, capable of making sounds and communicating with people. As a matter of fact, you cannot communicate in the Tibetan language, so English is better. It can also be Chinese or whatever, but at least the syllable OM AH HUM should be there. The photo or image should also be consecrated. Then you can put it on your altar.

[Then you need **offering materials**, like biscuits for the tormas-offering etc.]. I began to use musli in one of those sealed bottles and keep it there. Even all the other offerings, like *pushpe*, *dhupe*, etc. I kept in jam jars. In that manner you can keep the offerings for a year and don't have to change them. I am teaching you how to be lazy! If the bottle is sealed, the material inside does not go bad. Also the water level does not go down. You just have to be careful with the saffron and make sure that it does not go moldy. To avoid this, soak some saffron in water for a while and add that water to the offering, rather than the saffron itself. In this way it does not get moldy.

In some circumstances some meat may be needed. For that purpose you use a can of luncheon meat or something like that. You may think it is horrible, but still, it is meat.

You also need the **commitment materials**. This refers to bell, vajra, khatanga, damaru and so on. If you have physical bells and damarus, etc., it is good. If you don't have that, it does not matter. During initiations we give you a drawing of all those ritual implements and this is what you keep with you. It is just one page. You should keep it very confidential. I noticed that a lot of people keep it in their practice book and then you take that everywhere and open it and that might not be that great for you. It may be better to keep it in an envelope somewhere on the altar. I don't know. I keep mine in my practice book, but I don't open it in public everywhere. Since it is in Tibetan, nobody could read it anyway. So I don't have that problem. The commitment substances are really confidential and should not be shown. It is not your thangkas and statues, etc. You may ask if others who have had initiations can see them. May be so, but why do you have to show it to anyone?

Audience: I remember you said one time, we should keep [the sheet with commitment materials] with us at all times once we have received it.

Rinpoche: Yes, I did. So maybe you should put it into an envelope and keep it in your practice book.

Inner and outer offerings are laid out in accordance with the teaching tradition and particularly in accordance with the system of your own root guru.

When you sit down you should be facing west, – remember in Yamantaka you are facing south – but it is enough to think that you are facing west. You don't have to turn your bed around each time you are doing a different practice. If you do that you create a lot of additional chores for yourself.

The actual practice - the eleven yogas

These are:

1. yoga of sleep
2. yoga of getting up
3. yoga of tasting nectar
4. immeasurable yoga
5. guru yoga
6. yoga of self generation in the deity's form

7. yoga of purifying all beings
8. blessing of dakas and dakinis
9. recitation of mantra by sound and mind
10. inconceivable yoga
11. yoga of every day activities

FIRST YOGA – THE YOGA OF SLEEP

There are two different ways of sleeping: 1) with activity; 2) without activity.

1. Yoga of sleep with activity

This yoga is suitable for us who are attempting to practice the **development stage**. You visualize the place where you are sleeping as Vajrayogini's mandala, which means the double triangular reality source.

Why is it called 'reality source' or 'phenomena source'? Where do human beings come out from? From the womb. You are the most important person in your own world. When you are out, the world is out. So that triangle symbolizes the womb, the source of reality, the source of existence.

So you visualize your house as a double triangle. It is red in color and light-natured. You yourself are in the form of Vajrayogini without ornaments and implements. When you lie down, visualize at the level of your head, as your pillow, your root guru in the form of Vajradharma. He too is light-natured. With great respect and admiration and no other thoughts interrupting, you fall asleep.

Actually sleep should be used for the practice of emptiness. Since we cannot do that [yet] it is taught here to [to go to sleep while you] have profound respect for Lama Buddha Vajradhara. He appears as Vajradhara, but in reality is emptiness. So, it is like a magician's trick. The magicians create things which you can see, but you know in reality they are not there. Likewise, you can see, feel and touch things, but they are all in the nature of emptiness. You can perceive things and they serve a purpose, but in nature they are empty. If you can think like that it is great. Otherwise, just think of Lama Buddha Vajradharma.

When you actually die and do not have the understanding of emptiness and not even the development of bodhimind, a profound respect to buddha Vajradharma or buddha Vajradhara or Lama Lozang Tubwang Dorjechang or your root guru – whatever image comes up most in your daily practice – is the best. If you think and visualize in this manner during the change of lives, you ensure a smooth transition. That is indicated here when you visualize Vajradharma before sleeping. It ensures that the whole period of sleeping will be a positive vajrayana practice, because of the mind state developed immediately before the moment where you lose control. This mind state will influence your mind during the unconscious period of sleep. This analogy also shows that the period of death functions the same way.

Audience: What if your mind wanders between this thought and actual sleep?

Rinpoche: Normally it is recommended to [go to] sleep in that way, but if you have some little thoughts and even if something else is happening, it is still better than not having it. At our level these thoughts are bound to come up. So, better have the visualization and then do whatever you need to do and go to bed.

Audience: Does that process during the death time protect you from a terrible bardo experience?

Rinpoche: I did not talk about the bardo. I said that this method ensures a smooth transition to the next existence. But actually you should not have a terrible bardo either. There is no reason why you should.

Audience: But when you compare the death process to sleep, then during sleep, even though you may go to sleep with a virtuous thought, you can still have nightmares. So, during the death process, are similar processes possible?

Rinpoche: Well, even a terrible bardo is not necessarily that bad either. Some left-over negative karmas that still have to be purified, can come out in the bardo. But that is okay.

2. Yoga of sleep without activity

The second way of sleeping, the **completion stage** way, is just dissolving yourself and everything into the nature of emptiness and going to sleep.

When you do this yoga of sleep ‘without activity’, then from your heart as Vajrayogini lights emanate and pervade all of existence. All melts into the nature of red light and everything dissolves to yourself. Then you dissolve to the mantra at your heart level, this dissolves into the letter BAM, this into the nature of emptiness. Emptiness and mind become inseparable. With that thought you [go to] sleep.

You also can focus on the BAM itself which is in the nature of emptiness and that BAM is completely overjoyed by the warmth as well as the emptiness. Falling asleep in that manner is the yoga of sleep without activities.

Audience: Is it possible to combine the two methods? Could you go through the generations stage visualization and then finish with the dissolution?

Rinpoche: I did not even go into detail on the generation stage method. I did not mention the sun- and moon cushion; I mentioned just yourself as Vajrayogini in the double triangular reality source and then Vajradharma in front, on your pillow and then go to sleep, with the perception that although it appears that way, in nature it is empty – *nan gla rangshin mepa*. If I went into more detail, people would get more confused. Therefore, in regard to the generation stage method or ‘the method with activity’, you also think about emptiness, so it is almost the same thing. But you can’t use both practices at the same time. It may not work.

SECOND YOGA – THE YOGA OF WAKING UP

The time to wake up is early in the morning, not late in the afternoon. The recommended time is before dawn. In winter that is quite late, in summer it is as early as 4.30 am. Therefore the recommended time to get up is 4.00 am and not 11 am. Of course it depends on the work you are doing. For some jobs you have to be up all night and don’t get to sleep before 5 am. But if that is not the case, just sleep and waste your time because you cannot change your habits, is not good. So try to go to bed early, as early as possible. Kyabje Ling Rinpoche and Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche, with the exception of special days, used to go to bed at about 8.30 or 9.00 o’clock in the evening and then they were up by 3.30 and 4.00 am. But then, Kyabje Lhatsun Rinpoche did not go to bed early at all. You would see him sitting in meditation until after midnight, stuck with his practice somewhere. But still, he was always up in the morning before me. When we tried to copy Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche and get up at 4 o’clock in the morning, we would just go back to sleep right away. So that does not serve any purpose at all. It is very important to go to bed early and get up early. The sadhana itself states too that you should get up before dawn¹⁸.

Waking up after the yoga of sleeping with activity.

When you wake up, you think that the dakinis are singing, playing damarus and bells, chanting the triple OM mantra of Vajrayogini, her essence mantra¹⁹, etc.

Practitioners use the damarus at the navel level, symbolizing the raising of the psychic heat. [tib. *tummo*]. That is the Gelugpa system. But when the dakinis use the damarus, they play it up in the air. Even in the sadhana, at the level of the guru tree, the damarus are used up [at the shoulder level]. These are differences you have to know. If it says that damarus are used at the navel level, that does not mean

¹⁸ Not to be found in our translated sadhanas. It belongs to ‘small letters’

¹⁹ OM VAJRA VAIROCHANIYE HUNG HUNG PHAT SOHA, From the Heruka sadhana.

they always have to be used that way. Recently we have done quite a few of the *Dakini Long Life offerings*, that is why I mention that here.

So, by the dakinis chanting and playing instruments you wake up. You have to think that even the sound of the alarm clock is actually the sound of mantra or the sound of bell and vajra. It might be interesting to record the sound of bell and vajra and connect it to an alarm. You can also record mantras and wake up with their sound.

If you do the yoga with activities, you wake up in the form of Vajrayogini. You remember that Lama Buddha Vajradharma is right in front of you and the place where you are sleeping is the mandala house and if you have company with you, think that there is another Vajrayogini. Don't think there is another man, but another Vajrayogini. Have a thought of great respect for Lama Buddha Vajradharma, his kindness and his qualities and do three prostrations.

You can also do three prostrations before you go to bed. You can do the prostrations anywhere, even on your bed. When I was young I used to do it on my bed itself, no matter how small my bed was. Now the Lama melts into light the size of a small bird egg and dissolves to you. Your own consciousness and the mind of the Lama become inseparable.

These are actually very important points. When you just say it, it may not seem so important, but it is. You may talk about the great mahamudra, and this point here is exactly that. Also it is said that when you become enlightened you will do so in the nature of the Lama's mind. And this is how it works. These points come up somewhere in the sadhana and they are not announced with great titles or mentionings of how important and secret they are. They are just slotted in at different places in the sadhanas. We have the habit of looking for something special, some title announcing a great hidden treasure, but that is not how it is done. In the middle of every practice these points come up. It is important to recognize them. At this point it is supposed to be just the practice of how to get up. There is no title of mahamudra here. Similarly in the *Lama Chöpa*. When it comes to the practice of mahamudra, it is simply the Lama dissolving to you and you recognize.... Actually, in the *Lama Chöpa* it is a little bit extended.

So you don't have to go and search for mahamudra, it is right here. You don't have to look for the introduction to the primordial mind, because it is clearly introduced here. Changing into the lama's mind does not mean that you become the personality of the Lama. As I said earlier, 'When the rain comes from the sky, it dissolves to the ground', that's what it is. Think about that!

The question may rise, 'What will happen to me if I have been very bad and mischievous?' It can also depend on pure luck. If you manage to die in a pure state, those negativities will not even materialize at all. Maybe I am overstating the facts. It may really be like that, but perhaps I should not say it. Anyway, a lot of these practices come up like in the middle of nowhere and they are important to recognize.

Yoga of waking up after the yoga of sleep without activity

If you have gone to sleep with the method of no activities, then you rise from emptiness like a bubble in the water or a cloud in the sky. You suddenly wake up in the form of Vajrayogini with ornaments and implements.

THIRD YOGA – THE YOGA OF TASTING THE NECTAR

These teachings are tailored for someone in retreat. In normal daily practice you don't have to physically taste nectar every day, unless you like a taste of alcohol early in the morning – that is a different matter.

The way you do this yoga is that you pick up the inner offering bottle, then you imaginatively draw a triangle into the palm of your left hand, with the three letters OM AH HUM at the sharp points of

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the triangle following each other in a counterclockwise direction. You think that you take the nectar from the center of that triangle.

The nectar you take comes from the inner offering which has the continuation of the nectar pill. In the good old times it was recommended to eat three nectar pills in the morning. That was when there were plenty of them around. You had one for the OM, one for the AH, and one for the HUM. When I was a kid in the monastery, they had that big container with nectar pills soaked in water and they used to give you a drop of that water every morning. So that included the nectar pill in it. Whether you actually taste from the inner offering or if you just think that you do, both will do. Actually the three letters refer to the body, speech and mind.

In the Heruka practice there is a text called *Three purifications* – that is a commitment for those who have had the Heruka body mandala initiation. Rilbur Rinpoche gave that here. The whole of this practice is substituted in Vajrayogini just by this short practice. If you look into the long Vajrayogini sadhana you will find a long prayer at the end [The dedication prayer of Tsarpa Dorje Chang.] About the initiation this prayer says,

...and entering the ocean main of bodhisattva deeds,
may I become a fit vessel of the developing initiations.

‘Developing initiations’ refers to the initiations like Heruka, Yamantaka, etc. The next verse then mentions the Vajrayogini initiation which is called ‘liberating path’.

From the kindness of the qualified vajra holder,
by enjoying the glory of the elixir of the (Dakini) blessing
(combined) with an unexcelled yoga tantra initiation,
may I become a fit vessel to contemplate the liberating path.

The qualification to practice this ‘liberating path’ is the initiation into the *sindhura* mandala. Then how you actually liberate yourself is through the eleven yogas.

The next verse of the long prayer mentions the first of the 3 yogas,

...And by the yogas of sleeping, rising and elixir tasting,
may I delight in the three pleasures of the three doors.

The three doors are body, mind and speech. These are the objects of the three purifications in Heruka. Here in Vajrayogini this is done by tasting the nectar, using OM AH HUM. It serves the purpose, it works. That is why Vajrayogini is so special: it is so simple, so easy and so short. It does not look like anything, yet it has all the qualities of the Heruka Chakrasamvara tantra and in addition it has its own special way of doing things. That’s why it is called ‘liberating path’, rather than developing path. The text says, ‘May I delight in the three pleasures of the three doors.’ The delight is emphasized here. When the three doors become pure, naturally you experience delight. When the body is pure, you are happy, then when the mind is pure, you are even happier and the speech naturally has to become pure, because it has no source of becoming dirty. That does not mean that now our body is filthy, but it is not necessarily that pure either.

Drinking nectar gives you delight of body, speech and mind. In the Heruka practice you have that particular text to say. The actual Heruka body mandala sadhana is terrible. The shortest version has 44 pages. So it is difficult and we are not going to do any Heruka body mandala initiations at all.

That is the yoga of tasting nectar.

Audience: When you do the elixir tasting, where do you take the elixir from?

Rinpoche: You are visualizing it, but if you want to use an actual nectar, you take it from the inner offering. During a retreat this is always available, during daily practice you don’t have to use it, just think about it.

For the inner offering we use little liquor bottles. Since we don’t have enough nectar pills for everybody, I usually share around some drops from my inner offering. It can be from the inner offering

of anyone who has the continuation of a nectar pill in it. I actually try to minimize the traditional way of doing these things, like using actual skullcups and choppers. That is my style. I just keep a bottle and even if I use a skullcup, I put a bottle in it.

THE SADHANA

The actual short sadhana starts with the practice of the fourth yoga. I am trying to do the explanation on the basis of the short sadhana, because that is what most people practice. The first three yogas are not based on any sadhana. You go to sleep, you get up and you drink nectar; that's it.

FOURTH YOGA – THE IMMEASURABLE YOGA

This yoga includes refuge, bodhimind and the Vajrasattva purification. Of course it is immeasurable. If you can take refuge to Buddha, dharma and sangha and through that at least your next future is ensured, it is an immeasurable achievement. If you do purification through the Vajrasattva recitation, it is immeasurable too.

In the case of Vajrayogini the object of refuge is the Chakrasamvara mandala. Usually [at the fifth yoga] we say the names of all the lineage masters. That is easy to say, but very difficult to imagine. So maybe just say it and think they are there.

The traditional explanation of refuge is that it will correct you, so that you don't follow the wrong path. It sounds like a buddhist sectarian talk. If you look at the various religions, they all claim that what they do is correct and the others are wrong. So the buddhists also say that by taking refuge to Buddha, dharma and sangha you will avoid practicing the wrong – that means non-buddhist – paths. Then generating love, compassion and bodhimind will stop you from falling into the lower, narrow, self-interest motivated theravadin path of self-liberation. I am saying that according to the commentary. Sometimes you have to use that too. Then to clear obstacles one does the Vajrasattva recitation, and in order to accumulate merit one does the mandala offering. So there are four parts within the immeasurable yoga.

Refuge

In the space before me stands Guru Chakrasamvara, male and consort, encircled by a host of figures, including my root and lineage gurus, the yidams, three jewels of refuge, attendants of the cemeteries, guardian protectors and so forth.

Regarding the refuge visualization first remind yourself according to the vajrayana system that everything, right from the beginning, is pure. Your whole environment is pure. The land is pure and the house is a great mandala rather than a concrete building. Always think that way. No matter how small your room may be, even if it is as small as a nostril, think that it is a huge place. It has to be at least the size of an acre, perhaps even bigger, like 200 acres or even as big as space. It is open and very spacious.

The ground is made of precious stones, mainly lapis lazuli. I don't know why the traditional Buddhist vajrayana texts mention lapis lazuli so often. The quality of the ground in the pure land is like a rubber mattress. When you tread on it, it recedes under your feet and then comes back up. It is soft, smooth and there is nothing impure. That is important. Also, when you touch the ground it gives you a joyous, special feeling, as if you touch a person's special place. This feeling should arise no matter what you touch, the ground or the walls, the cushions or the furniture. They are capable of giving you this joy. That is the quality of the mandala. It also helps you to open up. By thinking that everything is open and joyful you will also open up.

At the center of this, in the space before you, there is the great throne with lotus cushion, etc., the usual thing. On top of that is in reality your root master, but in the form of buddha Vajradharma – that is one way of doing. Another system says that it is your root master in the form of Vajra Heruka, but surrounded by the sixty-four deities [of his mandala]. Then there is the usual way, with your root master as buddha Vajradharma residing in the center of a huge lotus and his whole entourage on the surrounding petals.

When you choose Lama Buddha Vajradharma – he is red in color, with one face and two hands, the right hand holds the vajra and the left one the bell. Alternatively you can visualize Hero Vajradharma who holds a damaru high in this right hand, while his left hands holds a skullcup filled with nectar. In the bend of his left arm he supports a khatanga. Both are acceptable.

There are a lot of alternative visualizations. You can't be so quick to say that one is wrong. If there is only Lama Vajradharma or Lama Heruka you have to think that his mind is totally mixed with the minds of all the enlightened beings. All the enlightened beings are collected in this one image, whether it is a single Lama or the Lama with the sixty-four mandala deities of Heruka or whether it is Heruka and consort. Therefore this is called 'the collection of all the lamas'.

The easiest way, which is explained in our short sadhana, is to visualize the root master as Heruka and consort. His body is blue in color. He has four faces and twelve hands. Even if you just visualize him as a solitary figure with one face and blue in color, that will also do. When you see the gilded statues, don't think he has a yellow face. One of the four faces is yellow, but the main one is blue.

The five skandhas or aggregates of the Lama are actually the five buddhas, therefore he is a collection of all the buddhas. The dharma is the ultimate quality he has obtained and the ultimate stage of purification he has developed. The body of the Lama and its various joints, limbs, nadis and the five sense-bases are in the nature of the wrathful and peaceful bodhisattvas, dakas and dakinis. Alternatively you can do it like in the *Lama Chöpa* where even the hair pores of the lama are the liberated arhats. All that is the sangha. In that manner just the one figure of the lama is the collection of Buddha, dharma and sangha all together. This is called *kundu norbu ling*, the jewel-like collection.

Every single little atom in the universe – and there are countless numbers of them – has the total completion of the whole universe within it. This sounds mystical to us. If you can solve this clearly you have no problem in life. You can not solve it right now. You will solve it when you become totally enlightened. That is what total knowledge means. If you work on the computer you have an example for this. One little key, one little window, how many things are in there? We take it for granted. Computers have been introduced as scientific equipment. But if you had no idea what a computer was and somebody tried to describe to you how one little window can open so many things, how would you explain this to somebody? And how would you receive all this information stored in there without using this tool?

What I am trying to say here is that each of these physical pieces by nature is the dakas and dakinis. If you want to think that all of the cells in the Lama's body are buddhas and bodhisattvas, that is also fine.

So that is the easy way, just Lama Heruka with consort, embodying Guru, Buddha, dharma and sangha all in one. That is what you visualize in front of you.

Then you yourself are the leader of the sentient beings. You have your enemies in front of you. At your right side is your father and all the male sentient beings. How conservative it is! The separation has to be there. At your left side is your mother and all female sentient beings. All other beings, including all the bardos, fill the ground. Then you are taking refuge to Lama Heruka. You think, 'I and all sentient beings have one problem and that is falling into the lower realms and having to continue in samsara. This is very difficult. I am afraid that we may have to continue for a long time'.

This fear of remaining in this situation for a long time is the cause of taking refuge. Knowing that the Lama Vajra Heruka has the power and capability to show the way out of this long-term suffering and making an end to this, you rely on him totally, whatever the situation, whatever may happen. That

is basically how you take refuge. If you just keep on saying the refuge formula *Namo Gurubhya, Namu Buddhaya, Namu Dharmaya, Namu Sanghaya* even a zillion times without thinking, I don't believe it is proper refuge. The real refuge is totally relying, on the basis of intelligent faith and fear of falling into the lower realms and remaining in samsara endlessly.

In vajrayana you do the four round refuge, that is the Lama and the Three jewels. You go according to the sadhana which says,

**I and all beings as vast as the full extent of space,
from now until our attainment of the essence of buddhahood,
take refuge in the glorious, holy Gurus;
we take refuge in the fully enlightened Baghawan Buddhas;
we take refuge in the holy Dharma teachings; we take refuge in the Arya Sangha**

The total reliance on the three jewels as the ones who have the power to guide you out of suffering, is the actual refuge, not saying the words. You rely on them without any doubt, without any question or fear. You totally trust and rely on them. If you just say it, no matter how many times, it does not do any good. You have to trust, because you need a method. Why do you need a method? Because you are afraid that you will keep on continuing in this bottomless pit for a long time. So the wish to get out is the main cause of taking refuge.

**I prostrate to and take refuge in the Gurus and the Three Precious Jewels. Please
bestow your blessings upon my mindstream.'**

By making this additional request, light goes out from the heart of Lama Heruka, reaches to all sentient beings, clears all their obstacles and produces all the necessary development. Their bodies become pure and they all transform into joyful Vajrayoginis. Their minds become thought-less *dharmakaya*. Don't think that they become zombies, but that their mind becomes the nature of emptiness. It becomes space-like and joyful. All sentient beings around you become Vajrayoginis and they all fly away, like as if there were some hundred birds on a lawn and you pick up a basketball and throw it in the middle of them, all of them would rapidly fly away. In that manner, each of them flies away to the pure land of the dakinis.

Again, the Lama to whom you have prayed becomes light-natured and dissolves to your mind. Your mind and that of all the enlightened beings become inseparable. Just that dissolution generates in you some kind of never experienced fantastic joy. Acknowledge that fantastic joy as bliss, label that as bliss. That bliss is also not dull, it is a sharp mind which acknowledges and recognizes emptiness. So label this as the nature of bliss-void. This bliss you should imagine as a hundred times better than the most wonderful sexual experience.

This is how blessings are received. You have to pay attention to it and try to synchronize it in your mind. In the Western tradition you just go somewhere, ask for blessings and go away. There is no way that this is how you receive blessings. At the most you may think along the lines of baptism where a little water is thrown at you. Here the way you receive blessings is by thinking that light is generated which purifies everybody, sends them home, then the Lama dissolves into light nature, bringing the wisdom and joy combined together. You make requests for the blessing, but then you have to think how the blessing occurs. That is how you think.

You may wonder what happens to your compassion now that everybody has become enlightened in your imagination. In a way it is useful to reflect that actually everybody should be grateful to the others, because they are there. Only because of them being there can you generate compassion. If everyone was really enlightened, you could not generate compassion, you would be stuck.

Generating bodhimind

I must attain the state of a fully enlightened buddha in order to free all beings from the ocean of samsara's suffering.

For this reason I will practice the stages of Vajrayogini's path.

You would like to liberate all the sentient beings, and you are willing to do that yourself. Therefore you need a method. The method is the liberating path. You decide to train yourself, to practice, until you become perfect. Remember, the sadhana is there in order to train. You are training to become Vajrayogini. When your training is completed, you will become that. Until then, you keep on training. So generating bodhimind is now the second step.

The first chapter is closed. Refuge has been taken, everybody has become pure and enlightened and has gone. The Lama has dissolved to you and you have become joyful, wonderful, in the nature of wisdom, etc. Now you have to close this chapter, because you have to generate compassion. You can think that one chapter of a story is finished and another opens. Or you can think like in some stories where simultaneously several things are happening.

Again, you see yourself at the center, all the sentient beings are around you. Wherever you turn, whatever you do, you see all sentient beings.

For each of them you think, 'Do I have to care for that person too?' Unfortunately you do. The very simple reason is that we don't recognize each other. I am going to explain this in a traditional way, you people should not have a problem with that.

We are unable to recognize each other because of the change of physical identity and appearance. In reality, at one time or another, everyone has been our closest friend, our mother, who has not only given us our life, but also has seen to it that we have grown, and not only grown, but grown well – such a kind being.

Particularly today now I have an opportunity to practice the liberating path. All these my mothers don't have it. On top of that they are totally drunk, not from alcohol and marihuana, but from anger, attachment, hatred, jealousy, and particularly from ignorance. They have gone totally crazy because of ignorance. I, among all of them, happen to have this opportunity.

It is absolutely true. Look at us here. We are the only people in this town who happen to have this liberation path. Who else here? And it is my turn to help them, to serve them, to remember their kindness and to repay their kindness. Look at them. How pitiful they are. Think,

How can I remove their suffering? How can I separate them from their suffering? How can I bring them joy and permanent joy forever? Can I do it? I don't have the power to do it. The power lies at the total enlightenment. Therefore I must make best use of the liberating path. I must liberate myself as quickly as possible and get working.

That is how you generate bodhimind. It will not do to just think, 'Oh, there are all these suffering beings and I want to help them.' Do you know why? There is no bodhimind without first developing compassion. If you do it the way I have just described, you have the seven-stages development of bodhimind almost in completion. At least you have love and great compassion and these are necessary for developing bodhimind.

Not only that. This way of thinking will also shift your focus of self-centeredness. If you keep on meditating in this way, your self-centeredness will shift. Your thinking of 'How can I benefit?' will be replaced by thinking 'Poor thing' about others.

Do you know the story of 'Potingla'? There was a woman in Singapore about eight years ago and she used to drive me around town and in her Chinese-Malay way of speaking English she put a 'la' at the end of almost each sentence. I think it is a slightly respectful manner of conversation. She kept on

saying 'po-ting la', meaning number fourteen. There is a road and a bridge called 'Nr.14'. But I kept on hearing 'poor thing la'. We had that misunderstanding for three years!

When you think about the 'poor things', don't make comparisons between yourself and others. Sometimes you may say, 'I am not the only one, there are others too.' That is a slight shift, not a big one. A big shift is when you forget about yourself and are totally dedicated to helping others. Your main concern has to be about others. Try at least to spend five minutes on that, then next time it could be ten minutes and then half an hour. If you do that, your focus of self-centeredness will shift. That will help against depression. Even if it does not bring you enlightenment, at least it will eliminate depression. This has already been confirmed by modern neuro-surgeons.

If with that thought you say the words, 'I would like to become a fully enlightened buddha in order to liberate all sentient beings. Therefore I will practice', it has meaning. Otherwise if you just simply say the words, it is meaningless chatter.

Audience: Can you do the practice of *tonglen* at this point?

Rinpoche: If you want to spend time here and do *tonglen*, you can do that, but it is not part of this sadhana. If you want, you can insert the verses about *tonglen* from the *Lama Chöpa* or from the *Seven-point mind-training* or from the *Eight verses of mind training* or from the *Wheel of sharp weapons*. You can do all that, but it will be like putting a yak's head onto a sheep's body. It will fit, but it will be a little too big. That means if you have time and opportunity you can do it. But here the major point is the sadhana, not the *tonglen*. The *tonglen* belongs to the preliminary level. If you spend too much time on the preliminary, the main practice will disappear. That's why I made the comparison with the big head. You would then end up with a short tail.

Purification

How come you have a Vajrasattva recitation in this short sadhana? In the shortest sadhana the Vajrasattva recitation is not included. But it is all right to do it here. It is not a yak's head in this case.'

If you do the Vajrasattva recitation you have a specific visualization – different from the one in Yamantaka. The difference is not that the Vajrasattva is different, but what the practice is geared towards to. The Vajrayogini system is mainly geared towards developing the clear light. The practice of the Yamantaka sadhana is geared towards developing the illusion body. If you look closely you will see the difference. Here we have a very short Vajrasattva practice.

On the crown of my head on a lotus and moon seat are Vajrasattva father and mother, their bodies white in colour, with one face and two hands, holding a vajra and bell and curved blade and skull cup, embracing each other. The father is adorned with the six mudra ornaments and the mother with the five mudra ornaments. They sit in the vajra and lotus positions. In his heart, on a moon disc is a HUNG encircled by the mantra mala from which cascades a stream of white nectar, cleansing me of all sickness, evil spirits, black karmic debts and obstacles.

Vajrasattva is white, holding bell and vajra, in union with his consort who holds chopper and skullcup. The father has the six mudra-ornaments and the mother has five mudra-ornaments. She is one short, because she does not put the ashes on her body. The ash on your body symbolizes raising the white semen. The females don't need to raise the white semen.

In India you sometimes see those siddhus who smear burning charcoal all over their body. This is supposed to represent the burning ashes of the human body. It is trying to raise the white semen.

You just follow the sadhana where it describes the visualization of Vajrasattva and consort. Here in this case the description says at the end 'In his heart, on a moon disc is a HUM encircled by the

mantra mala from which cascades a stream of white nectar, cleansing me of all sickness, evil spirits, black karmic debts and obstacles.'

In the Yamantaka sadhana it says at the same place in the sadhana something like 'cleansing me and developing my majesty.'

Then you do the Vajrasattva recitation OM VAJRA HERUKA SAMAYA.....and all the nectar dripping from the part of their bodies where the sex organs are joined, goes through the lotus cushion on which Vajrasattva and consort are sitting, goes through your body and washes all the negativities away.

Basically in the Vajrasattva recitation you do three different meditations:

1. Cleansing from top to bottom
2. Cleansing from bottom to top
3. Collecting all negativities at the heart level and light shines on them and clears them away, like darkness disappears [when the light comes].

You can do either of them. The third one is the easiest to do. If you want to do the washing method, you have to think carefully whether it is going up or down. In the first system the nectar is coming in from the top and goes down, clearing everything, you can even see the division where it is clean and where not yet. If you look at Paul Newman's salad dressing you sometimes see the oil is floating on the top and the spices are at the bottom and in that manner you visualize the cleaning process. Also don't forget the outside environment. Everything outside the body gets cleaned in the exactly the same way – simultaneously.

The body of Vajrasattva, the letters at his heart level, and even his lotus cushion, are all white. Therefore you see them as different whites. One can be silver white, the other conchshell white and yet another could be crystal color. If you want you can do it in this way. But for us it is probably not necessary. All we will see is a white lump, which should be just about the size of a fist. If it is too big and you imagine it sitting on your head you will feel it is difficult to lift! If it is too small you can't even focus. It will disappear. The recommended number of Vajrasattva recitations is 21.

Finally you have to think that Vajrasattva has told you that you have become pure. In the Vajrayogini short sadhana you don't have that part, but in Yamantaka you do. Vajrasattva tells you that all your different obstacles have been purified.

Vajrasattva father and mother dissolve into me and my three gateways become inseparable from the body, speech and mind of Vajrasattva.

Then he melts into you and your body, speech and mind and Vajrasattva's body, speech and mind become inseparable. Becoming inseparable is a big issue everywhere. You find that process everywhere and is a big issue. The foundation, the basis, is emptiness. Furthermore, the dualistic views are an obstacle. These are the reasons why the inseparability is practiced so much. In particular it is happening at the enlightened level.

That covers the Vajrasattva recitation. The mandala offering can be done a little later and with this we have covered the fourth yoga, the immeasurable yoga.

FIFTH YOGA – THE GURU YOGA

Guru yoga is extremely important and is mentioned everywhere. It is also one of the more difficult points in vajrayana – actually in any practice. The guru becomes very important and becomes a big problem too. Let me first say why it is important.

The traditional example given here is as follows. All the different rivers and brooks and springs, no matter how small, all their waters will finally flow into the great ocean. At least the Tibetans think so. They live in high altitudes and watch the waters flow down and they know that all the rivers flow into the four great rivers when they reach India. From there finally everything goes to the ocean. By the time they reach the ocean, all the different rivers, the nature of their water, their texture, their shape, their appearance, everything, will merge and go into the sea. You can not keep them separate. In the

middle of the Atlantic ocean you cannot say, 'Oh, this is the water from the snow mountains of Tibet', because it has all merged into one.

Similarly, all the gurus that you have and even the gurus' gurus, ultimately merge with all the enlightened beings. The word that is used for this is 'one taste'. This is to show that you cannot have the gurus separate from the enlightened beings, and you cannot have enlightened beings separate from gurus. They are oneness. There is no being called 'buddha' separate from gurus, there is no separate identity of the guru. Guru and Buddha, there is no separation. How much benefit the individual practitioner gets from the practice depends on this. In Pabongka's *Liberation in the palm of your hand* it says,

How many blessings are received, does not depend on the lama, but on the individual.

Most of the gurus are manifestations of enlightened beings. Therefore, even though a particular manifestation may have a limited capability or no capability at all, the sources and forces behind them, what is really functioning, are the fully enlightened beings. That's why it really does not depend on the individual gurus how strong the blessings will be, but on the practitioners. One needs unshakable faith. Guru yoga is therefore the root of all development.

If you think the guru is an ordinary being full of delusions, then you get the blessings accordingly. If you think the guru is just a nice person, you get the blessings of a nice being. If you think the guru is a bodhisattva, you get the blessings of a bodhisattva. If you think the guru is inseparable from the buddhas, yidams, deities, dharma, etc., then you get the blessings in accordance with that. After that, it is a matter of relying on the guru. That is why guru yoga is the foundation.

Also, when you become an enlightened being, you do so through the mindstream of the lama who is inseparable from the buddhas and deities, etc. There are a number of people who think that they can make direct deals with Vajrayogini or any other deity or buddha. A lot of people in the west say, 'I am fine, I made peace with God.' In the light of the traditional teachings, this does not work that way. That is why the guru is important. It is not a particular guru as such, but the guru in general. Guru Sakyamuni, Guru Vajradhara, they are all gurus. I think it is looking at all gurus as oneness. That will make it much easier.

Let's go according to the sadhana and do the generation of the guru.

In the space before me is a precious throne supported by lions. Upon it on a variegated lotus and a moon sits the root guru in the form of Venerable Vajradharma. His body is red and he has one face and two hands. His right hand plays a damaru that sends forth the sound of bliss and voidness; and his left, which is at his heart, holds a skullcup filled with nectar. The left arm cradles a katvanga. Seated in the vajra posture, adorned with the six bone ornaments and with a radiantly youthful appearance, the root guru is the embodiment of all the objects of refuge.

This is the common system. Here you generate the lama in the form of Hero Vajradharma. In the uncommon system you generate the lama as buddha Vajradharma. You can do either, but here it is Hero Vajradharma. In the shortest sadhanas, naturally they will do the common things. There are three different points one has to know.

(1) The most important point is that you generate your own root lama as inseparable from all enlightened beings in general and in particular from Heruka male and female in union, but in the physical appearance of Lama Hero Vajradharma as described in the sadhana. After generating you make the request:

**I bow down to and take refuge in the precious Guru,
who is the embodiment of the buddhas of the three times.
Please bestow your blessings upon my mindstream.**

This is very similar to the above passage at the refuge level. The repetition shows that this is very important. In the long sadhana at this point all these different offerings are made which you don't have in the short sadhana.

By making the request, think that the lama is extremely happy with the work you are doing. You are also extremely happy at having the opportunity of having contact with Lama Hero Vajradharma. You are looking up and want to join and become oneness with the lama. The lama is looking down and wants to come down and become one. The eagerness of this longing is stronger than the coming together of two people who discovered their long lost love. It is like they had lost each other for a long time and now found each other and are running towards each other, looking forward to merging with each other.

Thus, the lama melts into light which dissolves through the crown of my head.

Within that feeling, suddenly the lama melts into light and dissolves to your body. Again, you have the red light the size of a bird egg merging into you.

(2) [Then what follows] the short sadhana does not mention, but the long one does. By merging together in this way, you develop tremendous bliss and joy, not a dull joy but one that is sharp and clear and lucid. This joy recognizes the nature of reality. Actually you are merging your consciousness with the primordial consciousness which is represented by the consciousness of the guru. Therefore it is the union face to face, or the union of the primordial self and the individual self. At this point you also go through the simulation of the dying process with the eight different steps. If you want to, you can do that at this stage, as the long sadhana shows you.

(3) Another aspect which the long sadhana has and the short one does not, is taking the four initiations. When you take the initiations, the 'river of initiations will not dry up'. If you included all these things into the short sadhana, it would not be a short sadhana any more. These parts are important but not doing them does not break your commitment and is not essential for the structure of the sadhana. So, the additional things have been cut out to make a short sadhana. They have their own qualities and when you are not doing them you do not get the advantages they have.

SIXTH YOGA - THE YOGA OF SELF-GENERATION AS THE DEITY

In any case, the meditation on the death process finally ends with OM SVABHAVA SHUDDA SARVA DHARMA SVABHAVA SHUDDOH HAM, of which Allen's translation is '*Nature empty, everything's pure, naturally pure, that's what I am.*' This translation is not exactly perfect in the case of the inner offering or the tormas offering, but it is perfect here. In the ultimate reality all things are empty, so therefore it is correct to say *nature empty*. Then, if it is empty, it is pure, so *everything's pure*. That is their nature, so it is *naturally pure*. And that is me, so *that's what I am*. That gives you a good understanding of the *dharmakaya*. The *dharmakaya* is properly described. You have to further acknowledge that this recognition of the nature of reality is full of joy, a joy which we can at our level not even imagine. That joy is naturally *me* and it is impossible to separate that joy and *me* and *my mind*. This is what is called *dharmakaya*.

So, if you can meditate on the dying process, you can close your textbook and do it here. You don't have to, because the short sadhana does not seem to have it. It also seems to skip the *sambogakaya* and goes straight away into the *nirmanakaya*.

It does not mention them explicitly, but you somehow have it fitted in there. I never heard a teaching on the short sadhana and have never seen a commentary on it²⁰. You can do some sort of short instantaneous rise like the way I told you it happens in Yamantaka and which has a short version of the three kaya practice. This would exactly fit in here.

Two syllables EH appear at my heart and become a double three dimensional triangle, inside of which appears a letter AH that transforms into a moon mandala.

²⁰ Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, *Short Vajrayogini Sadhana Commentary*, Dharamsala, LTWA 1992.

The mindstream of the Lama and your mindstream is now becoming a double triangle at your heart



At the center of the moon mandala stands a red syllable BAM and circling to the left around its perimeter is the mantra mala
OM OM OM SARVA BUDDHA DAKINIYE VAJRA VARNANIYE VAJRA VAIROCHANIYE
HUNG HUNG HUNG PHAT PHAT PHAT SOHA.



Within that you have the seed syllable BAM surrounded by the mantra and this all develops after acknowledging the dharmakaya.

Lights shine forth and fill my body completely, washing away all diseases, evil spirits, negative karma and obscurations of my body, speech and mind. My body becomes a ball of light from which I arise in the form of venerable Vajra Yogini.

Within that, again light radiates from the mandala and you become a light-natured body and it purifies everything. The light body could become the *sambogakaya*, because in Yamantaka, in the instantaneous rise, you have the blue light as the sambogakaya and in Vajrayogini you have the red light. However, if you look into the long or the medium sadhana, there is a total absorption into emptiness and from that, the sambogakaya will rise as letter BAM, rather than any physical appearance. The reason why here the sambogakaya is just the syllable BAM is because this practice is clear light-oriented. This is the shortest, simplest appearance, not an elaborate manifestation, just a simple appearance.

**I am standing on a seat of a lotus and a sun.
My right leg is outstretched and treads on the breasts of the red Kalaratri.
My left leg is bent and treads on the back of the head of the black Bhairava.
My body is red in radiant brightness like the fire at the end of an eon.
I have one face, two arms and three eyes which look up to Dagma Khacho, the pure Dakini Land. In my right hand I hold a downward pointing knife marked with a vajra. In my left hand I hold a skull cup full of blood from which I partake with my upturned mouth. On my left shoulder I carry a khatanga marked with a vajra, from which hang a damaru, a bell and a triple banner. Loose black hair hangs down to the waist. In the prime of youth, my nipples are erect and my bearing expresses great bliss. Five dry human skulls ornament the head and fifty dry skulls form a necklace. Naked and adorned with the five ornaments, I stand in the centre of a blazing fire of transcendental wisdom.**

You have the description of Vajrayogini in the sadhana, so I don't have to say much. She is naked, standing in the wisdom fire.

Inside the body are moon mandalas on top of which at the navel is a red OM BAM in the nature of Vajra Varahi; at the heart is a blue HAM YOM as Yamani; at the throat is a white HRIM MOM as Mohani; at the forehead is a yellow HRIM HRIM as Samchahini; at the crown is a green HUNG HUNG as Samtrasani; and at all the limbs smoke-colored PHAT PHAT in the nature of Candika.

Then you have some additional deities which you put in [in the form of letters]. At your navel is Vajrayogini [Vajravarahi]. [In your sadhana they are named in] Sanskrit; in Tibetan these deities are known as: *Shinjema* at your heart, *Mongjema* at your mouth, *Tongjema* at your head, green *Tragjema* at your crown, and at all your limbs the smoky-colored *Chandika*. From this body you then generate light and purify all beings. Mind you, this is not a body-mandala.

In the long sadhana you have the seventh yoga before putting these deities on your body [in the eighth yoga].

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Audience: Why does Vajrayogini need a body armor?

Rinpoche: Good question. Why does the President need bodyguards? The protection is a really big issue. I don't really think it is about protection from arms and ammunition, but from ignorance, spirits, etc. Whether Vajrayogini as a pure being needs protection or not, is another matter, but when the practitioner tries to practice and get to that level, protection is needed. The reality source in which Vajrayogini stands, is the mandala, not specifically designed for protection, but its walls have some kind of protection. The armor deities are located within Vajrayogini's body, between the skin and flesh. In reality they are deities – symbolized by mantra syllables. These deities are standing upright on moon cushions, except at the level of the head, where the deity is lying flat.

These deities emit lights which form such a dense network of lights that there is not a single inch uncovered.

SEVENTH YOGA – THE YOGA OF PURIFYING ALL BEINGS

From the mantra at my heart light shines forth. It fills the body and shines out from all the pores, touching all the sentient beings of the six realms. It purifies them from negative karma, obscurations and negative imprints and transforms all of them into Vajra Yogini.

Light radiates from your heart level and the letter BAM, reaches to all sentient beings and just through the touch of the light from your body all the sentient being's negativities are purified and they all become Vajrayoginis. Earlier on in the sadhana, at the refuge level, there was a practice very similar to this.

This seventh yoga is in the short sadhana joined together with the self-generation and generating the armor. It actually substitutes the purification in the sutra system from the first path to the seventh bhumi, which takes countless eons of time. To be able to do that through such a short practice is one of the vajrayana qualities.

EIGHT YOGA – THE YOGA OF BLESSINGS OF THE HEROES AND HEROINES [DAKAS AND DAKINIS]

PHEM! From the syllable BAM at my heart light radiates out, inviting Vajra Yogini who is surrounded by all the yogis and yoginis of the ten directions, and especially from Akanishta Pure Land. They and all the beings that were transformed into Yogini are absorbed into me.

DZAH HUNG BAM HOH!

The wisdom beings are invoked, enter, merge, become joyously inseparable.

Here in the short sadhana it works a little bit different from the long sadhana. At the end of the seventh yoga, the purified sentient beings don't get sent home. At that point the eight yoga is being joined with the invocation of all the enlightened beings, and particularly Vajrayogini, from the pure land. The buddhas and bodhisattvas from the ten directions plus those who had newly become enlightened at the seventh yoga level, all of them dissolve to yourself.

The body mandala

In the long sadhana you go into the body mandala in detail. The short sadhana leaves that out. The body mandala is actually very, very simple. Basically at your heart level there is the seed syllable BAM. That splits into the four syllables YA RA LA VA – these become the four essence dakinis. Then you have the mantra of thirty-two syllables: OM OM OM SAR VA BUD DHA DA KI NI YE VAJ RA VAR NA NI YE VAJ RA VAI RO CHA NI YE HUM HUM HUM PHAT PHAT PHAT SO HA – These become the thirty-two deities.

These thirty-seven deities – the central one, the four essence dakinis and the thirty-two dakinis surrounding them – are at the [inner] end of all your channels. Each channel or *nadi* in your body is finally connected at your heart level and at the point where those nadis reach the heart level, at this

major junction, there are thirty-two such points and these become the thirty-two deities. Each syllable of the mantra is a deity. It is as simple as that. Those pieces of your own flesh and your nadis have become deities. It is like the major nuts and bolts of your internal plumbing system which become deities. That is the body mandala, as simple as that.

Why is this body mandala so special? The Heruka tantra also has a body mandala, but in that case the deities are on the outer ends of the channels. They are on the points of your fingers and on your joints and even at the anus and on the sex organs. Allen has made a poem on that once. Trungpa Rinpoche's ultimate practice has also been the Chakrasamvara and Vajrayogini. So in Heruka, even though your own body parts and physical energies do become deities, they do so at the furthest possible points of the body, at the outer ends of the channels. In Vajrayogini the deities are at the inner joining points of the channels, at the heart chakra. That's why it is extremely important. It is very sensitive, easy to practice and very effective. The points where the deities are put are almost inside the heart level. That is the closest possible. That is the main reason why people should not read the long sadhana before having received the teachings on the body mandala. It is used as a safe-guarding technique. It is extremely important and very simple. There are just thirty-two syllables in a circle, going counter-clockwise and each of them becomes a different deity. If you don't know what these deities look like, it is easy, they all look like Vajrayogini. They just have different names.

Generally, in vajrayana teachings it is said that with less than five deities a mandala is not complete, with the exception of the Solitary Hero Yamantaka, that has the essence of the Yamantaka forty-nine deities practice in it, that's why it is exempt. Vajrayogini is also exempt because of these thirty-two deities.

Audience: When you invite all the enlightened beings from the pure lands, what do they look like?

Rinpoche: You don't have to see them, just think they are there.

Audience: And how do they dissolve into you?

Rinpoche: I don't think they have to wait in line! You just visualize them all dissolving to you.

OM YOGA SHUDDAH SARWA DHARMA YOGA SHUDDHOH HAM!

I am that reality of the yoga of the perfection of all things.

I am having a little difficulty talking to you on the basis of the short sadhana. In the short sadhana the seventh yoga and the eighth yoga are sort of combined. All the enlightened beings and the beings that you have purified, dissolve into you simultaneously. The short sadhana is perfect, there is nothing wrong, but I have a little difficulty myself figuring out what is what. It is like the blind leading the blind. So the seventh yoga and the invocation of wisdom beings from the eighth yoga are combined and so these beings all dissolve into you at one time, rather than separately.

Audience: I would like to request a teaching on the short sadhana of Heruka. Could you do that?

Rinpoche: No! Should I? I have no idea.

All: Yes.

Rinpoche: There is already so many sadhanas around. There is no shortage. It depends on the individual how much they are prepared to put in. I know in your case you have been saying this Heruka sadhana for a long time. It is not a commitment. If you really want, there are 340 sadhanas of all sorts of different deities – you can't do them all. After you have taken some more you will not even be able to do just their mantras and have to say 100 OM AH HUMs and hopefully that will do. If you want to do all of them, you need 48 hours in the day, so there is no way. As far as the five-deity initiation of Heruka is concerned, there is no commitment, but for the body mandala you do have one. In a way the body mandala commitment is long but if you only say a few mantras it does not take that long and day by day you can do it faster and it takes less and less time. It used to take 45 minutes for

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me to do it at first, but now it is a little over ten minutes. You get used to it. You don't say too many mantras, you just do them three times, except the really short ones which you should say seven times. There is also a difference in how long it takes to recite one mantra. I say them very quickly. Sometimes I even wonder whether I am pronouncing them correctly. Lhago Rinpoche told me that once he did a Vajrasattva retreat in Taiwan. He said that sometimes the Vajrasattva mantra seemed to go very fast, even faster than OM MANI PADME HUM. Then he started listening to himself and noticed that almost the whole middle section of the mantra was missing!

As for the Heruka sadhana teaching, it would be interesting for me to do that one time. But first I am trying to fill in the practices you are doing already and then I think the general vajrayana teaching we started is also very important to establish within the individual. Thereafter we can do the Heruka.

The general vajrayana teaching is very good. It is like the *Three principles of the path* for vajrayana. There is a teaching by Tsong Khapa called *Ngag rim chenmo*. It is a very extensive vajrayana text equivalent to his *Lamrim chenmo*. It does not seem that anybody has translated this work at yet.

Audience: Why are we receiving blessings [of the Heroes and Heroines]when we are already in Vajrayogini form

Rinpoche: For two reasons. Firstly, we are only visualizing that we are Vajrayogini, but in reality that has not happened yet. Secondly, even in that imaginative state, our rational mind will definitely question the process. So to satisfy that, we go through the process of inviting the wisdom beings. Basically, enlightened beings are everywhere, so there is no question of inviting them, they don't have to come. But our mind is such that it tells us that we are only imagining. So in order to satisfy the rational mind, we visualize this process. Furthermore, although they are already there, by inviting them we are putting in extra efforts to make it happen.

Audience: It seems that some of the stuff in the sadhana reinforces my rational mind's statement that I am only imagining the whole thing.

Rinpoche: I think the sadhanas are composed with that intention. Ultimately, they try to lead you to the point of realizing the wisdom of emptiness. That's why they always try to remind you that it is a matter of perception and imagination. Sometimes this may create unnecessary trouble at a certain level, but ultimately it pays off better. When you feel that you get a block and cannot [believe in what you] practice, maybe just skip that and go on to the next line. When the time comes, that block may then just disappear or you may get an answer within yourself. At the same time you don't have to hesitate right from the beginning and worry about a block coming up at a certain passage. Sometimes you may notice that the block does not occur. Maybe it is too extreme to say that, but the sadhanas try to remind you all the time that this all illusion, but within the illusion, things do happen. Although we are told it is not real, it does happen. Illusions do make a difference to peoples' lives. Maybe it has to bring positive or negative effects to peoples' lives in order to clear the hallucinations.

Audience: When you visualize Vajrayogini, do you always have to see her in that funny pose?

Rinpoche: Well I think it is a very sexy pose, it is not funny at all.

Audience: I would like to see her more often as a living goddess.

Rinpoche: She is a living goddess.

Audience: But it would be nice if she did something else sometimes, moved around, etc. It is strange, with Yamantaka I don't have a problem just standing there and scaring away all the things I am having difficulties with.

Rinpoche: You know, peoples' minds are different. Some people have tremendous problems with Yamantaka and some others don't. Some people are very happy with Vajrayogini, they almost want to get up and dance with her. Yet some others have difficulties. That is how peoples' minds work. The

way how you find out what your ultimate yidam will be, is through observing in practice; not only for a short period, but over a long time and monitor where you feel comfortable and where you feel less comfortable. This is how you find out what your real yidam is. And then this is where you should focus your major practice.

Over a short period of time, everybody will have some excitement and problems, you cannot judge on the basis of that. Over the years you find out how you feel about the practice and through that you determine your most important yidam.

You don't go and ask somebody else. A lot of people do and ask some lamas and they give you answers. They either say what comes up in their minds or throw some dice or something. Sometimes it may be true, sometimes it may not be. If you throw a dice into a bowl, one of its few sides has to come up. Then there are books which describe the positions of the dice and through them you get the answers – like playing the Chinese I Ching.

My father used to say, 'Don't rely on people who are throwing dice!' Funny enough, in his own case there was always almost the whole of Lhasa town requesting him to do just that! He also said, 'Never rely on people going into trance!' He used to tell this story:

There was woman who made her living as a medium. When she was about to die she told [her secret to] her daughter, 'If you push your toes strongly on the ground, your heels will shake.' – In Tibet, when people go into trance, they shake. – 'If you to tighten a rope around the body the color of your face will change.' A further advice said to burn a particular type of incense called *poga* which is made from tree sap and induces yawning. Lastly she suggested to keep talking a lot, because then chances were that some prophecies she made could prove to be correct. That is how the mother had managed to make a living and if she daughter did the same, she too could make a living out of that.

So what you really have to do is establish your groundwork, use your commonsense and work with that. Do not rely on throwing dice and asking oracles. Then, over the years, you find out what your yidam really is. In a short period, you go through phases of excitement, hatred, you may walk away from it and then come back. That is normal human habit. It does not mean anything. Once you have found it, you keep just the minimum commitment for the practices for which you have taken initiations. Just don't break the commitment and that is how you can spend more time on your principal yidam. It may not be appropriate to only say one hundred OM AH HUM, but if you have a sadhana commitment, just do that commitment and if you have a mantra commitment, just do that. That is what I do.

But sometimes it gets imposed on you too. In my case, from the beginning, I was not interested in Vajrayogini at all. I did not even take the initiation for a long time. I had a funny feeling about it. But then it was imposed on me. So that is a different thing. I am actually happy that it was imposed on me, but it took a long time to get used to that and feel happy about it. It might have taken close to ten years.

Audience: Is not the change of activities you are visualizing in the sadhanas a distraction to concentration?

Rinpoche: If you are doing purely a concentrated meditation, then it is. But for one thing, in vajrayana you are doing mainly self-generation. There are then a lot of mudras and physical activities, so there is movement. So even if you become Vajrayogini you will not remain frozen without activity forever. You constantly generate things out and dissolve things back. There are a lot of opportunities.

Audience: When you are visualizing the mandala according to the sadhana, do you mentally go to all those places, like into the house and then into the courtyards and charnel grounds?

Rinpoche: The way you do it is to generate a little duplicate Vajrayogini who goes everywhere and sort of oversees the whole thing. So you are supervising the mandala rather than participating in any activities.

Audience: You mean I could not join a party in one of the charnel grounds?

Rinpoche: If you want to you can have a couple of joints down there!

Carrying the sadhana into daily life - compassion

Audience: How do I carry over the sadhana practice into daily life?

Rinpoche: The moment you get up from the meditation you should generate compassion and keep the refuge in mind and continue like that at least for the day.

Audience: I don't know how to apply that. I can say the words, but I don't feel it.

Rinpoche: A lot of people will agree with that. But you can even think, when you get into your car and start it up, that you are starting up your compassion engine. But I don't think that you have to remind yourself at every single point in your daily activities of compassion. The main point is to generate the compassion very strongly in the morning and that will affect your mind. The effect of your meditation of compassion should remain with you. You don't have to be thinking about it all the time. But the mind has been influenced by it. And that influence can remain with you.

Audience: But I don't feel it. I don't have much of an idea what is bliss and what is emptiness and how compassion fits in with those things. How does compassion fit in with bliss and emptiness?

Rinpoche: Don't worry about bliss and emptiness at this moment.

Audience: But I am saying these things every day, every sadhana is full of them.

Rinpoche: You are right, that is true, but what to do? The grounding of our compassion is our first priority. The bliss is something that will develop by itself. Just when you say your sadhana you may imagine a little bit. That's about it. At this stage that is where you put a stop and don't keep on thinking about bliss all the time.

Also, when you don't have the understanding of emptiness yet, you just think about open space and imaginatively build this picture up in order to serve the purpose of having something there in the place of emptiness and then you think that this emptiness is inseparable from bliss and you recognize this as the dharmakaya and then you move on rather than hang on to it.

Although we are supposed to develop pure perception, at our present level we are not capable of thinking that we are emptiness and there is no 'I' and trying to do this all the time in our daily life. This is the point of the relative truth functioning. You cannot go on thinking emptiness and bliss all the time. You only do that during your sadhana practice and then also only at the point where it appears in the sadhana and not right from the beginning.

First you learn how the compassion influence remains with you during the total functioning of your life – that also depends on the others of the three principles of the path. The attitude of seeking freedom should influence all your activities. You don't actually have to think about it all the time, but it influences all your activities. A number of you are experiencing that. That thought of seeking freedom, of getting out of samsara is somewhere ingrained deep down and with every single thing you do, that interest in seeking freedom is coming up. You can see that within yourself. A number of you have that. With compassion it works similarly. Some of you may have it, many people will not have it.

Then, after you have developed to this point, you will go through a similar process with emptiness. Initially you have to put a lot of effort into the ground work. There is no point of grasping at emptiness and bliss, or at the 'face to face meeting of the mind'. When you try to grasp that, it will not work at all. It will eventually happen by itself as a reality. If it happens through pushing too much in your own mind, then it is a problem. When it happens naturally, on its own level, then it is not a problem, it is very clear, you can see it yourself with your own consciousness.

You can also see it with other people quite clearly, whether it is coming as a development or whether it is just grasping. Strong grasping is a problem. Basically if you watch within yourself how the first principle or even the refuge is affecting your mind, I think you will definitely see that. It is there. It is influencing every work you do. But is not popping up so obviously and making you jumpy. Similarly, the second and third principle will follow the same style within the individual. But when it is

boiling and bumpy, then it is a problem because it is not the natural process of spiritual development, but over-grasping. In that case I would advise the person to let it go, even to the extent of advising that person to enjoy life, go for picnics, go for walks, go to the mountain tops, etc. That's how it works.

Atisha was the one who used to send everyone to the beaches and mountain tops. He did that very often. Later, in the monasteries, it even became some sort of funny rule called 'The day of begging wood'. The disciplinarian of the monastery announces it about five times a month. The idea is that everybody can go to the mountains or wherever and have some fun. Later still, the monastic discipline became very tight and it was not considered proper any more to do that. So it is very important to have strong desire for dharma development, but in a relaxed manner rather than pushing it. If you try to grasp at something, it will not work. We all want enlightenment, but it is not possible to grasp at it. It has to be like a continuously flowing river, not flooding and not drying out. That is the key, believe it or not. If you push too strongly emotionally, then you get nowhere, you get into trouble. If you relax completely, it will become dry – like the plants in my house! They don't really die though, because when I see that the leaves start crumpling up I give them a little water and they recover.

You know, compassion begins with the first principle. And then you change and focus on the others. Because of the level of mental capacity we emphasize, when teaching Westerns, that compassion includes ourselves. That is definitely true, but the focus of the *real* compassion, when you really begin to think, is very simply....

At each point it is my job to tell you what you are supposed to do and also to criticize that. Good critics can give you better understanding than people who don't criticize you.

Basically, at the beginning you already meditate that all sentient beings may remain with joy and happiness, may be free from suffering and have equanimity. That's where you begin – the four immeasurables. You visualize all the sentient beings right in front of you. They may just be nameless, faceless dots, but that's where you begin. We want to improve that situation, so they have names and faces later. But to begin with, you have nameless, faceless dots and you try to imagine that you care for them. Shifting the attention from yourself to them, that is the beginning of compassion. Whether it is part of your sadhana, the six-session yoga or whatever it is, that's where it begins. There is a big difference between sitting here relaxed and caring for somebody. When you talk about compassion, you shift the focal point from seeking something for yourself to seeking something for others. It is a big difference. It does not matter if the road you are traveling on is slick and covered with oil. You fall and then you get up, you fall and get up again, and so on and that is the way we go. We are not living in the good old, glorious times. That's why we have a lot of falls on slippery roads, but every time you have to make sure that you get up and move.

Another point here is the idiot compassion. I raise this very carefully, but as often as possible. Our mind swings to extreme points extremely easily. That's why bringing it to the central level and keeping it in a relaxed manner is important. The extreme points have to be blocked. Mentioning idiot compassion is a good tool for that. In the 1960s we had a great and wonderful opportunity and good time. But there were enormous problems too, because the extreme points were not blocked. Our mind is such that we will go all the way, whatever it is. Gurus like Timothy Leary made this mistake and did not block the idiot compassion. As a matter of fact, the last words of Timothy Leary, after I talked to him, were 'Why?' and after that he said, 'Why not?' If you need examples for idiot compassion, look around – there are plenty of them. One thing I have to say though. It is still better to have idiot compassion than no compassion at all.

Audience: In one teaching you said that there are some people who develop the wisdom of emptiness first and then compassion and the mind of enlightenment.

Rinpoche: This statement is only about very few, brilliant people, and in our time, I don't think we will see any at all. In the beginning, our focus is only on ourselves. No matter how many times we talk about 'all sentient beings', the one we really care about is *me*. This is definitely and tremendously self-centered. There is no question. That's fine. Then you begin to see that life is full of problems and you want to find the way out. When you begin to see that, then you also start to think about others. That is

where the transition from self-centeredness to caring about others happens. Even compassion alone will not produce the desire to become enlightened. The question of enlightenment does not really rise until you are very strongly connected with compassion and bodhimind. Until then you will just force it into your mind and you may think about it but you don't really have it.

NINTH YOGA- THE YOGA OF RECITATION OF MANTRA

1. Verbal recitation
2. Mental recitation along with 2 side completion stages

Verbal recitation

The mala. The first point to talk about here is what kind of mala to use. Traditionally, a bone mala is recommended. It is not like those malas you can get in India where buffalo bones are carved into the shape of a skull for each mala. Actually it is supposed to be pieces of male and female skulls carved into flat, round discs and put together. They are about half an inch thick and as large as a dime or a quarter. When you look at it, it is not that impressive and that is why you don't see many for sale. Westerners go more for those skull-shaped ones! Traditionally you did not pay money for the genuine ones, so there were no fake ones around, but nowadays everybody does it for money, so you can never trust what you buy.

It is really not necessary to have skull malas. bodhi seed malas are also recommended. These seeds are supposed to be the seeds of the bodhi tree. I am not sure whether that is the case, but I noticed that you get most of them from Bodhgaya. Among the bodhi seeds there are various types. The best are the ones that have a triangle on the surface of each bead. But nowadays it is all so business-oriented – you find malas with a couple or perhaps 15 or 20 beads with triangles and the rest are different ones. So they get mixed. If you have one just with beads that have the triangle, it is considered even better than a bone mala. Lotus seed malas are also fine and so are any other kinds, but recommended is the bodhi seed mala.

The number of beads on a mala should not be 108, but actually 111. The number 108 is mentioned in books, even in sutras and tantras. The simple reason is that there are supposed to be 108 bodhisattvas. That is an explanation that I have seen. There must be a way of counting 108 bodhisattvas. In order to correspond with that, some people use malas with 108 beads. However, 111 is the real number. The reason is that with every 10 beads you add one. So for 100 you get 10 and for these 10 you add one more which makes 111. Why are these added? In order to make sure that one has recited at least 100 proper mantras – probably some would have been mispronounced. So when you accumulate 100 000 mantras, you don't count 111 for every round, but only 100. That's why it takes so long. For 1000 mantras you already say in actuality 1100. For 100 000 you add 11000 extra ones and for 400 000 it becomes 44000 extra ones.

In the beginning, before you use the mala, you can bless it. You don't have to do it every time. Traditionally you will hear that one should not take a mala into the toilet. If you do you have to re-bless it. But here in America the toilets are of no concern. They were thinking of the good old Tibetan toilets.

Basically it is recommended to keep one mala which you don't show to anyone. Then it is fine to have further malas which you can show in public. It is the same with the vajra and bell. You have the ones which you use in public and then you keep your secret drawing of the ritual implements. Some old Tibetans even keep a bag over the hand in which they use the mala, so that nobody could see it. It is different now. In the old days when I used to wear robes, it was easy to hide all sorts of things in them. So once you designate a mala to be private, keep it that way. If you are using the mala in the retreat, you don't have to bless it every time. You just leave it there, next to your cushion. Even when you do your daily sadhana, you should use your private mala. For all other occasions you can have a nice, handy one. It is easier to have a small one for that purpose.

Actual practice of the verbal recitation

At my heart is the three-dimensional double triangle with a moon mandala inside. The syllable BAM stands at the centre of the moon and the red mantra mala turns anti-clockwise around its perimeter. Limitless red lights emanate from this and cleanse all sentient beings of their negative karma and obscurations. They then make offerings to all the buddhas and bring back the power and strength of their blessings in the form of red light which dissolves into the seed syllable BAM and the mantra mala, thus blessing my mindstream.

**OM OM OM SARWA BUDDHA DAKINIYE VAJRA VARNANIYE VAJRA
VAIROCHANIYE HUNG HUNG HUNG PHAT PHAT PHAT SOHA (.....x)**

You are in the Vajrayogini form. In case you are visualizing the body mandala as well, you focus on that. There are the four dakinis and at the center of these is the inner Vajrayogini. The mantra recitation is done from the heart of this inner Vajrayogini.

In the Heruka body mandala you have the complete sixty-four deity duplication inside your body three times. In that case the recitation is done from the most subtle Heruka. Similarly here the recitation is done from the most subtle Vajrayogini.

If you don't visualize the body mandala, it is easy.

You focus on the double triangular reality source at your heart level and on the letter BAM at the center. Each of the letters [of the mantra-mala] you visualize, you have to imagine as like a very red cherry color. The central letter BAM radiates a tremendous amount of red light which fills up your body completely.

That's why Vajrayogini's body is shown to be red. It is not necessarily her skin which is that red. It is the reflection of this inner red light.

Through the process of filling up with red light, all your non-virtuous actions, negativities, downfalls, etc, are purified. Then the light goes out of your body through your hair pores. It is like the sun shining and radiating light everywhere. In the same way you radiate red light and each one of the zillions of light rays comes through your hair pores.

That must work very well in the west because the Westerners seem to have more hair!

Each one of those light rays carries at its tip a tremendous amount of offerings and offering goddesses who make offerings to all the buddhas and bodhisattvas. The light also goes out to all the non-enlightened beings in the six realms, including the bardo.

You remember, this process is also shown in the *Lama Chöpa* where the light goes out and purifies everything and closes down the hell realms²¹. You can do the same thing here. When it says that the light rays purify all beings and they become Vajrayogini, you can go into detail and let your light reach all the different realms.

Again, the motivation for your practice is not that you would like to become better. Then the practice will not work. Your motivation should really be the benefit of all sentient beings and it should not be forced or pushed artificially. If it really comes naturally, then this practice will work.

The light goes out and reaches the lower realms and touches everybody and completely clears all the lower realms.

You can do that one by one or together. It depends on how much time you have and how much effort you want to put in. You can go into each realm and clear it. If you don't have so much time you just think that all these lights went down here and freed everybody and then shut the door to the lower

²¹ Meditation emptying samsara.

realms. How much you do it and how strong, will depend on your compassion. Sometimes you might not be able to do anything except say your mantras or whatever your commitment is and be done with it. That is also fine. But when you have time you can do this practice. It is a great thing to do!

Everything happens just by the touch of the light. All the sentient beings' problems and negativities, downfalls, delusions and the imprints of the delusions, everything is thoroughly cleared and you make them into Vajrayoginis.

Then your light dissolves back. All the siddhis or accomplishments of the Yogini or 'Sky-goer' are collected in the form of red light. This light fills up all of space and then dissolves to the letter BAM at your heart.

This visualization is called 'verbal recitation'. If I sometimes call it 'verbal registration', it is actually not all that wrong. You are registering in the enlightened beings' space through that practice.

The trick in vajrayana buddhism is to say the mantra and do the visualization at the same time. For the Westerners it takes quite some time to learn and adjust to that. In the beginning, if you visualize, you cannot say the mantra and if you say the mantra you cannot visualize. Sometimes people believe that when you are meditating it means you cannot say mantras at the same time, but that is not right. It has to go together. You don't have to think all the time about the meaning of the mantra while you are reciting, so it is possible to also visualize. It is also very important not to think about unrelated things during the recitation. Just focus on the visualization. To say seven mantras and concentrate is better than trying to say hundreds and after a while just saying the mantra by mouth and thinking about zillions of different things. This does not work, it is no good. It is better to say a few and think carefully.

Also it is particularly important not to interrupt the mantra with different sounds. So don't talk, don't answer questions during the period of recitation, unless your own masters talk to you.

Focusing on the meditation and saying the mantra nicely helps tremendously to obtain blessings. Whatever you do, do small quantities but with good quality. It is extremely important.

The way you say the mantra is quietly. Even in the old tantric colleges, in big or small groups, the mantras are recited quietly. Mantras are supposed to be kept quiet. You yourself should hear it, but nobody else. You don't hear it with your ears but from inside, you acknowledge it.

You should not exhibit your altar either. When you practice somewhere you don't have to put up pictures. That is not necessary at all.

Side completion stage meditations

Before you start with the mental recitation, you can do one of the side completion stage practices. It is not the main one, but recommended to do at this point. There are two meditations here.

This time it is necessary to sit cross-legged. Before, when we first learnt to meditate, it was said that it did not matter how to sit, any position was acceptable. But when you reach to this level, it is really recommended to sit cross-legged. If you have troubles with your legs though or any other pain, then better not. You have to sit with a straight body. You know the body structure. Then, when you sit properly, you have to visualize the central channel. You have to see it as being smooth, soft and straight. Externally, its color is white, internally it is red. In texts, it is described like that.

I had a funny experience once. One day, someone in Delhi gave me a 'bang' – a form of hashish. It was put in my breakfast. A wealthy Indian guy invited us for breakfast. Besides me there was an old Tibetan doctor and a couple of Indian ministers. The ministers somehow knew and declined to eat these things. The host insisted and said they contained a blessing and then the ministers agreed to take a very small quantity. Anyway, I took a lot. It comes as part of the Indian sweets and I like sweets. Two hours later, at about mid-day, things appeared very clear to me, extremely clear. I could clearly hear every word of people who were having a conversation two rooms away. It was as if they were

talking inside my ears. By that time I began to realize what was happening. I liked the taste of these sweets and had eaten quite a lot, at least six or seven of them and also brought quite a lot of them home. Kyabje Ling's attendant, Titila, came to see me. When he was talking to me, I was hearing everything he said as if from inside my ears. I told him what was happening and he told me that I probably had some hashish. Then I started to get curious what the central channel looked like. When you begin to focus in such a state, you really see something. What I saw was some bamboo-type of thing and the color was dark green rather than white from outside and internally it was redder than described, more like maroon. Also, as soon as I started to think about the chakras I could see them, and they were like rotating discs, going round quite fast. I could see the chakras at the navel, heart, throat and crown level. When Daisy la came to know what was going on she flushed the left over bang down the toilet. Later, when I tried a joint in Texas, nothing like that happened at all. I started to throw up, it was like being sea-sick or car-sick, terrible.

First side completion stage meditation

You visualize the central channel as being straight. At your heart level, you have the double triangular reality source, moon disc and letter BAM, surrounded by all the different mantra-syllables.

You have already visualized this picture during the mantra recitation. There are all these cherry-colored syllables sitting in a circle – the mantra mala. Now is the time for you to clear the dead air from your body.

You blow the dead air out from your right nostril three times and then three times from your left nostril – very slowly. Then, after that, you practice the sucking up of the lower air from the anus. You slightly suck it up from there and keep it. Then you have to push the upper air down. You do that from the nostrils.

It is very important to breathe through the nose during this type of meditation. Never breathe through the mouth. Also, you have to breathe smoothly and regularly, not hyperventilating, like a ghost entering someone in a trance. You take the air in slowly and while swallowing some saliva, push the air down. It is like we do when we recite OM A RA PA ZA NA DHIH and swallow saliva and [say the] syllable DHIH at the end, without making any sound. So here we do that too, and push the air down. It is as if it drops down.

At your heart chakra you have the body mandala or if not, at least the mantra mala with the letter BAM at the center. The air pushes the mantra mala down to the navel level. The air you have sucked in and the air you have pushed down, will extend your stomach. Hold these airs together at the navel level and concentrate on that.

Hold the air as long as you can and then try again, but don't hold the air until your face becomes red or purple. If you cannot take the body mandala deities down completely to the navel chakra, try to take at least the four essence dakinis, or if not, the central dakini in the form of a letter BAM.

At the beginning level, you cannot really suck up air from below, you just think that you are doing it. That's how you learn it. Sometimes you even have to put your fists together, just to get it. Then suck a little bit up and leave it there. Later, you can suck the air in completely. So in the beginning you think you are sucking up the air, but in reality you are not. After some time, though, it will really happen. When it functions you can suck the air in completely or half of it, whatever you want. When you are sucking air in, it reduces the size of your stomach, when pushing the air in from above, it extends the stomach. When your stomach really extends a lot, it is a sign that you are not sucking up the lower airs well. Anyway, these are the side effects.

82 *Three main short vajrayana practices*

To summarize, you suck up the lower air a little bit and then push down the upper air, so that whatever you have visualized at the heart chakra goes down to the navel level. Then you suck the rest of the lower airs up and hold the air at the navel for as long as you can.

Your mental focus at that level is the double triangular reality source and particularly those swirls in the four corners which are spinning around. They are all spinning anti-clockwise. The letter BAM at the center has a squiggle above. Focus on that red-colored squiggle. It is almost about to develop fire sparks, about to burst into a flame, like when you try to ignite a lighter. It is not yet a flame, but just about. So your main focus is that squiggle, and your secondary focus are the swirls. Then lastly, focus on the triangle. If you can see all of them together, that is best.

At the same time you are reciting the mantra of Vajrayogini

OM OM OM SARVA BUDDHA DAKINIYE VAJRA VARNANIYE VAJRA VAIROCHANAYE
HUM HUM HUM PHAT PHAT PHAT SOHA

If you keep on doing this quite strongly, it is stated that you will develop some kind of heat and experience some comfort. I can't say it is joy or bliss, but some kind of comfort. I believe that is how you move. It is a sign of development. For a while don't consider the number of mantras a priority. Take some time to do this practice occasionally. This is not mental recitation, but a side completion stage practice. It is between the verbal recitation and the mental recitation.

When you visualize the central channel, you are actually tracing it. So when you keep on practicing, after some time, you get some warm and comfortable feeling. Leave it at that, don't try to get too much out of one sitting. Just go in a relaxed manner and do some every day or occasionally and then these signs will come. If you chase after them, they won't come. It is like the writers. When you are writing a book and you are chasing the best seller list, you are not going to get there. But if you are concentrating on what you want to produce, you may get there.

Holding the upper and lower airs at the navel is called *bumpa chen* – vase breathing. Literally, 'the great vase'. Think of a flower vase – small at the top, small at the bottom and a big belly in the middle. You are creating a balloon at the navel.

Mental recitation

For the mental recitation you create the same vase again. Then you read the mantra. Who is the reader? Your mind in the form of the letter BAM. If you have moved the central Vajrayogini of the body mandala down to the navel, you have the letter BAM in her heart and that reads the mantra. Otherwise just the letter BAM. It is like a lady bug looking around from inside the mantra mala and reading the mantra carefully, word by word, syllable by syllable.

Actually I would recommend to people not to attempt to meditate on the body mandala until you are familiar and have heard the [complete] teaching on it.

Audience: I thought we are supposed to visualize the mantra letters turning into the thirty-two dakinis of the body mandala. When we do the mind reading, do we focus on them as letters or dakinis?

Rinpoche: The choice is yours. They are inseparable anyway. The deities are letters and the letters are dakinis. You can try to read the mantra like that three or seven or twenty-one times, the minimum should be two or three times. At the same time you are holding the air at the navel.

Second side completion stage meditation

For this practice it is better to move the double triangle and the body mandala or if not, the letter BAM, back up to the heart chakra.

You should be able to move these things up and down. Don't think that everything is fixed and has to stay that way. Just pull it back up. Our minds are so much trained in a materialistic way that it becomes very difficult to change our perspective on something once it is established. This is one of our biggest problems.

Another problem we have in this society is measuring someone's success in terms of money. That is really bad. Doctor Dorje went to Tibet to visit his own family. He saw his old home town and said he was quite shocked not to find any Chinese. All the local leaders were Tibetans and perhaps there was some higher Chinese official somewhere hundreds of miles away issuing orders, but there was none in the town. Everything functioned still in the same old way as it did for hundreds of years. Even the food was still the same. But they have one new problem now. Traditionally the people in the valleys who are farming, exchange their grain with the nomads who come down from the mountains with butter, cheese, yogurt and meat. That is not happening anymore. So the nomads don't have grains and the people in the villages don't have the animal products. The reason is that the people in the valleys nowadays keep their grains and take them to bigger markets where they sell them for money. The nomads can't get to these markets and thus are stuck with their products and can't get any grains. So that is the problem when you deal with money. Traditionally, people used to exchange goods. That was in the good old days. Now we measure everything with money. That's why everybody has to have jobs and get money. Indirectly society makes you into a slave just to fit in with this particular system. It is bad, but you'd better adapt to it, otherwise you would not survive. There is no use fighting it, so better get into it and make best use of it. Particularly in terms of the vajrayana system, it is recommended to get into it.

The tantras are divided into four classes. They are all designed to destroy negativities, but the way they do that is by getting into them, following the same patterns, but then destroying them from within, like for example, a tree will die when worms get into the wood and eat the tree from inside out. If the worms would attack from outside the tree bark only it would be much more difficult for them.

You have brought the body mandala back up to the heart chakra and if you have forgotten, remind yourself of the central channel with all the details.

You may wonder what to do with all your internal organs etc. You don't have to worry about that, because you are a light-natured Vajrayogini and therefore your body is hollow. I used to give the example of a teepee, the native American tent which is hollow inside.

So your body is light-natured, hollow and red in color. Focus on the central channel. The lower end is at the level of the sex organ. When you follow the central channel upwards, it goes to the crown and curves down from there, until it comes out between the brows at the forehead.

Sometimes, in other explanations, you will hear that the central channel ends below the navel, four inches above the sex organ and that the upper end is at the crown. There are different explanations for different levels of practice. It does not mean that you have to follow one explanation all the time. In this particular case it ends at the tip of the sex organ. In this case you are a female Vajrayogini, you don't have anything hanging out.

Audience: For a male, it is quite obvious what the tip of the sex organ is. For females, does it refer to the inner tip, like at the uterus or does it mean an external point?

Rinpoche: For this practice I think it refers to an external point that you can touch and where you raise the sexual energy. Some people may have that particular point quite at the outside, others may have it further inside. In any case, it should be the point which triggers the sexual response. Even in the case of the male, that point is actually not right at the tip of sex organ but a bit further in. However, in the case of females, it can be at the most external point. That's why females have more intense sexual experiences. At least that is what this book here – written two thousand years ago – tells me. We may

not really have to pinpoint here where exactly this point is. For some females it may really come out to the external physical point. For some it may be a little deeper inside.

In this meditation you don't focus on the mantra mala or the body mandala deities. Think that they are gone, they have become empty. You only observe the central channel, especially the upper and lower tips. When you visualize the end of the central channel, upper or lower, you have to think that it is a hollow tube. You can see the hole when you look at it from outside. It is important to see the hole. The reason is that your activities begin right at that point.

Focus on the hole at the end of the lower tip of the central channel. It is not completely at the external end of the sex organ, but maybe slightly within. Inside the hole of the central channel you visualize a swirl. The one at the lower end is cherry-red, very bright. It is alive, not a drawing. It is not an external object, of metal or plastic or wood. It is not very big either, since the hole is very small and subtle. The biggest doesn't necessarily work the best. The recommended size is that of a large barley seed.

Actually it is more like husked wheat, not like the barley we see here. It should have two thin, sharp tips and should be bigger in the middle. It is right inside the hole of the central channel.

It is spinning anti-clockwise. It is like an encased fan turned on or like encased airplane propellers. In that manner that barley-size happy swirl sits inside the central channel and starts spinning.

Now what happens is that every movement at that most subtle part of our body, the innermost part of the physical body, is something we have never experienced. Normally we don't experience any movement there at all. Our body is manufactured from the sperm and egg of our parents, it grows and expands and then becomes static, there is no movement at all.

Now this particular swirl initiates movement into the central channel and it also pushes air through, it is letting energy through. When this movement starts to happen, at the beginning level it is like a tickling sensation. Because of that process joy arises in the individual.

Even if you receive a massage from somebody, if you have a blocked vein somewhere and the massage frees that blockage and the energy moves, that feels wonderful; but the level of energy we are talking about here is deep inside, at a very subtle level that no masseur can reach. It is right in the central channel. So there is movement and this brings you joy.

Now that swirl starts moving upwards as well. It reaches to the navel. That upward movement itself creates tremendous joy. From the navel it moves up still further, up to the heart level.

The ordinary sex can give you some limited power to move subtle body energies, but here this goes right through the central channel, right up the heart level. It also moves up with very high speed, all the while spinning anti-clockwise. You can visually follow it. In the beginning you can't really do that. You have to think you are doing it and then it moves a little and then you think again and you may lose focus. So in the beginning you gradually move it up.

When we talk about it, it is easy, because we talk slowly. When you think about it right now, you will probably just follow my words mentally, but you will not feel it. In order to get the feeling you have to set up your mind at that lower end of the central channel and try to feel the movement of the swirl. Then not only will you be able to concentrate and visualize more clearly, but you can also feel it a little bit. Then you gradually move the swirl up until you reach the heart level. At the moment what you are doing is like an overview.

At the point where your lower swirl has reached up to the heart chakra and swirls around there, you change your focus to the upper end of the central channel at the forehead. There you have a white-colored swirl at the inside of the central channel. It is also moving and it is almost like the whole center of the brain is vibrating. There is tremendous energy and feeling.

At first that swirl moves upwards and reaches the crown chakra and you really have tremendous feeling here. Then it goes down the central channel in front of the spine and reaches the throat chakra. Then it does further down and reaches the heart chakra where it comes face to face with the red swirl, both spinning round.

Finally, these two mix together, they touch and join and are no longer separate objects. They merge and their color becomes pink – like when you put jam into yogurt. This swirl spins round at your heart level very strongly, and then it becomes smaller and subtler and finally it just disappears and becomes empty.

By that time you have developed tremendous joy in your body and on that peaceful void you can now meditate and you hold it as long as you can.

TENTH YOGA – THE YOGA OF DISSOLUTION²²

Light shines forth from the syllable BAM and the mantra mala at my heart and pervades all the three realms. The formless realm melts into blue light and dissolves into the upper part of the body. The form realm melts into red light and dissolves into the middle part of the body. The desire realm melts into white light and dissolves into the lower part of the body.

The three realms dissolve to your body, the upper, medium and lower body. At your heart you have the [letter BAM and from there] light goes out to the three realms – the desire-, form- and formless realms. These are filled with light.

When your light reaches the formless realms it is like when you have snow and some water runs through the snow, then whenever the water touches the snow, the snow will become part of the water and go. It melts. Just like that, like snow melting into water, everything in that realm becomes like blue and blissful light which dissolves to the upper part of your body.

Similarly the form realm. The moment the light reaches it, it transforms into the red light. This then dissolves to your body to the middle part — between the throat and navel.

Then the light reaches the desire realm. This includes the heaven of vicarious pleasures, that is the highest heaven, down to the lowest hell realm. Your light reaches there and melts it into white light. This includes your own mandala and also your own seat. Everything melts into white light and dissolves to the lower part of your body.

I gradually melt into light and dissolve into the double triangle. This dissolves into the moon, which dissolves into the mantra mala. That dissolves into the syllable BAM which dissolves into the head of the BAM¹. That dissolves into the half moon², moon into tige³, tige into nada⁴, and the nada becomes smaller⁵⁻⁷ and disappears⁸.

²³

By that time, your body's bliss and void has filled up all three realms and the three realms' nature and your bliss and void are inseparable.

Then you yourself also start to melt from the top and bottom and you melt into the double triangle at your heart level. Then this melts [according to the sadhana] up to the circle, *the tige*, that dissolves to the lower part of the squiggle, that to the middle part, that to the upper part, and that to emptiness. It slowly, slowly disappears. That covers the tenth yoga.

²² Rinpoche did not teach on this occasion the two last yogas. The remaining text has been taken from the Vajrayogini teachings at Amhurst 1987.

²³ 1-8 mark the dissolution stages.

ELEVENTH YOGA - THE YOGA OF DAILY ACTIVITIES

From the sphere of emptiness I arise in the form of Her Holiness Vajra Yogini. Inside the body are moon mandalas on top of which at the navel is a red OM BAM in the nature of Vajra Varahi; at the heart is a blue HAM YOM as Yamani; at the throat is a white HRIM MOM as Mohani; at the forehead is a yellow HRIM HRIM as Samchahini; at the crown is a green HUNG HUNG as Samtrasani; and at all the limbs smoke colored PHAT PHAT in the nature of Candika.

In order to perform the yoga of activities, you have to rise [from the emptiness].

Whenever you remain in emptiness, whenever you say 'emptiness', remember the four qualities of *dharmakaya*. Whenever you rise, also remember that you rise in that one cubit of red light and have the recognition of *sambogakaya*, and then rise into *nirmanakaya*. All this you should not forget.

So, suddenly from emptiness, like a rainbow arises in space, you rise in the Vajrayogini form. With all your implements and ornaments you stand and assume the pride. You wear the protection armor.

Mantra for protection in the ten directions

OM SUMBHA NISUMBHA HUNG HUNG PHAT.

OM GRIHANA GRIHANA HUNG HUNG PHAT.

OM GRIHANAPAYA GRIHANAPAYA HUNG HUNG PHAT.

OM ANAYAHO BHAGAWAN VAJRA HUNG HUNG PHAT.

The mantra you have to say from your mouth loudly. You visualize that from Vajrayogini's heart the mantra comes, in blissful nature, yet as mantra sound. You have to imagine it to be so loud that the space itself is about to crack.

That way you are protected from outer, inner and secret obstacles Devils, ghosts, no one can really come near to you, including non-virtues and suffering. You are totally protected by that powerful mantra. That is what you have to think.

In between [the meditation] sessions

There are a lot of activities.

- The left is always important.
- You have to have respect to the ladies.
- You make offerings to the deity all the time.
- Then there is the tsok offering [compulsory twice a year, on the two special days of Heruka and Vajrayogini, the 25th of the 11th and the 10th of the 12th month of the lunar calendar].
- Then, as a buddhist, whatever you eat or drink, you should make that into an offering first. As vajrayana practitioner you should not offer anything which is contaminated. Ordinary conception and perception are contaminated. So you have to purify. You should not offer anything without purification. The shortest way for a Vajrayogini practitioner to purify the food is saying OM AH HUM HA HO HRIH three times. Song Rinpoche even only just said HA HO HRIH three times. Then you say: 'All faults of smell, color and potential be purified, multiplied and transformed into an ocean of nectar. OM AH HUM (3X)'. You say that once or three times, which is recommended by Tsong Khapa. I recommend that for everybody to say. Whenever you are in a group, the group can say it together. If you are alone or in a restaurant where everybody might be looking around, don't do it, say it quietly.

IV GLOSSARY

- Akshobya** (Tib. *Mikyöpa*) The manifestation of the aggregate of consciousness of all buddhas. He is one of the five Tathagatas or Dhyani buddhas. He has a blue-colored body. He holds the commitments of vajra, bell, mudra and reliance upon the guru.
- Amithaba** (Tib. *Öpame*) The manifestation of the aggregate of discrimination of all buddhas. He has a red-colored body. He is one of the five Tathagatas or Dhyani buddhas. He is ‘the buddha of infinite light’ who presides over the Western Paradise, Sukhavati. He is associated with infinite compassion and is the teacher of Arya Avalokitesvara. He holds the commitments of relying upon the teachings of the sutra and of the lower and higher tantras.
- Amoghasiddhi** (Tib. *Dönyo drupa*) The manifestation of the aggregate of compositional factors or volition of all buddhas. He has a green-colored body. He is one of the five Tathagatas or Dhyani buddhas. He holds the commitment of making offerings to the guru and maintaining purely all vows.
- Arhat** (Skt; Tib. *drachompa*) ‘Enemy destroyer’ or ‘foe destroyer’. One who has overcome the forces of karma and delusion and attained liberation from cyclic existence and thus has obtained arhatship, the spiritual ideal of Hinayana Buddhism. It is the culmination of the four stages of perfection: in succession one becomes stream-enterer, once-returner, non-returner, arhat. The arhat has achieved nirvana, but not buddhahood, because he does not return out of compassion to teach others as the mahayana bodhisattva does.
- Arya** (Skt; Tib. *pakpa*) Title meaning ‘noble one’. It indicates one who has attained the third of the five paths, the path of insight/seeing (Tib. *tong lam*) and so through an understanding of emptiness, has gone above the world.
- Atisha** Dipamkara Sri Jnana. Also called Jowo Palden Atisha [982-1055] (Tib. *Marme dze*) A great Indian pandit, perhaps the last of the universally acclaimed masters of Indian Buddhism. He spent the last seventeen years of his life in Tibet, bringing many important teachings. Well-known is his short treatise *Light on the Path to Enlightenment* (Skt. *Bodhipathapradipa*; Tib. *Lam drön*) which points out in a concise manner the path to enlightenment. This work became the foundation for what was to become the *Lamrim* literature. The followers of Atisha became known as the Kadampa school.
- Avalokitesvara** (Tib. *Chenrezig*) The great bodhisattva of compassion, chief disciple of Amithaba. The Dalai Lama is considered to be an incarnation of Avalokitesvara. In China he is (in combination with his female counterpart Tara) known in female form as Kwan Yin.
- Bardo** (Tib; Skt. *anubhava*) Intermediate state. The state of consciousness between death and rebirth. It begins the moment the consciousness leaves the body and ceases the moment the consciousness enters the body of the next life. One remains in that state anywhere from a moment to forty-nine days.
- Bardo** A being in the bardo.
- Bikshu** (Skt; Tib. *gelong*) Buddhist mendicant monk. *Bikshuni* is the female counterpart.
- Blessing** (Tib. *jin lab*) The transformation of our mind from a negative state to a positive state, from an unhappy state to a happy state, or from a state of weakness to a state of strength through the inspiration of holy beings such as our spiritual guide, buddhas, and bodhisattvas.
- Bliss** (Tib. *dewa*) An extremely pleasurable feeling; in *maha annutara yoga* tantra the very subtle clear light mind experiencing great bliss is focused on emptiness.

Bodhimind (Skt. *bodhicitta*; Tib. *jangchub-kyi sem*) ‘The awakened mind’, ‘the awakening mind’ or ‘mind of enlightenment’. Bodhimind or bodhicitta is the altruistic motivation of a bodhisattva: a mind that is directed towards the attainment of buddhahood, for the sake of all living beings; the fully open and dedicated heart. Once one has generated the bodhi-mind, one enters the first of the bodhisattva paths, the accumulation path. The bodhimind is of two main types: relative or conventional and absolute or ultimate. The former is also of two types: that which aspires to highest enlightenment as a means of benefiting the world, and that which engages in the practice leading to enlightenment. Ultimate bodhimind is the latter of these placed within an understanding of emptiness. In *maha anuttara yoga* tantra bodhimind is of two types: the red *bodhicitta*, which symbolizes female energy; and the white *bodhicitta* which symbolizes male energy. These are represented by ovum and sperm respectively. In this context buddhahood is the unification of these two forces placed within realization of mahamudra.

Bodhisattva (Skt; Tib. *jangchub sempa*) Also referred to as ‘child of the Buddha’, ‘spiritual hero’, or ‘fortunate one’. A bodhisattva is a living being who has produced the spirit of enlightenment in himself and whose constant dedication, lifetime after lifetime, is to attain the unexcelled, perfect enlightenment of buddhahood for the sake of all living beings. The term bodhisattva refers to those at many levels: from those who have generated aspiration to enlightenment for the first time to those who have actually entered the bodhisattva path, which is developed through the ten stages (Skt. *bhumis*) and culminates in enlightenment, the attainment of buddhahood. Those who have embarked on the path but have not yet gained direct perception of the meaning of emptiness are called ordinary bodhisattvas; those who have attained the path of seeing and can in meditation directly perceive emptiness are called extra-ordinary or superior bodhisattvas or *arya* bodhisattvas.

Buddha nature Our potential to attain full enlightenment. Specifically, it is the ultimate nature of the mind. Every living being has buddha nature. Buddha nature and buddha seed are synonyms.

Buddha Sakyamuni ‘Sage of the Sakyas’, name of the buddha of our era, who lived in India 563-483 BC. He was a prince from the Sakya clan. He taught the *sutra* and *tantra* path to liberation; founder of what came to be known as Buddhism. His mundane name was Siddharta Gautama. Buddha Sakyamuni is the fourth of one thousand buddhas that are to appear in this world age. Also see: Buddha.

Buddha (Tib. *sang-gye*) Lit. ‘awakened one’. Title of one who has attained the highest attainment for a living being. It refers to one who has completely purified (*sang*) all the defilements, the two obscurations, and completely expanded (*gye*) or perfected his mind to encompass all excellences and knowledges. A fully enlightened being is perfect in omniscience and compassion. Every being has the potential to become a completely enlightened buddha. There are countless buddhas.

Buddha’s bodies (Skt. *kaya*; Tib. *ku*) There are several divisions. If three kayas: (1) *dharmakaya* or truth-body or ultimate body, (2) *sambogakaya* or enjoyment-body or beatific body, (3) *nirmanakaya* or emanation-body or incarnational body. The last two ones together are called form-body or *rupa-kaya*. If two kayas: (1) truth-body or *dharmakaya* and (2) form-body or *rupakaya*. If four kayas: truth-body divided into (1) *svabhavikakaya* or nature-body and (2) *jnanakaya* or wisdom-body; the form-body divided into (3) *sambogakaya* or enjoyment-body and (4) *nirmanakaya* or emanation-body.

Buddhadharma Buddha’s teachings and the inner realizations attained by practicing them.

Bumpa (Tib.) vase. In initiations two kinds are used: the activity vase with spout and the initiation vase without spout.

Chakra (Skt; Tib. *tsa kor*) Energy-wheel; a focal point of energy along the central channel upon which one’s concentration is directed, especially during the completion stage of *annutara yoga tantra*. Meditating on these points can cause the inner winds to enter the central channel.

Channels (Skt. *nadi* Tib. *tse*) A constituent of the vajra body through which energy-winds and drops flow. In the body there are three main channels: the central channel (Skt. *avadhuti*, *shushumma*; Tib. *uma*), the major energy channel of the vajra body; the right channel (Tib. *roma*) and the left channel (Tib. *kyangma*). From the tip of the sex organ up to the top of the head it is very straight, but from there it bends down in an arch and terminates between the two eyebrows. It is located exactly midway between the right and left halves of the body but it is closer to the back than to the front. It is visualized greenish-bluish from the outside, more reddish from the inside. Immediately to either side of the central channel are the right and left channels. The right channel is visualized red and the left one white.

Clarity Generally, any clear appearance of an object of meditation to the concentration focused on it. More specifically, a vajrayana practice whereby the practitioner, having generated himself or herself as a deity and the environment as the deity’s mandala, tries to attain clear appearance of the whole object to his or her concentration. It is the antidote to ordinary appearance.

Clear light (Tib. *ösel*) The subtlest state of mind, which becomes manifest only when all the gross minds have ceased their active functions. This state is experienced by ordinary beings naturally at the time of death, though it may not be and cannot be recognized by those not trained to do so. With the mind of clear light -and the pure illusory body- the

- full awakening of buddhahood can be achieved. The clear light is potentially with everyone; its full development in order to sustain the spiritual path is aimed at in highest tantra yoga practice.
- Commitment being (Skt. *samaya sattva* Tib. *damtsik sempa*) A visualized buddha or ourselves visualized as a buddha. Also called symbolic being.
- Commitments (Skt. *samaya*, Tib. *dam tsik*) Promises and pledges taken when engaging in certain spiritual practices.
- Completion stage (Tib. *dzok rim*) Highest yoga tantra realizations that are attained through completing a special method that causes the winds to enter, abide, and dissolve within the central channel.
- Concentration being (Skt. *samadhisattva*; Tib. *tingdzin sempa*) A symbol of Buddha's Truth Body, usually visualized as a seedletter at the heart of a commitment being or a wisdom being. It is so called because it is generated through concentration.
- Concentration (Skt. *samadhi*; Tib. *ting dzin*) The ability to focus the mind single-pointedly on any chosen object of meditation and keep it there. Concentration meditation is one of the two main forms of meditation, the other one being analytical meditation. Also see *Samadi*.
- Contaminated phenomenon. Any phenomenon that gives rise to delusions or that causes them to increase.
- Dakas and dakinis (Skt.; Tib. *kandro* and *kandroma*) Literally 'sky-goers'; Male and female beings who help arouse blissful energy in a qualified tantric practitioner.
- Dakini Land Usually refers to the Pure Land of Vajrayogini. (Skt. *Kechara*; Tib. *Dakpa Khachö*). *Uddiayana*, the 'place' where the tantras come from, is also called a dakini land.
- Deity See yidam
- Delusion (Skt. *klesha*, Tib. *nyong mongs*) A thought, emotion or impulse that is pervaded by ignorance, disturbs the mind and initiates actions (karma) which keep one bound within cyclic existence. That which makes the mind impure. Delusions are mental factors. The three root delusions or the three poisons: ignorance, attachment and hatred; from these many others arise.
- Demon See Maras
- Dependent existence or interdependent origination or dependent arising or interdependent relationship. (*pratityasamutpada*) Any phenomenon that exists in dependence upon other phenomena is a dependent-related phenomenon. All phenomena are dependent-related because all phenomena depend upon their parts. Sometimes dependent-related is distinguished from dependent-arising with the latter meaning arising in dependence upon causes and conditions. However, the two terms are often used interchangeably.
- Desire realm The environment of humans, animals, hungry ghosts, hell beings, and the gods who enjoy the five objects of desire.
- Desire Can be either negative, like in the meaning of attachment to worldly pleasures, or positive, in the meaning of striving for enlightenment.
- Development stage (Tib. *kye rim*) Also called generation stage. The first of the two main stages of *maha-annutara-yoga-tantra* during which one cultivates the clear appearance and divine pride of one's chosen meditational deity. The second stage is called the completion stage.
- Dharma Protectors (Skt. *dharmapalas*; Tib. *chö kyong*) Manifestations of buddhas or bodhisattvas whose main function is to eliminate obstacles and to gather all necessary conditions for pure dharma practitioners.
- Dharma (Skt., Tib. *chö*) Buddha's teachings and the realizations that are attained in dependence on them. One's spiritual development. 'That which holds one back from suffering'. Also, any object of knowledge.
- Dharmadhatu* (Skt.; Tib. *chöying*) Realm of true reality. The ultimate reality underlying phenomena; that is, their non-existence as intrinsic natures, or emptiness. The wisdom of *dharmadhatu* is one of the five wisdoms.
- Dharmakaya* (Skt.; Tib. *chö ku*) Truth Body. The mind of a fully enlightened being, free of all coverings, remaining meditatively absorbed in the direct perception of emptiness while simultaneously cognizing all phenomena.
- Dhyani Buddhas* See Five buddhas.
- Divine pride (Tib. *hla-yi-nga-gyel*) A non-deluded pride that regards oneself as a deity and one's environments and enjoyments as those of the Deity. It is the antidote to ordinary conceptions.
- Dorje Chang* (Tib.) See Vajradhara
- Dorje Jigje* (Tib.) See Yamantaka
- Dorje Rolangma* (Tib.) See Vajra Zombini
- Dorje* (Tib.) See Vajra
- Dratsang* (Tib.) Monastic college
- Drops (Skt. *bindu*; Tib. *tikle*) A constituent of the vajra body used in the generation of great bliss; of two types, the red drops are received from one's mother and the white drops from one's father at conception. Also see Indestructible drop
- Dualistic appearance The appearance to mind of an object together with the inherent existence of that object.

Emptiness (Skt. *shunyata*, Tib. *tongpa nyi*) The absence of all false ideas about how things exist; specifically the lack of apparent independent self-existence of phenomena.

Enlightenment (Tib. *jangchub*) Full awakening, buddhahood. The ultimate goal of buddhist practice, attained when all limitations have been removed from the mind and all one's positive potential has been realized; a state characterized by unlimited compassion, skill and wisdom.

Ensa nyinggu Literally the 'Ensa whispered lineage'. One of the two great transmission lineages in the Gelugpa tradition. This lineage is coming through Ensapa. The other one is the Segyu lineage.

Eon (Skt. *kalpa*) A large period of time, described as the time it takes a dove to exhaust a mountain of grain the size of the Mount Everest by removing one grain every thousand years.

Field of Merit (Tib. *tsok ching*) In general a field of merit is any basis on which one can collect merit, like a field of earth is the basis on which you can grow crops, the crops depending on the field. A supreme field for accumulating merit are the holy beings, to which we can offer the seven limbs of our practice, the holy beings acting as a field in which we plant and nourish our seeds of virtue.

Five buddhas There are five main buddha families or castes, the families of Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, Amithaba, Amoghasiddhi and Akshobya. They are also called the five Dhyani buddhas or the five Tathagatas. They represent the five purified aggregates or skandhas, the aggregate of form, feeling, discrimination, formative elements or volition and consciousness respectively. And the five exalted wisdoms: the mirror-like wisdom, wisdom of equality, wisdom of individuality or discrimination, wisdom of accomplishing activities, wisdom of *dharmadhatu* (Skt.) or true nature, respectively.

Five *skandhas*. (Skr; Tib. *pungpo*) Aggregates. Literally meaning 'pile' or 'heap' which has the connotation of an utter lack of internal structure. The body-mind organism is made up of innumerable elementary constituents, called 'dharma's', which are grouped into five. The five compulsive aggregates are the five basic constituents of psycho-physical existence, of great importance as a scheme for introspective meditation in the abhidharma. They are: (1) matter or form (Skt. *rupa*), (2) feeling or sensation (Skt. *vedana*), (3) perception or discernment or discrimination or intellect -the sense of verbal, conceptual intelligence (Skt. *samjna*), (4) volition, motivation, habits, compositional factors, formative elements or conditioned activities (Skt. *samskara*) and (5) consciousness or primary mind or pure awareness (Skt. *vijana*). Associated together they make up most living beings.

Five wisdoms The five wisdoms of a Buddha: the mirror-like wisdom, the wisdom of equality, the wisdom of individual analysis, the wisdom of accomplishing activities, and the wisdom of *dharmadhatu*, i.e. the wisdom of the dharma sphere.

Form realm The environment of the gods who possess form.

Formless realm The environment of the gods who do not possess form.

Four anti-dote powers Four practices of purification used to counteract the karmic imprint of negative actions. 1. Power of the base: if enlightened being then take refuge; if non-enlightened being then meditate love-compassion. 2. Power of action: generally any virtuous [anti-dote] action. 3. Power of regret. 4. Power of repentance or promise.

Four levels of tantra Successively *Kriya* tantra (Skt.; Tib. *dya gyu*) which uses many external rituals such as washing etc.; *charya* tantra (Skt.; Tib. *chö gyu*) which balances outer methods with inner ones; *yoga* tantra (Skt; Tib. *neljor gyu*) which emphasizes internal methods; *maha anuttara yoga* tantra (Skt.; Tib. *lama me gyu*), which exclusively relies upon internal methods.

Four Mindfulnesses 1. Mindfulness of the body, 2. Mindfulness of feelings [sensations], 3. Mindfulness of the mind or awareness, 4. Mindfulness of phenomena [contents of thoughts].

Four Noble Truths (skr. *catuh-arya-satya*, Tib. *pakpei denpa zhi*) 1. The truth of suffering; 2. The truth of the causes of suffering. 3. The truth of the cessation of suffering. 4. The truth of the path to the cessation of suffering. They are called 'noble' truths because they are supreme objects of meditation. Through meditation on these four objects we can realize ultimate truth directly and thus become a noble, or superior being.

Ganden Lha Gyema 'The hundreds of deities of the Land of Joy' A short guru-yoga practice.

Ganden 'Land of Joy'. See: Tushita.

Gelugpa The tradition of tibetan Buddhism established by Je Tsong Khapa as a fusion of older sects, sometimes named Ganden Kagyu, also known as the New Kadam, The name Gelug means: wholesome way or: virtuous tradition. The three great Gelug monasteries are Ganden, Drepung and Sera. The other main traditions of Tibetan Buddhism are the Nyingma who go back to Guru Padmasambhava, Sakya going back to Sakya Pandita, and the Kagyu going back to Marpa-Milarepa-Gampopa.

Generation Stage See Development stage

Guhyasamaja (Tib. *Sangwa dupa*) One of the three major Gelugpa yidams, the other two being Heruka and Yamantaka.

Guru (Skt; Tib. *lama*) See Spiritual master

- Guru Yoga** (Skt.) The fundamental tantric practice whereby one's guru is seen as (a) identical with the buddhas, (b) one's personal meditational deity and (c) the essential nature of one's own mind.
- Highest yoga tantra** (skr. *maha-annutara-yoga tantra*) The fourth and supreme division of tantric practice, consisting of generation and completion stages, capable of leading the practitioner to full enlightenment within one lifetime.
- Hinayana**. Sanskrit term for 'Lesser Vehicle'. The Hinayana goal is to attain merely one's own liberation from suffering by completely abandoning delusions.
- I or self or ego** (skr. *atman*, Tib. *nga*) Buddhism does not accept the existence of an independent, self-existent, unchanging ego or self, because if such were to exist, a person would be unchanging and would be unable to purify himself of fettering passions and attain buddhahood. Rinpoche often refers to this one as 'I rinpoche', 'the Big Boss inside', the 'Queen Bee' or 'Dictator I'. There is acceptance of a relative, impermanent, changeable, conscious entity, which is the continuation of life, linking one's former life to this life, and this life to future lives.
- Ignorance** (skr. *avidya* Tib. *marikpa*) The root cause of cyclic existence; not knowing the way things actually are and misconstruing them to be permanent, satisfactory and inherently existent. The delusions that gives rise to all other delusions and the karma they motivate. Ignorance can be eradicated by the wisdom of emptiness.
- Illusion body or illusory body** (skr. *maya-kaya* Tib. *gyu lu*) A subtle bodily form generated through the practice of the completion stage of highest yoga tantra. When a practitioner of highest yoga tantra rises from the meditation of the isolated mind of ultimate example clear light he or she attains a body that is not the same as his or her ordinary physical body. This new body is the illusory body. It has the same appearance as the body of the personal yidam of generation stage, except that it is white in color. It can be perceived only by those who have already attained an illusory body.
- Indestructible drop** The most subtle drop, formed from the very subtle red and white drops received from the parents at conception and located at the heart *chakra*. At death the red and white drops separate and the very subtle mind and its mounting wind or most subtle energy are freed to travel to the next life.
- Inherent Existence** The illusion that people and things exist by virtue of their own essential characteristics alone, independently of any conditioning factors. Ignorantly assenting to this illusion is the basis for cyclic existence; wisely dispelling it, the basis for enlightenment and liberation. Inherently existent, truly existent, existence from its own side or existent from its own true nature are interchangeable terms. Also see: Self-existence. Also see: Emptiness
- Initiation** (Skt. *abhisheka*; Tib. *wang*).
- Intermediate State** See: Bardo
- Karma** (Skt.; Tib. *le*) Deeds. Term referring to actions and their effects. Through the force of intention we perform actions with our body, speech, and mind, and all of these actions produce effects. The effect of virtuous actions is happiness and the effect of negative actions is suffering
- Katvanga** (Tib.) Ritual object.
- Lam Rim** (Tib.) Stages on the spiritual path to enlightenment in sutrayana. In tantrayana the stages of the path are called *Nag Rim*.
- Lama Chöpa** (Tib.) A tantric guru-yoga practice.
- Liberation** (Skt. *moksha*, Tib. *tharpa*) Release from the bondage of *samsara*, cyclic existence. Freedom from compulsive karmic patterns and the mental and para-mental obscurations.
- Maha anuttara yoga tantra** (Skt) See Highest yoga tantra
- Mala** (Tib.) Rosary.
- Mandala** (Skt.) A circular diagram symbolic of the entire universe. The abode of a meditational deity, understood as the emanation of the wisdom of that deity. Figuratively, one's personal surroundings seen as a reflection of one's state of mind.
- Manjushri** (Tib. *Jampelyang*) Male meditational deity. The eternally youthful crown prince, the embodiment of the wisdom of all enlightened beings. From Manjushri the lineage of the profound view of emptiness was handed down to Nagarjuna. Manjushri incarnated in human form is called Manjunatha ('*Jam ngon*), an epithet for Tsong Khapa.
- Mantra** (Skt.; Tib. *ngak*) Literally, 'mind protection'. Sanskrit syllables recited in conjunction with the practice of a particular meditational deity and embodying the qualities of that deity. Mantra protects the mind from ordinary appearances and conceptions. *Mantrayana* is a synonym for vajrayana.
- Meditation** (skr. *bhavana*, Tib. *gom*) Literally 'getting used to'. The process of controlling, training and transforming the mind that leads one to liberation and enlightenment. The process of becoming thoroughly familiar with beneficial states of mind through both analytical investigation and single-pointed concentration.
- Merit** The wholesome tendencies implanted in the mind as a result of committing skillful actions. That positive wholesome tendencies or energy has the power to create happiness and good qualities.
- Method** Any spiritual path that functions to ripen our buddha seed, i.e. our growing buddha nature. Training in renunciation, compassion, and bodhicitta are examples of method practices.

Migtsema (Tib.) Originally a hymn on Rendawa made by Tsong Khapa. Rendawa (1349-1412), one of the most important teachers of Tsong Khapa, who belonged to the Sakya school. Rendawa reversed the praise into a hymn on Tsong Khapa.

Mind (Tib. *shepa*) That which is clarity and cognizes.

Mudra (Skt.; Tib. *chakgya*) Generally, the Sanskrit word for 'seal', as in Mahamudra, the 'Great seal'. More specifically, 'mudra' is used to refer to a consort, as in 'action mudra' or 'wisdom mudra', and to hand gestures used in Tantric rituals.

Nada Squiggle; last part of a seed-syllable that dissolves.

Nadis See: Channels

Naropa Eleventh century Indian *mahasiddha* who transmitted many profound tantric lineages, including those of Heruka Chakrasamvara and Vajrayogini. Disciple of Tilopa and guru of Marpa.

Nectar (Skt. *amrita*; Tib. *dütsi*) Transcendental substance emanated by enlightened deities, which confers such benefits as purification, realizations, long life etc. according to the type.

Nirmanakaya (Skt.; Tib. *tul ku*) Emanation body. Form in which the enlightened mind appears in order to benefit ordinary beings.

Non-virtue Action that results in suffering

Phowa See Transference of consciousness

Preliminaries. Preliminary practices (Tib. *ngondro*); the meditations designed to remove hindrances and accumulate a store of meritorious energy so that a disciple will have success in the practice. Several tibetan traditions practice four *ngondros* for the *vajrayana* practice: 100,000 prostrations, 100,000 Vajrasattva purifications, 100,000 mandala offerings, 100,000 guru-yoga practices. In the tradition of Tsong Khapa the foremost *ngondro* for the practice of *vajrayana* is the study and practice of the *Lam Rim*. As special *ngondro* one does the 100,000 guru-yoga practices, i.e. the 100,000 *Migtsemas* within the context of the *Ganden Lha Gyema*.

Pride See Divine pride.

Protectors There are Dharma protectors (Skt. *dharmapalas* Tib. *chö kyong*) and worldly protectors, also called guardians of the world (Skt. *lokapalas*; Tib. *jikten kyongwa*).

Psychic heat (Tib. *tummo*) Inner fire. An inner heat located at the center of the navel channel wheel.

Puja A ceremony in which offerings and other acts of devotion are performed in front of holy beings.

Pure Land An environment free from true sufferings which appears to a pure mind. A state of existence outside *samsara* in which all conditions are favorable for becoming fully enlightened. Examples include: Tushita or Joyful land, the pure land of Maitreya; Sukhavati, the pure land of Amithaba; Dakiniland, the pure land of Heruka and Vajrayogini.

Ratnasambhava (Tib. *Rinchen jungne*) The manifestation of the feeling aggregate of all Buddhas. He is one of the five Tathagatas or Dhyanis buddhas. He has a yellow-colored body. He holds the commitments of the four generositys.

Reality source (Tib. *chojung*) Also called phenomena source. Emptiness, the source of all phenomena, symbolized as a single or double tetrahedron.

Rebirth The entrance of consciousness into a new state of existence after death and the intermediate state.

Rupakaya (Skt.) See Buddha's bodies.

Sadhana (Skt.) Method of accomplishment. The step by step instructions in vajrayana for practicing the meditations related to a particular meditational deity. A method for attainment associated with a Tantric Deity

Samadhi (Skt.) A state of deep meditative absorption; single-pointed concentration on the actual nature of things, free from discursive thought and dualistic conceptions.

Samantabhadra (Tib. *Kuntu zangpo*) A bodhisattva known for his heroic aspiration and extensive offerings.

Sambogakaya (Skt.; Tib. *long ku*) Enjoyment body. One of the form-bodies of a buddha. The body of Buddha as it exists in the Buddha fields or paradises and upper realms; form in which the enlightened mind teaches the highly realized bodhisattvas who are at that stage. This body is fully adorned with the unique physical characteristics of a buddha. It can only be seen by those who have attained the highly realized stage of an arya.

Samsara Cyclic existence; the recurring cycle of death and rebirth under the control of ignorance and fraught with suffering.

Samsaric gods Samsaric gods are samsaric beings dwelling for the moment in a heavenly state.

Sangha (Skt.) As object of refuge it is the community of *arya* beings or saints, those who have achieved spiritual aims - have attained a direct realization of emptiness- and are able to help. According to the *vinaya* any community of four or more fully ordained monks is also a sangha. Any being, lay or ordained, who has taken bodhisattva vows is also a sangha. In daily life we regard the community of those on the spiritual path as a sangha.

Seed-syllable In tantric visualizations, a Sanskrit syllable arising out of emptiness and out of which the meditational deity in turn arises. Also called sacred syllable.

Segyu One of the two great transmission lineages in the Gelugpa tradition. This lineage is coming through Segyu Könchok Gyeltsen. The other one is the Ensa nyinggyu lineage.

Self See: I

Self-existence The mistaken conception that things exist independently from their own side rather than being dependent upon causes, conditions, parts and the process of conceptual imputation; the wisdom of emptiness is the understanding that all things lack, or are empty of, even an atom of such self-existence.

Selflessness (Tib. *dak mepa*) Two selflessnesses: personal selflessness and phenomenal selflessness, both being descriptions of the ultimate reality, which is the absence of the two 'selves', the realization of what is called 'transcendental wisdom' or *prajnaparamita*

Sentient Being (skr. *sattva*, Tib. *semchen*) Any being who possesses a mind that is contaminated by delusions or their imprints. Both 'sentient being' and 'living being' are terms used to distinguish beings whose minds are contaminated by any of the two obstructions from Buddhas, whose minds are completely free from these obstructions.

Shunyata See: Emptiness

Siddha Accomplished practitioner.

Siddhi Achievement, attainment. These are of two types: common attainments and supreme attainments.

Sindhu or *sindhura* - vermilion powder, that dakinis wear on their forehead.

Six root delusions (*kleshas*) Attachment, anger, pride, ignorance, doubt, wrong view.

Spiritual master (skr. *guru*, Tib. *lama*) A spiritual guide or teacher. One who shows a disciple the path to liberation and enlightenment. A direct guru is any spiritual guide from whom we have received teachings in this life, a lineage guru is any spiritual guide who has passed on the lineage of teaching received by our own direct gurus. One's principal spiritual guide is also known as one's root guru (Tib. *tsewei lama*). In tantra, one's teacher is seen as inseparable from the meditational deity and the essential nature of one's mind.

Sutra (Skt.; Tib. *do*) The teachings of Buddha that are open to everyone to practice. This pre-tantric division of buddhist teachings stresses the cultivation of bodhicitta and the practices of the six perfections.

Sutrayana The pre-tantric vehicle or path of Buddhism, leading to the attainment of full enlightenment over three countless eons through the practice of the six perfections; hence also called the perfection vehicle (*paramitayana*)

Tantra (skr., Tib. *gyu*) Literally 'thread' or 'steam' or 'continuity', the 'stream' or 'tread' of innate wisdom embracing all experience. Another name is: secret mantra. The texts of the secret-mantra teachings of buddhism. The esoteric teaching of Buddha. The essential practice of tantra that distinguishes it from sutra is bringing the result into the path. The practice involves identification of oneself with a fully enlightened deity. The tantric stages of the path are called *nag rim*. Also see Four classes of tantra

Tantrayana The post-sutra vehicle of Buddhism, capable of leading to the attainment of full enlightenment within one lifetime. Also called 'the diamond vehicle', i.e. *vajrayana*, or *mantrayana*.

Tathagata An epithet of Buddha 'One who has thus gone'.

Ten directions The four cardinal directions, the four intermediate directions, and the directions above and below. As a conventional formula it means 'all directions'.

Thangka A traditional painting of a Buddha.

Theravada 'Vehicle of the Elders'. Tradition of buddhism following its earlier style of practice and understanding of scripture. Sometimes called *hinayana*. Its final goal is *arhatship*.

Three Principles of the path 1. Determination to be free, 2. *bodhicitta*, 3. emptiness.

Three realms The three levels within samsara: the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm.

Three times Past, present, and future.

Tigle See drops.

Torma offering A special food offering made according to either sutric or tantric rituals.

Transference of consciousness A practice for transferring the consciousness to a pure land at the time of death.

Trijang Rinpoche Yongdzin Trijang Dorje Chang [1901-1981], Losang Yeshe. Was the junior tutor to His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and holder of the many lineages in sutra and secret mantra. Disciple of Pabongka Rinpoche. The senior tutor to the Dalai Lama was Yongdzin Ling Dorje-Chang (1903-c.1984), Thubten Lungtog, ninety-seventh holder of the throne of Ganden. Both Trijang Rinpoche and Ling Rinpoche were teachers of Gelek Rinpoche.

Tsongkhapa (1357-1419) Lit. 'The man from the union land (Tsong)'. Je Tsong Khapa was a great fourteenth-century scholar and teacher who reforming the Kadampa tradition restored the purity of buddhadharma in Tibet, thus founding the Gelug tradition. His many treatises finalized the work begun by Atisha of clarification and synthesis of the vast body of Indian scriptures and schools of practice into a unified exposition of sutrayana and tantrayana paths. He wrote several lamrims, the most well-known one is Great exposition on the Stages of the Path, *Lam rim chen mo*. On the stages in tantra he wrote the Great exposition of secret mantra, *sNgags rim chen mo*. He is regarded a full enlightened being and along

with Longchen Rabjampa (1308-1363) and the Sakya Pandita (1182-1251) an emanation of Manjushri. That is why he is called *Jamgon*, 'gentle lord', indicating that he and the deity Manjughosa -form of Manjushri- are of one essence. He is regarded as the synthesis of Manjushri, Avalokiteshvara and Vajrapani and therefore regarded as the embodiment of the wisdom, compassion and power of all the buddhas.

Tulku, See Nirmanakaya.

Union, state of ultimate (Skt. *yuganaddha*. Tib. *zung juk*). Tantric term for buddhahood.

Vairochana (Tib. *Nampar namdze*) The manifestation of the form aggregate of all Buddhas. He is one of the five Tathagatas or Dhyani buddhas. He has a white-colored body. He holds the commitments of refuge to Buddha, to Dharma, to Sangha, refrain from non-virtue, practice virtue, help others.

Vajra Bhairava See Yamantaka

Vajra (Skt.; Tib. *dorje*) Diamond scepter. Generally the Sanskrit word 'vajra' means indestructible like a diamond and powerful like a thunderbolt. In the context of tantra it means the indivisibility of method and wisdom.

Vajra Zombini (Skt. Vajra Vetali; Tib. *Dorje Rolangma*) Consort of Yamantaka.

Vajradhara (Skt; Tib. *Dorje Chang*) 'Holder of the diamond scepter'. Conqueror Vajradhara is the source of all secret mantra. He is the same nature as buddha Sakyamuni but displays a different aspect. Buddha Sakyamuni appears in the aspect of an emanation body, *nirmanakaya*, and Conqueror Vajradhara appears in the aspect of an enjoyment body, *sambogakaya*. He symbolizes the attainment of enlightenment through the union of simultaneous great bliss and emptiness.

Vajra-master Teacher who is qualified to perform the task of a tantric guru.

Vajrasattva (Tib. *Dorje Sempa*) Diamond Being. Male meditational deity; a major tantric purification practice for removing obstacles created by negative *karma* and the breaking of one's vows.

Vajrayana (Skt.) Secret mantra vehicle. The advanced means to quickly achieve buddhahood -within one lifetime- for the sake of all sentient beings. Its method is bringing the result into the path. It is also called: *tantrayana*. It is part of the mahayana, which is divided into *sutrayana* and *tantrayana*

Vajrayogini (Tib. *Dorje Neljorma*) Female meditational deity of the *maha-annutara yoga tantra*, who is the embodiment of indivisible bliss and emptiness. She is the same nature as Heruka Chakrasamvara. It is a mother tantra.

Vinaya (Skt.) The first of the three major collections of scriptures or 'baskets' of the buddhist canon, the *Tripitaka*. It contains the narratives of how the Buddha established the monastic life and rules. It also refers to the code of behavior contained in this vinaya basket, followed by those who have taken the vows of the buddhist order. *Vinaya Sutras* are sutras in which Buddha principally explained the practice of moral discipline, and in particular the Pratimoksha moral discipline.

Visualization The use of creative imagination in meditation. Despite the term used it is not limited to vision, but involves the full creative sphere of one's imaging abilities

Void or Voidness See: Emptiness

Vows Promises to refrain from certain actions. The three sets of vows are the Pratimoksha vows of individual liberation, the Bodhisattva vows, and the Secret Mantra vows.

Wisdom being (skr. *jnana-sattva*; Tib. *yeshe sempa*) An actual Buddha, especially one who is invited to unite with a visualized commitment being.

Wisdom (skr. *prajna*, Tib. *sherab*) The sixth of the six transcendences or *paramitas*. The unmistakable understanding of things; specifically the insight into emptiness: the actual way in which things exist; Wisdom is the antidote to ignorance. It is symbolized by Manjushri

Yab yum *yab* is father (male buddha); *yum* is mother (female buddha)

Yama (Tib. *Shinje*) The Lord of Death. Personification of uncontrolled death. Although he is not actually a sentient being he is depicted as a being and known as a lord because death has dominion over our lives. In the diagram of the wheel of life he is depicted clutching the six realms of cyclic existence.

Yamantaka A yidam; in *maha-annutara-yoga tantra* a wrathful manifestation of Manjushri, to overcome hindrances; it is a father-tantra. Many names refer to him: First of all 'Terminator of Death' in sanskrit Yamantaka (Yama-antaka) in tibetan *Shinje She*; Then 'Vajra Terrifier', in sanskrit Vajra Bhairava, in Tibetan *Dorje Jigje*. He is also referred to as 'King of the Yamas', in sanskrit Yama Raja, in tibetan *Shinje Gyalpo*. There are many forms of Yamantaka. The Yamantaka referred to in this teaching is the 'Solitary Hero Yamantaka', in sanskrit Yamantaka Ekavira, in Tibetan referred to as *Dorje Jigje Pawo chikpa*

Yidam (Tib sometimes *tha*) Also called meditational deity. A male or female figure embodying a particular aspect of the fully enlightened experience and used as the focus of concentration and identification in tantra.

Yoga (Skt.; Tib. *neljor*) A term used for various spiritual practices that entail maintaining a special view, such as Guru yoga and the yogas of eating, sleeping, dreaming, and waking. 'Yoga' also refers to union, such as the union of tranquil abiding and superior seeing.

Yogi, Yogini (Skt.; Tib. *neljorpa*) Male resp. female practitioner.

For the glossary we made use of:

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Born in Lhasa, Tibet, Kyabje Gehlek Rinpoche was recognized as an incarnate lama at the age of four. Carefully tutored by Tibet's greatest living masters, he received specialized individual teaching at Drepung Monastery, the nation's largest monastery.

In 1959, Gehlek Rinpoche was among those forced into exile, fleeing the Communist Chinese who had occupied Tibet since 1951. While in India, Rinpoche as a member of a group of sixteen monks, was chosen to continue specific studies with the great masters who had escaped Tibet, including the Dalai Lama's personal tutors.

At the age of twenty-five, Rinpoche gave up monastic life. In the mid-70's, Gehlek Rinpoche was encouraged by his teachers to begin teaching in English. Since that time he has gained a large following throughout the world. Coming to the U.S. in the mid-80's, Rinpoche later moved to Ann Arbor, MI and in 1987 founded Jewel Heart, an organization dedicated to the preservation of Tibetan culture and Buddhism. Today, Jewel Heart has chapters throughout the U.S. and in Malaysia, Singapore and the Netherlands.

A member of the last generation of lamas to be born and fully educated in Tibet, Gehlek Rinpoche is particularly distinguished for his understanding of contemporary society and his skill as a teacher of Buddhism in the West. He is now an American citizen. Gehlek Rinpoche's first book, the national bestseller, *Good Life, Good Death*, was published in 2001.

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