

# The Easy Path to Travel to Omniscience

by Panchen Losang Chokyi Gyaltzen<sup>1</sup>

At the feet of the venerable and holy masters, indivisible from Sakyamuni-Vajradhara, I pay homage continuously. With your great compassion I pray to you to care for me.

The exposition of the stages of the path to awakening, the profound method leading fortunate beings to Buddhahood, has two parts:

***I. How to rely on spiritual mentors, the root of the path***

***II. Having relied on them, how to progressively train your mind***

*The first has two parts:*

*I.1. How to conduct the actual meditation session*

*I.2. What to do between meditation sessions*

***I.1. The first has three parts:***

*I.1.1. Preliminaries*

*I.1.2. Actual meditation*

*I.1.3. Conclusion*

*I.1.1.* For the preliminaries, in a place you find pleasant, sit on a comfortable seat in the eight-point posture or in whatever position is comfortable. Then examine your mind well, and in an especially virtuous state of mind, think:

In the space in front of me, on a precious throne both high and wide, supported by eight great lions, on a seat of a multicolored lotus, moon and sun discs is my kind main spiritual mentor in the form of the Conqueror Sakyamuni. The color of his body is pure gold. On his head is the crown protuberance. He has one face and two hands. The right touches the earth; the left, in meditation posture, holds an alms bowl full of nectar. Elegantly he wears the three saffron-colored monastic robes. His body, made of pure light and adorned with the signs and marks of a buddha, emanates a flood of light. Sitting in vajra posture, he is surrounded by my direct and indirect spiritual mentors, by deities, Buddhas and bodhisattvas, heroes, heroines and an assembly of arya Dharma protectors. In front of him, on exquisite stands are his teachings in the form of books of light. The members of the merit field look upon me with contentment. In turn, at the thought of their compassion and virtue I have great faith in them.

Then think:

I and all sentient beings, my mothers from beginningless time until now, have continuously undergone the dukkha of cyclic existence in general and the suffering of the three lower realms in particular. Nevertheless, it is still difficult to fathom the depth and breadth of this

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misery. Now that I have attained a precious human life, so difficult to attain and so meaningful once acquired, if I do not realize supreme liberation in which all the dukkha of samsara is overcome – Guru-Buddhahood – then once again I will have to experience the various torments of cyclic existence in general and those of the three lower realms in particular. As I now have before me the mentor and the Three Jewels who can protect me from this pain, for the sake of all mother sentient beings I will do all I can to realize precious, perfect, and consummate Buddhahood. To this end, from the depths of my heart I take refuge in the spiritual mentors and in the Three Jewels.

Having first meditated on refuge, bodhicitta, and the four immeasurable qualities, reflect on the following, reciting it seven, twenty-one times or more:

In particular, for the sake of all mother sentient beings, by all means I will quickly, very quickly, realize perfect, consummate Buddhahood. To that end, I will now meditate on the stages of the path to awakening by the means of the profound practice of guru-deity yoga.

Then visualize and recite from:

In the space in front of me, on a precious throne both high and wide, supported by eight great lions, on a seat formed by a multicolored lotus and by sun and moon discs, is my main spiritual mentor, so kind, in the form of the Conqueror Sakyamuni. The color of his body is that of pure gold.

Up to:

He is seated in vajra posture. Above and behind him on a seat formed by a multicolored lotus, moon and sun discs is seated Victorious Vajradhara surrounded by the mentors of the Blessing Practice lineage. On his right is Venerable Maitreya surrounded by the mentors of the Vast Activities Lineage. On his left is Venerable Manjughosa surrounded by the mentors of the Profound View Lineage. In front of him is my kind main spiritual mentor surrounded by the mentors with whom I have a spiritual relationship. Surrounding them are deities, Buddhas and bodhisattvas, heroes, heroines and an assembly of arya Dharma protectors. In front of them, on exquisite stands, are their teachings in the form of books of light. They send out in the ten directions an extraordinary array of emanations in forms appropriate for taming others. The central figure and his entourage are marked with a white OM at the head, a red AH at the throat, a blue HUM at the heart, a yellow SVA at the navel, and a green HAH at the secret place. These emit light rays of the five colors. Guru-Sakyamuni-Vajradhara radiates light from the syllable HUM at his heart in the ten directions, inviting from their natural abodes, wisdom beings who resemble those meditated on.

Once each of them has dissolved into their specific commitment being, think that by nature each one embodies all objects of refuge. Offer the seven-limb prayer and the mandala and be sure to request them according to the mentors' instructions with great sincerity.

Next Guru-Sakyamuni-Vajradhara sends out light from the syllable HUM at his heart. It reaches the great multitude of peaceful and wrathful beings surrounding him. They dissolve into light

and are absorbed into Munindra. Munindra in turn dissolves into your main mentor on your head, transforming him completely. Visualize on your head on a lion-throne, lotus, moon, and sun discs from, "... is my main spiritual mentor, so kind, in the form of the Conqueror Sakyamuni ..." up to, "He is seated in vajra posture." Offer the abbreviated version of the seven-limb prayer and the mandala, and then think that all mother sentient beings who are present around you together in one voice request:

Extraordinary guru-deity who is the nature of the four bodies, Munindra-Vajradhara, I request you.

Extraordinary guru-deity who is the nature of the dharma body free of obscuration, Munindra-Vajradhara, I request you.

Extraordinary guru-deity who is the nature of the blissful enjoyment body, Munindra-Vajradhara, I request you.

Extraordinary guru-deity who is the nature of various emanation bodies, Munindra-Vajradhara, I request you.

Extraordinary guru-deity embodying all mentors, Munindra-Vajradhara, I request you.

Extraordinary guru-deity embodying all deities, Munindra-Vajradhara, I request you.

Extraordinary guru-deity embodying all Buddhas, Munindra-Vajradhara, I request you.

Extraordinary guru-deity embodying all Dharmas, Munindra-Vajradhara, I request you.

Extraordinary guru-deity embodying all Saṅghas, Munindra-Vajradhara, I request you.

Extraordinary guru-deity embodying all dakas and dakinis, Munindra-Vajradhara, I request you.

Extraordinary guru-deity embodying all Dharma protectors, Munindra-Vajradhara, I request you.

Especially,

Extraordinary guru-deity embodying all objects of refuge, Munindra-Vajradhara, I request you.

If I and all other sentient beings have been born in samsara and are endlessly subjected to intense dukkha, it is due to our failure to rely on our spiritual mentors correctly in both thought and deed. Guru-deity, please inspire me and all sentient beings to henceforth correctly rely on our spiritual mentors in thought and deed.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with correctly relying on your mentors in thought and deed. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a special realization enabling you to correctly rely on your spiritual mentors in thought and deed has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

### ***1.1.2. The actual meditation***

*1.1.2.a) How to rely [on the mentors] in thought*

*1.1.2.b) How to rely on them in deed*

*1.1.2.a)1. Cultivating faith, the root*

*1.1.2.a)2. Having recalled their kindness, developing veneration for them*

***1.1.2.a)1.*** For the first, visualize that the mentors with whom you have a direct spiritual connection appear from Guru-Munindra’s heart and place themselves in the space in front of you. Think:

My spiritual mentors are true buddhas. In his precious-collection of tantras, the complete and perfect Buddha said that in degenerate times the Conqueror Vajradhara would work for the benefit of sentient beings by appearing in the form of spiritual mentors. Accordingly, my spiritual mentors have simply shown an alternate physical form and are in fact the Conqueror Vajradhara manifesting as spiritual mentors to guide those who do not have the good fortune to meet the Buddha directly. Guru-deity, please inspire me and all mother sentient beings so that we may perceive our spiritual mentors directly as Munindra-Vajradhara.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies you of all the negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with directly perceiving your mentors as Munindra-Vajradhara. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth, expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization – the direct perception of these spiritual mentors as Munindra-Vajradhara – arises in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

If the thought occurs, “But a buddha has eliminated all faults and possesses all good qualities. My spiritual mentors have such and such faults inspired by the three mental poisons,” it is due to a false impression. In the past, due to such a false impression, Lekpa’i Karma saw all the activities of our Guide, the Buddha, as pure deceit. Asanga saw Venerable Maitreya as a female dog. Maitripa saw the Lord of Yogis, Shavaripa, kill pigs and commit great wrongdoing. [Think]:

Similarly, do my spiritual mentors really have these faults or is it a mere impression? It is a false impression. Guru-deity, please inspire me and all mother sentient beings so that the view of faults in our mentors may never occur even for an instant, and that great faith which allows us to see only goodness in all they do may easily arise in us.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with not seeing faults with these spiritual mentors, even for an instant,

and with the great faith that allows you to see only goodness in all they do easily arising within you. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that in you and others, the view of faults in your spiritual mentors no longer arises even for an instant, and that you have easily attained the realization of great faith that allows you to see only goodness in all they do.

***1.1.2.a)2. [Having recalled their kindness, developing veneration for them]***

Visualize dearly the spiritual mentors in space before you and think:

These spiritual mentors have been very kind to me. If I have understood the profound path that easily confers supreme liberation ending all the sufferings of cyclic existence and those of the lower realms, and confers complete, perfect, and precious Buddhahood, it is due to these spiritual mentors' kindness. Guru-deity, please inspire me and all mother sentient beings so that from the awareness of these spiritual mentors' kindness, great veneration for them may easily arise in us.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with great veneration for these spiritual mentors easily arising in you from the awareness of their kindness. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that in you and others the realization of great veneration for these spiritual mentors has easily arisen from the awareness of their kindness.

***1.1.2.b) How to rely on them in deed***

Visualize clearly the spiritual mentors before you and think:

For the sake of these spiritual mentors who are true buddhas, I will give my body, life, belongings, and so forth without hesitation, and I will especially please them with the offering of practicing according to their words. Guru-deity, please inspire me so that I may do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with delighting the spiritual mentors by means of the three kinds of pleasing actions. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that in you and others the realization of delighting the spiritual mentors by means of the three kinds of pleasing actions has arisen.

### ***I.1.3. What to do to conclude***

While meditating with the guru-deity on your head, request him, recite mantras, and with intense aspiration, dedicate the virtue created from the above, to the fulfillment of your own and others' temporary and ultimate goals.

### ***I.2. What to do between meditation sessions***

Between sessions read canonical and exegetic works that explain how to rely on spiritual mentors, rely on mindfulness and introspective awareness to control the doors of the senses, eat with moderation, strive at the yoga of no-sleep and when you do sleep, do so in the proper manner. You should energetically practice the yogas of washing and eating as well.

## ***II Having relied on [spiritual mentors], how to progressively train your mind has two parts:***

*II.1. Exhortation to take full advantage from a rebirth with freedom*

*II.2. How to take full advantage from it*

*II.1.1. What to do in the actual meditation session*

*II.1.2. What to do between meditation sessions*

*II.2.2.2.1.a) Preliminaries, II.2.2.2.1.b) Actual meditation, II.2.2.2.1.c) Conclusion*

***II.1.1.a)*** The preliminaries are as before:

... Extraordinary guru-deity who embodies all objects of refuge, Munindra Vajradhara I request you.

Then reflect:

The fact that I and all other sentient beings have been born in samsara and are endlessly subjected to intense dukkha is due to our having failed to attain a superior realization of the great potential of freedom and fortune, and of the difficulty of attaining them. Guru-deity, please inspire me and all sentient beings so that we may attain a superior realization of the great potential of freedom and fortune and of the difficulty of attaining them.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with attaining a superior realization of the great potential of freedom and fortune and of the difficulty of attaining them. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of the great potential of freedom and fortune and of the difficulty of attaining them has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

### ***II.1.1.b) The actual meditation***

*II.1.1.b)1. Contemplating the great potential of freedom and fortune*

*II.1.1.b)2. Contemplating the difficulty of attaining them*

***II.1.1.b)1.*** While meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

The opportunity to practice the perfect teaching is called freedom. The presence of all inner and outer favorable conditions for spiritual practice is called fortune. In brief, the life with freedom and fortune that we have attained carries great potential because on its basis we can produce the causes of a high rebirth with an excellent body and resources – generosity, ethical discipline, fortitude and so forth. In particular on its basis we can generate the three kinds of ethical codes and in a short life of this degenerate age easily accomplish Buddhahood. May I not waste in useless activities this life complete with freedom and fortune that is difficult to attain and carries great potential, and instead may I take full advantage of it! Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with attaining a superior realization of the great potential of freedom and fortune. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of the great potential of freedom and fortune has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

***III.1. b)2. Contemplating the difficulty of attaining them***

While meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

The freedom and fortune that I have attained not only carry great potential, they are also extremely difficult to attain. The majority of sentient beings, human and otherwise, engage mostly in the ten nonvirtues and so forth, which are obstacles to attaining freedom and fortune. In particular to attain an excellent rebirth complete with freedom and fortune, you must have pure ethical discipline as a base, supplement it with generosity and so forth, and complete these with stainless prayers and so on. Since such causes are very rarely created, the probability of attaining a simple high rebirth as compared to a low rebirth as an animal and so on is barely conceivable.

Compared to simple happy rebirths, lives complete with freedom and fortune are as infrequent as stars visible during the day. For that reason I must not waste in meaningless activities the difficult-to-attain and once attained very meaningful life complete with freedom and fortune that I have found just this once. Instead I must take full advantage of it. The way to take full advantage of it is to rely on my spiritual mentors who are inseparable from the Buddha and to apply the key instructions of the supreme vehicle that they teach. May I thereby in one life easily attain Buddhahood! Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and

those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with attaining a superior realization of the difficulty of attaining freedom and fortune. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of the difficulty of attaining freedom and fortune has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

**II.1.1.c)** The way to conclude is as before.

**II.1.2.** Between meditation sessions, as before, read canonic and exegetic works that explain the topic of freedom and fortune, etc.

**II.2. How to draw full advantage from [this precious human life]**

*II.2.1. Training the mind on the stages of the path shared with lesser beings*

*II.2.2. Training the mind on the stages of the path shared with intermediate beings*

*II.2.3. Training the mind on the stages of the path shared with great beings*

**II.2.1. [Training the mind on the stages of the path shared with lesser beings]**

*II.2.1.1. What to do in the actual meditation session*

*II.2.1.2. What to do between meditation sessions*

*II.2.2.2.1.a) Preliminaries, II.2.2.2.1.b) Actual meditation, II.2.2.2.1.c) Conclusion*

**II.2.1.a)** The preliminaries are as before:

... Extraordinary guru-deity who embodies all objects of refuge, Munindra Vajradhara I request you.

Then [reflect]:

The fact that I and all other sentient beings have been born in samsara and are endlessly subjected to intense dukkha is due to our having failed to contemplate death and impermanence, to take refuge from the depths of our hearts in the Three Jewels. Refuge is generated due to fear of suffering in the lower realms, to having faith based on conviction in karma and its effects, to correctly reject destructive actions and do constructive ones. Guru-deity, please inspire me and all sentient beings so the awareness of death and impermanence may arise in us, we may take refuge from the depths of our hearts in the Three Jewels out of fear of the suffering of the lower realms, and having generated faith based conviction in karma and its effects, that we may correctly reject negativities and practice virtue.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with attaining a superior realization of the stages of the path shared with lesser beings. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of



the stages of the path shared with lesser beings has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

### ***II.2.1.1.b) The actual meditation***

*II.2.1.1.b)1. Contemplating death and impermanence*

*II.2.1.1.b)2. Contemplating the suffering of the lower realms*

*II.2.1.1.b)3. Training in taking refuge in the Three Jewels*

*II.2.1.1.b)4. Cultivating faith in the form of conviction in karma and its effects*

*II.2.1.1.b)1.* While meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect in the following manner:

This life with freedom and fortune, so difficult to attain and once attained so meaningful, will soon be destroyed; death is certain to occur. Furthermore, no inner or outer circumstances can prevent it. I cannot add to my lifespan, which in fact shortens unceasingly. I am sure to die without having had the time to practice the teaching while alive. Not only do I have to die, the time of my death is uncertain. Because the lifespan of sentient beings of Jambudvīpa is uncertain, the causes of death numerous and those of life few, and our bodies are as fragile as water bubbles, the time of our death is uncertain. At the time of death everything but the teaching is useless. No matter how great the affection that my circle of loved ones has for me, I cannot take a single one of them with me. No matter how large a collection of lovely belongings I have, I cannot bring the tiniest portion of it with me. I must even be separated from the very flesh and bones I was born with. Therefore what purpose does attachment to the good things of this life serve? The lord of death is sure to come but it is unsure when that will occur. Since I run the risk of dying this very day, truly I must do something to prepare for death. By way of preparation, may I practice the teaching purely, free of attachment to any of this life's excellence! Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with henceforth practicing the teaching purely, free of attachment to any of this life's excellence. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of the ability to practice the teaching purely henceforth, free of attachment to any of this life's excellence, has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

### ***II.2.1.1.b)2. [Contemplating the suffering of the lower realms]***

While meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

This life-basis, complete with freedom and fortune that is so difficult to attain and once attained, so meaningful, will soon end. After its destruction, I will not cease to exist but will

be obliged to take rebirth. There are only two possible places of rebirth: a happy realm and a miserable realm. If I take rebirth in a miserable realm, as a hell-being I will undergo inconceivable sufferings of heat, cold, and the like; as a hungry spirit, the sufferings of hunger, thirst, and so on; and as an animal, the sufferings of ignorance, stupidity, eating others, and being eaten. I am not capable of bearing the likes of the lower realms' suffering. Now that I have attained a life-basis complete with freedom and fortune that is so difficult to attain and once attained, so meaningful, may I attain Guru-Buddhahood that ends all the sufferings of the lower realms! Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with henceforth attaining Guru-Buddhahood that ends all sufferings of the lower realms. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization allowing you to attain Guru-Buddhahood that ends all sufferings of the lower realms has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

#### ***II.2.1.1.b)3. [Training in taking refuge in the Three Jewels]***

All parts of the guru-deity's body on your head emit an assembly consisting of spiritual mentors, deities, the Three Jewels, heroes and heroines, Dharma protectors, and guardians that fill space. Visualize clearly the objects of refuge surrounding the guru-deity on your head. Keeping in mind the good qualities of their body, speech, mind and activity, think, "Henceforth please protect me and all sentient beings from the fears of cyclic existence as a whole and from those of the lower realms." With intense aspiration, say, "I take refuge in the spiritual mentor, the deities, and the Three Jewels." A stream of nectar flows from the Three Jewels, dissolving into you and other sentient beings. It purifies you of your bad karma, negativities and obscurations. The Three Jewels' inspiration enters your mind and enhances your lifespan, merit, and qualities of scriptural knowledge and realizations. Thus take refuge a hundred, thousand, ten thousand, hundred thousand times, and so forth. With the awareness of the temporary and ultimate benefits of taking refuge in the Three Jewels, thoroughly train in the refuge precepts.

#### ***II.2.1.1.b)4. [Cultivating faith in the form of conviction in karma and its effects]***

While meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

The Conqueror's scriptures say that from the cause that is the practice of virtue only a result of happiness can occur, not one of suffering; from the cause that is nonvirtuous conduct can only arise a result of suffering, not one of happiness. Although one may perform only minor virtue or negativity, when either fails to encounter an obstacle, it gives rise to a result of great magnitude. If you perform neither virtue nor negativity, you will experience neither happiness nor suffering. If the virtue or negativity performed encounters no obstacle, the action performed will not go wasted; it is certain to produce either happiness or misery. Furthermore, depending on its object, the thinking behind it, its nature and basis, it will be

[more or less] powerful. Having generated faith based on conviction in this, may I strive to do good starting with minor virtue, the ten virtues, and so on, and may my three doors of action not be sullied by even the slightest nonvirtue such as the ten nonvirtues! Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with generating faith based on conviction of karma and its effects, with correctly producing good deeds and abstaining from bad deeds. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that having cultivated faith in the form of conviction of karma and its effects, a superior realization of abstention from negativities and correct practice of virtue has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others. Although you may strive in this manner, if due to the feebleness of your antidotes and the strength of your afflictions you are sullied by nonvirtue, do your utmost to purify it by means of the four opponent powers and abstain from it henceforth.

**II.2.1.1.c)** The way to conclude is as before.

**II.2.1.2.** Between meditation sessions read canonical and exegetic works that explain the topics shared with lesser beings and so forth.

This concludes the explanation of training the mind on the stages of the path shared with lesser beings.

## **II.2.2. Training the mind on the stages of the path shared with intermediate beings**

*II.2.2.1. Developing the aspiration to liberation*

*II.2.2.2. Establishing the nature of the path leading to liberation*

*II.2.2.1.1. What to do in the actual meditation session*

*II.2.2.1.2. What to do between meditation sessions*

*II.2.2.2.1.a) Preliminaries, II.2.2.2.1.b) Actual meditation, II.2.2.2.1.c) Conclusion*

**II.2.2.1.1.a)** The preliminaries are as before:

... Extraordinary guru-deity who embodies all objects of refuge, Munindra Vajradhara I request you.

Then reflect:

The fact that I and all other sentient beings have been born in samsara and are endlessly subject to intense dukkha is due to our having failed to understand that cyclic existence is by nature only dukkha and to generate a strong wish to be free of it. Guru-deity, please inspire me and all sentient beings so that once we have understood that cyclic existence is by nature only dukkha, we have the strong wish to be free of it.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with understanding that cyclic existence is by nature only dukkha and with having the strong wish to be free of it. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that, having understood that cyclic existence is by nature only dukkha, the strong wish to be free of it has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

***II.2.2. 1.I.b) The actual meditation has two parts:***

*II.2.2.1.1. b)1. Contemplating the dukkha of samsara in general*

*II.2.2.1.1. b)2. Contemplating specific dukkha*

***II.2.2.1.1.b)I. [Contemplating the sufferings of samsara in general]***

While meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

Although by correctly practicing the ethics of abstention from the ten nonvirtues I may attain a happy rebirth and avoid the sufferings of a bad rebirth, unless I attain a state of liberation that eradicates suffering, I will never know a moment of [true] happiness. It is like great criminals who are to be executed in a month's time and meanwhile undergo torture daily, being beaten and burnt with drops of hot sealing wax. Through their connections and so on, some are able to avoid the torture of being beaten. They are nevertheless aware that the painful moment of execution is approaching daily and so never have a moment's peace. Similarly if I do not reach liberation and eradicate suffering definitively, no matter what kind of happy rebirth I may have once the good karma that propelled it is exhausted, I will fall into one of the three lower rebirths and be subjected to various kinds of atrocious suffering for extremely long periods of time.

Moreover once born in cyclic existence under the influence of karma and afflictions, I cannot avoid a condition that is by nature dukkha. Enemies become friends and friends become enemies: there is no certainty regarding harm and help. When I enjoy samsaric pleasures, I cannot possibly feel fully satisfied and enhance my attachment, which elicits endless and abundant dukkha. No matter how wonderful the bodies I attain, I am forced to abandon them repeatedly: there is no certainty regarding the bodies acquired. Since beginningless time, again and again I have taken birth: there is no apparent end to birth. No matter how wonderful the samsaric excellence I attain, in the end I am surely compelled to give it up: there is no certainty regarding excellence attained. I am obliged to move on to the next life alone without any friends: there is no certainty regarding friends. Consequently, now that I have attained a life with freedom and fortune, so difficult to attain and so meaningful once gained, may I by all means attain precious Guru-Buddhahood that ends samsaric dukkha once and for all! Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with understanding that cyclic existence is by nature pure suffering and with having the strong wish to be free of it. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization allowing you to attain precious Guru-Buddhahood that ends samsaric suffering once and for all has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

### ***II.2.2.J. J.b)2. Contemplating specific samsaric dukkha***

While meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

Once appropriated aggregates have been produced, I cannot avoid what is by nature dukkha. This is evident for the three lower realms. Having attained human appropriated aggregates, I must experience the dukkha of hunger and thirst, having to seek my livelihood, the loss of dear friends, meeting inimical enemies, not getting what I want despite seeking it, unwanted events occurring, birth, ageing, sickness, death, and the like. Having attained a demigod's appropriated aggregates, I have to experience the mental torment of jealousy that cannot bear the thought of the gods' wealth, which in turn leads to being subjected to physical suffering. Having attained the appropriated aggregates of a desire realm god, I suffer having my limbs chopped off, my body cut up and being killed while doing battle with demigods. I suffer from being unwillingly afflicted with the signs of my impending death and knowing that I will lose my divine wealth and be subjected to the torments of the lower realms. Even if I attain the appropriated aggregates of the two kinds of gods of the higher realms, I will not have gained the freedom to stay. Consequently when the good karma that propelled those lives is exhausted, I will experience the endless suffering of the lower realms. In brief, appropriated aggregates are the bases for birth, ageing, illness, death, and the like in this life, and lead to manifest suffering and to the dukkha of change both in the present life and in future lives. When appropriated aggregates arise, their production is by nature a composition conditioned by karma and afflictions. For that reason, by all means may I attain Guru-Buddhahood that frees me from saṃsāra, which by nature consists of appropriated aggregates! Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with attaining by all means Guru-Buddhahood that frees you from saṃsāra, which by nature consists of appropriated aggregates. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization allowing you to attain by all means Guru-Buddhahood that frees you from saṃsāra, which by nature consists of appropriated aggregates, has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

**II.2.2.1.1.c)** The way to conclude is as before.

**II.2.2.1.2.** Between meditation sessions read canonical and exegetic works that explain how cyclic existence is entirely by nature suffering and so forth.

**II.2.2.2. *Establishing the nature of the path leading to liberation***

*II.2.2.2.1. What to do in the actual meditation session*

*II.2.2.2.2. What to do between meditation sessions*

*II.2.2.2.1.a) Preliminaries, II.2.2.2.1.b) Actual meditation, II.2.2.2.1.c) Conclusion*

**II.2.2.1.1.a)** The preliminaries are as before:

... Extraordinary guru-deity who embodies all objects of refuge, Munindra Vajradhara I request you.

Then [reflect]:

The fact that I and all other sentient beings have been born in samsara and are endlessly subjected to various kinds of intense dukkha is due to our failure to cultivate the three higher trainings correctly once we have developed the aspiration to liberation. Guru-deity, please inspire me and all sentient beings that we may cultivate the three higher trainings correctly once we have developed the aspiration to liberation.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with cultivating the three higher trainings correctly once you have developed the aspiration to liberation. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Having developed the aspiration to liberation, think that a superior realization of correct cultivation of the three higher trainings has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

*II.2.2.2.1.b) The actual meditation*

While meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

Although perception on its own is by nature ethically neutral, in relation to “I” and “mine” first arises the thought that they are naturally established. Then, on the basis of this mode of apprehension of the “I,” arise various kinds of wrong thinking such as attachment to what is on my side, anger towards what is on the other side, arrogance that deems me superior to others. On their basis arise doubt and wrong views that deny the existence of the Guide who taught selflessness and of his teaching – karma and its effects, the four noble truths, the Three Jewels, and the like. Based on these, the other afflictions develop. Having accumulated karma under their influence, I am obliged to experience a wide variety of dukkha in cyclic existence. Therefore ultimately the root of all dukkha is ignorance. May I

by all means attain Guru-Buddhahood that frees me from the root of all of samsara's suffering! For that purpose may I correctly train in the qualities that are the three precious higher trainings. In particular may I correctly guard the ethical disciplines to which I have committed myself even at the cost of my life, since guarding them is beneficial and failing to do so is extremely harmful.

Since ignorance is a door to transgressions, as its antidote may I hear and learn about the precepts. Since disrespect is a door to transgressions, as its antidote may I respect the Guide, the precepts he established, and those of pure conduct, my companions who train well in the precepts. Since carelessness is a door to transgressions, as its antidote may I cultivate mindfulness and introspective awareness, integrity and consideration, and be conscientious. Since an abundance of afflictions is a door to transgressions, having meditated on ugliness as the remedy to attachment, love as the remedy to anger, and dependent arising as the remedy to ignorance, may I correctly train in order to make my ethical discipline pure and unsullied by transgressions! Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with correctly developing the good qualities that are the three trainings, once you have generated the aspiration to liberation. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Having generated the aspiration to liberation, think that a superior realization of correct cultivation of the three higher trainings has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

**II.2.2.2.1.c)** The way to conclude is as before.

**II.2.2.2.2.** Between meditation sessions, as before, you should read about the vows of the personal liberation category and so forth.

This concludes the explanation of training the mind on the stages of the path shared with intermediate beings.

### ***II.2.3. Training the mind on the stages of the path of great beings***

*II.2.3.1. How to develop bodhicitta*

*II.2.3.2. Having developed bodhicitta, how to train in the bodhisattva practice*

*II.2.3.1.1. Developing bodhicitta as such*

*II.2.3.1.2. How to maintain bodhicitta through ritual*

*II.2.3.1.1.1. How to train your mind according to the seven-point instruction of cause and effect*

*II.2.3.1.1.2. How to train your mind in equalizing and exchanging self and others*

***II.2.3.1.1.1. [How to train your mind according to the seven-point instruction of cause and effect]***

Having first developed equanimity towards all sentient beings, then meditate on the recognition of them as your mothers up to bodhicitta.

*II.2.3.1.1.1.1. What to do in the actual meditation session*

*II.2.3.1.1.1.2. What to do between meditation sessions*

*II.2.3.1.1.1.1.a) Preliminaries, II.2.3.1.1.1.1.b.) Actual meditation, II.2.3.1.1.1.1.c) Conclusion*

***II.2.3.1.1.1.1.a)*** The preliminaries are as before:

... Extraordinary guru-deity who embodies all objects of refuge, Munindra Vajradhara I request you.

[Reflect]:

O guru-deity, please inspire us that in my mind and in the minds of all mother sentient beings may arise a superior realization of equanimity free of bias, attachment, and anger towards all sentient beings, of the recognition of them as our mothers, the recollection of their kindness, the wish to repay it, love, compassion, and bodhicitta.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with the cultivation of equanimity, free of bias, attachment and anger, and so forth towards all sentient beings. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of equanimity, free of bias, attachment and anger, and so forth towards all sentient beings has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

***II.2.3.1.1.1.1.b) The actual meditation***

While meditating with the guru-deity on your head, visualize clearly before you a neutral sentient being, one who has neither helped you nor harmed you, and think:

Since he or she wants to be happy and does not want to suffer, may I develop equanimity towards her, free of bias, attachment, and anger, without at times feeling close to her and helping her and at other times feeling distant and harming her! Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings, purifying all negativities, and obscurations accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifying all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obscurations that interfere with the cultivation of equanimity free of bias, attachment, and anger towards this neutral being. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior



realization of equanimity, free of bias, attachment, and anger towards this neutral being has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

Once you have leveled your feelings for this person, visualize clearly before you someone you find very appealing and cultivate equanimity towards her. Think, “It is out of attachment that I lack equanimity for this person. In the past it was due to attachment for attractive things that I was born in saṃsāra,” and meditate so as to stop your attachment.

Once you have leveled your feelings for this person, visualize clearly before you someone you find very unappealing and develop equanimity towards her. Think, “My lack of equanimity for this person comes from my considering her to be utterly inimical, which then makes me angry with her. If I do not level my feelings, I will never be able to generate bodhicitta,” and meditate so as to put a halt to your anger.

Once you have leveled your feelings for this person, visualize clearly before you someone very appealing like your mother and someone very unappealing like an enemy and think:

From their side, they are equal in their desire for happiness and their wish to avoid suffering. From my side, since beginningless time in saṃsāra, the one that I now hold dear has been my worst enemy countless times. Since beginningless time in saṃsāra, the one that I now consider an enemy has also cared for me lovingly innumerable times. To whom should I be attached? With whom should I be angry? May I develop equanimity towards them, free of bias, attachment, and anger! Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obstructions that interfere with the cultivation of equanimity free of bias, attachment and anger for both categories, loved ones and enemies. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of equanimity, free of bias, attachment, and anger for the two categories, loved ones and enemies, has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

Once you have leveled your feelings towards them, meditate to level your feeling towards all sentient beings. The way to do it is to think:

All sentient beings from their side are equal in their desire for happiness and their wish to avoid dukkha. From my side, since all sentient beings are my friends, may I avoid splitting them into two groups – holding some dear and helping them, and feeling distant from others and harming them – and instead develop equanimity free of bias, attachment, and anger. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since

beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obstructions that interfere with the cultivation of equanimity free of bias, attachment and anger in relation to all sentient beings. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of equanimity free of bias, attachment and anger in relation to all sentient beings has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

Next, to meditate from **recognition of them as your mothers up to bodhicitta**, while meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

What are the reasons for stating that all sentient beings are my friends? Since there is no beginning to cyclic existence, my series of lives is also beginningless. I have been moving from one life to the next; there is no single land or location in which I have never been born. My past lives are countless. There is no single kind of sentient beings' body that I have not had and I have had each of them innumerable times. There is no single sentient being who has not been my mother and each of them has been so innumerable times. There is no single sentient being who has not been my mother in my human lives; each of them has been so innumerable times and will continue to do so. Consequently all have been my mother and have cared for me.

If you wonder, "Since sentient beings are innumerable, how could they all have been my mother?" think:

That they are innumerable does not preclude that they have all been my mothers, for just as sentient beings are innumerable so too are my past lives. Thus all sentient beings are indeed my mothers.

If you imagine that they cannot be your mothers as you do not recognize one another, think:

That we do not recognize one another does not preclude that they have been my mothers, because it happens even within one lifetime a mother and a child do not know one another.

Furthermore, if you think that although all sentient beings were your mother in past lives, those lives are over and there is no reason to see them as your mother now, think:

Yesterday's mother does not cease to be my mother today just because that moment is past. Moreover my mother of yesterday and my mother of today are no different; they are the same. There is no difference between them in that they have both shown me kindness. Similarly there is no difference between my mothers of previous lives and my mother of this life. They are all my mothers and there is no difference between the kindness all of them have shown me. Thus all sentient beings are certainly my mothers.

Once you have a spiritual experience of this notion, **reflect on their kindness**. While meditating with the guru-deity on your head, imagine before you your mother of this life, picturing her not as she was when she was young but as she was when she was old, and reflect as follows:

My mother not only in this life but in my past lives as well since beginningless time has been my mother countless times. In this life in particular she first cared for me lovingly while carrying me in her womb. After I was born, she placed me on a soft bed. She lifted me up on the tips of her fingers. She held me close to her warm body. She greeted me with kind smiles and looked at me with loving eyes. She cleaned my nose with her mouth and wiped my dirt with her hand. For her the anxiety that my minor illnesses caused her was far greater than that produced by the prospect of losing her own life. All the food and riches she produced by the sweat of her brow without taking into account the negativities, suffering, ill-repute, and risk to her own life that it involved she lovingly gave to me. She attained endless benefits and happiness for me according to her ability. She protected me from endless harm and suffering. Thus the kindness she has shown me is boundless.

Once you have had a spiritual experience of this, meditate in the same way in relation to other loved ones, your father and so on. For this visualize clearly your father and the others, and think:

In my past lives since beginningless time he has been my mother countless times. At that time, just as my mother in this life cared for me so too did he care for me. His kindness to me is boundless.

Once you have had a spiritual experience of this, meditate in the same way in relation to all neutral sentient beings. For this visualize neutral sentient beings clearly before you and think:

Now it seems that there is no close connection between them and me. However they too in my past lives since beginningless time have been my mother countless times. At the time just as my mother of this life cared for me, so too did they care for me. Their kindness to me is boundless.

Once you have had a spiritual experience of this, meditate in the same way in relation to your enemies. For this visualize your enemies clearly before you and think:

Now what is the point of seeing them as my enemies? In my past lives since beginningless time they were my mother countless times. When they were my mother, they attained endless benefits and happiness for me. They protected me from endless harm and suffering. Above all I couldn't bear to be separated from them even briefly and they couldn't bear to be separated from me even for a short while. We were close countless times. If we now find ourselves in the present situation, it is due to our destructive karma. At other times they have been my kind mothers.

Once you have had a spiritual experience of this, contemplate the kindness of all sentient beings. For this think:

All sentient beings of the ten directions in my past lives since beginningless time have been my mother countless times. At the time, just as my mother of this life cared for me so too did they care for me. Their kindness to me is boundless.

Having in this way reflected on kindness, to meditate on **the wish to repay their kindness**, while meditating with the guru-deity on your head, think as follows:

The minds of these mothers who have cared for me since beginningless time are disturbed by the demon-like afflictions. As they have no control over their thoughts, they are crazed. They are blind to the path to high rebirth and definite goodness and lack spiritual mentors, guides for the blind. At every moment and with every step they commit misdeeds. It would be absolutely shameless for me to abandon them on the precipice of samsara in general and of the terrifying lower realms in particular. Thus to repay their kindness I wish to free them from samsara's dukkha and establish them in the joy of liberation. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies you of all negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obstructions that interfere with the wish to free sentient beings from samsara's dukkha and establish them in the joy of liberation. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of the wish to free them from samsara's dukkha and establish them in the joy of liberation has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

To meditate on **love**, visualize someone you are close to, such as your mother, and think as follows:

Without talking of unpolluted happiness, she does not even enjoy any polluted happiness. What she now mistakenly takes for happiness will become suffering. Wanting happiness and making all sorts of effort to attain it, she does nothing but create the causes for future suffering in the lower realms. In the present life as well, worn out and exhausted, she experiences only misery and is totally deprived of genuine happiness. Wouldn't it be wonderful if she had happiness and all the causes of it? May she have happiness and the causes of happiness! I shall ensure that she gains happiness and the causes of happiness. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obstructions that interfere with ensuring that this mother gains happiness and the causes of happiness. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of [the intention to] ensure that this mother gains happiness and the causes of happiness has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

Once you have had a spiritual experience of this, meditate as before taking as your object other loved ones – your father and so forth – then neutral sentient beings, next enemies, and finally all sentient beings.

To meditate on **compassion**, while visualizing the guru-deity on your head first imagine a miserable being in the throes of suffering such as a sheep being slaughtered by a butcher. For this, first clearly picture the animal before you, its limbs bound, its chest cut open, the butcher plunging his hand inside its chest, it knowing perfectly well that its life is at stake, and it goggling at the butcher's face. Having contemplated the way this torment creates great anguish in this being, think:

Wouldn't it be wonderful if it were free of dukkha and the causes of dukkha? May it be free of dukkha and all its causes! I shall ensure that it is free of dukkha and all its causes. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities and obstructions that interfere with ensuring that this mother is free of dukkha and all its causes. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of [the intention to] ensure that this mother is free of dukkha and all the causes of dukkha has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

Once you have had a spiritual experience of this, meditate taking as your object people who have not hesitated to commit a variety of negativities and nonvirtues: those who have used the saṅgha's belongings carelessly, observed ethics badly, abandoned the Dharma, held false views, or harmed sentient beings. Visualize them clearly before you and think:

Now due to their actions and conduct, they are unhappy in the present life and without doubt will be born in a lower realm as soon as they die. Once born there, they will have to endure various kinds of intense suffering for extremely long periods of time. I wish they were free of dukkha and of the causes of dukkha. May they be free of dukkha and of the causes of dukkha! I shall ensure that they are free of dukkha and of all its causes. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities and obstructions that interfere with ensuring that these mothers are free of dukkha and all its causes. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of [the intention to] ensure that these mothers are free of dukkha and of all the causes of dukkha has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

Once you have had a spiritual experience of this, meditate visualizing clearly before you loved ones such as your mother and think:

Having made all kinds of effort for the sake of this life's concerns and labeled others as friends and enemies, they are subjected to both manifest dukkha and the dukkha of change. As such they never have a moment's peace. Being involved in wrongdoing in this life, virtuous states of mind never arise in them. As a result, the moment they die, they will take rebirth in a lower realm and be obliged to undergo various kinds of intense misery for long periods of time. Wouldn't it be wonderful if they were free of dukkha and of the causes of dukkha? May they be free of dukkha and of the causes of dukkha! I shall ensure that they are free of dukkha and of all its causes. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities and obstructions that interfere with ensuring that these mothers are free of dukkha and all its causes. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of [the intention to] ensure that these mothers are free of dukkha and of all the causes of dukkha has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

Once you have had a spiritual experience of this, meditate the same in relation to neutral beings, enemies and finally all sentient beings as before.

Once in this way you have had a transformational experience of love and compassion, meditate on the superior intention as follows. While meditating with the guru-deity on your head, think:

I shall ensure that all sentient beings undergoing dukkha and deprived of happiness are free of dukkha and of the causes of dukkha. I shall ensure that they find happiness and the causes of happiness. I shall especially ensure that all mother sentient beings attain complete and perfect Buddhahood in which the two kinds of obstructions along with their latencies have been rejected. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities and obstructions that interfere with ensuring that all sentient beings, your mothers, attain complete and perfect Buddhahood in which the two kinds of obstructions along with their latencies have been rejected. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of [the intention to] ensure that all mother sentient beings attain complete and perfect Buddhahood in which the two kinds of obstructions along with their latencies have been eradicated has arisen in your mindstream and the mindstreams of others.

Next, to meditate on bodhicitta, while meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

If I ask myself whether I now have the ability to establish all sentient beings in complete and perfect Buddhahood, I have to admit that I do not have the ability to establish so much as a single sentient being in a state of complete and perfect Buddhahood. Moreover, even if I attained one of the two kinds of arhatship, my work for others' welfare would be partial and I would lack the ability to lead all sentient beings to Buddhahood. Who has that ability? Complete and perfect buddhas do because of their physical qualities, being perfectly adorned with the signs and marks; their verbal qualities, a melodious voice with sixty characteristics that in a single discourse can explain the teaching effortlessly to all sentient beings in each of their languages separately; and their mental qualities, direct perception of all knowable entities on both the conventional and ultimate levels of existence, impartial compassion for all sentient beings – like a mother's for her unique child – that never abandons the task of taming them even for an instant; and spontaneous and effortless activity such that every light ray emanated from their body, speech, and mind can establish innumerable sentient beings in the state of omniscience and the like. In brief, since only buddhas possess every kind of good quality and are free of every kind of fault, to complete both my own goals and others', I must attain Buddhahood. For the sake of all mother sentient beings by all means, I will quickly, very quickly, realize complete, perfect, and precious Buddhahood. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, a duplicate of the guru-deity's body comes from him into you through the crown of your head, like one butter lamp lighting another. It dissolves into you. Imagine yourself on a precious throne both high and wide supported by eight great lions, on a seat of a multicolored lotus and sun and moon discs, in the form of the Conqueror Sakyamuni, with a body the color of pure gold, a crown protuberance on your head, one face, and two hands. The right touches the earth; the left, in meditation posture, holds an alms bowl full of nectar. You are elegantly robed in the three saffron-colored monastic robes. You sit in vajra posture in a flood of light emanating from your body, which is made of pure light and adorned with the signs and marks of a Buddha. Visualizing yourself thus as Munindra, emanate your body, belongings, along with your virtue in the form of five-colored light and nectar and offer them to all sentient beings. Imagine that all sentient beings thereby attain the excellent happiness of high rebirth and definite goodness.

**II.2.3.1.1.1.c)** The way to conclude is as before.

**II.2.3.1.1.1.2.** Between meditation sessions read canonic and exegetic works that explain the topics of love, compassion, and bodhicitta.

**II.2.3.1.1.2. *How to train your mind in equalizing and exchanging self and others***

*II.2.3.1.1.2.1. What to do in the actual meditation session*

*II.2.3.1.1.2.2. What to do in between meditation sessions*

*II.2.3.1.1.2.1.a) Preliminaries, II.2.3.1.1.2.1.b) Actual meditation, II.2.3.1.1.2.1.c) Conclusion*

**II.2.3.1.1.2.1.a)** The preliminaries are as before:

... Extraordinary guru-deity who embodies all objects of refuge, Munindra Vajradhara I request you.

Then:

O guru-deity, please inspire me and all sentient beings to generate the precious bodhicitta that cherishes others more than ourselves.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities and obstructions that interfere with generating the precious bodhicitta that cherishes others more than yourself. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of the precious bodhicitta that cherishes others more than yourself has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

**II.2.3.1.1.2.1.b) *The actual meditation***

Having first developed equanimity that levels your feelings towards all sentient beings, and meditated on the three – recognizing them all as your mothers, recalling their kindness [and wishing to repay it] – visualize clearly all sentient beings around you and ask yourself, “In my heart, which of the two do I cherish most, myself or others?” When you determine that you tend naturally to cherish yourself and abandon others, reflect in the following manner:

It is not right to cherish myself and abandon others because we are all equal in our desire for happiness and our wish to avoid suffering. Hence I need to cherish others as I cherish myself, for just as being treasured by others pleases me, so will others be pleased when I treasure them. Moreover, even though I wanted to attain excellent results for myself, since beginningless time in samsara I have cherished myself and accomplished nothing for the sake of others. As a result I have experienced only myriads of misery. Consequently, self-centeredness has been the source of all my misfortunes – the dukkha of saṃsāra, of the lower realms and so forth. Since preventing future self-centeredness from arising, overcoming present self-centeredness, and cherishing others are the sources of all good qualities, may I generate the attitude cherishing others that I [currently] lack, and may whatever I have grow stronger! Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obstructions that interfere with generating the precious bodhicitta by which you cherish others more than yourself. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of



the precious bodhicitta by which you cherish others more than yourself has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others. [Reflect]:

In brief Munindra attained complete Buddhahood by abandoning self-centeredness, cherishing others, and devoting himself exclusively to their welfare. By following his example, I too will attain Buddhahood very soon. Having failed to do so, until now I have wandered in saṃsāra. As long as I continue to harbor self-centeredness within me, I will not be able to cultivate cherishing others, or if I do, I will not manage to maintain that attitude. Thus may the thought that is preoccupied with myself and abandons others not arise in me even for an instant! May I give up my selfish concern and treasure others, entirely take upon myself other sentient beings' dukkha and negativities, and offer others all my happiness and goodness! Thus may I ensure that all sentient beings are free of dukkha and attain great happiness! Presently I lack the ability needed to do this. If you ask who has it, it is a complete and perfect Buddha. Thus may I attain the state of complete and perfect Buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings, my mothers! Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, a duplicate of the guru-deity's body comes from him into you through the crown of your head, like one butter lamp lighting another. It dissolves into you. Imagine yourself on a precious throne both high and wide supported by eight great lions, on a seat of a multicolored lotus and sun and moon discs, in the form of the Conqueror Sakyamuni, with a body the color of pure gold, a crown protuberance on your head, one face, and two hands. The right touches the earth; the left, in meditation posture, holds an alms bowl full of nectar. You are elegantly robed in the three saffron-colored monastic robes. You sit in vajra posture in a flood of light emanating from your body, which is made of pure light and adorned with the signs and marks of a Buddha. Visualizing yourself thus as Munindra, emanate your body, belongings, and virtue in the form of five-colored light and nectar and offer them to all sentient beings. Imagine that all sentient beings thereby attain the excellent happiness of high rebirth and definite goodness.

### ***II.2.3.1.2. How to maintain bodhicitta through ritual***

*II.2.3.1.2.1. What to do in the actual meditation session*

*II.2.3.1.2.2. What to do between meditation sessions*

*II.2.3.1.2.1.a) Preliminaries II.2.3.1.2.1.b) Actual meditation II.2.3.1.2.1.c) Conclusion*

***II.2.3.1.2.1.a)*** The preliminaries are as before:

... Extraordinary guru-deity who embodies all objects of refuge, Munindra Vajradhara, I request you.

Then:

O Guru-deity, please inspire me and all sentient beings so that once we have generated the wish for supreme awakening in its aspirational and engaging forms, we may train in the [bodhisattva] precepts.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities and obstructions that interfere with training in the precepts once you have generated the wish for supreme awakening in its aspirational and engaging forms. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of training in the [bodhisattva] precepts, once you have generated the wish for supreme awakening in its aspirational and engaging forms, has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

***II.2.3.1.2.1.b) The actual meditation has two parts:***

*II.2.3.1.2.1.b)1. How to take vows for the first time*

*II.2.3.1.2.1.b)2. Once taken, how to keep them from declining*

***II.2.3.1.2.1.b)1.*** Although the lamrim teaches taking the [precepts of] aspiration and engagement sequentially, it is simpler to take them simultaneously according to Shantideva's tradition. The way to do so is to first follow the usual preliminary steps. In particular, do the actual meditations on how to rely on spiritual mentors up to bodhicitta in a heartfelt fashion. Then, while visualizing the guru-deity on your head, think:

For the sake of all mother sentient beings may I quickly attain complete and perfect Buddhahood. For that purpose, from now until I attain the essence of awakening, I shall keep the ethical code of the conquerors' heirs, train in their vast activities, and for the sake of all sentient beings attain Buddhahood. May I maintain this intention until I do indeed realize Buddhahood!

Imagining that you are repeating the words after Guru-Munindra, say:

All buddhas and bodhisattvas, please listen. Just as the sugatas of the past generated bodhicitta and trained step by step in the bodhisattva precepts, I too, for the sake of sentient beings will generate bodhicitta and train step by step in the bodhisattva precepts.

Having repeated these verses three times, think that you have attained the bodhisattva precepts.

Next to rejoice say:

Today my life has become fruitful. I have successfully attained a human life. Today I have been born into the buddha family and have now become a child of the buddhas. From now on whatever I do will be in harmony with that family. I will do nothing to taint this unsullied ethical family of ethics

***II.2.3.1.2.1.b)2. Once taken, how to keep them from declining***

While meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

For the sake of all mother sentient beings may I quickly attain complete and perfect Buddhahood. For that purpose, by reflecting on the benefits of bodhicitta three times a day and three times a night, I shall keep my promise to maintain bodhicitta. No matter how sentient beings behave and what they do, I shall never banish a single one of them from my heart. To reinforce the bodhicitta I have generated, I shall strive to accumulate the two collections by making offerings to the Three Jewels and so forth. Furthermore, I shall refrain from what causes bodhicitta to decline, such as the four destructive deeds: (1) misleading my gurus and so forth with lies, be it in jest or in play; (2) causing others to regret the good they have done; (3) out of anger, speaking unpleasantly to bodhisattvas who have entered the great vehicle; and (4) being hypocritical and deceitful without a higher intention. I shall also train well in what reinforces bodhicitta by relying on the four constructive deeds and so forth. In brief, until I attain the essence of awakening, even at the cost of my life, I shall thoroughly respect the bodhisattva ethical code and never let it be tainted by the eighteen root and forty-six auxiliary transgressions. Guru-deity, inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities, and obstructions that interfere with training in the precepts once you have generated the wish for supreme awakening in its aspirational and engaging forms. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of training in the bodhisattva precepts, once you have generated the wish for supreme awakening in its aspirational and engaging forms, has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

### ***II.2.3.2. Having developed bodhicitta, how to train in the bodhisattva practice***

#### *II.2.3.2.1. How to train in the practices of conquerors' children in general*

#### *II.2.3.2.2. How to train in the last two perfections in particular*

##### *II.2.3.2.1.1. What to do in the actual meditation session*

##### *II.2.3.2.1.2. What to do between meditation sessions*

##### *II.2.3.2.1.1.a) Preliminaries, II.2.3.2.1.1.b) Actual meditation, II.2.3.2.1.1.c) Conclusion*

##### *II.2.3.2.1.1.a) The preliminaries are as before:*

... Extraordinary guru-deity who embodies all objects of refuge Munindra Vajradhara, I request you.

##### *II.2.3.2.1.1. What to do in the actual meditation session*

##### *II.2.3.2.1.2. What to do between meditation sessions*

##### *II.2.3.2.2.1.a) Preliminaries, II.2.3.1.2.1.b) Actual meditation, II.2.3.1.2.1.c) Conclusion*

##### *II.2.3.1.2.1.a) The preliminaries are as before:*

... Extraordinary guru-deity who embodies all objects of refuge, Munindra Vajradhara, I request you.

Then:

O guru-deity, please inspire me and all sentient beings to be able to train correctly in both aspects of extensive bodhisattva deeds, vast and profound.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities and obstructions that interfere with training correctly in both aspects of extensive bodhisattva deeds, vast and profound. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of correct training in both aspects of extensive bodhisattva deeds, vast and profound, has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

***II.2.3.2.1.1.b) The actual meditation has two parts:***

*II.2.3.2.1.1.b)1. How to train in the six perfections to ripen your mind.*

*II.2.3.2.1.1.b)2. How to train in the four methods of assembling to ripen the minds of others*

***II.2.3.2.1.1.b)1. [How to train in the six perfections to ripen your mind.]***

While meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

For the sake of all mother sentient beings may I quickly attain complete and perfect Buddhahood. For that purpose, may I correctly train in the three kinds of **generosity**: (1) giving the dharma by explaining the perfect teaching as well as I can to sentient beings deprived of the teaching, without taking into consideration personal gain, honors, reputation and the like; (2) giving fearlessness by protecting frightened sentient beings from the harm inflicted by humans, non-humans, the elements, and so forth; (3) giving materially by providing whatever is appropriate to poor and deprived sentient beings, overcoming miserliness and hope for reward and for maturation effects. In brief, for the sake of all mother sentient beings may I quickly attain complete and perfect Buddhahood. For that purpose may I give my body, belongings, and virtues to all sentient beings without stinginess. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities and obstructions that interfere with correctly training in the practice of the three kinds of generosity. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of correct training in

the practice of the three kinds of generosity has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others. The practice of generosity consists of developing the intention to give.

Next, for the practice of **ethical discipline**, while meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

For the sake of all mother sentient beings may I quickly attain complete and perfect Buddhahood. For that purpose may I give up misdeeds that conflict with whatever precepts I have taken, like the precepts to abstain from the ten nonvirtues. May I generate in my mind the six perfections - generosity and so forth – and the excellent virtue of ethical discipline and so on that I have yet to generate, and may the good qualities that I already have be enhanced. May I lead all sentient beings to the excellent virtue of ethical discipline and so forth, and establish them in the path of progress and liberation. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities and obstructions that interfere with correctly training in the practice of the three kinds of ethical discipline. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of correct training in the practice of the three kinds of ethical discipline has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

Next, for the practice of **fortitude**, while meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

For the sake of all mother sentient beings may I quickly attain complete and perfect Buddhahood. For that purpose, even if all sentient beings rise up against me, may I not feel even a moment's anger and instead, in response to their harm may I benefit them. May I and others fully accomplish the Buddha's teaching, the perfection of fortitude and so forth. Moreover, when unwanted misfortune occurs – being deprived of food, wealth, beds, and so forth, falling ill suddenly and the like – may I see these miserable experiences are the fruit of destructive karma accumulated in the past. In this way, may I purify myself of many destructive karmas and see that there is no call to reject suffering. Especially may I see that putting up with hardship in relation to spiritual practice brings me closer to the path to omniscience. May I accept hardships and [by practicing fortitude] may the stream of samsaric dukkha and that of the lower realms cease for me and others. Furthermore, vast are the effects of generating firm belief in the maturation effects of destructive and constructive karma, in the inspiration of the Three Jewels and the inconceivable power of great beings – buddhas and bodhisattvas – in unsurpassed awakening, the twelve kinds of scriptures, and the different points of bodhisattva precepts. Consequently, once I have cultivated faith in them, to attain unsurpassed awakening may I correctly train in the different aspects of the bodhisattva precepts – the subject matter of the twelve categories of scriptures. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities and obstructions that interfere with correctly training in the practice of the three kinds of fortitude. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of correct training in the practice of the three kinds of fortitude has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

Next, for the practice of **joyous effort**, while meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

For the sake of all mother sentient beings may I quickly attain complete and perfect Buddhahood. For that purpose, even if attaining Buddhahood requires remaining in Unrelenting Torment for a hundred thousand eons for each Buddha-quality to be produced – the signs and marks and so on – and to accomplish each bodhisattva practice – generosity and so on – may I delight in it without losing my joyous effort. Bringing together all vast and profound virtues in me and establishing others in the path of virtue, may I attain unsurpassed awakening. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities and obstructions that interfere with correctly training in the practice of the three kinds of enthusiasm. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of correct training in the practice of the three kinds of joyous effort has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

Next, for the practice of **meditative stability**, while meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

For the sake of all mother sentient beings may I quickly attain complete and perfect Buddhahood. For that purpose, may I train in all aspects of bodhisattvas' meditative stability: from the angle of its natures, mundane and super-mundane concentrations; from the angle of its features, meditative serenity, special insight, and meditative stability that unites the two; from the angle of its functions, meditative stability that abides in physical and mental bliss, meditative stability that serves as a basis for all good qualities, and meditative stability for accomplishing sentient beings' welfare. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and

those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities and obstructions that interfere with correctly training in the practice of the three kinds of concentration. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of correct training in the practice of the three kinds of meditative stability has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

Next, for the practice of **wisdom**, while meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

For the sake of all mother sentient beings may I quickly attain complete and perfect Buddhahood. For that purpose, may I train in all aspects of bodhisattvas' wisdom: (1) the wisdom realizing the ultimate – understanding reality; (2) the wisdom realizing the conventional – the five sciences; and (3) the wisdom realizing the way to accomplish sentient beings' welfare. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities and obstructions that interfere with correctly training in the practice of the three kinds of wisdom. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of correct training in the practice of the three kinds of wisdom has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

#### ***II 2.3.2.1.1.b)2. The practice of the four methods of gathering [disciplines] that ripen the minds of others***

While meditating with the guru-deity on your head, reflect:

For the sake of all mother sentient beings may I quickly attain complete and perfect Buddhahood. For that purpose, may I assemble all sentient beings by (1) being generous, (2) speaking pleasantly, correcting and caring for them, and explaining the teaching to them, (3) implementing the aim by encouraging them to practice the content of the teaching and (4) by being consistent with the aim by practicing what I teach others. Thanks to these good ways of helping others, may I lead all sentient beings to the path of progress and liberation. Guru-deity, please inspire me to be able to do so.

In response to your requesting the guru-deity, five-colored light and nectar stream from all parts of his body into you through the crown of your head. It absorbs into your mind and body and those of all sentient beings. It purifies all your negativities and obstructions accumulated since beginningless time, and especially purifies all illnesses, spirit interferences, negativities and obstructions that interfere with correctly training in the practice of the four ways of assembling. Your body becomes translucent, the nature of light. All your good qualities, lifespan, merit, and so forth expand and increase. Think in particular that a superior realization of correct training in

the four ways of gathering disciples has arisen in your mindstream and in the mindstreams of others.

**II.2.3.2.1.1.c)** The way to conclude is as before.

**II.2.3.2.1.2.** Between meditation sessions, as before, read canonic and exegetic works that explain the great bodhisattva practice, vast and profound.

**II.2.3.2.2. Training in the last two perfections in particular has two parts:**

**II.2.3.2.2.1. How to train in meditative serenity (śamatha), the essence of meditative stability**

**II.2.3.2.2.2. How to train in insight (vipaśyanā), the essence of wisdom**

**II.2.3.2.2.1.1. What to do in the actual meditation session**

**II.2.3.2.2.1.2. What to do between meditation sessions**

**II.2.3.2.2.1.1.a) Preliminaries, II.2.3.2.2.1.1.b) Actual meditation, II.2.3.2.2.1.1.c) Conclusion**

**II.2.3.2.2.1.1.a)** The preliminaries consist of common and special preliminaries, the latter being to train in the attitudes of initial and intermediate beings. [Also, make effort to] have a favorable, secluded environment, including good companions whose thinking is in harmony with yours, to maintain pure ethical discipline, to give up associating with numerous beings and coarse thoughts of attraction to objects of desire, to have few desires and be content with less. Having sat on a comfortable seat, your body straight, your legs in vajra posture, your hands in the meditative absorption position, calm your breath, and so forth.

**II.2.3.2.2.1.1.b)** Having thus prepared the conditions for attaining serenity, [now engage in] the actual meditation. Although [the Buddha] taught many objects in relation to which serenity can be attained, the prime object and the ideal one is recollection of the Buddha. It is good to visualize a deity's form because doing so serves many purposes such as preparing you for meditating on tantric deity-yoga. Meditate one-pointedly, visualizing that from the heart of the guru-deity on your head a light ray like a spider thread is emitted. On its tip, in space in front of you at the level of your navel, visualize "on a seat of a multicolored lotus, sun and moon discs is your kind, main spiritual mentor in the form of the Conqueror Sakyamuni. The color of his body is pure gold ... made of pure light and adorned with the signs and marks of a Buddha." He is the size of a kidney bean.

An alternative is to meditate one-pointedly, visualizing that from the guru-deity on your head comes a second guru-deity, like one butter lamp lighting another, who dissolves into you. [Visualize yourself] "on a precious throne both high and wide, supported by eight great lions, on a seat of a multicolored lotus, sun and moon discs, [as] the Conqueror Shakyamuni... adorned with the signs and marks of a Buddha," who appears but lacks inherent nature, like a rainbow in the sky.

At this point, if you wish to meditate on a yellow object and it appears red, or you wish it seated and it appears standing, you wish it solitary and it appears multiple, do not follow these appearances but meditate one-pointedly, maintaining the original object. Although at first it will not appear clearly or made of light, when the mental image of about half the body parts is clear, meditate on it, focusing your mind one-pointedly.



Moreover generate the firm aspiration, thinking, “During this session of such duration, I will not let laxity or excitement arise, and if perchance they should, I shall immediately identify them and abandon them.” Then focus one-pointedly on the object, not forgetting it and reinforcing your mindfulness [remembrance] of it from time to time. Maintaining that awareness continually is the excellent method for beginners to attain the [nine] stages of sustained attention.

In brief, meditate on genuine meditative stability according to what is said:

The eight antidotes reject the five faults.  
Relying on them will cause it to arise.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore you must rely on the eight antidotes, which are the counterforces that oppose the five faults. The fault that arises when you start to concentrate is laziness. It has four antidotes: faith that perceives the advantages of concentration, aspiration that is drawn to concentration, joyous effort that strives after it, and pliancy, the fruit of effort. When striving after concentration, “forgetting the instruction” is a fault; its antidote is mindfulness. It is insufficient for mindfulness to not forget the object; the mind focused one-pointedly on the object must ascertain it clearly and firmly.

When absorbed in concentration, the two faults that occur are laxity and excitement; their antidote is introspective awareness. Introspective awareness examines thoroughly whether laxity or excitement has arisen. Those most skillful are able to detect and counteract laxity and excitement as soon as they threaten to appear; those with average skill, as soon as they appear; those with lesser skill counteract laxity and excitement not long after they have appeared.

What, then, differentiates lethargy on the one hand and laxity and excitement on the other? Lethargy has the aspect of physical and mental heaviness and its object is unclear. It is as if darkness has descended on the mind. In the case of coarse laxity, although the mind does not move towards another object, it lacks limpidity and clarity, and mindfulness is weak. In the case of subtle laxity, stability and clarity are present but the firmness of the ascertainment of the object has declined slightly. As antidotes to them, apply the instructions to recall the Three Jewels’ good qualities, imagine light, and think that your winds and mind have merged with the sky.

In the case of subtle excitement the mind does not remain steadfast on the object but scatters slightly. Its antidote is to meditate while relying on mindfulness and introspective awareness. Despite applying mindfulness and introspective awareness, if the mind is unstable and scatters to objects of attachment, it is a case of coarse excitement. As an antidote to it, apply the instruction to meditate on impermanence and on the dukkha of the three lower realms and of saṃsāra, and in this way forcefully stop excitement. When either laxity or excitement occur, non-application is a fault. Rely on its antidote, application, and abandon them as soon as you have become aware of their presence.

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<sup>2</sup> *Madhyanta-vibhaga-karika*, Maitreya

Stressing the intensity of the mind's strong grip on the meditational object may enhance the clarity aspect but increases excitement, thereby making it difficult to attain stability. Gripping it not firmly but loosely may enhance stability but increases laxity, thereby making it difficult to attain clarity. Hence based on your personal experience, when you have the impression that by heightening your grip on the object excitement will arise, loosen it a degree. When you sense that if you leave things as they are laxity will arise, raise it a degree. Then balance will be attained. Between the two, bring the mind back from scattering and excitement and seek stability. Each time you attain stability, watch out for laxity and generate clarity with intense perception. Meditate on the two alternately and you will attain faultless concentration. Do not count solely on stability that lacks clarity and ascertainment's mode of apprehension.

When you have put a stop to laxity and excitement and abide continually in concentration, over-application is a fault. Consequently the antidote is nonapplication of the antidotes to laxity and excitement, and leaving the concentration as it is. By training well in concentration in this fashion, you will progressively attain the nine stages of sustained attention and generate meditative serenity with physical and mental pliancy.

**II.2.3.2.2.1.1.c)** The way to conclude is as before.

**II.2.3.2.2.1.2.** Between meditation sessions, as before, read canonic and exegetic works that explain the system of serenity.

### **II.2.3.2.2.2. How to train in insight (vipaśyanā), the essence of wisdom**

*II.2.3.2.2.2.1. What to do in the actual meditation session*

*II.2.3.2.2.2.2. What to do between meditation sessions*

*II.2.3.2.2.2.1.a) Preliminaries, II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b) Actual meditation, II.2.3.2.2.2.1.c) Conclusion*

**II.2.3.2.2.2.1.a)** The preliminaries are as explained in the context of serenity. More specifically, while correctly relying on a learned spiritual mentor, receive instructions on insight, ardently request the mentors inseparable from the deity, strive to purify [negativities] and accumulate [virtue], and so on. Combining the three is the indispensable prerequisite to the realization of views.

**II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b) The actual meditation has two parts:**

*II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b)1. The way to meditate once the selflessness of persons is established*

*II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b)2. The way to meditate once the selflessness of phenomena is established*

**II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b)1.** Although in his discourses, the Conqueror taught innumerable logical reasonings to establish selflessness, since ascertaining it through the four key points is easier for beginners, the way to do so is as follows.

The thought, "Me, me" that your mind tightly apprehends from the depths of your heart even when sunk in a deep sleep, is the innate apprehension of self. When someone accuses you falsely of making a mistake that you have not made, you think, "I didn't make that mistake yet I am being accused of it." Then a strong apprehension of "I" appears from deep within you and the

way innate grasping at self apprehends the “I” is clear. That is the time for a small part of your mind to examine the “I” that the mind grasps and how it grasps it. If the [analytical] mind is too strong, the former perception will disappear, and as there will be nothing left [to examine] you will not succeed. Hence the major part of the mind should consistently produce the awareness of the “I” and only a small portion of it examine it. When you analyze the matter, the bases on which the innate apprehension of the “I” grasps the “I” are the five aggregates - the body and mind - and nothing else. It does not do so on the basis of any of the five aggregates individually nor on the basis of the body or mind individually. It is on the global basis of the five aggregates as a group or the body and mind as a group that the innate apprehension of the “I” grasps the “I” as having always existed on its own, not as a simple designation by conception on this basis. This “I,” which is its object of apprehension, is the object of negation to be refuted. It must be ascertained not just by understanding someone else’s explanation or by simple verbal images but from within yourself, palpably. This is the **first key point**, the key point of ascertaining the way the object of negation appears.

Regarding the **second key point**, ascertaining the range [of possibilities], reflect as follows:

Does the “I” that is apprehended tightly in the depths of my heart by the perception that thinks of the “I” exist in relation to the five aggregates? Is it one with the five aggregates or distinct from them? A third mode of existence other than these two is absolutely impossible. Any existent, whatever it is, must have either an aspect of unity or an aspect of multiplicity.

In this way draw the conclusion that there is absolutely no third possible mode of existence other than these two.

Regarding the **third key point**, ascertaining the lack of inherent unity, if you imagine that the “I” thus apprehended is [inherently] one with the five aggregates: since living beings have five aggregates, the “I” too would have to have five distinct continuums. If the “I” was one, the five aggregates too would have to be one, partless, and so on, which poses many problems. Consequently, conclude that the “I” thus apprehended is not one with the five aggregates.

Moreover, if the “I” thus apprehended is established as one with the five aggregates, as the five aggregates arise and disintegrate, so would the “I” established by the perception aware of it standing on its own have to arise and disintegrate. If that were case, would the “I” that arises and disintegrates be one with or distinct from its previous moment of existence and its subsequent moment? If you were to consider it to be one with them, then the “I” of the previous life, of the present life and of the subsequent life, all three would be one and partless. If they were distinct, (although generally speaking what is distinct is not necessarily unconnectedly distinct) since whatever is inherently distinct must be distinct and utterly unconnected, the “I” of the previous, of the present and of the subsequent life would be utterly unconnected. This poses many problems: one would experience the results of karmas that one had not created; karma created would go wasted, and so forth. Hence the previous and subsequent moments of such an “I” are not [inherently] distinct. Therefore conclude that the “I” as apprehended by that perception is not one with the aggregates.

In addition, if the “I” thus apprehended were one with the aggregates, since they would be inherently one, they would have to be completely and utterly one. If that were the case, it would conflict with the “I” or self being the appropriator of the five aggregates, with the five aggregates being what is appropriated by the “I” or self and so forth. Therefore conclude that the “I” thus apprehended is not one with the five aggregates.

Regarding the **fourth key point**, ascertaining the lack of inherent plurality, although the “I” thus ascertained is not established as one with the five aggregates, if you think perhaps it is established as distinct from the aggregates, just as once you have eliminated each of the [four] aggregates, the aggregate of form, etc. there remains the aggregate of consciousness that can be recognized distinctly, once you have eliminated each of the [five] aggregates, that of form, etc. you should be able to identify distinctly an “I” thus apprehended, but that is not possible. Consequently, conclude that the “I” thus apprehended is not established as distinct from the five aggregates.

By analyzing the four key points, once you have ascertained that the “I” as apprehended by the innate grasping at “I” does not exist, meditate on that ascertainment continually and one-pointedly, free of laxity and excitement.

If the ascertainment weakens slightly, beginners should revert to an analysis of the four key points and induce the ascertainment of the lack of inherent existence. Those with higher faculties will analyze whether the “I” as it appears to innate grasping at “I” exists or not. On that basis they can elicit the ascertainment of non-inherent existence in a way similar to the analysis of the four key points. At that point, the way to meditate on space-like concentration is to meditate one-pointedly on the combination of the two: from the angle of confirmation, the firm ascertainment of non-inherent existence, and from the angle of appearances, the ascertainment of emptiness that is the simple absence of the object of negation, inherent existence. Subsequent to space-like concentration, meditate on the illusion-like display of the “I” and so forth, i.e. of all phenomena. In addition, by the strong ascertainment of non-inherent existence in meditative absorption, subsequently train in inducing the appearance of a false and illusion-like display according to which all that manifests lacks inherent existence although it appears.

***II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b)2. The way to meditate once the selflessness of phenomena is established.***

*II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b)2.1. The way to meditate once composite phenomena’s lack of true nature is established*

*II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b)2.2. The way to meditate once non-composite phenomena’s lack of true nature is established*

*II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b)2.1.1. The first includes matter*

*II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b)2.1.2. consciousness*

*II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b)2.1.3. and abstract composites (non-associated compositional factors)*

***[II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b)2.1. The way to meditate once composite phenomena’s lack of true nature is established]***

**II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b)2.1.1.** For the first, take the example of a body. On the basis of a body, which is a simple collection of five limbs made of tangible flesh and bones, what appears to us unmistakably is a whole body that stands on its own and does not exist as just a designation by conception. This is how the object of negation appears. If such a body existed, would it be one with or distinct from the body that is a simple collection of five limbs made of tangible flesh and bones? If it is one with it, as the body that is a simple collection of five limbs made of tangible flesh and bones was produced by its parents' sperm and egg, the drop of [the combined] sperm and egg that was the basis into which the consciousness entered would be the [coarse] body that is a simple collection of five limbs made of tangible flesh and bones. Moreover, just as it has five limbs, so too would the body that is a collection of five parts be multiplied by five [one for each limb].<sup>3</sup> If they were distinct, once you had eliminated each limb, the head, and so forth, you should be able to point out to a body, but you cannot. Once you have generated the ascertainment that thinks, "In no way does such a body exist," meditate on that.

**II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b)2.1.2.** Take today's consciousness as an example. If there is today's consciousness that does not exist as a simple designation by conception on the bases of the consciousness of this morning and the consciousness of this afternoon, is it one with or distinct from the consciousness of this morning and the consciousness of this afternoon? If it is one with them, on the basis of this morning's consciousness you will find this afternoon's consciousness. If they are distinct, after eliminating this morning's consciousness and this afternoon's consciousness, you should be able to point out today's consciousness, but you cannot. Once you have generated the ascertainment that thinks, "There is no such consciousness," meditate on that as before.

**II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b)2.1.2.** Take a period of time such as a year as an example. If there were a year that existed from its own side and not as a simple designation by a conception on a year's basis of designation – twelve months – would it exist as one with the twelve months or as distinct from them? If they were one, just as there are twelve months, so would there have to be twelve years. If they were distinct, once you had eliminated each of the twelve months, you should be able to point to a year but you cannot. Once you have generated the ascertainment that thinks, "There is no such year," meditate on it as before.

**II.2.3.2.2.2.1.b)2.2.** *The way to meditate once non-composite phenomena's lack of true nature is established.*

Take space as an example. As space has many parts, directional and inter-directional, analyze whether it is one with them or distinct from them. Once you have generated the ascertainment of non-inherent existence, meditate on it as before.

In brief, on the one hand there is space-like absorption one-pointedly focused on the ascertainment that all samsaric and non-samsaric phenomena – the "I," the aggregates, mountains, fences, houses, etc. – do not have even a particle's worth of self-produced existence that is not a designation by conception. On the other hand, there is the ensuing illusion-like

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<sup>3</sup> The point is: is the whole body inherently one or inherently different from the parts that compose it? If it were inherently one, there would be five bodies, one for each limb. If it were inherently distinct, the body would be totally unrelated to the five limbs.

[concentration] that subsequently understands that all that appears [inherently existent] and arises from a collection of causes and conditions does not exist inherently and is therefore by nature false. Insight is defined as the absorption associated with the bliss of mental and physical pliancy induced by analysis through training well in these two yogas.

*II.2.3.2.2.1.c)* The way to conclude is as before.

*II.2.3.2.2.2.* Between meditation sessions, as before, read canonical and exegetic works that explain the system of insight and so forth.

Having trained your mind in the common path in this way, it is absolutely necessary to enter the vajrayana, for thanks to that path you will easily complete the [two] collections without having to take three countless eons to do so. Moreover, having received an experiential explanation on the way to rely on a spiritual mentor up to serenity and insight, meditate daily in four sessions, or at minimum one, and gain a transformational experience of the stages of the path. This is the best method to take full advantage of your life with freedom and fortune.

The thought of the incomparable master of the cane sugar clan<sup>4</sup>  
Elucidated by the glorious and excellent Dipamkara and his spiritual heirs,  
And the second Buddha, Je Losang [Drakpa]<sup>5</sup>  
Is presented here concisely in the order for practice,  
As a method for fortunate ones to travel to liberation,  
Composed by the one known as Chokyi Gyeltsen.  
By its virtue may I and other sentient beings  
Complete the practices of the three kinds of beings.

*I, the Dharma teacher Losang Chokyi Gyeltsen, taught a practical exposition of these stages of the path, the Easy Path to Travel to Omniscience, based on my notes, to the large and complete assembly of monks {at Tashi Lhunpo Monastery} during a summer retreat. Notes were taken at the time, which I was shown and corrected. May the ensuing work be a victory banner for the precious, never-declining teaching!*

Translated by Rosemary Patton under the Guidance of Venerable Dagpo Rinpoche. Reproduced from *The Pearl Garland: An Anthology of Lamrim*s, France: Editions Guépèle, 2012. Print.

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<sup>4</sup> Buddha Sakyamuni

<sup>5</sup> rJe bLo bsang [Grags pa], i.e., Je Tsongkhapa.