



Daily
Practice

Advice from Lama Tsongkhapa

Lama Tsongkhapa, Dharma King of the three realms, has said:

This opportune physical form
Is worth more than a wish-granting gem.
You only gain it's like the once.
So hard to get, so easily destroyed,
It's like a lightning bolt in the sky.

Contemplate this and you will realize
All worldly actions are but winnowed chaff.
And night and day you must
Extract some essence of this life.
I, a yogi, practiced in this way.
You, wanting liberation, should do the same!

Morning Motivation

"Every day, think as you wake up, I am alive. I have a precious human life. I am not going to waste it. I am going to use all of my energies to develop myself, to expand my heart out to others, to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all beings. I am going to have kind thoughts towards others. I am not going to get angry or think badly about others. I am going to benefit others as much as I can."

- His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama



Morning Practice

Visualize the refuge tree or the Buddha seated in front of you.

Refuge and Bodhicitta

SANG GYE CHO DANG TSOK KYI CHOK NAM LA
CHANG CHUB BAR DU DAG NI KYAB SU CHI
DAG GYI JIN SOG GYI PEY SONAM KYI
DRO WA PEN CHIR SANG GYE DRUP PAR SHOG

I take refuge until I am enlightened in the Buddhas, the Dharma, and the Sangha. Through the positive potential I create by practicing generosity, ethics, patience, joyous effort, concentration, and wisdom, may I attain Buddhahood in order to benefit all sentient beings. (3x)

Four Immeasurables

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were to abide in equanimity, free of bias, attachment, and anger. May they abide in this way. I shall cause them to abide in this way. Enlightened ones, please inspire me to be able to do so.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings had happiness and its causes. May they have these. I shall cause them to have these. Enlightened ones, please inspire me to be able to do so.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were free from suffering and its causes. May they be free. I shall cause them to be free. Enlightened ones, please inspire me to be able to do so.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were never parted from upper rebirth and liberation's excellent bliss. May they never be parted. I shall cause them never to be parted. Enlightened ones, please inspire me to be able to do so.

Seven Limb Prayer

(Visualize the merit field or the Buddha as representation of the merit field.)

1. Reverently I prostrate with my body, speech and mind,
2. And present clouds of every type of offering, actual and mentally transformed.
3. I confess all my negative actions accumulated since beginningless time,
4. And rejoice in the virtues of all holy and ordinary beings.
5. Please remain until cyclic existence ends,
6. And turn the wheel of Dharma for sentient beings.
7. I dedicate all the virtues of myself and others to the great enlightenment (for all sentient beings).

Mandala Offering

This ground, anointed with perfume, flowers strewn, Mount Meru, four lands, sun and moon. Imagined as a Buddha land and offered to you. May all beings enjoy this pure land. The objects of attachment, aversion and ignorance – friends, enemies, and strangers, my body, wealth, and enjoyments – I offer these without any sense of loss. Please accept them with pleasure and inspire me and others to be free from the three poisonous attitudes.

IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM NIRYA TAYAMI

Meditation Session

Mindfulness

After meditation, set an intention to be mindful so that you can avoid the 10 non-virtuous actions and cultivate the 10 virtuous actions:

10 Non-Virtuous Actions—killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, divisive speech, harsh speech, gossip or useless speech, covetousness, ill-will (wishing others harm), and wrong view - means one does not have the clarity of understanding actions and their consequences, the cause and effect of karma, virtue and non-virtue. One's mind has distorted beliefs about the nature of reality.

10 Virtuous Actions—protect life, honor other people's property, maintain sexual purity in body and mind, be truthful, speak gently to others, bring people together, speak meaningfully/mindfully, cultivate contentment, wish happiness for all sentient beings, and maintain a Buddhist world view – all good comes from virtue, all suffering comes from self-cherishing.

Dedication

By this merit, may I soon
Attain the enlightened state of guru-Buddha
That I may be able to liberate
All sentient beings from their sufferings.

May the precious Bodhi mind,
Not yet born arise and grow.
May that born have no decline
But increase forever more.

Short Morning Practice

Refuge and Bodhicitta

SANG GYE CHO DANG TSOK KYI CHOK NAM LA
CHANG CHUB BAR DU DAG NI KYAB SU CHI
DAG GYI JIN SOG GYI PEY SONAM KYI
DRO WA PEN CHIR SANG GYE DRUP PAR SHOG

I take refuge until I am enlightened in the Buddhas, the Dharma, and the Sangha.
Through the positive potential I create by practicing generosity, ethics, patience,
joyous effort, concentration, and wisdom, may I attain Buddhahood in order to
benefit all sentient beings. (3x)

The Four Thoughts That Turn the Mind to Dharma

First, a precious human birth favorable to dharma practice, is hard to obtain and easily lost. I must make this life meaningful.

Second, the world and all its inhabitants are impermanent. In particular, the life of each being is like a water bubble. It is uncertain when I will die and become a corpse. At that time, only dharma can help. I must practice now with diligence.

Third, when death comes, there is no freedom and karma takes its course. Since I create my own karma, I should abandon all unwholesome actions and always devote my time to wholesome actions. With this in mind, I must observe my mind-stream each day.

Fourth, just like the feast before the executioner leads me to my death, home, friends, pleasures, and possessions of samsara cause me continual torment by means of the three sufferings. I must cut through all attachment and strive to attain enlightenment.

Meditation Session

Dedication

By this merit, may I soon
Attain the enlightened state of guru-Buddha
That I may be able to liberate
All sentient beings from their sufferings.

May the precious Bodhi mind
Not yet born arise and grow.
May that born have no decline
But increase forever more.

Evening Practice

Every night before you go to sleep, take some time to reflect upon your day, calling to mind the virtuous and non-virtuous activities you engaged in. Dedicate all of the merit you accumulated from your virtuous activities to your continued spiritual growth and enlightenment so that you can help all beings be free of suffering.

Then do the following short Vajrasattva practice to purify any non-virtuous activities.



Taking Refuge

I take refuge until I am enlightened in the Buddhas, the Dharma, and the Sangha. Through the positive potential I create by practicing generosity, ethics, patience, joyous effort, concentration, and wisdom, may I attain Buddhahood in order to benefit all sentient beings. (3x)

Remembering Impermanence and Death

Many people I have known have died, some my age, some younger, or older. It is truly a rare and precious opportunity to be alive and have incredible good fortune to purify my negative karma right now.

Generating Bodhicitta

I am not practicing this Vajrasattva purification for myself alone-the purpose of my life is to release all sentient beings from their suffering and its causes and help them to attain enlightenment. In order to do this, I must first reach enlightenment myself. Therefore, I must purify all my negative karma as quickly as possible.

Visualize Vajrasattva above the crown of your head, seated upon a lotus and moon seat. His body is made of white light and his two hands are crossed at his heart; the right holds a vajra, the left holds a bell. At his heart is a moon disc with the seed syllable HUM at its center encircled by the letters of Vajrasattva hundred-syllable mantra.

The Power of Regret

Spend some time reviewing any unwholesome or harmful physical, verbal, and mental actions you have done, both those you can remember and those you created in previous lives but cannot recall. Generate an intelligent regret for having done these, recognizing that, though they were done out of a desire for happiness, these activities actually undermine your well-being and create suffering for yourself and others. Have a strong wish to be free from their suffering results and to avoid causing harm to others and yourself in the future.

Recognizing Vajrasattva as a combination of the wisdom and compassion of all the Buddhas and as your own wisdom and compassion in fully developed form, make this request:

Bhagavan Vajrasattva, please clear away all negative karma and obscurations of myself and all living beings and purify all degenerated and broken commitments.

The Power of the Remedy

From the HUM at Vajrasattva's heart, light radiates in all directions, requesting the Buddhas to bestow their blessings. They accept the request and send white rays of light and nectar, the essence of which is the knowledge of their body, speech, and mind. The light and nectar absorb into the HUM and the letters of the mantra at Vajrasattva's heart. They then fill his whole body completely, enhancing the magnificence of his appearance and increasing the brilliance of the mantra.

While reciting the mantra, visualize that white rays of light and nectar stream continuously from the HUM and mantra at Vajrasattva's heart. They flow down through the crown of your head and fill every cell of your body and mind with infinite bliss and purifying all negativities and afflictions.

Recite the mantra seven or twenty-one times or as many times as possible, visualize all the negativities and afflictions as darkness at your heart. Immeasurable, powerful rays of white light and nectar pour down from Vajrasattva's heart, entering through your crown. Instantly, the darkness at your heart is dispelled. Concentrate on being filled with light and on the total absence and freedom from all negativities and afflictions.

If you know them, you can visualize the three techniques of downward cleansing, upward cleansing and instantaneous cleansing.

om vajrasattva samaya manu palaya/ vajrasattva deno patita/ dido may bhawa/ suto kayo may bhawa/ supo kayo may bhawa/ anu rakto may bhawa/ sarwa siddhi mempar yatsa/ sarwa karma su tsa may/ tsitam shriyam kuru hum/ ha ha ha ha ho/ bhagawan/ sarwa tatagata/ vajra ma may mu tsa/ vajra bhawa maha samaya sattva/ ah hum pey

If you have not yet memorized the long mantra, or if you are pressed for time, you may recite the short mantra - *om vajrasattva hum*

The power of Resolve

Then make the following determination with firm resolve: "I shall do my best not to do these destructive actions again in the future."

With delight, Vajrasattva melts into light and dissolves into you. Your body, speech, and mind become inseparably one with Vajrasattva's holy body, speech and mind. Concentrate on this.

Dedication

Due to this merit may I soon
Attain the enlightened state of Vajrasattva,
That I may be able to liberate
All sentient beings from their sufferings.

May the precious bodhi mind,
Not yet born arise and grow.
May that born have no decline,
But increase forever more.