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# The Luminous Path To Liberation

*A Preliminary Practice Liturgy*

Arranged by Mipam Namgyal

Translated by Cortland Dahl

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## Preliminary Practices

Guru, think of me! (3x)

*The first verse for contemplation*

Rare as the udumbara, the freedoms and endowments  
Are invaluable when found, more precious than a wish-  
granting gem.

Yet we who have found them, rare though they certainly  
are,

Accomplish nothing of any real value, no benefit that truly  
lasts.

This opportunity we render useless, letting it go to waste.  
Oh Guru, embodiment of the Three Jewels! Please look  
upon us with compassion!

Grant your blessings that these freedoms and  
endowments be used in a meaningful way!

*The second verse for contemplation*

All conditioned things are impermanent, like lightning  
flashing through the sky.

Consider the universe itself or the beings within it: all is  
subject to decay.

Death, we know, is certain, yet there is no telling when it  
will strike.

Deceiving ourselves we cling to things as though they  
will last,

And with this attitude we live our lives in idle carelessness.

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Oh Guru, embodiment of the Three Jewels! Please look  
upon us with compassion!  
Grant your blessings that we may remember the facts of  
impermanence and death!

### *The third verse for contemplation*

The karmic results of our virtue and vice will inevitably  
appear.  
From the infallible workings of karma come all phenomena,  
Everything that manifests throughout samsara and nirvana.  
Despite the fact that we experience the consequences of our  
own deeds,  
We remain incapable of acting accordingly and selecting  
our acts as we should.  
Oh Guru, embodiment of the Three Jewels! Please look  
upon us with compassion!  
Grant your blessings that we may take up virtue and  
abandon vice!

### *The fourth verse for contemplation*

We are plagued by infinite sufferings, and difficult they are  
to bear.  
Even what seems to be pleasant is transitory, a trick of the  
mind.

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For all the defiled aggregates are what cause suffering to occur.

Samsara's three realms are no different than a flaming pit of fire.

Yet still we do not understand this, and our obsession with samsara remains!

Oh Guru, embodiment of the Three Jewels! Please look upon us with compassion!

Grant your blessings that renunciation may take birth in the depths of our hearts!

*For the unique preliminaries, begin by going for refuge:*

The Vajradhara Guru of Oddiyana sits before me,  
In the center of a five branched wish-granting tree,  
Surrounded by the lineage gurus, yidams, and dakinis.  
In front of him, the supreme teacher, along with the  
buddhas of the three times,  
And to his right the eight close sons, the Mahayana's noble  
assembly.

Behind him are the Buddha's sublime words in the form  
of Buddhist scripture,  
And to his left, the eight supreme ones, the sangha of  
sravakas and pratyekabuddhas.

The assembly of wisdom protectors surrounds them in  
every direction.

Every source of refuge throughout the ten directions and  
three times I visualize,

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Crowded together like a mass of seeds, without a single  
one left out.

I, my mother, and all beings that pervade the furthest  
reaches of space

Now find ourselves standing before them, bowing with  
reverence and respect.

From now, until the essence of enlightenment is attained,  
With supreme conviction we go to them for refuge:

In the assembly of gurus, yidams, and dakinis,  
That fill the furthest reaches of space,  
And in the Buddha, Dharma, and noble Sangha,  
I and all the six classes go for refuge respectfully.

*Next, cultivate bodhicitta in the presence of these sources of  
refuge. To begin, meditate on the four boundless qualities and  
recite the following prayer a suitable number of times:*

May all sentient beings have happiness and the causes of  
happiness!

May they be free from suffering and the causes of  
suffering!

May they never be apart from the sublime bliss that is  
free from suffering!

May they remain in a state of equanimity, free from  
attachment and aversion to those near and far!



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*For the main part of the practice, cultivate bodhicitta by reciting the following prayer 100,000 times:*

HO

As the victors of the three times and their offspring  
Cultivated the supreme mind of enlightenment,  
So do I cultivate supreme, unsurpassed bodhicitta  
To liberate all beings that fill the reaches of space.

*Following this, recite the following prayer an appropriate number of times. This prayer embodies the unique approach to cultivating bodhicitta found in the Fruitional Vehicle of the Secret Mantra:*

I and all the infinite number of beings  
Have been buddhas from the very start.  
In acknowledgement that this is so,  
We now cultivate supreme bodhicitta.

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*Next, arrange heaps on the mandala and recite the following:*

OM AH HUM

In the dharmakaya pure realm, dharmadhatu equality,  
The realms of the five sambhogakaya families self appear  
unobstructedly,  
Along with the array of nirmanakaya pure realms that fill  
all of space.  
All this I offer as Samantabhadra's clouds of great bliss.

OM RATNA MANDALA PUJA MEGHA SAMUDRA SPARANA SAMAYÉ AH HUM

## Preliminary Practices

*The meditation and recitation of Vajrasattva*

AH

On a lotus moon seat upon the crown of my head  
Sits glorious Vajrasattva, the color of the moon.  
Embraced by Vajratöpa, holding vajra and bell,  
He sits in vajra posture, adorned as a sambhogakaya.  
The HUM on the moon in his heart is circled by 100 syllables.  
Amrita flows down, purifying misdeeds and obscurations.

*With the four powers complete, repeat the 100 syllable mantra  
as you visualize a cleansing stream of amrita flowing into you:*

OM VAJRASATTVA SAMAYAM ANUPALAYA VAJRASATTVA TVENO  
PATISHTA DRIDHO MÉ BHAVA SUTOSHYO MÉ BHAVA SUPOSHYO MÉ  
BHAVA ANURAKTO MÉ BHAVA SARVASIDDHIM MÉ PRAYACHA  
SARVAKARMA SU CHA ME CHITTAM SHREYAH KURU HUM HA HA HA  
HA HO BHAGAVAN SARVA TATAGATA VAJRA MA MÉ MUNCHA VAJRI  
BHAVA MAHASAMAYASATTVA AH

*At the end of the session, recite the following:*

Protector, under the sway of unknowing and ignorance  
I have transgressed my samayas and let them decline.  
Oh guru, protector, grant me refuge!  
You are the chief of all who wield the vajra,  
The very embodiment of great compassion!  
Lord of all beings, I go for refuge to you.

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I confess all lapses of the subsidiary and main samayas of enlightened body, speech, and mind, both my own and those of all sentient beings. Please purify and cleanse this whole host of impurity, all our negativity, obscurations, faults and misdeeds!

*To this supplication, Vajrasattva responds, "Fortunate child, all of your breeches and transgressions of samaya are now purified!"*

*Absolved in this way, visualize Vajrasattva dissolving into you. This transforms both you and all sentient beings into the form of Vajrasattva. Then repeat the six syllable mantra:*

OM VAJRASATTVA HUM

*Conclude by reciting as follows:*

With this virtue, may I myself  
Swiftly accomplish Vajrasattva,  
And bring each and every being  
To this level of spiritual attainment!

May all the breeches and transgressions of samaya,  
Both my own and those of all beings, be purified.  
From now until we reach the very heart of bodhi,  
May our samaya be thoroughly and utterly pure!

## Preliminary Practices

### *Guru Yoga*

How wondrous!

In a self-manifest realm of infinite purity,

I find myself, visualized as Vajrayogini.

On my crown sits a 1,000 petalled lotus, a sun and moon,

And Oddiyana Vajradhara, union of all sources of refuge.

He is white tinged with red, with a peaceful smile, vajra,  
skullcup, and vase;

He wears sambhogakaya ornaments and is embraced by  
his partner Yeshé Tsogyal.

Self-arisen mandalas of tantra are perfectly present in his  
form.

Root and lineage gurus, dakinis, and the oath-bound

Surround him like a pod of seeds split open.

From Chamara continent come their wisdom  
counterparts.

Falling like rain, they dissolve into the visualized support.

*Next, recite the seven line supplication three or seven times as  
you invoke and dissolve the wisdom deities:*

HUM

In the northwest of the land of Oddiyana,

In the center of a blooming lotus flower,

Is the one with supreme, wondrous siddhi:

The renowned Lotus-Born Padmakara,

Surrounded by a vast retinue of dakinis.

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Following in your footsteps, I pray:  
Please come and bestow your blessings!

GURU PADMA SIDDHI HUM

*Then perform the seven branch offering:*

HO

With infinite bodies I bow down, prostrating respectfully,  
And offer as Samantabhadra, apparent existence the  
manifest ground.

Every misdeed and downfall from all lifetimes I now  
confess,

Rejoicing in all the virtue throughout samsara and  
nirvana.

May you remain as the vajrakaya, as long as beings and  
realms exist.

I beseech you to turn the wheel of the profound and vast  
Dharma,

As I dedicate this whole host of virtue to the attainment  
of buddhahood.

*And then supplicate as follows:*

In the magnetizing fortress of the Northern land of  
Oddiyana,

Dwells the emanation of the sugatas' body, speech, and  
mind,

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Come to the continent of Jambu for the welfare of beings,  
Surrounded by a multitude of vidyadharas and dakinis.  
I supplicate the divine assembly of Padmakara!  
I supplicate you, Padmakara, guru of Oddiyana!  
Please grant me your blessings and empowerments!

*Supplicate with fervent devotion as you visualize a stream of  
amrita light entering your crown and empowering you.*

*Alternately, you may practice guru yoga by envisioning the  
inseparability of the Great One of Oddiyana and a suitable  
yidam deity. For instance, you may visualize the form of  
Hayagriva being in essence Padmasambhava. In this case,  
supplicate using the six verses that begin: "In the dark red  
triangular mansion..." And add the line, "Please grant me  
empowerment," making seven lines altogether. You can do the  
same with Yamantaka by reciting, "From a dark blue E..."*

*At the conclusion of the session, receive the four empowerments  
as you recite the following lines:*

From the three syllables in the guru's three places,  
Three lights radiate: white, red, and dark blue,  
Dissolving into my three places, blessing me as they do.  
The guru and his retinue then dissolve into light,  
Traveling the path of Brahma and melting into the core  
of my heart.  
The enlightened mind of the guru and my own indivisible,  
I settle into the innate nature of the dharmakaya mind.

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Cleansing the four obscurations and achieving the four  
empowerments' wisdom,  
All blessings and empowerments are attained,  
The four paths are mastered and the four kayas actualized.

*As you visualize all this, recite an appropriate number of vajra  
guru mantras:*

OM AH HUM VAJRA GURU PADMA SIDDHI HUM

*Conclude by making aspirations, such as the following:*

In all my lives, may I not part from the true guru  
And may I enjoy the richness of the Dharma.  
Perfecting the qualities of the paths and levels,  
May I swiftly attain the state of Vajradhara!

*This preliminary practice liturgy was arranged by Mipam  
Jampal Gyepa. May virtue and goodness flourish!*

*Translated under the direction of Pukang Khenpo Sherab  
Sangpo by Karma Tsultrim Shönu [Cortland Dahl] on the third  
day of the fire pig year, 2134 [February 21st, 2007].*

*Sarva Mangalam!*



# Preliminary Practices

## Appendix

*As noted by Mipam in the preceding text, guru yoga practice may be linked with any suitable yidam deity. What follows are short liturgies that may be inserted prior to receiving the four empowerments. In any case, the deity should be viewed as being Padmasambhava in essence, visualized in the form of the yidam one is meditating on.*

*If the yidam deity is Hayagriva, recite the following:*

In the dark red triangular mansion of power,  
Stands the mighty king, Padma Heruka,  
Trampling black male and female demons as his seat  
And surrounded by the wrathful deities of the padma  
family.  
I supplicate you, mighty Hayagriva and your divine  
assembly!  
I supplicate you, Padmakara, master of Oddiyana!  
Please bestow your blessings and empowerments upon  
me.

*If the yidam deity is Yamantaka, recite the following:*

From a dark blue E appears a mansion of wrath,  
Within it Manjushri Yamantaka, slayer of the lord of death.

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He tramples the buffalo headed Yama as his seat,  
And is surrounded by a retinue of wrathful slayers.  
I supplicate you, Yamantaka and your divine assembly!  
I supplicate you, Padmakara, master of Oddiyana!  
Please bestow your blessings and empowerments upon  
me.

*If the yidam deity is Vajrakilaya, recite the following:*

In a mansion that blazes like a fire at the end of time,  
Stands the form of heroic Vajrakumara, great and glorious.  
He tramples an arrogant male demon as his seat, and is  
surrounded by a retinue  
Of the ten wrathful subduers of mara and their animal  
headed assistants.  
I supplicate you, Vajrakilaya and your divine assembly!  
I supplicate you, Padmakara, master of Oddiyana!  
Please bestow your blessings and empowerments upon  
me.