

The Chariot for Traveling the Noble Path

The chanted daily practice drawn from the Spotless Teachings of the Jewel Garland of the Practice Lineage, the Karma Kagyu, the Lineage of Ultimate Realization

To glorious Vajradhara, the sovereign of all families and guru Karmapa; The source of all mandalas, who possesses the glories of samsara and nirvana, the yidam Vajrayogini; He who is powerful in performing all activity, the dharmapala Pernakchen and his consort and retinue. I, the yogin (or yogini), pay homage with one-pointed respect, protect me unceasingly with your kindness.

*A great continuous river of blessings arises
From the tradition, the path of the precious Practice Lineage,
Which I studied with many spiritual friends.
Having practiced that, in order to awaken bodhicitta,
I have clearly arranged the Vajra teachings:
The Supreme Chariot for Traveling the Noble Path.
Those who are worthy of entering this path
Should have unwavering exertion.*

In order to do the daily practice of these ngöndro teachings, when the sound of the drum calls you to practice, externally you arise in accordance with the vinaya discipline of either bhiksu, sramanera, or upasaka. Inwardly, having aroused the bodhicitta of aspiring and entering, assemble and prostrate with respect to the representations of the three jewels. Secretly, abiding in the command and samaya of the vajracarya of the mantrayana, sit down in your row, adopting the five points of meditation posture. Not being controlled by the eight worldly dharmas¹, take the attitude: “I will completely practice the dharma, my provision for death.” When you are chanting, with unwavering insight, rest your mind on the words inseparable from their meaning.

This is the supplication for the general preliminaries and the special preliminaries of Mahamudra, written by the thirteenth lord. It is always important to chant this.

Namo gurubhyah

The guru who shows my mind as Dharmakaya
Continually rains down amrita of blessings.
To me and as many hosts of beings as there are, limitless as space,
Please bestow the ordinary and supreme siddhis without exception.
It is difficult for any sentient being to find a “free and well favored” situation.
Having great certainty in seeing these, “free” is meaningful.
Remembering impermanence, I will quickly accomplish the holy dharma.
Believing in karma and its result, may I endeavor to practice the ten virtues.

In order to attain the bhumi of permanent joy, free from the danger of samsara,
I eternally take refuge in the three jewels.
May I train in the supreme bodhicitta of aspiring and entering².

By means of the four powers³ and the hundred syllables, evil deeds and obscurations are purified.

Vigorously I offer mandalas to completely accomplish the two accumulations⁴.
May I receive blessings by means of guru yoga.

Practicing the Samadhi of shamata, free from thoughts,
May I be fully illumined by the wisdom of vipashyana.

Having spontaneously purified obstacles of body and mind-
Particularly the obstacles to Samadhi are drowsiness,
Wildness and so forth- may I pacify all those obstacles
And completely attain the virtues of renunciation and realization on the paths and
bhumis.

Having traveled the paths of the threefold four yogas⁵, making twelve,
Benefiting whomever I encounter, by means of auspicious coincidence and skillful
means,
May I bring all sentient beings to the state
Of supreme, unsurpassable, complete, great enlightenment.

This was composed by the thirteenth holder of the title of Karmapa, Vajra Subjugator of the Hosts of Mara (Dudul Dorje). May there be virtue.

Begin 20 minute sit

Chant each and then contemplate 5 minutes:

*The chanting of the instruction that it is difficult to find a human body free and well-favored:
First, contemplate the preciousness of being free and well-favored.
This is difficult to gain, easy to lose; now I must do something meaningful.*

Death and Impermanence

Second, the whole world and its inhabitants are impermanent;
In particular, the life of beings is like a bubble.
Death comes without warning; this body will be a corpse.
At that time the dharma will be my only help;
I must practice it with exertion.

Karmic cause and effect

Third, when death comes, I will be helpless.
Because I create karma, I must abandon evil deeds
And always devote my time to virtuous actions.
Thinking this, every day I will examine myself.

Retribution of samsara

Fourth, the homes, friends, wealth, and comforts of samsara
Are the constant torment of the three sufferings,
Just like a feast before the executioner leads you to your death.
I must cut desire and attachment and attain enlightenment through exertion.

Those are the four general preliminaries.

Then, to make one's being a suitable vessel, and to make whatever you do an aid to the path of liberation, chant the instructions on taking refuge and arousing bodhicitta:

Create visualization

Before me, in the middle of a lake, is a wish-fulfilling tree
With one main trunk and four branches.
In the middle, where the branches join, is a lion throne.
On a lotus, sun and moon sits my root guru
As Vajradhara, surrounded by the Kagyu gurus.
In front of him are the yidams; to the right, the Buddhas;
Behind the throne, the dharmapalas and protectors.
All surrounded by oceans of hosts of their respective retinues.
On the shore of the lake is a field of moss, and on it, stretching as far as the sky,
Are those who have been my mothers, all sentient beings.
With one-pointed mind we take refuge and arouse bodhicitta.

Stand up - either recite in anjali or begin prostrations

I and all sentient beings, limitless like space, take refuge in the glorious very
embodiments of body, speech and mind of all the tathagatas of the ten directions and the
three times, the source of eighty four thousand texts of dharma, the Lord of the Noble
Sangha.
I take refuge in the glorious holy guru,
I take refuge in the kind root guru,
I take refuge in the lineage teachers.
I take refuge in the divine assembly of the mandala of yidams
I take refuge in the Buddha
I take refuge in the Dharma
I take refuge in the Sangha
I take refuge in the entire assembly of dakas, dakinis, dharmapalas
And protectors who possess the eye of wisdom.

Recite that seven or twenty one times, or as much as you can. Then do prostrations with short form:

I take refuge in the glorious holy guru,
I take refuge in the divine assembly of the mandala of yidams
I take refuge in the Buddha
I take refuge in the Dharma
I take refuge in the Sangha
I take refuge in the entire assembly of dakas, dakinis, dharmapalas
And protectors who possess the eye of wisdom.

Sit down

Until attaining the essence of enlightenment
I take refuge in the Buddha
And likewise in the dharma
And the host of bodhisattvas

Just as the sugatas⁶ of former times
Realized bodhichitta
And established themselves by stages
In the training of a bodhisattva,

Just so, for the benefit of beings,
I will arouse bodhichitta
And likewise will train
Progressively in those disciplines.

Say this three times:

May all sentient beings enjoy happiness and the causes of happiness
May they all be free of suffering and the root of suffering
May they never be separated from the great happiness devoid of suffering
May they dwell in the great equanimity that is free from passion, aggression and prejudice.

10 minutes of tonglen

OM AH HUM

Finally the object of refuge melts into light and dissolves into me.

Sit 20 minutes

¹ Tilopa then handed a string full of knots to Naropa and asked him to untie them. Naropa did it and gave the string back. Tilopa threw it aside and asked Naropa what he understood. Naropa replied, "All beings are tied by the eight worldly dharmas, and we need to untie them. Once we have done so we have to remain natural and rest the mind in itself without being artificial. We have to get rid of all our expectations, hopes and fear."

"We always hope to be praised and we are afraid of being criticized."

"We are looking for fame and we are afraid of being disgraced."

"We want to gain something and we are afraid of losing it."

"We are striving for happiness and we are afraid of misery."

² The bodhicitta of *aspiration* is the intention to attain enlightenment.
Entering is putting that Dharma into practice.

³ Power of Dependence or Power of Reliance

"The teachings mention that when a person falls down on the ground, they get up by depending on the ground. [Similarly] we purify any negative karma collected in relation to the holy objects of guru, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha by taking refuge and we purify any negative karma collected in relation to sentient beings by generating bodhicitta, which means by depending on the sentient beings. This is the power of dependence. Some people translate it as "the power of reliance."

Power of Regret

"When you examine each of these different negative karmas...you can see the whole package. What needs to be purified—the obstacles to achieving enlightenment and to doing perfect works for all sentient beings—becomes very clear. Then feel strong regret. The teachings say that you should feel as if you have swallowed a deadly poison. ...Think like this just before you start to recite the Vajrasattva mantra or while you are reciting it. This is the way to practice the power of regret."

Power of Remedy

"Refers generally to any virtue, because virtue is the remedy that purifies negative karma. Taking refuge, generating bodhicitta, [and] reciting the mantra are all part of the remedy."

Power of not committing negative actions again

"At the end of the sadhana, after Vajrasattva says that you are purified, you practice the power not to commit the negative actions again." – (Four Powers explanations paraphrased from writing of Lama Zopa Rinpoche)

⁴ The two accumulations are *wisdom* and *merit*.

⁵ Four yogas of Mahamudra: "The first of these, *one-pointedness*, essentially means that you can remain calmly undisturbed for as long as you want. The next yoga is *simplicity*, and means to recognize your natural face as being ordinary mind, free from basis and free from root...We train by means of mindfulness, first effortful, then effortless. [The third yoga:] *One taste* means that the duality of experience dissolves, that all dualistic notions such as samsara and nirvana dissolve into the state of nondual awareness. Having perfected one taste through the levels of the lesser, medium and higher stages, the fourth yoga is *non-meditation*. This is the point at which every type of conviction and the fixing of the attention on something completely dissolves. All convictions and habitual tendencies have dissolved and are left behind. One has captured the dharmakaya throne of non-meditation."

- Chogyi Nyima Rinpoche

⁶ sugatas-those who have gone beyond joyfully