

COMPASSION

A Guide to the Mantra Practices of the Great Compassionate One

By

Geshe Tenzin Zopa



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This book is dedicated to the good health, long life and fulfilment of all holy wishes of His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, Geshe Tenzin Zopa and all our holy Gurus.

The book is also dedicated for the swift return of the reincarnation of our precious Guru, the late Kyabje Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche for the continuous benefit of all sentient beings.

May all teachers of the Dharma live long and healthy lives, may they continue to turn the wheel of Dharma and may all their holy wishes be spontaneously fulfilled. May all living beings achieve every happiness, liberation and Enlightenment.



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EDITOR'S NOTE

With great devotion and deepest respect to Geshe Tenzin Zopa, we express our immeasurable gratitude to Geshe-la for his immense kindness to teach us, guide us and inspire us to live a truly meaningful life through the practices of compassion and wisdom. Thank you for being our constant source of inspiration in this endeavour.

This book contains the compilation of five online sessions of *Saka Dawa* Mani Retreat teachings by Geshe-la, organised by Chag Tong Chen Tong Centre (FPMT Tasmania, Australia) and Taitung Foundation Inc. during *Saka Dawa* 2021. At the beginning of the retreat with teachings on motivation, in the middle of retreat with inspirations and lights offering, and at the end of the retreat with rejoicing and extensive dedications.

In this book, Geshe-la explains about *OM MANI PADME HUM* mantra practices of Chenrezig [Compassion Buddha is also known as Chenrezig (in Tibetan), Avalokiteshvara (in Sanskrit), Guan Yin Pu Sa (in Chinese) or the Great Compassionate One] and retreat guidance for a complete practice during Mani Retreat.

“Mani Retreat is one of the most extensive and most powerful retreat. It is the most easy retreat, suitable for all ages and everyone is qualified to do practices of compassion. It can be done during any time of the year (not only during Saka Dawa or Vesak merit-multiplying month). OM MANI PADME HUM mantra can be recited at any time, any moment, anywhere and any day throughout one’s precious lifetime. It is how we can make our lives as meaningful as they can possibly be.”

- Geshe Tenzin Zopa

Two main sections in this book are the Transcripts of Teachings and Summary Notes; both portraying Geshe-la’s dynamic blessed speech in conversational-style written texts. Summary Notes is the summary of teachings in note form—for meditation or reflection on the main points. I sincerely apologise for any errors, mistakes or omissions due to my own limitations. Please refer to the recordings of Geshe-la’s teachings for the true and exact meaning.

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Joanne Keet Foong Foo

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1. TRANSCRIPTS

1.1 Setting the Altruistic Motivation



During this period when the world is facing so many adversities like pandemic, natural disasters and all sorts of difficulties, we are here not to just heal whatever adversities that we can witness through our senses. Your compassion carries an even deeper wisdom and deeper responsibility, which is expressed by altruism, a fully matured Great Compassion. [As such], understanding the pervasive [sufferings] of samsaric existence of the entire six realm sentient beings is the most important part. The crisis in the world that we can see is the suffering of pain which is very gross suffering. We can also witness the suffering of change using our ordinary mind, but to understand the pervasive suffering due to contamination of karma and delusions is hard. It requires a deeper level of wisdom, in particular the wisdom that is supported by Great Compassion. Only then will you be able to see the pervasive suffering within each and every sentient being, and that is the most courageous wisdom which is so powerful that it not only leads you to the state of Enlightenment, but can also make your Enlightenment most beneficial for the rest of numberless sentient beings' Enlightenment.

This is amazing to know, as one not just [simply] wants to participate in a *Saka Dawa* Mani Retreat but there is a huge play of wisdom and deep compassion, which a retreator may not even know that one is carrying that force.

I am here to introduce this and to remind you that it is in you.

During the path of training, Chenrezig had many numberless reincarnations - as a bug, an animal, a girl, a man etc., and had trained extensively for eons of lifetimes; similar to how we are trying to train on the path to eventually become Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig. The Guru Compassionate Buddha showed the example by manifesting as many different *panditas*, *mahasiddhas* and many aspects of Buddhas and bring about all these wonderful teachings and treatises on compassion and compassion practices like *Nyung Nā* and Mani retreat practices.

Starting today which is the *Saka Dawa* month, hundreds of thousands of Mahayanic Buddhists around the world are cultivating this practice of Great Compassion, conducting *Nyung Nā* and Mani retreats just like all of you.

At the same time, there are so many sentient beings even within our own human family who may not be interested in the practice, and some may even think that being compassionate is a weakness. But, when you relate through the understanding of your special karmic connection with your family members (and not with others), then their Enlightenment and development of compassion is very much dependent on you.

Just like how the Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig has inspired us and made us do the practice, we are ready to conduct the practice and follow his footsteps. All these activities are very much based on the fact that we have a special karmic connection with Chenrezig. Even though the Great Compassion, blessings and the attention [of Buddha Chenrezig] is unbiased and reaches out to every single numberless sentient being, but due to the interdependent karmic condition created from the sentient beings' side (due to their limitations of ignorance and delusions), they are unable to enjoy the blessings nor digest the blessings. There is a lot of play of karma. That's the reason why your practice is so important—starting with those who are karmically close to you such as your family members—their Enlightenment and their working on the path to Enlightenment gradually are very much dependent on you, in a similar way how we are depending on Chenrezig.

From that point of view, it is a great gift and great service to your loved ones to whom you have a special karma. Indirectly, through this practice, we are able to share the merits with the rest of the numberless sentient beings as a conditional cause. No matter how many suffering sentient beings and ignorant sentient beings there are out there, and how much negativities that they have engaged in at this stage, the merits that you have accumulated in relation to the practice of compassion will be able to contribute as conditional causes for them to eventually have the light on the path.

Therefore, it is so meaningful to dedicate our time in the practice, particularly in relation to Compassionate Buddha.

SIGNIFICANCE OF *SAKA DAWA*

This month [*Saka Dawa*] is one of the most special months compared to any other Buddha's holy days. In the general understanding, even though different Buddhist traditions have different assertions of the holy days of the Buddha in particular, even in relation to the different calendars from different astrological beliefs, the month of *Saka Dawa* or Vesak can be before or after. There are also different assertions about how many significant Buddha's major deeds are within this month. The common assertions of Buddha's holy days (holy deeds) on the 15th day of the *Saka Dawa* month are:

1. Day of Enlightenment
2. Day of *Parinirvana*
3. Day of Birth into this Southern world

On top of those common assertions, based on the *Vinaya* sutra and another sutra [in Tibetan], there are additionally two other holy days (holy deeds) of Buddha during the 15th day of *Saka Dawa* month:

4. Day of Conception in mother Maya's womb. On the 15th day of *Saka Dawa*, (Buddha descended from Tushita at different time) Buddha was conceived in mother Maya's womb.
5. Day of Eradicating the Four *Maras* of delusions, contaminated aggregates, death and distractions. In order to be enlightened, one needs to eradicate these four *Maras*; these deeds also happened on the 15th day of *Saka Dawa*.

In fact, on the 15th day of *Saka Dawa*, Buddha performed five major holy deeds for the benefit of sentient beings. There is no such other holy month.

Even though Siddhartha was already enlightened many eons ago, but among all the Thousand Fortunate Buddhas, he accepted to come to Southern universe with skilful means to tame and liberate the most distracted people like us during this time of five degenerations (when our delusions are the most stubborn). One of the five degenerations is the degeneration of delusions. Delusion itself is already a degenerated phenomenon, but on top of that, our time of delusion is the worst delusion. In particular in the Southern world, the desire grasping is most concrete and most difficult to transform. In this kind of critical time, Shakyamuni Buddha agreed to come into this world and used skilful means to tame degenerated beings like us.

During Buddha's time in the Southern world, he has brought benefits to sentient beings with infinite deeds. Among [the infinite deeds], the deeds that suited perfectly for beings in the Southern world are the twelve different major deeds. Each of the Buddha's deeds is carefully chosen and each of those days, months and the time are regarded as the blessed month (because it was chosen by the Omniscient One). It is blessed because the Omniscient One performed virtue and due to the virtue, it created the existence of atmosphere and a time for all to become auspicious and meritorious. Blessed because the particular time was chosen by the Omniscient One; however, many times it is repeated, it is blessed because Buddha intended it and made prayers.

MULTIPLYING MERITS

The power of Buddha's blessing for any virtue performed is multiplied 100 million times compared to other times. So powerful and amazing! Therefore, with 5 major Buddha's holy days (holy deeds) on 15th day of *Saka Dawa*, each virtue is multiplied 500 million times. In one of Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche's explanations on the benefits of *Saka Dawa*, 300 million merits are multiplied for the assertion of three major holy days (holy deeds). Adding to this, are two other holy days—deed of conception and deed of eradicating demons [*Maras*]. So, for five major deeds logically the merits are multiplied 500 million times.

One extra benefit is that every single time you do recitation, you can rejoice with an even larger amount of merits to rejoice. The benefit of rejoicing is when you rejoice in your own merits, you multiply the merits by double. So, when you rejoice with 500 million merits, it doubles up to 1,000 million times. Unbelievable! How fortunate!

PURIFICATION

For busy people and anyone who wants all the happiness in the world and everlasting happiness of Enlightenment, yet complaining that they have no time to practise Dharma or virtue, and complaining about having so many problems and so much ups and downs in life (in relation to business, relationship, health, etc.), the answer is because of one's karma. Problems are the results of negative karma of the past, yet they have no time to purify. It is totally understandable as people are truly busy with so many responsibilities to earn livelihood, with work, family, etc.

Therefore, one should make sure never to miss these holy days to practise, especially during *Saka Dawa*. Within a short period of time, one can accumulate huge amount of merits which one cannot accumulate even with the practice throughout the day for 24 hours. So, for the busy people who do not

wish for any problems but want all the happiness, this is absolutely dependent on the purification of past karma and accumulation of merits. Therefore, on this holy day like *Saka Dawa*, when you rejoice, your merits will be doubled. That means when we recite *OM MANI PADME HUM*, even if just reciting one *mala* and we then pause to rejoice, there would be a huge accumulation of merits. The accumulation of merits itself plays as an antidote to purify the karma. Two benefits with one action—purification of karma and accumulation of merits. Especially, by utilising the full opportunity of this blessed holy day, in such a short time, you can accumulate such a huge amount of merits and effectively purify infinite negativities of the past.

Therefore, by thinking of the benefits and what you really deeply want—which is to achieve everlasting happiness of Enlightenment and not wishing to experience samsara—then you should dedicate your entire life to Dharma practice, or at the very least during this special blessed holy month to actualise the practices.

CHENREZIG'S *OM MANI PADME HUM* PRACTICE

Among all the Dharma practices, whether in relation to sutra or tantra, Chenrezig's *OM MANI PADME HUM* practice is universal and has the elements of both sutra and tantra, which are the basis of all practices.

Compassion has the element of the common path which is sutra, and the energy of the mantra *OM MANI PADME HUM* itself is a tantric practice. In tantra, Chenrezig's practice have the elements of all the four tantric schools and all the stages of tantric practice. For example: common Chenrezig, Action Tantra, Chenrezig Gyalwa Gyatso (Highest Yoga Tantra) and different Chenrezig manifestations like Hayagriva is one of the embodiments of Chenrezig Highest Yoga Tantric Deity.

For the common path, it's not just an ordinary common path. It is an altruistic common path which makes the Compassionate Buddha practice one of the greatest:

- ❖ From the object side, it reaches every single numberless sentient being.
- ❖ From the subject side, when you express Great Compassion, every single fundamental altruistic capability of yours is expressed (much more than just expressing common renunciation, wisdom of selflessness, wisdom of emptiness, wisdom of impermanence; as you are not expressing your entire potential of your altruistic Buddha Nature). So, when you express Great Compassion, you really [optimise] the entirety of your absolute potential—and you are able to express the greatest altruistic attitude.

The *OM MANI PADME HUM* mantra is so powerful that even without understanding the meaning, you purify your three doors, and you establish the seeds of both Wisdom and Method. Not only that, you also establish the seeds and actualise the imprints in a unified way [of Wisdom and Method].

MEANING OF *OM MANI PADME HUM* MANTRA

- ❖ *OM* has 2 symbolisms. In relation to the basis of the practitioner, it symbolises our ordinary body, speech and mind. By reciting *OM*, this acts as an antidote to purify negativities accumulated through our body, speech and mind, and create the causes and conditions to

actualise the resultant purified Buddha's body, speech and mind which are also represented by syllable *OM*.

The syllable *OM* ॐ is comprised of 3 letters **AH, U, MA** representing the body, speech and mind. By practising the mantra *OM* the impure contaminated aggregates which is the basis causal stage of the practitioner's body, speech and mind **AH, U, MA (OM)** will bring about the purified Buddha's holy body, speech and mind.

- ❖ *MANI* refers to jewel. The actual meaning of *MANI* is referring to Great Compassion or Bodhicitta; the altruistic jewel, greatest wish-fulfilling jewel and our altruistic heart. By reciting *MANI* can purify the self-cherishing attitude, which is one of the most powerful root causes of all our problems.
- ❖ *PADME* literally meaning lotus; born from mud but unstained by mud, and it is one of the purest flowers. The meaning of it is emptiness. Whatever existence including the samsaric aggregates, enlightened aggregates, samsara, liberation, suffering, happiness, pure, impure, everything in our perception is like the filthy mud and that actualises the existence. But the actual reality of that existence is like the lotus, even though it is born from our impure hallucinated view, the actual absolute power of the nature of those existences lies in the lack of inherent existence, in the nature of emptiness. We understand that everything arises from the imputations of our mind, everything arises from our mind and karma. Even though this is true, the actual reality of all those existence lies in the lack of inherent existence. Therefore, the absolute nature of those existences lies in the most pure existence like the lotus. There is no stain in its nature, no stain of true existence, no stain of inherent existence, no stain of independent existence, no stain of hallucinational innate existence within the existence even in samsaric things like our own identity and our aggregates and whatever that we actualise through our mind or through our karma.

Even though the word to word meaning of *PADME* is lotus, but when we recite *PADME*, since this mantra is the blessed energy of the Compassionate Buddha, the actual blessings that we receive is the purification of one of the worst root causes of our entire problem i.e. self-grasping ignorance.

Whilst *MANI* is the direct antidote to the self-cherishing attitude, *PADME* is the direct antidote to the self-grasping ignorance. How powerful! The entire Buddhadharma is for this purpose—to eradicate the self-cherishing and self-grasping attitude and to develop Bodhicitta and Emptiness.

- ❖ The syllable *HUM* is the unification of these two paths. As a trainee, we interpret the syllable *HUM* [in this mantra] to teach us always to practise in **union of Method and Wisdom**. Just like a bird that needs two wings to fly, you need to carry both wings of Method and Wisdom.

Another understanding of *HUM* [in this mantra] is that just by practising the common path of Bodhicitta and Emptiness is insufficient to actualise full Enlightenment or Chenrezighood. You also need to practise the tantric path.

The entire tantric practice is summed up into 2 practices: generation practice and completion practice. The unification of generation practice and completion practice will bring about the absolute Enlightenment. What makes tantra so powerful and regarded as the swiftest path to

Enlightenment is the generation and completion stage practices. In order to become Buddha, the practitioner has to accomplish the unified practice of generation practice and completion practice. Otherwise, [no matter] how perfected Emptiness and perfected Bodhicitta one has, without the unified practice of Highest Yogic Tantric generation stage and completion stage of the path, the trainee cannot actualise full Enlightenment.

BENEFITTING SENTIENT BEINGS OF SIX REALMS

Simply by reciting the six-syllable mantra *OM MANI PADME HUM* not only benefits so greatly to your liberation and your Enlightenment, but it is also one of the most powerfully motivated and dedicated benefit to the entire six realm beings.

- ❖ *OM* – specifically plays as an antidote to purify sufferings of God realm. It directly acts as an antidote to purify ego-centred mind. It helps to purify the causes to be born in the God realm (for anyone who is not yet born in the God realm). For those who are already born in God realm, [it helps] to purify that samsaric God realm existence and liberate them into state of Chenrezig.
- ❖ *MA* – purifies the delusion of jealousy, which is the main cause to actualise the rebirth in Demi-Gods realm. By reciting *MA*, you bring the benefits to all the rest of the sentient beings who are not born there yet, and to purify committing the karmic causes of jealousy. For those beings who are already born as Demi-Gods and experiencing the suffering as Demi-Gods expressing so much jealousy (and always fighting) between Gods and Demi-Gods, you bring the benefit to purify that.
- ❖ *NI* – is the direct antidote to purify attachment; attachment is the main cause to be reborn as a human being. It helps to protect those who are not yet born in the Human realm to purify the main cause of attachment and liberate them into the state of Chenrezighood. For those who are already born in the Human realm, then by reciting syllable *NI* it will act as an antidote to purify human's specific sufferings of birth (by force of karma and delusion), ageing, sickness and death.
- ❖ *PAD* – helps to purify causes to be born in Animal realm, due to karma of ignorance or any action that causes suffering by abusive attitude. By reciting *PAD* helps to purify and protect those beings committing such karma and liberate animals from their specific sufferings of mute, death, being in food chain and suffering of eating each other (bigger animals to smaller animals).
- ❖ *ME* - purifies the delusion of miserliness (stinginess) that causes the karma to be born in the *Preta* realm. It also acts as an antidote to liberate hungry ghost beings from the suffering of hunger and thirst, and liberate them into state of Chenrezighood.
- ❖ *HUM* - purifies the karma that is committed through delusion of aversion (anger), and protect from being born in the Hell realm. By chanting *HUM*, it acts as the direct antidote to liberate the hell beings and abide them in the state of full Enlightenment.

Why is it that even though so many Buddhas have come before us, yet could not do exactly the above benefits?

It is due to the sentient beings' karma. Buddhas' blessings and compassion have no discrimination and pervade in every single sentient being, but we need to have the interdependent conducive conditions to receive the benefits; therefore, it is a mutual effort. Buddhas have all the capabilities to offer the benefits with skilful means according to the different mental disposition of [each] being. But sentient beings have to create the causes and that does not bring limitation in Buddha's power.

Each and every one of us have our own specific past karmic affiliated sentient beings, which we do not have with other Buddhas. Why one Buddha manifested into so many different *deities'* forms such as Thirty-five [Confession] Buddhas, Twenty-one Taras, Thousand Fortunate Buddhas? All are actualised dependent on the aspirations that were established with sentient beings when they were trainees.

Even though we dedicate our merits to all sentient beings, but then we also have the conventional responsibility to our family members and those that come our way and ask for our help. From there, whenever we do our practices, we establish specific concentrated aspirational connections with those beings. So, through that, by the time when we become Buddha, and we are able to benefit whatever close aspirations we have made before, and they are the quickest to receive benefit.

By reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM*, without any doubt we are offering benefit to the entire six realms of numberless sentient beings accordingly, providing relief, cure and conditional virtuous help including to sentient beings like those who are trapped in lowest Hell–Vajra Hell who have a time [when they will be] liberated from there.

There is a time that the entire samsara will be empty, and there is a time there are no more suffering sentient beings. That is a fact. There is a time that the entire Buddha Nature within every sentient being will be fully awakened. But not every being is as fortunate as us [in Human realm] especially those animals, *pretas* and hell beings. Even [for those beings] in the lowest Hell–Vajra Hell, when you think of them and dedicate your practice, you contribute a conditional substance or conditional cause which can play one of the most powerful roles for them to be liberated from there. Every sentient being (including those in the Vajra Hell) have Buddha potential. Hell beings are in Hell due to committing negative karma, but they have the opportunity to get out of there; yet they have no capability to do so because they are completely enveloped with delusions and sufferings (without even one single moment to remember or arise virtuous thoughts that can act as a condition to trigger their Buddha Nature and take a new rebirth). So, we as the fortunate ones should play the role by dedicating whatever merits we accumulate for them, and that will trigger it.

For example, in one of the reincarnations of Shakyamuni Buddha before he actualised in Tushita God realm, he was one of the carriage carriers in the Hell realm. Through the prayers of other Buddhas who have the karmic affinity with that reincarnation of Shakyamuni Buddha in the Hell realm, triggered him to generate immeasurable compassion to his carriage carrier companion (who was in far greater suffering being beaten up by the Hell guard). He said "Please don't beat him. I will carry his burden and liberate him." Then, the Hell guard was so angry and beat him with an iron hammer until he (the reincarnation of Shakyamuni Buddha) passed away, and reborn in Tushita God realm. From then onwards, virtuous rebirths after virtuous rebirths [ensued].

Similarly, we can play that role, especially to those who have karmic affinities with us like our parents in this life. To repay the kindness of our mother, the best [thing] to do is to commit one million *OM MANI PADME HUM* mantra recitations for mother. In the name of our mother, it can be conducted like an open retreat (without any time frame). By simply reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM*, even without carrying any

thoughts, Chenrezig's mantra is so exceptional (in comparison with any other *deities'* mantras such as for wealth, wisdom, love or activity where there could be danger of mixing up with self-cherishing or delusions). Even when you carry negative intentions and recite *OM MANI PADME HUM*, it is powerful virtue. [What is more powerful virtue, is] if we recite with good intentions. This is because of the pure Great Compassion in Chenrezig's mantra. When you express anything in any way through your body, speech and mind in relation to compassion, all is absolutely pure virtue and no way can go wrong.

Unlike other *deity yoga* practices, you can recite *OM MANI PADME HUM* while lying down, while watching TV, while gardening, while exercising, while driving (main focus on driving; give about 10% of your awareness on recitations), even while cooking (you bless the food), you can also blow to bless water to benefit the fish, etc. Anywhere, at any time, anything as there is no restriction at all; eventually, you can train yourself to be multitasking (as long as you recite *OM MANI PADME HUM* as it has to do with your system and energy).

Someone may ask how to count the number of mantras recited? If it is not convenient, you do not need to carry the *mala* in your hands. You can count by the amount of time you spend on reciting the mantras (by checking the number you can recite in one minute, then you are able to calculate how many recitations you can do in one hour, etc). That way, it is not difficult to recite 1 million times; after you have completed it, you should recite extra 100,000 times [in case there is a shortfall in the numbers of mantras recited]. Then, dedicate to this present lifetime mother, and also dedicate to the rest of mother sentient beings. Unbelievable! How meaningful! So, there may be many different types of practices like *deity yoga* practices, sutra recitations, Dharma learning, but one practice that we cannot miss out is the Chenrezig's *OM MANI PADME HUM* practice.

COMMITMENT FOR SAKA DAWA MANI RETREAT

During *Saka Dawa*, for at least 15 days (or throughout the full month of 30 days), you can [choose to] commit recitations of 1 million mantras as a retreat, or you can commit recitations of 10 *malas* or 1,000 times of *OM MANI PADME HUM* daily, or even few rounds of recitations are also fine.

In order to conduct recitations in the form as retreat, there should be a minimum number of recitations that should never be interrupted even for one day. The term "retreat" has its special significance:

- ❖ There are element of commitment, element of specific motivation and element of specific dedication.
- ❖ The element of commitment, as one must do a minimum number of recitations every day (without interruption, even for one day). For example, one can commit reciting 3 times of *OM MANI PADME HUM* daily (regardless of how busy or how difficult the situation maybe, one must recite 3 times every day), and when you are free, you can recite more. You can keep continuing in this way, even if you take 50 years to complete 1 million mantras, you are still qualified as having completed the retreat.
- ❖ The element of specific motivation is an altruistic motivation: "For the benefit of numberless sentient beings from temporary happiness up to the ultimate happiness of Enlightenment, I am

going to engage in the Mani retreat. Every single existence of mine and every single action of my body, speech and mind be the cause for that.”

- ❖ The element of specific dedication. You can insert all your specific dedications that you wish to dedicate (or as motivated), and at the end you can dedicate in a similar way.

So, I deeply, deeply rejoice. You can regard that this is the most meaningful opportunity we have in our Precious Human Rebirth. Even though we are facing this pandemic but compared to the pervasive suffering of samsara, it is nothing; but still, we as human being have a special karma to the human society. As there are so many people who are suffering from COVID-19, we also dedicate this Mani retreat for this COVID-19 situation to be overcome. You can also dedicate to the long lives of your Spiritual Gurus like His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche and all your other Spiritual Gurus.

Dedicate for the good health, long life and fulfilment of the holy wishes of all the good people who are the cause of peace and happiness in the world.

You can see how important the Buddhadharma is, and the importance of the preservation of the meaning and understanding of the sutras and Dharma in relation to Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig. The main preserver of the Dharma is the Sangha community, the nuns and monks in particular observation of pure Monastic Vows. So you can dedicate for the monasteries and nunneries and all the Dharma organisations to overcome all the inner, outer and secret obstacles and to actualise all the conducive conditions to perfectly preserve the Buddhadharma in extensive learning and actualisation or realisations on the stages of the path.

In the world, [despite] so much suffering is going on due to this COVID-19 pandemic, yet there are still some world leaders and countries talking about war and fighting. And we also hear about so much abuse to the weaker ones in the family (especially during the lockdown) and that is all due to the play of delusions. Not only that, we also have to stay under lockdown and there is danger of getting into depression, wrong thinking and suffering delusions, etc. Therefore, we also dedicate this practice to all the leaders of the world, organisations and your family and to yourself who lead your life to be free from delusions, and free from hallucination, free from wrong thinking, depression, self-harming and harming others. And be filled with wisdom of selflessness and attitude full of love, compassion, respect and forgiveness, etc. So that even in your family, you will be the source of happiness for the rest of the family because you offer respect to each of them. You are so compassionate and so helpful to them, and you are so cheerful with your positive attitude. When anyone in the family is suffering from sickness, you can play a role to help them as your heart is filled with virtues.

Then [dedicate] to yourself who is filled with genuine love and compassion, so that you can care correctly for yourself compassionately, lovingly and will not let delusions or self-harm arise. We harm ourselves because we don't have compassion for our self. Even though, we say that, “I don't want suffering and I love myself” but you do not really love yourself. If you really love yourself, you only want happiness and you will not let yourself suffer. What makes us suffer? Delusions, hallucinations, self-grasping, self-cherishing and anger make us suffer. So, if you really love yourself, you will protect yourself from the arising of these thoughts. We dedicate this retreat for each and every one to be filled with full of love and full of wisdom.

(Transcribed based on the online teaching hosted by Chag Tong Chen Tong FPMT Tasmania, Australia on 12 May 2021. Please refer to recording of the teaching at <https://youtu.be/2tFxtYlthyQ> as the true and exact meaning)



1.2 Inspiration



Saka Dawa Duchen is one of the most auspicious meritorious days in the entire existence of our time throughout the year. Therefore, feel delighted, feel rejoice, express gratitude and happiness from the depths of our heart that we still have this Precious Human Rebirth today. We are still able to enjoy abundance numberless vast profound extensive merits which are the abundance of causes for our future virtues and future happiness; not just for ourselves. It is so beneficial that we are able to accumulate abundance of virtuous, meritorious causes not just for the loved ones who have karmic affinity with us in this life starting from our parents, children and loved ones, but also for the rest of numberless sentient beings.

Looking at the position we are having now in samsara, such an opportunity is rare to come by. The amount of merits and virtues that we are able to accumulate and the amount of deeds that we are able to create are so beneficial for the rest of numberless sentient beings, if not more, but is equal to all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the past, present and future—that much fortune we have, just to have a life today. There are so much adversities and suffering happening in the world; that is the exact reality of samsara. Even though we are in the midst of samsara and carrying the samsaric aggregates, yet we have this precious opportunity to be most beneficial for the rest of numberless sentient beings; that makes how precious we are and how precious our life is.

Therefore, even by thinking of the suffering and all the problems in the world, we have to be stronger, be even more motivated and be more uplifted to take full advantage of this precious opportunity. We cannot be feeling down together with the rest of so many others who are helpless, who have no opportunity or freedom, who are completely tormented by suffering of suffering—like millions of people who are going through suffering of pain; with no opportunity to get away from the intense domination of suffering and would not be able to think about virtues or practice of Dharma.

There are numberless sentient beings even in humanity, millions [of people] are completely [distant] from the cultivation of virtue. They indulge in worldly sensual distractions and are unable to utilise the full potential they have—the altruistic basis. In order to express that altruistic basis, which is equal in every sentient being, one needs to have the conducive conditions to express it. Similarly, like the animals and the rest of the sentient beings in the six realms, even though their basis is altruism but they are unable to express that because of not having the conducive conditions; even in the humanity, there are so many who are out of those conditions.

So, from that point of view, we really have to feel so fortunate and have to think of this every day—every now and then, especially when we start to feel that life is meaningless, worthless or when there are too much of ups and downs in our daily life. Looking at the intense suffering aspect of samsaric existence, we can make ourselves even stronger, be more motivated and be more helpful to others than we have ever been before.

When we think of the good side, we can get inspired by the virtues of the past and present Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Looking into our own position, we can do our very best to dedicate our whole time [in the practice] with the motivation, wholeheartedness and sincerity to be just like them. From that point of view, we can count ourselves in the category as one of the past present future Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

In the practice of altruism, we should feel happy even with so much happening in the world and should feel motivated—even when we relate to those who are in the better position than us or to those who are in suffering situation worse than us—in whichever side, it has to become the cause to make us stronger than ever before.

The best thing that we can do to benefit ourselves as well as our loved ones and the rest of numberless sentient beings is through the cultivation of altruism and dedication of our merits in the deeds of altruism—dedicating entirety of our time and dedication of whatever we do in altruism. Just like what the Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig (His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama) said, “The cause of all the suffering is due to our past karma. The most effective antidote to purify that is altruism. To help to condition other suffering sentient beings to purify their karma is through the help of altruism, and to help ourselves to be free from negativities is to cultivate altruism.”

Therefore, anyone who have dedicated this auspicious month to accumulate Compassionate Buddha’s name mantra, staying focused in the practice of altruism, gathering virtues through our body, speech and mind of altruism, such as accumulation of *OM MANI PADME HUM* [mantras] and physically engaging in any form of practices like mandala offering, prostrations, doing Chenrezig sadhana and meditation in relation to Compassionate Buddha have therefore made their lives so meaningful and so beneficial.

Even though *Saka Dawa* month is very precious, as long as we utilise our physical energy in cultivation of altruistic deeds and practise *OM MANI PADME HUM*, it is very much like every day is *Saka Dawa* and every future day is *Saka Dawa*. The reason for saying that, as long as we are able to accumulate altruistic merits, that merit surpass any other virtues and that merit is numberless. Although during the *Saka Dawa* month, there is the power of merits multiplying hundreds of million times, but as long as we continue to accumulate altruistic virtues even after *Saka Dawa* month, we are still able to accumulate equally numberless merits and numberless causes for one’s own temporary happiness up to the ultimate happiness of Enlightenment. We are also able to give and offer numberless causes and conditions for the rest of numberless sentient beings from temporary happiness up to the ultimate happiness of Enlightenment.

Compassion becomes power and it is not a weakness. By keeping compassion and altruism in our day-to-day life, whether we relate to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas or relate to the immense suffering beings, we have to train ourselves to become more motivated and stronger than before.

LIGHT OFFERING PRAYER COMPOSED BY LAMA ATISHA

May this vessel become as vast as the entire billionfold universe.

Visualise your candlelight or vessel that contains butter or oil, or any electricity light in the house, regard as vast as billionfold universe.

May its wick grow as large as Mt Meru, the king of mountains.

Visualise the wick or filament that sparks electricity light, regard as huge as Mount Meru.

May the oil within become as vast as the great ocean at the edge of the world.

Visualise the candle wax, oil, butter or electricity, regard as vast as ocean filling the entire place.

And may a billion such lamps appear before each and every Buddha.

Visualise your light as infinite in numbers. And also visualise there is an infinite merit field of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Gurus, and visualise in each Buddha's merit field, there are numberless lights.

Their light banishing the darkness of ignorance everywhere,

Conventionally, the lights brighten the entire universe or existence. The effect from this practice of light offering that is offered to Buddha's merit field becomes an antidote to purify darkness of ignorance in every single numberless sentient being. In order to make this practice sensible, right at this very moment, you look into your own mind and try to design your attitude to be free from confusions—towards reality of emptiness, karma and Dharma practices. If we don't clear the confusions, we may think how is it possible—we still have question marks that just by thinking and visualising like that, how is it possible to have vast oceans, numberless merit fields and numberless candle lights being received numberless times by each Buddha. These confusions are the effect and the impact of ignorance.

To make sense of this particular line '*Their light banishing the darkness of ignorance everywhere,*' you should start from your heart to have a single-pointed, 100% irreversible faith in what Lama Atisha said, and have 100% definite conviction on Buddha's teaching on Emptiness. The ultimate reality of yourself, your aggregates and the rest of phenomena do not exist from its own side. Everything exists merely in the name labelled by mind. Whatever the way in how we perceive does not exist in actual reality in that way. Every phenomena lack inherent existence, lack of true existence, lack of intrinsic existence, lack of independent existence. Every single existence is exactly as what the Buddha said, it exists in the nature of dependent arising. Whether we have realisation of this or not, at this very moment right now, we completely have a clear conviction and trust in what the Buddha has said. This is what it means by '*banishing the darkness of ignorance*' in our heart.

See the absolute Dharmakaya of the Buddha—in the picture, in the painting of the thangka, in the statue on your altar and the idea of Buddha's image in your mind; not as a material object. Have an absolute definite conviction that Buddha means omniscient; omniscience means omnipresence in entire existence. So you just have to have full confidence that Buddha is everywhere—in every pore of your existence, in every single space of your room, in every single thing, and in every single thought of yours. It is almost like something that you cannot differentiate what is your thought and what is Buddha's omniscient; like in total oneness. So, this is what it means by '*banishing the darkness of ignorance.*'

When you open your eyes and seeing your family members in front of you, you don't see them in ordinary persons—you may see the same image or same look, but you understand them in essence of oneness with the Buddha. The ordinary [way] of how we used to think about our partner, parents and

children is a misperception and a wrong hallucinated view—we have been kidded persistently in that wrong idea. When you close your eyes and think about yourself, you realise that “Wow, you are absolutely not how you used to think about yourself...you are so precious, as precious as the Buddha.” That is my reality; that is my ultimate. So, that is what it means by ‘*banishing the darkness of ignorance.*’

Completely turn our awareness into pure view. The pure view which is not a mistaken perception, but it is a pure valid view understanding the absolute truth of every existence; that is a valid idea. In fact, this is one of the very powerful meditations to do daily to help us purify the root cause which is the ignorance.

From the very peak of existence down to the lowest hell, may they reveal all the realms of the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas throughout the ten directions.

This verse makes sense of what we have just understood in the previous verse. From the very peak of cyclic existence down to the lowest hell, everything is revealed into Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas throughout the ten directions—including yourself and the place that you are in, everything becomes celestial beings within the celestial mansion. To actualise and make it actually possible to bring about celestial beings like the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and their celestial mansions, we need to meditate like in the previous verse. This is the way how we purify our contaminated aggregates and eventually we become just like the Buddha, the resultant one. So, this is the progress; the light offering practice is a very profound stages of the path.

Starting from now, at least during the light offering [practice], view everyone as Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and everything as a celestial mansion—in your understanding based on the valid reasoning explained before—especially in the Wisdom of Emptiness, that is true.

OM VAJRA ALOKE AH HUM (blessing the light offering)

OM – the three basis that make up basis of a person yourself that is going to be purified in order to actualise the resultant *OM* representing Buddha’s holy body, speech and mind. There are three-syllable letters in *OM* ཨྐ comprising AH, U, MA.

VAJRA – refer to Emptiness or Dharmakaya.

ALOKE – is light. *VAJRA ALOKE* is wisdom light, the light of Dharmakaya, or the light of Emptiness Wisdom which is the antidote.

AH HUM – bringing about the absolute benefit, actualising absolute purification and achieving the resultant awakening state of the Buddha.

***E MA HO! This wondrous and amazing light, burning brightly,
I offer to the thousand Buddhas of this fortunate age, Gurus, yidam deities, dakinis and
dharmapālas, and the deities of all the maṇḍalas, in all the infinite realms of the ten directions.***

Inspiration

You visualise entire existence is completely filled by merit field. If you have specific karmic affinity with your Gurus, meditational *deities*, *dakas*, *dakinis* or *dharmapalas*, you visualise them among the merit field but spotlighted like they are dedicated to you in the front row face-to face with you.

May all beings, with my own parents foremost among them,

When you are doing this light offering, you visualise starting from your parents of this life, and the rest of sentient beings who need to accumulate merits and who need to purify past karma in order to actualise the resultant Buddha's realm. You become the chant leader, the leader of this practice. So starting from your parents and the rest of sentient beings in this practice, they are following you. When you are holding the light, they are also holding the light, following you. You have to think that whatever visualisation that you are doing in this practice, each and every sentient being also have that capability of understanding and do the practices. And that includes sentient beings who are not human now, but for the purpose of this practice, they all actualise as Precious Human Rebirth like you and they have full conviction and faith in the practice, the refuge and merit field and [they participate] in this practice together led by you.

***In this and in all lives to come, whatever our place of birth,
Always see directly the perfect Buddhas' realms,***

You dedicate to all sentient beings. Here, you can dedicate specifically to those who passed away and those who are going through the death process, the intermediate process and those who are about to actualise the new rebirth, the conception. You visualise that this light offering practice becomes the cause and condition for all those who are in that journey to have a meritorious karmic condition for a new rebirth to be born in the Buddhas' realms like Sukhavati with the opportunity to be guided directly by perfect Gurus and Buddhas such as in Chenrezig's Pureland and Amitabha's Pureland. This is so powerful and so beneficial to do especially for animals that have died—from their side, they do not have the capability to have the conducive conditions to protect themselves at death or during the intermediate state, etc. We can help them by engaging in this practice. Visualise that no one will be reborn in the suffering realms. Once they are born into the Buddhas' realm such as Sukhavati, then it is definitely confirmed that within that Pureland they will actualise full Enlightenment.

***And remain forever inseparable from Amitabha, 'Lord of Boundless Light'—
Grant your blessings so that, through the power of the truth
Of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and the deities of the Three Roots,
This prayer of aspiration may swiftly be fulfilled.***

This is another important point. When you dedicate your light offering to all numberless sentient beings and specifically to those beings that are going through the three stages of life, death and rebirth, you should not have any doubt about your prayer dedication. Instead, you should have full confidence that this is definitely 100% going to help them. This will make your prayers so powerful and effective to swiftly ripen these prayers onto sentient beings.

In order to do that, the power of the Buddhas (*deities, dakas, dakinis* and Gurus), power of interdependence emptiness nature, power of your aspirational prayer and power of your sincere heart that you really want to help them—as long as all these points and conditions are gathered, even if you may not know how to chant the prayers or may not have a very intense visualisation, whatever prayers you make will become so effective.

Tadyatha Pañcendriyāvabodhanīye Svāhā

All prayers to be actualised in reality.

If we practise this way, it will be so helpful, especially for sentient beings that still have the opportunity not to experience their karmic consequences because their karma are not fully completed. They may have committed so much of negative karma in the past, but one factor which is the conditional karma is not encountered yet. So, before that negative karmic conditioning is encountered, you save them and you deliver that karmic condition to patch to the virtuous karma of that sentient being. Then at the time of death, they do not have to complete with a negative karmic conclusion. And even at the intermediate state, they can still divert their journey from lower realms to higher realms. When they are about to be conceived in the mother's womb, their consciousness can be influenced; that much benefits we can offer.

THE LIGHT OFFERING PRACTICE

(Hold the Light, and either chant in Tibetan or English, or read the text or meditate)

- ∞ Refuge and Bodhicitta prayers
- ∞ Purification practice to purify any ordinariness or negative substances
- ∞ Invocation of Merit Field
- ∞ Recite Samantabhadra offering prayer (in case, there is limitation in our visualisation/recitation, power of this prayer will help our practice becomes extensive)
- ∞ Light offering prayer composed by Lama Atisha
- ∞ Dedicate in Bodhicitta and Emptiness, dedicate in unification of generation and completion stage of tantric path and general dedications of Bodhisattvas
- ∞ Recite Long Life prayers
- ∞ Recite dedicate to pacify all suffering, dedicate to fulfil all entire mundane wishes and spiritual wishes of everyone
- ∞ Recite Lama Tsongkhapa's Migtsema prayer

(Transcribed based on the online teaching hosted by Chag Tong Chen Tong FPMT Tasmania, Australia on 26 May 2021. Please refer to recording of the teaching at <https://youtu.be/8mabwZZdUXA> as the true and exact meaning)

1.3 Rejoicement and Dedications



It is such a meaningful effort to conduct Mani retreat during this blessed month of *Saka Dawa*. You surely have conducted this retreat with altruistic motivation keeping numberless sentient beings in your heart. In particular, you must have dedicated to those who have special karmic affinity with you and those who are in need of prayer support, support from your merits and those who are ill and those who passed away. How wonderful that we are able to achieve such benefit within such a short period of time during this meaningful month. I wanted to say immense of rejoice and numberless prostrations to each and every one of you, sincerely from the depths of my heart.

Before we start today's session, we set positive motivation for this session to be most beneficial for the rest of numberless sentient beings' temporary happiness up to the ultimate happiness of Enlightenment. Try to establish that motivation on the basis of full conviction in the enlightened capabilities of the merit and refuge field objects – Guru Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

We have conducted the retreat with proper motivation [at the beginning]. In the middle [of the retreat], we have gathered the most precious Dharma of compassion through the accumulation of the most powerful positive enlightened energy which is *OM MANI PADME HUM*.

So now, the final [conclusion of the retreat] with deeds of dedication—we do dedication of the vast merits. You have arranged the time of this dedication session on the last day of *Saka Dawa* month (30th day) which coincides with the occurrence of eclipse of the sun; not every *Saka Dawa* month have the occurrence of eclipse. During eclipse, whatever merit that is performed is multiplied 100 million times. Therefore, it is the double dose of so much merits. It is very clear [that] to be able to conclude such a vast practice that you have conducted on this day is also the result of vast merits. That itself is a clear proof and there are so many other proofs, but just this alone is the result of vast merits in the past that was committed by yourself. How fortunate again. It's truly, truly amazing.

Knowing the fact that death is certain and time of death is uncertain, even conditions for the life—such as house, roof, food and drinks, clothes and the atmosphere elements—even that, can become cost of our life. Many such conditions become the cause of death for many people. For example, eating too much sugar cause diabetes or eating too much carbohydrate can give us problems. So many problems can arise even though those are the resources for our life but it can become the cause of our sickness; sickness is sign for death and sign for obstacle to our life. So, in that kind of journey of life, we had the opportunity and the time to accumulate one of the most precious Dharma that is the highlight of the entire life—that is the most fulfilling thing that we have done in our life.

That alone, can be the confidence [for us] to travel into the next life, in case death occurs at the next moment. We are ready to go into the next life with confidence. You can feel joy and at least have confidence without regrets—with the confidence that “I will be reborn in Amitabha Pureland or Chenrezig Pureland.” Or at least be reborn as Precious Human Rebirth where you will meet Mahayanic Guru who is the embodiment of Compassionate Buddha; you can continue to develop your heart in altruism and

continue to be most beneficial for entire numberless sentient beings. As long as that is delivered, it does not matter if we are reborn in Hell or as an animal or in Formless realms. It doesn't matter wherever we are born as it is equally meaningful, just like the Bodhisattvas who pray to be reborn in Hell realm to liberate hell beings, reborn in Animal realm so as to liberate animals, reborn in Hungry Ghost realm in order to liberate hungry ghosts, and to have a very special karmic affinity to make your deeds to make your Bodhisattva deeds to be most effective.

When you read the dedication prayers in the Dedication chapter from Shantideva's *Bodhisattvacharyavatara*, you will see how Bodhisattvas make dedications—even to be reborn in the lower realms to liberate sentient beings from suffering and abide them in a state of no more suffering. In order for us to be able to do that, we need to create a cause; without a cause, we cannot deliver even if we wish to. So what is the cause? The cause is what we have done during *Saka Dawa* in accumulation of *OM MANI PADME HUM*, conducting Mani retreat, meditating on compassion and trying to develop your potential in altruism as much as possible. Those are the fruitful causes. Whether one realises that or not, [but] that is a fact. Some may not realise that and may think that “It is a Mani retreat and another round of *Saka Dawa* and I will do it and accumulate 10,000 or 100,000 of *OM MANI PADME HUM*. Compassion sounds great, so I will [also] meditate on compassion.” [If that is the case], then one has taken it too lightly. In actual fact, you have created the cause that can deliver the confidence that will make whichever rebirth you take in future lifetimes to be most beneficial. This is very important to know; each of the dedication prayer in the Eight Great Prayers clearly illustrates on that.

REJOICEMENT

[After] acknowledging and knowing how much great merit you have achieved, now you should rejoice. In Dharma practice, you recall the good things you have done for the purpose of rejoicing. When you rejoice on your merits, right there you accumulate double [the merits] of what you have accumulated in the past. Like Shantideva said in *Bodhisattvacharyavatara*, “Rejoicing is a supreme virtue and it is the greatest virtue.” It is very important. It is kind of like a daily supplement or momentary supplement to always keep you happy. When you rejoice, it will always make you feel happy. When you are happy and peaceful, you will perform less problems and have less hallucination.

Your inner peace is the happiness that is generated through the virtuous causes such as rejoicing from the depths of your heart. You feel good and that is inner peace; it is not like sensual happiness. Inner peace is very beneficial for our spiritual development and for sustaining our virtues. And it also acts as the protection for our mind not to be deluded which is very harmful and disturbing. The moment our mind is disturbed with aversion or attachment grasping, it is very uneasy. So too with jealousy, ego pride and worst of all, wrong views about the self, the situation or entire existence and especially, if it is expressed in grasping like aversion, ego-centred mind, etc. It is very toxic to our virtue, even for our sensual happiness and in our day-to-day conventional samsaric happiness. These negative emotions are very toxic. When our mind is filled with rejoicement, there is no room for this toxic.

That's why it's wonderful to have so many holy objects. The moment you see holy objects like thangkas, statues or photos of your Gurus, then the first thing you do is to rejoice in the merits and qualities of your Guru and the Buddhas, and even when you look at the group photo of your Dharma events like the Mani retreat, you rejoice. More than that, remembering and reflecting on the virtuous deeds that you have conducted by yourself; that is like a solid kind of object where you can feel good

and feel “Well done!” So, when we rejoice in our daily life, we will have a very happy day, a happy life, and on top of that you accumulate double the merits.

The vast accumulation of merits is multiplied hundred million times because of *Saka Dawa* month. Even though let’s say you have accumulated only 1,000 *OM MANI PADME HUM*, but because of *Saka Dawa* month, [the mantra] is multiplied by 100 million times, and the merits that you have achieved also multiplied by 100 million times. Even if you have recited only one *OM MANI PADME HUM*, you have achieved 100 million times [of *OM MANI PADME HUM* mantras]. On top of that, particularly if you rejoice today, you are equally rejoicing 100 million times.

So, with one single rejoicing of your own virtue, it is multiplied by double. Then, we also rejoice among each other and to other Mani retreaters around the world. [We also rejoice in] the merits of Compassionate Buddha, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche, merits of all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who have achieved perfected enlightened qualities of compassion. Now, when you rejoice in the merits of ordinary beings, you have created double of what they have achieved. If you rejoice in the merits of Bodhisattvas, you will achieve half or 50% of the Bodhisattvas’ merits. Then if you rejoice in the Buddhas’ merits, you actualise one tenth of their merits. So unbelievable! No wonder Shantideva specifically emphasised that rejoicing is the greatest virtue.

To repeat, we know that rejoicing is the greatest virtue and when we rejoice the merits will be multiplied. But another very basic thing is we also want to be happy everyday—even if it not a bursting kind of happiness—at the least, we don’t want to get into a miserable kind of suffering experience. In samsara, everyday there are [already] so many bad news [happening] and it’s very difficult for us to feel uplifted when we hear that. But by rejoicing in the merits you have accumulated and when you have the heart of rejoicement, at least you will still feel meaningful in your life even upon hearing the worst news. And when you feel that your life is meaningful, then you are going to be very beneficial. Let’s say, when you hear that someone is suffering—instead of feeling disturbed—you will offer help to the needy suffering people, and if it’s about yourself, then you will immediately transform that suffering onto the path of Enlightenment.

So rejoicing is a very powerful tool to remind ourselves to always stay intact with the Dharma and help us not to lose our mindfulness in the Dharma and keep sustainable calmness in our continuum.

DEDICATION PRAYERS

First, take a moment to express rejoicement in the merits that you have accumulated from beginningless lifetimes, and whatever merits that you are going to accumulate in the future and the merits that you have accumulated in this month of *Saka Dawa* in relation to Mani retreat. Also, rejoice in the merits from the rejoicing and to the merits of the three times. Take a moment to feel that from the depths of your heart.

Simply, express how fortunate that I had the opportunity to conduct so much of beneficial deeds like the Mani retreat

You should feel that it is definite, no doubt that my future lives will be auspicious after auspicious, higher rebirths after higher rebirths in uninterrupted journey towards Enlightenment. Feel so blessed that I am able to achieve accumulating these causes before death comes in my way.

Secondly, you rejoice in the merits of all the ordinary sentient beings who are similar in status with you or any sentient being and in particular, those who have accumulated much virtues in relation to Chenrezig practice like *Nyung Nä* retreats and Mani retreats in the past, present and future and in particular during this month, this year. Just feel happy for them and express wishes that may their virtues ever increasing all the way up to achieving the state of full Enlightenment.

And especially within your family, your children, your parents, brothers, sisters and friends whom you know have also conducted virtues like charity, Mani retreats, etc. as well as our Dharma brothers and sisters who have participated in Mani retreats, we rejoice among each other.

Then, rejoice in the merits of Arhats, ordinary Bodhisattvas and Arya Bodhisattvas. There are numberless Bodhisattvas, Arya beings from Solitary Realisers and Hearers practitioners, Arya beings from the Bodhisattva path, and those beings from the past, present (and in the future) who are already on the path, we rejoice in their merits. Here, you express “How wonderful that may I too—without delaying even a moment—be able to achieve similar kind of virtues and merits.”

We rejoice in the merits of Gurus and Buddhas of the past, present and future, Gurus and Buddhas during this lifetime to whom that you have established spiritual practices like your living Gurus, lineage Gurus and the Buddhas like enlightened beings such as *deities* such as Compassionate Buddha, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, Eight Medicine Buddhas, Twenty-one Taras, Thousand Fortunate Buddhas of this era to whom we have a special karmic connection. So, we rejoice in their merits, then you aspire and express yourself to be just like them without delaying even a moment.

Finally, rejoice in all the merits that have been accumulated through rejoicing; feel so fortunate, so grateful and how fortunate you are—so happy.

Then, aspire yourself that you will sustain this positive energy full of merits and the joyous effort in accumulating numberless vast perfected virtues in ever existence in the future.

I. LAM RIM DEDICATION PRAYER

(Reflect on the meaning and at the same time, dedicate your merits accordingly)

Verse 1

***From my two types of merits, vast as space, that I have amassed
From working with effort at this practice for a great length of time,
May I become the chief leading Buddha for all those
Whose mind's wisdom eye is blinded by ignorance.***

“From my two types of merits, vast as space” that you have accumulated through this Mani retreat like accumulation of *OM MANI PADME HUM*, meditations and the effort. Many of you have family and have many responsibilities, but then you have put in so much effort to spend time to conduct the retreat and it is not just for one or two moments. You have tried your very best and many of you have dedicated a few hours every day; this is a great length of time in a very busy life. So, you dedicate “May these merits actualise me as the Omniscient Buddha leading the rest of numberless sentient beings—who are blinded by wrong conception, the ignorance of self-grasping—and liberate them through the wisdom eye that is

generated through accumulation of two vast merits of method and wisdom.” So, you dedicate in that way.

Verse 2

***Even if I do not reach this state, may I be held
In your loving compassion for all lives, Manjushri,
May I find the best of complete graded paths of the teachings,
And may I please all the Buddhas by my practice.***

If in case you are unable to become a Buddha without delaying even a moment—as what you have dedicated in the earlier verse—and if you still continue to remain and carry this samsaric rebirth, then now I shall dedicate the merits accumulated through this Mani retreat that oneself never be separated from the blessings of the Buddha in the expression of oneself always be in the cultivation of Great Compassion. Then, that will bring the impact to actualise all the realisations of the gradual path to Enlightenment, [starting] from the very beginning: realisations on Guru devotion, Precious Human Rebirth, death and impermanence, teachings and practices of three capable beings, and by surpassing the five paths and ten grounds to actualise the state of Enlightenment. In that way, you are able to dedicate your life even though you may continue to reincarnate as a sentient being, but you are ever pleasing all the ten directions Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

Verse 3

**Using skillful means drawn by the strong force of compassion
May I clear the darkness from the minds of all beings
With the points of the path as I have discerned them:
May I uphold Buddha’s teachings for a very long time.**

Be the upholder of the Buddhadharma and ever engaging in extensive learning of the Buddhadharma, ever progressing in actualisations and realisations on the stages of the path up to Enlightenment, and ever working for the benefit of sentient beings through the great force of compassion. So, dedicate that may I be able to do so.

Verse 4

**With my heart going out with Great Compassion
In whatever direction the most precious teachings
Have not yet spread, or once spread have declined,
May I reveal this treasure of happiness and aid.**

“Through the merits that I have accumulated from this Mani retreat, may I be the upholder of Dharma and engage in joyous effort in the practice of generosity of the Dharma wherever I go, and whichever direction I may be or reside, whoever I may encounter. May the merits that I have accumulated from the Mani retreat ever to become my body, speech and mind like an inspirational Dharma to everyone whenever I may go. The moment people talk to me or see me, they get inspired in Dharma, and the moment people think of me, they think of Dharma and practices.” So, dedicate the merits from the Mani retreat that may I become like that.

Then oneself becomes the treasure of happiness to everyone because you are blessed with compassion; your existence is the illustration of compassion and whoever you may relate to with compassion will bring happiness, and you cause those beings who comes your way to be alleviated from suffering and abide them in happiness. May the merits be the cause for me to be able to do that.

Verse 5

**May the minds of those who wish for liberation be granted bounteous peace
And the Buddhas' deeds be nourished for a long time
By even this graded path to Enlightenment completed
Due to the wondrous virtuous conduct of the Buddhas and their sons.**

Due to the blessings of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, you are ever preserving the Dharma in extensive learning, actualisation in the realisations, making it possible for yourself as the cause and condition for those who are suffering. Then, you alleviate them from suffering and make them achieve. Those who are poor in happiness, you become the cause for their happiness and those who are not liberated, you become the cause for them to be liberated. Those not abiding in the path of Bodhisattvas, then you cause them to abide in the path of Bodhisattvas. Those who are ordinary Bodhisattvas who need to surpass in Arya Bodhisattvas' path, you cause them to surpass in Arya Bodhisattvas' Path. Even those who are in the ten *bhumis* Bodhisattvas, you cause them to actualise the Path of No More Learning—the path of Buddhahood.

Verse 6

**May all human and non-human beings who eliminate adversity
And create conducive conditions for practicing the excellent paths
Never be parted in any of their lives
From the purest path praised by the Buddhas.**

Then, you become the cause for those who are performing negativities to prevent them from doing so. Those who cultivate evil heart, malicious heart and harmful heart, you become the cause for them to overcome that and for them to purify those negative emotions. You even become the cause for spirits, *maras* and harm-givers to turn away from causing harm to others. Such as what the past Buddhas have done like Guru Padmasambhava, whenever he met with *yakshas*, spirits and harm-givers—the moment they saw him, they were subdued—he assigned them to be *Dharma Protectors*, the resource of virtue and Dharma. Through the merits that I have accumulated from the Mani retreat, may I too, become like that.

This dedication is so important because we are very much like living in the nest of harm-givers. In the samsaric world, many people without any choice or control by the force of past karma think negatively of others and cause harm to others. And most of all, many beings even humans get angry and are delusional most of the time. So the moment you see them, you cause them to overcome those delusions and harmful thoughts. Then, lead them to be conditioned to cultivate the exalted path—the Bodhisattva path—and cause them ever lifetime in the future, never to turn back to negative doings and always continue to cultivate the path all the way up to achieving Buddhahood. In short, cause them to practise the path that is praised by all the past, present and future Buddhas.

Verse 7

***Whenever someone makes effort to act
In accordance with the ten-fold Mahayana virtuous practices
May he always be assisted by the mighty ones,
And may oceans of prosperity spread everywhere.***

You dedicate your merits from the Mani retreat for those who are already conducting virtues, “May they achieve all the conducive conditions, may your merits be the causes and conditions for them to gather all the necessary causes and conditions for them to continue to develop all those virtues.” Like for those who are in the ten *bhumis*, your dedication of merits gathers all the conducive conditions for them to actualise Buddhahood. There are so many Hearers and Solitary Realisers who abide in Nirvana Peace for eons; they have the capability to benefit numberless sentient beings but they are completely stuck into single-pointed concentration in Nirvana Peace. Here, you dedicate merits (that you have accumulated from the Mani retreat) and cause them to gather the causes for them to awake from the concentration and enter into the Mahayanic path, bringing immense benefits to numberless sentient beings. You dedicate like that.

II. DEDICATION IN BODHICITTA

***May the precious supreme Bodhichitta
Not yet born arise.
May that arisen not decline,
But increase more and more.***

Dedicate merits you have accumulated from Mani retreat for yourself and dedicate for the rest of numberless sentient beings. Many of us have Bodhisattva Vows—but due to arising of negative emotions, it may have declined—so here, we dedicate the merits for our Bodhisattva precepts to be re-established in our continuum. If the precept is still intact, then you dedicate for that to increase and to develop further. If in case anyone have not received the Bodhisattva Vows, then you dedicate that “May I quickly have the courage and the merits to actualise the Bodhisattva precepts.” In a similar way, you can also dedicate this way to your family members. You will roughly know which family members have or don’t have the Bodhisattva precepts; so, you can dedicate the merits for them. To [be able to] observe the Bodhisattva precepts is one of the very precious and valuable things that you can achieve in this precious human life. It is so beneficial. So, if you dedicate that to your family, you will help them tremendously. In the similar way, you also dedicate to the rest of numberless sentient beings.

III. DEDICATION IN EMPTINESS

***May the precious view of emptiness
Not yet born arise.
May that arisen not decline,
But increase more and more.***

Just having Bodhisattva precepts and actualising Bodhicitta is not good enough to actualise Buddhahood. You need [to have] the wisdom. Without the Wisdom of Emptiness, one cannot eradicate the self-grasping ignorance. So, Bodhicitta and Emptiness Wisdom have to go side by side. Therefore, you dedicate in similar way in emptiness too.

IV. DEDICATION IN UNIFICATION OF TANTRIC TWO STAGES OF THE PATH

***May the yoga of two stages
Not yet born arise.
May that arisen not decline,
But increase more and more.***

Even if you develop Bodhicitta and Emptiness, but the journey to actualise the completed benefit for oneself and the perfected completed benefit for the rest of numberless sentient beings can only be achieved after a long time; in most cases, [it can only be achieved] after three countless eons of lifetimes. Therefore, if we actualise the tantric path and able to develop the wisdom and altruism through the tantric path, then, one will have the opportunity to actualise Enlightenment within this very short lifetime.

Most of all, we already have this Precious Human Rebirth during the era of Shakyamuni Buddha's teaching still in existent, where the complete Dharma of both sutra and tantra still exist. The complete Dharma of both sutra and tantra [do] not necessarily exist in all existence where thousands of Buddhas turn the Wheel of Dharma. Therefore, while having this Precious Human Rebirth during Shakyamuni Buddha's time, we must then utilise tantra. Otherwise, it is like we are losing one of the biggest treasure and biggest opportunity. If we don't practise tantra, it's like you are in a diamond cave in a mountain—yet you stay hungry and die in starvation. If you know that it's a diamond cave and you utilise it, you will have abundance; but if you don't know and do not utilise it, you will die in poverty. In our spiritual practice, the tantric teaching is like the diamond cave in the mountain. We are in it and we are having it; but for many people, there is the possibility of not knowing that this is the diamond. Tantric teaching is like the diamond that can overcome your entire poverty and fulfil your entire wishes. So even if you know but if you don't utilise it, then again it is wasted.

First of all, in order to meet tantra [teachings], one requires greatest of the greatest merits. After meeting tantra, to understand the preciousness of tantra and to be able to practise and take full privilege of the tantric practices requires even greater merits. Therefore, now that we have accumulated so much merit through the Mani retreat, we should dedicate to actualise the two stages of the tantric path—the generation stage and the completion stage and whatever requirements [needed] to actualise these two paths. And that includes meeting the perfectly qualified Vajra Tantric Guru and timely actualise initiation of the karmic affinity *deity* and have the conducive conditions to engage in the four sessions of retreat. Then, dedicate to actualise the Dharmakaya (Enlightenment) before you lose the warmth of the cushion you sat on. You have to dedicate as drastic as that (so seriously) because if you don't gain realisations [quickly], there are many possibilities of encountering many distractions. There are prayers [for us] to meet perfect Mahayana Vajra Guru. Just meeting perfect Vajrayana Guru is not enough because Guru needs to have the time to initiate you and you need to have the time [to be initiated]. Like Shakyamuni Buddha came into this world but was unable to play the role of granting the initiation. At that time, we

didn't have enough merits. Therefore, we need to have the merits to meet the Guru and to get the initiation.

Most of us may have a list of initiations [that we have taken], but have you seriously conducted the four sessions daily? It's a big question and it requires immense, immense of merits and [in Tibetan] the four sessions of the sadhana or retreat practices is one of the main homework after we have received the initiation. Usually, after initiation people do conduct commitment retreat—but the commitment retreat is supposed to be conducted for the rest of your life until you achieve realisations. In our case, we just give a number like 100,000 times in two weeks [of commitment retreat], and [considered] it done. Actually, we are supposed to conduct the retreats until we have achieved realisations. We are unable to do that—up to now, because of not having enough merits. Many of us also have not even conducted the commitment retreat because of lacking of merits. We have so much merit to meet the Guru and receive the initiation but yet we do not have enough [merits] to conduct the retreat. And even if we are able to conduct the retreat, we are unable to conduct the four sessions daily because it requires even more merits to do that. Maybe there are some who have conducted [the four sessions] daily but having no realisations and are still wandering in samsara because of lacking merits; one needs even more merits to be able to gain the realisations. So, it is an extremely important dedication prayer—that whenever we accumulate merits, we should dedicate in our heart like that. Actually, when you recite this dedication [prayer] in tantra, you should meditate like that; understand this and dedicate for that. So here we dedicate the merits from the Mani retreat for that.

Even if you have received tantric initiations of the three lower tantric schools, but if you are unable to conduct the second stage of the tantric path i.e., the completion stage, then there is no way to actualise Enlightenment. [For that to happen], one requires the Highest Yoga Tantric *deity yoga* practice, and only then will you be able to conduct the generation stage and completion stage perfectly. Without conducting the practices of the generation stage and completion stage, we cannot utilise the three kayas and we will lose a huge opportunity that [even though] we have the basis but are unable to do the practice because we don't have the tools.

The tools are the practice of the three kayas which we get from the Highest Yoga Tantric *deity yoga* practices like Yamantaka, Vajrayogini, Kalachakra, etc. If you have the tool of the Highest Tantric practice, then you can take death into the practice of Dharmakaya, you can take intermediate state into the practice of Sambhogakaya, and you can take birth into the practice of Nirmanakaya. During the time of death, you meditate through the death process—dissolution of four elements, then dissolution of the 80 conceptual hallucinational thoughts through the dissolution of white, red and black near-appearances. Through the conclusion of all those conceptual hallucinations, then when you reach the natural clear light of death, there at least have the natural support from the natural experience of clear light to actualise emptiness. Not only to actualise emptiness but can even be able to actualise the union of emptiness and great bliss. If we have the proper training of the tools of Highest Tantric yoga and proper homework of doing the four sessions daily in our lifetime (after receiving the initiation), then that natural experience of voidness and bliss can turn into actualisation of the Dharmakaya and get enlightened there. So we need immense, immense of merits in order to meet the Highest Yoga Tantric practice, then learn about the practices. Without initiation, we can't even learn or study the path because initiation is the doorway. So we dedicate the merits for that.

V. GENERAL DEDICATION PRAYER

***I fully dedicate all these virtues
To be able to train just like
The hero Manjushri, who knows reality,
And just like Samantabhadra as well.***

We dedicate just like Bodhisattva Samantabhadra and Bodhisattva Manjushri. Whenever they accumulate merits, they do the most extensive dedications without leaving out the benefits to any single being. So, whatever merit we have accumulated from the Mani retreat, I too dedicate just like them.

***I dedicate all these roots of virtue
With the dedication praised as the best
By the victorious ones thus gone of the three times,
So I might perform good works.***

In the similar way, just like how the past Buddhas have dedicated their merits, I too dedicate in the same way; so that I can continue to perform virtuous deeds in future times.

DEDICATION TO PRECIOUS GURUS

We dedicate, as mentioned before, about the importance of precious Gurus. The highest practices like the Highest Yoga Tantric path, if without the Vajra Guru, it is not possible at all to even enter into the path. Therefore, in our lifetime we are so fortunate to have qualified enlightened Vajra Gurus like His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche and the rest of our other holy Gurus. Therefore, we dedicate—whenever we accumulate merits, in particularly during *Saka Dawa*—especially dedicating merits in relation to Gurus like His Holiness the Dalai Lama who is the embodiment of Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig in Guru form. It makes our dedication become even more significant and so effective to create meritorious karma for us to receive teachings and vows. Many of us have already received Highest Yoga Tantric initiations from His Holiness. For those who have not received initiations, dedicating the merits create the meritorious causes to be able to receive initiations in the future. After that you can study the path. Many of us are soon in retirement age or near retirement; so when we retire, we retire from the worldly busy life into a new job of four sessions of Highest Yoga Tantric *deity yoga* practices. If we are unable to achieve realisations within a few years and if we are able to do [the retreats] until we pass away, then, there's a great chance that we are able to utilise the natural death into actualising Dharmakaya. Many masters have gone through that path; so, we can follow in the similar way like that. If not, then at least when we know that there are some clear signs that death is coming near (maybe doctors said that we have a few years more to live), then without a second thought or other considerations, just go into four sessions retreat; we can at least do that. So therefore, we dedicate our merits for the long lives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche.

Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche holds within many great masters, many lineages of initiations and vows; and is a perfect fully ordained Sangha. If someone aspires to dedicate their life to be a Sangha (since Rinpoche is a monk, a fully ordained Sangha), one can receive those [Sangha] vows that Rinpoche is still

granting. One who wants to practise the individual liberation vows of a Sangha won't be able to receive the Sangha Vows if one's Guru is not a Sangha.

So lucky to have a Guru who observes perfected individual liberation Sangha Vows, perfected Bodhisattva Vows, perfected Tantric Vows, and whose kindness that we disciples can receive—the kindness in three times and the kindness in three ways—and the Guru who is kind [to us] in three times where you can receive all the three different precepts (the Sangha precepts, Bodhisattva precepts and tantric precepts) and who is enlightened. Therefore, without any doubt we have had the karmic affinity from our past life, who has been our Guru in the past, and who is our Guru in the present [life] and who without any doubt will hold us in their hearts to lead us in the path even in our future lifetimes. Not only that, whose kindness to us at the time of death, whose kindness even when we are in bardo, and whose kindness to us is [such that] even when we are reborn as a very naughty samsaric beings, Guru will never give up on us. So unbelievable! So fortunate! So, we should always dedicate the merits (that when this COVID-19 pandemic is over), Rinpoche will start to travel again to conduct retreats and continue to grant those powerful and necessary initiations that are so important to have. So, for that, we dedicate these merits.

VI. PRAYER FOR HIS HOLINESS' WISHES TO BE SPONTANEOUSLY FULFILLED

***Savior of the Land of Snow's teachings and transmigratory beings,
Who extensively clarifies the path that unifies emptiness and compassion,
To the Lotus Holder, Tenzin Gyatso, I beseech—
May all your holy wishes be spontaneously fulfilled.***

We dedicate the merits for His Holiness to live a long life as he aspires for 120 years to benefit all sentient beings. That also very much depends on the disciples' karma—just with His Holiness' wish to live long—we, as the followers [also need to play the role for that to be actualised]. [For instance], if we don't observe pure *samaya* and don't practise well or the disciples don't listen to the Dharma or don't listen to Guru's advice, and the Guru thinks there is no meaning in the present time but rather pass away in *Parinirvana*; that kind of things can happen. Therefore, we dedicate this merit for His Holiness to live a long life, and whatever His Holiness' wishes (like harmonising religious followers of all different faiths and harmonising different humanity together in the entire major world population) as well as the rest of His Holiness' wishes to be fulfilled.

May Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche's wishes which are like the Bodhisattva's aspiration be fulfilled.

VII. PRAYER FOR THE LONG LIFE OF KYABJE LAMA ZOPA RINPOCHE

***You who uphold the Subduer's moral way, who serve as the bountiful bearer-of-all,
Sustaining, preserving, and spreading Manjunath's victorious doctrine;
Who masterfully accomplish magnificent prayers honoring the Three Sublime Ones:
Savior of myself and others, your disciples: please, please live long***

***May I not give rise to heresy for even a second
In regard to the actions of the glorious Guru.
May I see whatever actions are done as the stainless (actions of a Buddha).
With this devotion, may I receive the Guru's blessings in my heart.***

A very important dedication. One of the greatest obstacles in our spiritual practice is heresy to our spiritual teachers. Once you have established a spiritual connection and if you have a mind of heresy, that will become one of the major obstacles to our spiritual development. Therefore, it is so important that we have a lot of merits that ensure all the actions of our body, speech and mind only please and only become service to the holy wishes of the Guru and only please the holy heart of the holy Guru. If in case unintentionally, or due to lacking of mindfulness through our body, speech and mind causes any (and even the slightest) form of losing faith or slightest thought or even a moment of not seeing Guru in Buddha, then may this merit be the antidote to purify them. May I always be equipped with vast merits that I will never encounter even a moment of negativity in relation to Guru and always increases virtue in relation to Guru and brings immense pleasing to the Guru's heart. Then, our spiritual goals without any doubts will be fulfilled. This is the dedication.

***In all my lives, never separated from perfect Gurus,
May I enjoy the magnificent Dharma.
By completing the qualities of the stages and paths,
May I quickly attain the state of Guru Vajradhara.***

This is a very important dedication. In the past eons of lifetimes—because we did not have enough merits and because we did not do dedication properly—that's why we have been interrupted with not meeting Guru. Being born in the barbaric land and being born in the time when there was no Buddha's teachings; we were stuck there for many eons of lifetimes. Even in the time of the descending of Buddha, we were born in the lower realms, in particular like the Hell realm and Hungry Ghost realm. Then even in Hell realm or Hungry Ghost realm, we were not born in the place where there was Buddha's teaching or the place where Guru was residing; born very far away. Even if born as a hell being, but if we were able to bump into the Guru when Guru is travelling, how wonderful that would be. As hungry ghost beings, we were born very far away. If being born as animals, it would be so fortunate to be the Guru's pet or as a pet of a Dharma practitioner; so fortunate as you bless them, chant mantras to them, take them around the stupas and show them Guru's picture and holy objects, and you dedicate merits specifically for them. They are so fortunate, but there are also many animals that are deep down in the oceans, or the ocean is so far away that even when Guru is travelling on a ship or on a plane flying over the ocean, the animals are too far away. So, you require so much merits to be able to get close to Guru or to get near to the Guru.

But don't be like Devadatta, who was with the Guru. Being with the Guru, but one also need a lot of merits to be able to cultivate Guru devotion. Being with the Guru but only seeing faults in the Guru like Devadatta, who was one of the closest monks to the Buddha, yet he created the karma to be born in Hell; as he was against every virtue of Buddha's conduct and did the opposite which were very much non-virtues (at least with the motivation). This is due to lacking of merits. So, we need so much merit to be near Guru and to be near Guru with the perfected practice of Guru Yoga.

VIII. PRAYER TO SEE OTHERS AS WISH-FULFILLING

To have pure view of all other sentient beings is very important. Because of not having pure view of others, we have a lot of negative emotions arise in relation to others. No question about the arising of negative emotion to those who harm you, but even to those whom you love as you are overwhelmed with attachment grasping; create so much negative karma. [Instead] have so much merits with pure view, pure affection and unconditional pure love which is free from the stain of attachment grasping towards our partners, parents and children. For that, we need to have pure view.

***Determined to obtain the greatest possible benefit
From all sentient beings,
Who are more precious than a wish-fulfilling jewel,
I shall hold them most dear at all times.***

To have pure view in relation to others, we relate to others with Bodhicitta mind, with emptiness understanding, with compassion, and with pure love. That way, you don't commit negative karma in relation to others. Others are truly a wish-fulfilling gem if you are able to relate to them with emptiness view, with Bodhicitta, with love and compassion. Then, they fulfil your wishes to actualise the two types of merits which will deliver you to become Buddha. We dedicate our merits that, "May we always be able to achieve this pure view and see others as wish-fulfilling jewel." Then, we also dedicate the merits to be wish-fulfilling for others.

IX. PRAYER TO BE WISH-FULFILLING FOR OTHERS

***Like a wish-fulfilling jewel and wish-granting tree,
May I fulfill the hopes of sentient beings
Without need for effort and exertion.
May all be auspicious for me to accomplish their wishes.***

Having the heart of altruism at all times. From the moment we wake up in the morning, the first thought immediately arises the altruistic mind and dedicate our entire future existence as the cause for others' happiness and the cause for others' benefit. Just like how Shantideva dedicates, "Whoever sees me, remembers me, hears my name or even relate to me with negative emotions or relate to me with positivity like praises or service, every single existence of mine and every single relation to others, [may] I become a wish-granting jewel fulfilling their wishes." Like the dedications in the *Bodhisattvacharyavatara*, those who need medicine, you become their medicine. Those who need shelter, you be their shelter. Those who need a friend, you become their friend. Those who need a parent, you become their parent, and those who need children, you become their children. Basically, you dedicate your entire existence to be like a wish-fulfilling jewel to others. If we are able to live a life like that, then this is the Bodhisattva's way of living.

***Whatever suffering transmigratory beings experience,
May it all ripen on me.
Whatever happiness and virtue I accumulate,***

May it all ripen on others.

This is another very precious practice; the heart practice of the Bodhisattvas, the Kadampa masters, the great *panditas*, our Gurus like Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche and His Holiness. It's the practice of *tonglen*. Whatever happiness experiences that come in our way, you instantly dedicate and transfer the merits and happiness through dedication to the rest of numberless sentient beings. Whatever suffering you see out there or whatever suffering that you experience, you dedicate to consume the suffering of entire numberless sentient beings onto the self-grasping and self-cherishing attitude. In that way, you ever develop the wisdom of selflessness and the attitude of Bodhicitta. So, again just to remember to do that requires so much merit. Therefore, you dedicate your vast merits from the Mani retreat that "May I be able to do that." Otherwise, when we are happy, we may forget to practise and be totally distracted. And when we are suffering, we feel so miserable, we cannot practise. Most of our time is very much wasted like that.

Then, during the neutral time; it's like blank. Like sleeping; every day we sleep like 6-7 hours and there is danger of forgetting to motivate before going to sleep—it's very serious as these 6 hours will be completely wasted. So, we need to have kind of very intact mindfulness before going to sleep; to really meditate and really motivate in Bodhicitta or meditate on emptiness, so that the entire sleeping time can be taken onto the path to develop wisdom or to develop merits (merit of merit and merit of method).

There are four situations or four phenomena that can be diverted through motivation. One of them is sleep. Sleep can be diverted through motivation. Even if you don't motivate, but if you sleep while meditating on emptiness, your entire sleep time is diverted to the accumulation of merit of wisdom. If you sleep while meditating on love, compassion and Bodhicitta, then you accumulate the merit of method, merit of altruism in your entire sleep. Your entire sleeping time is nurturing your altruism, nurturing your Bodhicitta mind. If you can't meditate but at least you can motivate that "May my entire sleep be the cause for numberless sentient beings' temporary happiness up to ultimate happiness of Enlightenment." It does not take even a minute to chant that and if you say that sincerely from your heart, you will have kind of like very happy settled comfortable nice ending of the day. Then, you somehow feel like so good to go to bed. In the day time, you are busy and didn't really get the chance to practise properly, and when you lie down on the bed, you feel not good and feel the day is like a bit empty and incomplete—you don't feel so nice. Immediately you hijack that by starting to motivate that "My day is not so marvellous in virtue, but may my entire sleep be the cause for numberless sentient beings' Enlightenment." Immediately, the atmosphere is like magic; instantly change the entire atmosphere. The moment you [set] the Bodhicitta motivation, it's like immediately changing your mood. So, we need so much merits to be able to remember and have the joyous effort of mindfulness. If we can simply be able to do that, even if our entire day is really really busy—then at least for every 24 hours in a day—there are 6 or 7 hours when you are able to accumulate pure complete, solid causes for your happiness, for your future happiness and your Enlightenment. So we need to dedicate our merits for that.

X. SHANTIDEVA'S DEDICATION

***For as long as space endures and
For as long as sentient beings remain,***

***For that long may I abide and
Eliminate the sufferings of transmigratory beings.***

We conclude [the dedication prayers] with dedication of merits for our life to be just like Shantideva's life. Therefore, "I dedicate this merit for me to be able to remember or for the rest of my entire existence be just like that; be the complete cause to eliminate the sufferings of sentient beings and be the complete cause to abide sentient beings from temporary happiness up to the ultimate happiness of Enlightenment."

MERIT MULTIPLYING PRAYERS

Reciting these merit multiplying mantras have the power to multiply one merit by 100,000 times. Because of *Saka Dawa*, just by reciting one *OM MANI PADME HUM*, the merit is multiplied by 100 million times, and due to the sun eclipse today, it is [further] multiplied by another 100 million times. After that you rejoice—even if you are just rejoicing in your merits alone—that will double up the merits. And now when you recite the merit multiplying mantras, that many times of hundreds of millions of merits [that you have accumulated] will be multiplied by 100,000 times. Unbelievable!

While reciting this prayer, you also dedicate if you have any specific dedication—whatever dedication you make, it includes everything (every wish, every prayer is included). But if you still feel like dedicating specifically for specific person or for specific situation, then you can also dedicate.

***CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ NAM PAR
NANG DZÄ Ö KYI GYÄL PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO (1X)***

***To Bhagavan, Tathagata, Arhat, Perfectly Complete Buddha, Vairochana, King of Light, I
prostrate. (1x)***

JANG CHHUB SEM PA SEM PA CHHEN PO KÜN TU ZANG PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO (1X)

To Bodhisattva Mahasattva Samantabhadra, I prostrate. (1x)

TADYATHÄ OM PAÑCHENDRIYA AVABODHANÄYE SVÄHÄ

OM DHURU DHURU JAYA MUKHE SVÄHÄ (7X)

***CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ MÄN GYI LA
BAI DUR YÄI Ö KYI GYÄL PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO (1X)***

***To Bhagavan, Tathagata, Arhat, Perfectly Complete Buddha, Medicine Guru, King of Sapphire Light, I
prostrate. (1x)***

***CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ NGO WA
DANG MÖN LAM THAM CHÄ RAB TU DRUB PÄ GYÄL PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO (1X)***

***To Bhagavan, Tathagata, Arhat, Perfectly Complete Buddha, King Fully Accomplishing All
Dedications and Prayers, I prostrate. (1x)***

MÄ JUNG SÄ CHÄ GYÄL WÄI JIN LAB DANG

Due to the blessings of the eminent victorious ones and the Bodhisattvas,

This is the first of the conditions that whatever prayers that we make, the results will be actualised effectively due to the blessings of the eminent victorious ones and the Bodhisattvas. The power of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas—because we have conducted on the basis of refuge—therefore, we already have that power. In relation to the Mani retreat, the Compassionate Buddha is your object of refuge and object of merit field. Therefore, the first condition is there.

TEN DREL LU WA ME PÄI DEN PA DANG
The truth of infallible dependent arising,

This is the second condition. In the nature of emptiness, all the prayers and wishes you make will be actualised in dependent arising nature of cause and effect. Whatever virtues that you have accumulated can only result in virtues and never non-virtues. Therefore, whatever you have accumulated will never be lost.

DAG GI LHAG SAM DAG PÄI THU TOB KYI
And the power of my pure special attitude of taking responsibility,

The pure sincere altruistic intention that you have—when you conduct Mani retreat or any practices and whatever merits that you have dedicated, you truly really expressed from your heart. This sincerity is the third condition.

NAM DAG MÖN PÄI NÄ KÜN DRUB PAR SHOG
May all the aims of my pure prayers be accomplished.

With these three conditions, may all the aims of my pure prayers be accomplished.

FOUR-LINE MIGTSEMA PRAYER

MIG ME TSE WÄI TER CHHEN CHÄN RÄ ZIG
Avalokiteshvara, great treasure of non-objectifying compassion;
DRI ME KHYEN PÄI WANG PO JAM PÄL YANG
Manjushri, master of stainless wisdom;
GANG CHÄN KHÄ PÄI TSUG GYÄN TSONG KHA PA
Tsongkhapa, crown ornament of the sages of the Land of Snow:
LOSANG DRAG PÄI ZHAB LA SÖL WA DEB (3X)
Lozang Dragpa, at your feet I make requests. (3x)

(Transcribed based on the online teaching hosted by Chag Tong Chen Tong FPMT Tasmania, Australia on 10 June 2021. Please refer to recording of the teaching at <https://youtu.be/7HSLpb8A8GY> as the true and exact meaning)

1.4 SUPPLEMENTARY TEACHINGS

1.4 (i) Sadhana Practice: Brief Retreat Guidance for Meditation-Recitation of the Great Compassionate One



Chenrezig practice in relation to Mani retreat is one of the most meaningful things to do. There is no other greater practice than *OM MANI PADME HUM* practice, in relation to sutra and tantra. Basically, what really makes Buddhadharma so special is because of the practice of compassion, particularly in the practice of altruism. Except for Mahayanic Buddhadharma, no other faith or any other practices contain the fully matured compassion which is altruism Bodhicitta. This practice is beneficial for everything; for anyone. To have the opportunity to do such practice is the highlight of the meaning of our life, our Precious Human Rebirth.

The recitations of *OM MANI PADME HUM* and cultivation of compassion should be done all the time, and not just during *Saka Dawa*. It is so powerful; the real absolute fulfilment of your entire wishes all the way up to full Enlightenment, and also fulfil the wishes of numberless sentient beings' aspirations for Enlightenment too.

The purpose of your Mani retreat starts from your present life's mother and to the rest of numberless mother sentient beings from the temporary happiness up to the ultimate happiness of full Enlightenment; that is the purpose of conducting the retreat.

ADVICE ON RETREAT PRACTICE

As for the number of recitations, recite minimum of 1 *mala* a day; which is so easy. Then it is up to you how many number of mantra you want to commit. It will be so wonderful if you can commit recitation of 1 million *OM MANI PADME HUM* mantra in your lifetime, without giving any time frame or any restrictions on where to do, when to do or how to do.

For those who have already received Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig's initiation, in particularly the Thousand-Armed Chenrezig or any other Chenrezig initiations like Four-Armed Chenrezig, then the common commitment is recitations of 600,000 *OM MANI PADME HUM* in retreat. Not necessarily have to be conducted in a very strict way; for those who have busy life, you just commit to accomplish 600,000 as the commitment retreat after receiving the initiation. If you are able to do that, it will be so wonderful. Whether the initiating Guru have given such a commitment or not [nevertheless], this is the usual commitment in relation to Chenrezig initiation practice. In other words, after receiving the initiation, you become a family member of Chenrezig; this [600,000 mantras] is the minimum homework or minimum criteria to be part of the family of Chenrezig.

Regarding which sadhana text to use, there are so many different sadhana texts. It is absolutely individual's choice. You can put all the sadhana together and make it a whole day of sadhana practice, or just use one particular sadhana. It doesn't matter as it is your choice.

Or, you can just simply recite *OM MANI PADME HUM*; just simply aspire to recite *OM MANI PADME HUM*—even that is good enough because that contains everything, as *OM MANI PADME HUM* practice is exceptional. Just recite *OM MANI PADME HUM*. Even while you are angry, you recite *OM MANI PADME HUM* also will bring so much benefit.

Therefore, do not get caught up with confusion: “Oh! This centre and that centre use different kind of sadhana texts or do in a different way, or this monastery does different way or this tradition does this way.” All these [confusions] have to be deleted. Whatever you are able to do is perfect. So, make sure that there is no such thing as yours is right or mine is right or yours is wrong, or mine is extensive and yours is not enough, or why you do like this because I saw someone doing like that. No such thing!

[Regarding] the counting of number [of mantras during the retreat], you can participate in three or four hundreds of different retreat groups, there is no problem. You can recite the same amount, and for the purpose of rejoicement, you can contribute [that amount of mantras recited] to this particular group of retreaters and also contribute the same amount for any other retreat group for the purpose of rejoicement, and to bring more energy together. It is so flexible.

Mani retreat is one of the most extensive retreats, most powerful retreat, and most easy retreat. Anyone is qualified to do this practice.

ON CHENREZIG SADHANA PRACTICE

For this Mani retreat session, Venerable Lindy of Chag Tong Chen Tong Centre, FPMT Tasmania, Australia recommended this particular beautiful text [sadhana], *The Welfare of Living Beings That Pervades Space: The Meditation-Recitation of the Great Compassionate One* by Thangtong Gyalpo. *[Please refer to the Chenrezig sadhana text from the link below]*¹

I will be pointing out a few points about the sadhana and do one time of chanting.

The first verse in this sadhana is taking refuge and generating altruistic intention. After that, next few verses are about visualisation or the defining of Compassionate Buddha. Then, making supplications and requesting prayers. Here, you think about your father and mother and the rest of the numberless sentient beings. Visualise them as exactly like you, having full faith and conviction in Chenrezig, and voicing the same kind of aspirations together, led by you to purify samsara and to actualise Enlightenment of Chenrezig. You can do the requesting prayers one time, three times, seven times or even hundred times until you sincerely get moved from the depth of your heart about the request that you are making, which is about purification of samsara and actualisation of the Enlightenment.

After that is the recitation of mantra. Here, you can reflect on the meaning of the request that you have made before, or while doing the recitations you can simultaneously continue to express the request, or you can meditate or visualise Compassionate Buddha. If you have Highest Yoga Tantric

¹ https://fpmt.org/wp-content/uploads/education/teachings/texts/welfare_living_beings_that_pervades_space_a5.pdf

initiation and also *jenang of* Chenrezig, then you can do the self-generation of Chenrezig. If not, then you can just visualise Chenrezig on top of your crown or in front, granting all the blessings to the requests that you have expressed.

While reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM*, you can also meditate on Bodhicitta, love, compassion and emptiness. When you meditate on Bodhicitta, you can remember the definition of Bodhicitta and meditate on expressing your aspiration to actualise full Enlightenment for the benefit of numberless sentient beings' Enlightenment. You reinforce that idea while reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM*. For certain sessions, you can focus your meditation sometimes on compassion, love or forgiveness, etc.

When you meditate on emptiness, you can also meditate on the voidness of the three circles—the emptiness of subject, object and action i.e. emptiness of yourself, emptiness of the practice of the Mani retreat and emptiness of the purpose that you are dedicating this practice all lies in the lack of inherent existent. You can integrate whatever understanding of emptiness that you have.

Or you can meditate on the three circles of the **subject** (the mind, the perception), the **object** (the entire rest of the phenomena starting from your aggregates) and the **action** (the subject, the mind relating to all those objects), everything you meditate as empty of inherent existence.

Sometimes you can also do healing practice (if there are any family members who are sick or with problem or the world is facing lots of problems) through visualisation of the nectar and light rays from Chenrezig bringing about healing; and to yourself as well.

At the end, you dedicate properly in Bodhicitta and Emptiness, in the similar way as how I have just explained. Rejoice and try to end the session with a sense of fulfilment, sense of rejoicement, sense of happiness, and a sense that you have become so worthwhile to benefit numberless sentient beings' well-being, starting from your parents, your children and your family. Then you look forward to the next session which could be the next moment, the next hour or the next day. You should end every session in a perfect mood with much joy. You can usually create the mood with rejoicement.

I will do the recitations here and there may be so many different tunes, so I am using this very simple easy tune that everybody can easily practise; usually this tune is used in relation to Amitabha practices and Chenrezig practices. You can also just read plainly or put it in any other tune that you like.

ON THE RECITATIONS OF *OM MANI PADME HUM*

When you recite the mantra—if you do the **verbal recitations**—then you recite [in the volume] that you are able to hear, but at the same time if someone is sitting next to you, then that person is unable to hear you.

Sometimes you can also do **mental recitations**, [in that case] at the centre of your heart, there is the seed syllable *Hrih*, surrounded by *OM MANI PADME HUM* letters. You are [mentally] reading the letters *OM MANI PADME HUM*; this is mental recitations.

Regarding the chanting, you don't have to follow the tune. You can focus on the visualisations and the meaning of the text. But if you like to chant, then you can use this kind of tune.

You can recite the mantras anywhere. Basically, just try to occupy your speech with *OM MANI PADME HUM* even while watching television, news or even while lying on the bed. There is no restriction at all,

as long as your speech is occupied with *OM MANI PADME HUM*; all beneficial. Of course, if you can do some disciplined sessions, there are great benefits. Otherwise, you can do anywhere. It is so important for you to do physical exercise, so while walking you can also recite *OM MANI PADME HUM*.

I am not kind of being revolutionary by making everything so relaxed; I am not trying to do that. I am just making all these statements because this practice is so precious. Sometimes we don't do [this practice] because we have so many excuses, inconveniences, reasons and responsibilities in our day-to-day life; because of that, we are unable to do such a precious practice. This is the main reason that you can do this practice in any situation, anywhere, and in any manner, as long as you are simply reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM* is already so meaningful.

Also, please remember that I am not just imposing this on all of you, but then myself relax. I, myself am going to commit [in this retreat] to my very best; I may not be able to catch up with you, but I will try my very best.

*(Transcribed based on the online teaching hosted by Taitung Foundation on 17 May 2021.
Please refer to recording of the teaching in this link as the true and exact meaning)*
<http://www.tenzinzopa.com/externallinks/vids3/ManiretreatPractice.m4v>



1.4 (ii) Meditation on the Two Aspects of Bodhicitta



The wisdom of altruistic attitude is the sole antidote to purify karma and it is also the sole practice to accumulate merits. It is the one practice that delivers both the purification of karma and accumulation of merits. The Guru Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig himself (His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama) has said many times that this is the one practice that can deliver the two most important purposes of spiritual practice which is purification and accumulation. It actualises the essence of the Buddha's teachings—the Buddhadharma which is accumulating perfected virtue and purifying the negativities.

NON-VIRTUOUS ACTIONS

In the cultivation of altruism, even if in case you perform some action which is not virtuous by its nature—when that action brings about the karmic consequences, there won't be heavy negative consequences—even in the deeds of engaging in negativities. As long as you are cultivating altruism, then that negative action won't be forceful. This is clearly said by the Guru Compassionate Buddha (His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama) in a Questions-and-Answers session with the audience. Some individuals who have jobs that by nature are non-virtue or may not be virtue or where there is no way to transform that job [when engaging in that non-virtuous task] into virtue. But through the force of altruistic motivation—even that act which is by nature non-virtue or neutral—the individual can still accumulate great virtues of altruism. Therefore, there is no question about while we are engaging in virtuous conduct, that virtuous conduct gathered with the altruistic intention is going to be supreme virtue.

TRANSFORMING ACTIVITIES IN DAILY LIFE

Even when you spend the whole day doing ordinary activities like cooking, watching television, sleeping or just relaxing, as long as you recite *OM MANI PADME HUM*, your entire day becomes most meaningful and becomes an altruistic day of gathering great supreme virtue because of the power of just simply reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM*. Before going to bed, if you accumulate *OM MANI PADME HUM* or generate Bodhicitta motivation, then in that way, the entire sleeping period is not wasted and becomes a gathering of supreme virtue. Just by doing that, can make our life so meaningful.

ANTIDOTE TO PURIFY PAST NEGATIVE KARMA

The practice of *OM MANI PADME HUM* can be used as the antidote to overcome obstacles—health or any form of obstacles that come in our way. The practice of *OM MANI PADME HUM* or just simply reciting the mantra, doing visualisation in relation to Chenrezig practice generating loving kindness and compassion—Bodhicitta is one of the most powerful antidote practices to purify all negativities and all negative experiences. The reason for that is because all the negative experiences and suffering

experiences that we go through are the result of causing harm to sentient beings. There is no doubt about that—simply experiencing that debt that we have accumulated for causing harm to sentient beings. So, by reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM*, generating compassion and do any practices related to Chenrezig, you heal the karmic actions that have been committed in the past in relation to causing harm to others. This is the reason why Chenrezig practice and simply by just reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM* is the most powerful antidote.

A NATURAL AFFINITY WITH ALL

Of course, there are numberless emanations of Buddhas and *deities*, and if you can manage and feel that you have affinity with so many different Buddhas and *deities*, then you can go for it and gather your practices in relation to them. But if you cannot manage that, if you are able to do just Chenrezig practice, practise *OM MANI PADME HUM* and compassion—that is good enough and sufficient of practising entire Buddhas and entire *deities*. Without any doubt, [it would also be so] that any sentient being has karmic affinity with compassion, Compassionate Buddha and altruism. Certain other aspect of the Buddhas and *deities*—even though they are enlightened beings carrying enlightened qualities, but due to the different aspirational purposes of their different manifestations—we may not necessarily have the affinity with some *deities* and some Buddhas in relating to the practice to develop our path. As far as is concerned with Chenrezig and compassion, everyone has a natural affinity. Therefore, whoever does practices in relation to compassion, the benefit is immense.

If you want to help your loved ones who are suffering from sickness or any obstacles, without any doubt you just chant *OM MANI PADME HUM* for them, generate compassion towards them. You can visualise Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig, then transfer merits to them through visualising light and nectar to purify them. It's not something that you need to look for Medicine Buddha because of sickness, or Tara because of business problems [as if] Chenrezig is not good enough. Or for very heavy spirit harm or heavy negative force, then you need to look for wrathful *deities* or wrathful protector. No. No need.

If you are able to practise *OM MANI PADME HUM* and practise compassion, that is most forceful and most powerful. If you have a relationship problem and you need some pujas or advice, you don't have to look for advice outside or seek for a specific *deity* to heal your relationship problem. You practise compassion and immediately practise Chenrezig in relation to your relationship problem. It is one antidote to all the problems and it is most effective; as I have mentioned before, because you have karmic affinity. When you check certain observation with *lamas*, they specifically recommend some *deities* for practice and that is based on your karmic affinity with that *deity*. When you have karmic affinity with that *deity*, that plays an important role to bring the effectiveness of the practice in relation to that.

So, with Chenrezig, compassion and *OM MANI PADME HUM*, every single numberless sentient being—even non-believers, other religious followers, animals, harm-givers, Buddhist followers of Mahayana or Hinayana, doesn't matter—all have complete affinity with compassion. Who does not have affinity with compassion? Who does not like compassion or appreciate compassion? Who doesn't want to merge one's energy into compassionate energy? More than that, our absolute being is compassionate one; our true nature is compassionate one. Even the fundamental energy of ours, the fundamental energy of all the Buddhas is compassion. It is like it matches perfectly.

IT IS THE ULTIMATE PRACTICE

The practice of altruism (Great Compassion) is the complete and greatest Dharma to achieve your entire wishes including the ultimate wishes of Enlightenment. The compassion-altruism practice is the most complete cause to fulfil the wishes of numberless sentient beings all the way up to ultimate wishes of Enlightenment. It is the ultimate practice.

There is a word in the taking of Bodhisattva precepts that you generate altruism for the purpose of actualising yours and all others' ultimate wishes. Therefore, this is one practice that when you are happy, it is the most marvellous practice to engage in. When you are sad and suffering, it is one of the marvellous practices to be engaged in. When you are sad and suffering, this practice of compassion will heal our suffering. When you are happy, this practice of compassion will be able to bring about increase in the happiness by rejoicing. When you encounter many forces of harm-givers, this is the most forceful and powerful practice to be cultivated to benefit those harm-givers. When everyone comes in your way to benefit you, the best way to repay the kindness of the benefactors is to generate compassion towards them.

CAUSING OTHERS TO ACCUMULATE FUTURE HAPPINESS AND PREVENT FUTURE SUFFERING

This practice of compassion is so effective and so powerful. Even in the situation when you are unable to overcome the suffering of sentient beings or when you encounter those suffering beings that are going through the ripening of karmic result of their past negative karma in the form of suffering—even though you are unable to heal that suffering right now— but in the practice of compassion, you can still benefit them by causing them to accumulate future happiness and prevent future suffering. In the practice of compassion, without any doubt, you definitely will be able to benefit others. Even like in the situation when you meet a wounded dog and you have no way to heal that wound nor the suffering that the dog is experiencing, but then in the generation of compassion you can still help that wounded dog through the dedication of great virtue of altruism to the dog. You create the conditions for the dog to prevent future suffering and create the conditions for the dog to experience future happiness all the way up to Enlightenment.

Generation of compassion can also benefit those who do not believe in reincarnation or karma. Just by simply generating compassion to them may not change them into believing in karma or have faith in Chenrezig or Buddha, [however] generating compassion can help this person to enjoy the benefit or virtue in the future.

If someone is being very violent or very destructive causing harm to others like terrorists, etc., you may not be able to change their thinking or action right now, but by generating compassion towards those terrorists, you create the causes for their future happiness and create the conditions for an end to the negative actions in the future. You help to generate the conditions to stop future suffering; that much practice we can do.

A PRACTICE FOR ALL SITUATIONS

If you happen to go to the wet market and see so many butchers and so many animals that they are about to kill, you don't have to feel helpless. Even though you may not be able to liberate all of them

from the danger to their lives and you may not be able to save them—it is quite sure you cannot ask all the butchers to stop their livelihood—but in the practice of compassion you don't have to feel helpless. You generate compassion to the butchers and also to the animals; that will create the conditions for prevention of such negative karma in the future, as well as prevention of future suffering, and condition to establish virtuous seeds for both the butchers and the animals.

In the practice of compassion, everywhere and in any situation, you can have the strength to practise, to help others and always carry the solutions to help others. You are never helpless in the practice of compassion. I am sure most of us visit the market and I am sure many of you have felt very sad, seeing all these butchers and seeing so many animals are going to be killed and you have no ability to free them; you feel like helpless and sad. In the practice of compassion, you don't have to feel sad. Instead of filling your heart with feeling of sadness, you would rather fill it with compassion and rather use your energy in the force for compassion. The stronger the force of compassion—particularly in targeting that particular animal—it becomes even more strong. So, when you see those fish, chickens and butchers right in front of your eyes, you generate compassion; you don't have to sit there to meditate. You can still go around to shop but generate your heart filled with compassion. This way, you can help them and it is so meaningful to visit market. Someone who practises compassion enjoy doing shopping, but at the same time brings immense of benefit to those who need your help.

In other parts of the world such as in Australia, there are kangaroos or wallabies that are knocked down by cars on the highways especially during the night time when the animals try to cross the roads. Sometimes when you are in the car, you see some animals being knocked down but still moving, yet there is no way you can stop the car as other cars are behind you. Even those who don't know Buddhism would find that scene very sad and very heart-breaking. As a Dharma practitioner in compassion, instead of feeling sad, you can immediately engage in the practice of compassion or at least recite *OM MANI PADME HUM* mantras. Then you close your eyes and generate compassion to that animal and also to that person driving who created the karma. Then you don't feel sad; rather you feel purposeful to put your full energy to help them and benefit them.

We know that animals by themselves have no capabilities and no intelligence for them to accumulate merit or to purify karma from their side, not like humans especially like ourselves. Knowing that, whenever you see any animals and know their positions as animals, then immediately you recite *OM MANI PADME HUM* and generate compassion towards them. Especially, if they are nearby to you, if you can loudly chant *OM MANI PADME HUM*—because you are directly relating to these particular animals—they will get immensely effective benefits.

More than that, when we see suffering animals or sick animals that can be your pets, dogs or cats, it can be very heart-breaking. Being a practitioner our self, we immediately recite *OM MANI PADME HUM* and blow on them if it can be done or at least generate compassion. Even though you may not be able to save their lives or cure their sicknesses or transform the animal into a precious human life, but you can condition them in future to take a precious human life or be born in Chenrezig Pureland. You condition those sick and dying animals to never have to be born in such condition in future lifetimes. So, in compassionate practice, you can do all this.

Anywhere you see any living beings such as ants or flies, instantly you generate compassion and recite *OM MANI PADME HUM*. Everywhere, there are so many opportunities to practise compassion and develop your heart, and bring yourself closer to Enlightenment and also to help others to be closer to Enlightenment. Everywhere we can see many people and encounter so many insects, bugs and without

leaving out a single bug, you establish altruistic relationship with them just simply by reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM*. If you are alone and if it is convenient to do, you bless and blow on them. If you are doing gardening, there are so many bugs in the garden. So throughout the gardening, you recite *OM MANI PADME HUM* and you make altruistic relationship to each and every single bug in your garden. You are causing each and every single bug towards developing the path up to Enlightenment. Unbelievable! However, we don't do that; we are just waiting for retreat to do practice and waiting for some big disaster to be very generous and compassionate. But this is something that [we can do] in our daily lives. As long as there is samsara, there is no greater disaster than that. As long as there are samsaric aggregates, that is the greatest disaster. As long as you have awareness, we have to use that awareness with full of compassion.

If you see or hear your neighbours quarrelling with their partners, and it is not convenient to intrude in their relationship problems, you can generate compassion and recite *OM MANI PADME HUM* for them. You may not be able to stop their fighting right [there and then], and it may seem helpless but you can still help them greatly to prevent their future sufferings and create conditions for them for future happiness by simply generating compassion thinking of them. More than that, if you can dedicate merits for them at the end, that will be even greater.

And if someone irritates you or scold you, you reply with *OM MANI PADME HUM*. If someone keeps blaming mistakes [on you] again and again, you recite *OM MANI PADME HUM*, *OM MANI PADME HUM*, *OM MANI PADME HUM*. So, that will not disturb you because the power of *OM MANI PADME HUM* itself will bless your heart and at the same time, you are doing this in relation to that particular person's action and so you are also blessing them.

These are a few examples that you can relate to in all situations to actualise the practice of compassion.

A POWERFUL HEALING PRACTICE

Historically, encountering within practitioners of Compassionate Buddha, the practice of compassion is one of the most powerful healings, even for chronic diseases such as leprosy. Like Gelongma Palmo who actualised the *Nyung Nä* practice, she had leprosy; after doing a few rounds of *Nyung Nä*, she purified the leprosy sickness, had direct vision of Compassionate Buddha and within that lifetime, she achieved Compassionate Buddha Enlightenment. There are many examples and real-life stories like that.

Within our lifetime, there are many practitioners who had cancer, but then engaging in Compassionate Buddha practices such as conducting *Nyung Nä*. Some are illiterate like the villagers in the Himalayas who just accumulate *OM MANI PADME HUM*—even chronic sickness like cancer is cured. There are many stories like this, not just one or two cases.

Even individuals who are going through the ripening experience of their past karma—which only by ripening the suffering results or else the karma cannot be purified—but if they know how to practise compassion and if they know the value of *OM MANI PADME HUM*, emotionally they won't suffer. Even though physically they are going through decay from the sickness, but they are happy and feel meaningful. Even my Gurus practised like that. There is no emotional suffering. We can do that—while we are suffering physically, why we need to [add on] extra suffering while we have a choice not to emotionally suffer. Sometimes our mind is difficult to control and train. But when we understand the

value of compassion and the power of Chenrezig practice, even just simply reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM*, it is so forceful that you really feel meaningful because this is an altruistic practice. Even in the situation that you are dying going through immense pain, you still can become most beneficial for the cause of numberless sentient beings' happiness—not just ordinary happiness, but all the way up to Enlightenment. So, when you know the value, you will surely feel happy emotionally. We have the capability to do that, we have the choice to do that and we can apply that.

It is truly, truly helpful that [upon] receiving bad news of people suffering from chronic sickness or trouble that is so overwhelming, immediately you generate compassion because you understand the value of compassion; immediately you gain power and courage, [instead of] feeling depressed. Immediately, spend time accumulating *OM MANI PADME HUM* and turn your small prayer wheel which contains a lot of mantras. Your heart will gain so much strength and within a few minutes, your entire perspective will change. If you really want to continue the feeling when you first heard the bad news, the feeling is torturing. It is very hard, but because your heart is filled with generating compassion and you utilise your body and speech to accumulate the energy of compassion through *OM MANI PADME HUM* and turning the prayer wheel, it is like an instant transformation. In that way, you are able to utilise the time in the most beneficial way to protect yourself from emotional suffering and you also have abundance of virtues to help those who need help. Even though you may not be with them, but that doesn't mean that you are helpless. If you do not use the practice, then you are really in a helpless position. How torturing it can be when you feel you are helpless when someone needs help the most, but you are not there. So, the compassion immediately saves you. That is just an example. We as the ordinary human being in samsara encounter so many situations like that. Sometimes it could be your own health when suddenly the doctor said there is something wrong with you or you suddenly really feel something wrong and that can be so painful to your heart. That painfulness can actually weaken your immune system. If you generate compassion and cultivate the compassionate energy that will help to develop and gain better immune system that may be able to help fight the disease that you are going through. It is very practical; it is not just being philosophical. It is really, really practical that every practitioner can easily utilise.

Finally, I want to emphasise one point which Guru Chenrezig (His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama) himself said after granting Bodhisattva precepts; it is most beneficial and so important for those who practise Bodhicitta and Great Compassion to take the meditation on **conventional altruism** and **ultimate altruism** as the daily commitment.

MEDITATION ON TWO ASPECTS OF BODHICITTA

The meditation is very simple. The generation of **conventional altruism** which is the mind of aspiration expressing, "May I actualise the state of full Enlightenment for the benefit of numberless sentient beings' Enlightenment." That thought, that mind transforms into a white full moon disc and resides at the centre of your heart, which is inseparable from your mind. Then you place your awareness on that for one or few minutes or hours, for as much as you can meditate. So first you express this **conventional altruism** and that wish or expression turns into an image of a very bright white full moon. It rests at the centre of your heart and become oneness with your mind or heart. Just simply recognise that and being aware of that, and place your concentration on that.

Meditation on the Two Aspects of Bodhicitta

The second meditation is on **ultimate altruism**. First, you express with the understanding of the meaning “Self and rest of the phenomena are completely in the nature of empty of inherent existence.” And that idea or understanding turn into a white vajra with five spokes (five points) on the top. That white vajra rested in the centre of the white moon. That empty nature too, is not separate or no different from that conventional altruistic aspect of your mind which appears in the moon.

Firstly, you place your mind concentrating on Conventional Bodhicitta for a few minutes (or for as long as you can meditate).

Secondly, then you change your meditation focusing on Ultimate Bodhicitta.

Thirdly, you place your concentration or meditation on the **union of Conventional Bodhicitta and Ultimate Bodhicitta**—which is in the experience or understanding that your awareness is fully completely in the expression of conventional altruism feeling a sense of joy or blissfulness, and yet you understand that it is in the nature of voidness of inherent existence—the union of empty and bliss. Place your focus on that and remain in meditation for as long as you can.

Try to do [this meditation] daily at least once or even for a short time. Then, try your very best to do it as much as you can, as it is very beneficial to develop your altruism—the realisation on the stages of the path of Wisdom and Conventional Bodhicitta.

When you do retreat sessions at home, of course you can integrate meditation on all the Lamrim topics—but for this particular meditation, try to do at least a few times. Best to do before you accumulate the recitation of the mantra. When you do the session, firstly you meditate on this (as explained before). Then, when you feel that you are losing the concentration, you release the meditation. After that, you engage in accumulation of recitation of the mantra.

(Transcribed based on the online teaching hosted by Taitung Foundation on 2 June 2021.

Please refer to recording of the teaching in this link as the true and exact meaning)

<http://www.tenzinzopa.com/externallinks/taitungvid/Maninmeditation.mp4>.



1.5 Questions and Answers Sessions



Question: *Just to clarify, Geshe-la mentioned that while doing gardening or cooking, we can recite OM MANI PADME HUM. I had the impression that when we recite mantra, we are supposed to focus on the deity.*

Geshe-la: If you can focus, well done! If you have time to do that, well done! But you also have responsibilities like cooking, gardening, driving. Then as far as concern with any mantras—in particular the Chenrezig mantra, just by simply saying it, is already so powerful and so beneficial.

Question: *[Please explain the meaning of] syllable Hrih in the context of the Mani retreat practices.*

Geshe-la: The syllable *Hrih* is the seed syllable of Chenrezig. It is like the continuum. Like our self when we take rebirth, we need a continuum to be reborn in a new body. So, in order for Chenrezig to arise, it needs to have the enlightened continuum which is represented by syllable *Hrih*. If we want to generate our self as *deity* Chenrezig, without the seed syllable, we cannot be born or arise into Chenrezig. It's exactly like our consciousness. On the basis of the two substances of our father and mother, our consciousness is established there, and from there your new rebirth begins. In a similar way with the lotus, sun disc and moon disc, the lotus can be regarded like the mother's womb. The sun disc and moon disc are like the father's substance and mother's substance. Syllable *Hrih* is like previous consciousness that's going to place onto it, and from there miraculously you actualise the entire Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig. It is like [how] our previous life's consciousness is established on the basis of our father's and mother's substances and in the mother's womb, you miraculously arise in a human body. The syllable *Hrih* is the seed syllable of Chenrezig, and other *deities* also have their own different seed syllables.

Question: *If we maintain a pure view, do we not then lose the suffering aspect of samsara?*

Geshe-la: If we really succeed in actualising pure view, definitely suffering of samsara is going to be lost. Why to the Buddha, there is no suffering or suffering world? Because Buddha has lost the impure view and carries the pure view of an enlightened mind. Even though suffering world still exists to the Buddha but in Buddha's perception or experience, suffering and impure world do not exist. This is simply because He has perfected in pure view. If we too train our mind, the moment that we achieve the perfected state of pure view, even while we are carrying this contaminated body, we don't experience the suffering.

But that is very, very tough. For those in the three higher realms like us humans, we are unable to really differentiate what exactly pervasive suffering is, unless we use wisdom of the Dharma. We can [only] understand the pervasive suffering or actual samsaric suffering after learning about how destructive the negative emotions are, otherwise we don't feel it. What we really can recognise, the so-called 'suffering' is very much just the suffering of pain and suffering of change which is a very superficial judgement, simply judged by our gross mind and our sensual perception. In fact, [it is] not even necessary to achieve a perfected pure view like the Buddha. As long as we are able to achieve a certain steady

degree of meditation and are able to live our day-to-day life in a meditative state like many yogis, then we are very much free from the suffering of pain and suffering of change. Even just by achieving serenity or *samatha*, you will not be affected by the suffering of pain and suffering of change. So physically, even if you may be bleeding from a cut or beaten up or when death occurs or flesh is deteriorating, the person doesn't suffer because that person is in the meditative state.

You can balance the pure view between an active mind and the focused mind. If we want to train ourselves to be free from the suffering of pain and suffering of change, we can train through the focused serenity training.

If you train in pure view, which is one of the key practices of tantra and in general, it is the key practice of the entire practice of Buddhadharma [and that is] to purify the impurity by purifying the impure perception and to actualise liberation. The meaning of 'tantra' is pure view and 'tantra' means protection to the impure view. The moment you do tantric practice whether to do with mantra or *deity yoga* visualisations, you immediately transform the entirety (like what we did through the sessions), everything becomes divine, non-real to our normal reality. Our normal reality is actually a false reality which is experienced by our impure mind and that is not a real reality. After training in the pure view, [with] whatever technique that you may use, then it is kind of like an immediate effect to liberate yourself so effectively, gradually. Eventually, we can reach to a point that "dagparamjam" like everything - all the sound is blissful and all the things you see are blissful, even in this so-called 'samsara' by the impure view, but for you it is not a samsara.

In fact, as one of the key practices of Buddhadharma in whatever *yana* that you may be practising whether it is sutra or tantra, training our mind in pure view (in relation to our job, the people we encounter or any good or bad experiences that come our way) is one of the main sadhana. Lojong teachings or practices are all about training our mind in pure view. And [pure view] is not mainly the words that design our thinking, but in actuality everything is possible in relation to the fundamental basis of emptiness. Every Buddha's teaching in fact, discuss on the fundamental basis of emptiness. So, on the basis of emptiness, then [pure view] is not designing our thinking but actually we are transforming it into a truthful reality.

It's very hard to train in pure view in the beginning. The past karmic whip is very hard on us as we have worked so hard for beginningless lifetimes to store so much numberless complete karma to ensure that we cannot get away from the whip of karma no matter how hard we try to train in pure view. One of that, [for example] is we have to go through death, the perishing of this body. But still, Dharma is still the solution and Dharma is the ultimate solution. Because even if we need to experience the definite karmic results of pain and suffering, through the transformation of the mind in pure view, you can be just like the meditators and can be free from the suffering of pain and suffering of change, and you can still go through a painless old age, painless sickness and painless death.

But that [does not mean] painless from pervasive suffering. For that, we still have to clear away all our debts of the past completed karma. So, maybe as an example [to be painless from pervasive suffering], it could be after the perishing of this body, you merge with Dharmakaya. That is how many meditators at the time of death get into clear light and attain Enlightenment utilising the clear light practice. If unable to do so at that stage, then in the intermediate state try to become Buddha in the Sambhogakaya form. If that is still not successful, then take [rebirth] in another human body and within that life, try to do as much purification as possible and within that very lifetime one can also be fully liberated. You can understand this from the teachings related to *Sravaka* and *Pratyeka, Nirvana With*

Remain and *Nirvana Without Remain*. *Nirvana With Remain* is when you achieve Nirvana before discarding this contaminated body and *Nirvana Without Remain* means at the time you perish this body, you merge your continuum into the ultimate continuum which is your Dharmakaya.

Question: *In the context of dependent arising, there is a sense of comparatives [relativity]. I heard a master said before that our mind can travel faster than the speed of light. Can Geshe-la comment on this?*

Geshe-la: Our mind can definitely travel faster than anything else and if really compared to the speed of light or any tangible thing or any scientific apprehension, the mind is numberless times faster. There are three meaning in relation to dependent arising: -

Dependent arising meaning of *causality* which is a gross meaning and most of us can easily understand and apprehend what really is the other side of emptiness meaning—the dependent arising meaning of causality.

Dependent arising in relation to *parts and particles*. This second meaning of dependent arising is slightly finer but not the finest meaning yet. Modern science like quantum physics which is always emphasised by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, has a very close understanding towards a certain degree of dependent arising and it can be so helpful to use those analogies in order to apprehend what exactly dependent arising is. And this is referring to the second meaning of dependent existence based on *parts and particles*.

Dependent arising in relation to the *mind or concept of the mind*. This third meaning is the subtlest and hardest to apprehend, but we must apprehend this in order to apprehend exactly what is the ultimate meaning of dependent arising. This is exactly what the Prasangika Madhyamika [view], Nagarjuna, and Lama Tsongkhapa would say and which is also the final intention of Buddha and that is, “Every existence exists merely labelled by mind.” So, things have to exist in dependence upon the labelling of the mind. Everything exists dependent on the label by mind. So, that means everything exists in the name only. Nothing exists by its own nature. Nothing exists from its own side because everything has to exist in dependence upon the imputation of the mind. This is the subtlest meaning of what interdependent arising is and you have to contemplate and meditate more on this in order to really apprehend exactly how it works. We have to understand well about our mind and the trick of our mind.

Like within one minute, we can have a minimum of 65 different kinds of experiences or understanding on the same object. In the example of a candle light, in the beginning you may like it but in the next moment you may dislike it and in the third moment you may like it a little bit and in the fourth moment you may like it so much even though it is the same object. So, that already proves that this candle light does not exist from its own side but it exists from the labelling of your mind in dependence upon your perception. More than that, if the mind did not create [the thought] about making a candle how can there be a candle? Everything started from the mind, isn't it? We can apply this to our own human body, relationships, job and every experience we have.

What you want to experience is not designed by the object but it should be designed by our own thinking of how you want to experience it.

Like in the Dharma, you would design the mind such that when someone scolds you, you will be so thankful to that person and even regard that person as your Guru and prostrate, “You have [speeded

up] my journey to Enlightenment.” But then, in our ordinary life we will think that that person has ruined our life and our peace and we may even choose to give up on that person. Even when we are going through very intense suffering, as a practitioner, we would regard that as the most fortunate thing that has ever happened in our life. If this [intense suffering] is the result of definite karmic result, now I have a chance to purify and I don’t have to suffer multiplication of the karma nor suffer eons of lifetimes in hell. Now at least, I can still seek a doctor and get medicine and I can still manage it. The worst thing that could happen is I may die—but I don’t have to go to hell when I am alive, at least some pain. So thankful. More than that, I want to do *tonglen* practice and take all other beings’ sufferings onto myself. If there is even a little moment of relief from the pain, dedicate that for the benefit of numberless sentient beings’ happiness and Enlightenment. Knowing the impact or the power of that, the [*tonglen* practice] will swift [speed] up our journey to Enlightenment. Even though there is still physical pain and the inconveniences, but there is fulfilment in your heart [to the extent that] the intensity of your concentration brings numbness to the physical pain. So, everything is a play of the mind but we need to train. If we don’t train hard, we will continue to suffer because the negative side is always omnipresent to train ourselves in a negative way, without us putting in any effort. So, we need to have full mindfulness to discipline ourselves to train in spiritual Dharma, mind transformation *Lojong* way as much as possible.

Question: Please explain more about the Hayagriva practice, especially during this COVID-19 situation.

Geshe-la: Hayagriva is the wrathful aspect of Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig. Hayagriva is not just a *Dharma protector* but is also a *yidam*, a Highest Yoga Tantric enlightened meditational *deity*. Hayagriva [appears] in a wrathful aspect and the mantra and its practices have many wrathful aspects, but we may not know that Hayagriva is the Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig of the most peaceful aspect. Certain karma or certain negative forces are so intense that it requires Buddha’s manifestation in the wrathful antidote. There are many different activities of the Buddha, one of which is the wrathful activity. There are many different practices in relation to Hayagriva *deity yoga* practice to overcome intense, very hard habitual karmic debts and negative forces.

Just simply reciting the mantra alone is regarded as so powerful and unquestionably it can also overcome evil forces such as negative black magic, spirit harm and even those very harsh ones, or even by carrying Hayagriva mandala protection with you is also regarded as very, very powerful.

Even though the main lineage of the practice comes from the Nyingma tradition, Hayagriva is also commonly used in the Gelug tradition such as in Sera Jey Monastery where I have studied. Our main meditational *yidam* or *protector* is Hayagriva to bring conducive conditions for the [undertaking of] a very tough journey in spiritual practice (like Geshe studies that requires very steady dedication for more than 20 years, which is not easy). By relying refuge in Hayagriva helps to keep you focused and clear all the disturbances and distractions.

Question: After receiving the great initiation of Chenrezig, you mentioned that generally there will be commitment of 600,000 OM MANI PADME HUM mantra recitations, is that right? Does this commitment include recitation of the long mantra dharani? Also, during this OM MANI PADME HUM retreat, Geshe-la has mentioned that even though we are busy, we must remember to do as many recitations as we can even while doing our daily chores. But I am distracted and do not remember to do throughout the day,

and only remember when I am sitting down. How can I increase the number of recitation of mantras the whole day as you suggested?

Geshe-la: The commitment is generally 600,000 mantras and only requires recitation of *OM MANI PADME HUM* mantra. Recitation of long mantra *dharani* is not required.

To overcome lack of mindfulness and lack of discipline in relation to the practice of Chenrezig, you can pray to Hayagriva or Six-Armed Mahakala. Specifically, Six-Armed Mahakala is like the attendant to Chenrezig and the *Dharma protector* for Chenrezig's practice to assist practitioners of Chenrezig. There is a short prayer to Mahakala that you can recite and you don't need an initiation to do that. Pray to Mahakala to overcome the lack of mindfulness in relation to practice of Chenrezig. So, Mahakala will help and this is how *Dharma protectors* are so necessary especially for beginner practitioners. They are like the close companion in relation to that particular practice to make sure there is no transgression of the practices and make sure that one stay focused in the commitments. So, utilise the protector practice as this could be beneficial.

All the different deities have their own karmic affinity protectors. And they naturally will also become your karmic affinity protectors because you have a karmic affinity with the practice of that particular *deity*. In order to clear the obstacles on the path and to gather resources on the path, do the protector's practice of that *deity*. You can find the major protector prayers in the FPMT prayer books. And there are also other practices like black tea offerings, protector pujas and extensive protector sadhana puja practices, but you can start by reciting the prayers.

Question: *Geshe-la, are you advising that we should do the short Mahakala practice during Mani retreat?*

Geshe-la: If possible, [especially] for those people who feel having similar kind of obstacles, unable to focus or sometimes there is no motivation or no inspiration even though you know it's beneficial. Practice is something like what my late Guru used to say that you need to have the spirit like you are on a holiday...how excited and how joyful you would be, how wonderful you will feel whenever you are on a real holiday. So whenever you do any kind of retreat, you need to have that kind of uplifting inspiration and the effort is like joyous effort and you will feel like you don't want to stop [the retreat]. But because you are looking [forward] to the next session, therefore, you want to stop the session in a good time. You feel so happy and so thankful that you can start a new session.

So, when you are in low spirits like losing aspirations, then protector practices can be very helpful and beneficial.

Also, you pause for a moment, then meditate to generate compassion by thinking of how fortunate you are compared to so many other suffering sentient beings that are unable to utilise their full potential. But each and every one of them is no different from your dearest mother of this life. So, when you are in this position and if you don't do the virtue to help them, who is going to help them? Just thinking of our parents and children, siblings or partner in this life who are still 'happy' in samsara and yet, when you who understand the value of Dharma and if you don't practise Dharma, who else can help them? Then, think, "I must practise and how wonderful that I can practise." This kind of meditation also can be helpful.

Questions: *How to visualise the mantra garland of OM MANI PADME HUM during the retreat? Is the mantra garland moving? Can we visualise the mantra OM MANI PADME HUM in Chinese?*

Geshe-la: You can visualise the mantra garland in two ways: -

1. On the front-generation *deity*. If you have not received the initiation, you visualise Chenrezig in front facing towards you. In the centre of Chenrezig's heart, there is a syllable *Hrih*, surrounded by *OM MANI PADME HUM*. When you recite, you are very much like reading the letters *OM MANI PADME HUM*, in clockwise circumambulating direction.
2. On self-generation. If you have received the initiation, then you generate yourself as Chenrezig. Then in the centre of your heart, there is a syllable *Hrih* surrounded by *OM MANI PADME HUM*, in clockwise circumambulating direction. Again, your mind is [visually] reading the letters *OM MANI PADME HUM*; not necessary to say it in pronunciation.

The mantra garland is still (it is not moving). The mantra garland is still and your mind is reading.

You can visualise [the mantra] in any form, but best if you can visualise as energy like the light energy. If you can visualise the colours of the light energy of *OM MANI PADME HUM*, that would be most beneficial. Even if you don't know the characters [letters], as long as you know that it is *OM* appearing in that particular colour—the colour has its representation—and also easier for visualisation. In actual reality, it is the energy—the letters are just bringing up for us to learn only—in fact, it is the energy. On that visualisation in the nature of light appearing in different colours, you don't have to worry about whatever letter appears, as long as you know what it is.

Question: *Does it matter if we visualise Thousand-Armed Chenrezig or Four-Armed Chenrezig?*

Geshe-la: It doesn't matter. You can visualise image of Kuan Yin, Eleven-Faced Thousand-Armed Chenrezig or Four-Armed Chenrezig. You can also visualise in the image of your Guru—the Chenrezig. If you are doing self-generation, then in the image of you—the Chenrezig (that your awareness and recognition is Chenrezig). After generating yourself as Chenrezig—unless you have obtained irreversible conviction that you are definitely Chenrezig—with high quality concentration, then you may be able to visualise (image of) yourself with image of Chenrezig.

Question: *Is there a final dissolution of the moon disc and the white vajra? Do you dissolve that at the end?*

Geshe-la: No. There is nothing to dissolve because that is already dissolved and already actualise oneness with your mind. For the purpose of meditation, you illustrate (like labelling or drawing) how it looks like in the form of image—**Conventional Bodhicitta** is represented by the moon disc and **Ultimate Bodhicitta** is represented by the five-spoked white vajra. In actual fact, it is your own mind or the Compassionate Buddha's mind.

The dissolution comes in if you do visualisation of Chenrezig on top of your crown or in the front, then you can also visualise in the similar way and that, you can do the practice of dissolution. But right now, it is the conclusion part and it is within your heart already; so no need to do dissolution. You very much end the session effortlessly and you don't need to define anything. You just stop. You meditate for as [long] as you can, for one minute, etc. When you need to end, it's like yourself just moving on to the next

move. So, when you want to do the second session, you resume like, “Okay. I am here again.” You bring [forth] the very obvious awareness, “I am here” and again focus on that, and after that, you move on.

This meditation practice is very powerful. It is like a concentrated accumulation of direct cause for your Rupakaya and for your Dharmakaya. So, it’s like creating a very focused concentration, and not messy. If you have the support of enough merits, in the next moment you may be able to actualise the actual resultant Buddhahood within Dharmakaya and Rupakaya by the direct cause of this meditation.

When we are passing away or while dying, if we can just focus on this and have a certain capability of awareness, you can just pinpoint or have a glimpse understanding on the first one, then second one, then finally you just be in absolute oneness—the **union of method and wisdom**—the **Conventional Bodhicitta** and **Ultimate Bodhicitta**. Just remain in that. Like just go into sleep in that and dissolve into the death process in that. So, it is so simple; you practise now. Then next time, of course, one day, we have to go. At that time, you don’t need to think of what to practise or what kind of ritual items to arrange. Nothing! In the practice of compassion, just do this meditation and try to travel with this. Unbelievable! Unbelievable! I think, almost without any doubt if you are able to do this, you will be born in Chenrezig Pureland.

At the time of dying, our memory will be so weak; so it is very hard for us to meditate on the detailed understanding of emptiness. Also, it is quite hard to have the force of generating the detailed definition of Bodhicitta. So now, when we know that we are going through the [dying] process, then initially we just express once “May I actualise the state of full Enlightenment for the benefit of numberless sentient beings.” Then that thought, that thinking or that attitude literally turn into the image of a full white moon right at your heart; and that is your mind and that is your heart. This is far more easier than the cultivation of Bodhicitta thinking.

After that, remain in that a little bit, and before you completely knock off, express (if possible, with understanding) or at least say “Myself and the rest of the phenomena lies in the nature of emptiness.” Now this very weak mind may not have the capability to interpret what it really means, but then you want to see something solid “I want to know what it is.” Then you just start to see that idea (that wisdom) appears in a white glowing five-spoked vajra, or just the white vajra (if you can’t remember the five spokes)—and that is the wisdom. Then without delay, you just feel the union of that—which is the sense of empty, the sense of void—because you are literally losing all the conceptual ideas and losing your awareness as you are dying. So, you take that into the wisdom which appears as a vajra. At the same time, because of losing all those grasping, you naturally feel like you are releasing from some kind of chain. You feel kind of liberating and releasing. You feel good, even though you are dying because you are meditating and not focussing on “I am dying.” You naturally feel bliss and at the same time void; because that is really experiencing. If you are able to do that well—before you stop your breathing and lose your awareness—then that is the actual natural experience of clear light. The natural experience of clear light is the expression of voidness and feeling of bliss. During the dissolution of the fourth element—the wind element, by then we would already lose all our sensual awareness. Then when we go through the three empty—white appearance, red appearance and black-near appearance—by then, there is no sensual awareness at all. After this three empty is over, then the clear light appears. What we need is something to join the clear light natural experience of emptiness and bliss, with your gross mind’s awareness of **Conventional Bodhicitta** and **Ultimate Bodhicitta**. That is why this meditation is so effective and so beneficial.

This can be practised by anybody; whether you have initiation or not. So wonderful!

(Collection of Questions And Answers Sessions transcribed based on the online teachings hosted by Chag Tong Chen Tong FPMT Tasmania, Australia on 26 May 2021 and Taitung Foundation on 2 June 2021. Please refer to recording of teachings in these links as the true and exact meaning)

<https://youtu.be/8mabwZZdUXA>

<http://www.tenzinzopa.com/externallinks/taitungvid/Maninmeditation.mp4>



2. SUMMARY NOTES

2.1 Setting the Altruistic Motivation



- ❖ Your compassion carries a deeper wisdom and deeper responsibility, which is expressed by altruism, a fully matured Great Compassion.
- ❖ Understanding pervasive suffering (contamination of karma and delusion) of samsaric existence in entire six realms sentient beings is the most important part.
- ❖ The crisis in the world is the suffering of pain which is very gross suffering. Witness the suffering of change using our ordinary mind, but to understand the pervasive suffering due to contamination of karma and delusions is hard.
- ❖ It requires a deeper level of wisdom, in particular the wisdom that is supported by Great Compassion; to be able to see the pervasive suffering within each and every sentient being—the most courageous wisdom that leads you to the state of Enlightenment, be most beneficial for numberless sentient beings' Enlightenment.
- ❖ The Guru Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig has manifested in many different *panditas*, *mahasiddhas* and in many aspects of Buddhas bringing about teachings and treatises on compassion, and compassion practices like *Nyung Nä* and Mani retreat practices.
- ❖ Having karmic connection with Chenrezig, just like us having karmic connection with our family; our practice becomes a great service to the rest of family members' Enlightenment.
- ❖ Indirectly, through this practice, we can then share merits with the rest of numberless sentient beings and dedicate merits as conditional causes for them to have the light on the path.

SIGNIFICANCE OF HOLY MONTH OF SAKA DAWA

Saka Dawa (or Vesak) is one of the most special months compared to any other Buddha's holy days. Common assertions about the three Buddha's holy days on 15th day of *Saka Dawa*:

1. Day of Enlightenment
 2. Day of *Parinirvana*
 3. Day of Birth into this Southern world
- ❖ In addition, based on the Vinaya sutra and another sutra (in Tibetan), there are two other Buddha's holy days (holy deeds) on the 15th day of *Saka Dawa*:

4. Day of conception in mother Maya's womb
 5. Day of eradicating the four *Maras* of delusions, contaminated aggregates, death and distractions. In order to become enlightened, one needs to eradicate these four *Maras*.
- ❖ On the 15th day of *Saka Dawa*, Buddha performed five major holy deeds for the benefit of sentient beings.
 - ❖ During this period of degenerated time, Siddhartha Shakyamuni Buddha with skilful means committed to liberate the most distracted people like us (with the worst delusion and most concrete desire grasping) in the Southern universe.
 - ❖ During Buddha's time in the Southern universe, he performed infinite deeds; 12 different major deeds suited perfectly for beings in the Southern world.
 - ❖ Each of the Buddha's deed is carefully chosen, and each of those days, months and times are chosen and blessed by the Omniscient One—performed virtues, auspicious and meritorious all the time, as Buddha intended and made prayers.

MULTIPLYING MERITS

- ❖ The power of Buddha's blessing for each virtuous deed is multiplied 100 million times compared to other times.
- ❖ There are 5 major holy deeds of Buddha on the 15th day of *Saka Dawa*. For each holy deed, merits multiply 100 million times. So, 5 major holy deeds multiplied by 5 times; therefore, each virtue performed will be multiplied by 500 million times.
- ❖ In Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche's explanation asserted 3 major holy deeds during *Saka Dawa* equal to 300 million merits multiplied, plus 2 holy deeds of conception and eradicating demons; 5 major deeds with 500 million times in multiplication of merits.
- ❖ Every single time you do recitation, you rejoice with double amount of merits. Benefit of rejoicing: When you rejoice, your own merits multiply double. So, when you rejoice on 500 million merits, double up to 1,000 million times during *Saka Dawa*.

PURIFICATION

- ❖ Make time to purify past karma, especially during *Saka Dawa*, as within short period of time, you will benefit from accumulating huge amount of merits and infinite purification of karma. This holy day is the best time to recite *OM MANI PADME HUM*. Even if you recite one *mala*, and then pause for a few seconds to rejoice, there would be a huge accumulation of merits which play as antidote to purify the karma.
- ❖ Two benefits with one [action] - purification of karma and accumulation of merits.
- ❖ With the wish to achieve Enlightenment (and not wishing to experience samsara), then you should dedicate your entire life to Dharma practice, or at [the very] least during this special blessed holy month to actualise the practices.

CHENREZIG'S OM MANI PADME HUM PRACTICE

- ❖ Chenrezig's *OM MANI PADME HUM* practice is universal in all Dharma practices and has elements of both sutra and tantra, which are the basis of all practices.
- ❖ Compassion has the element in common path of sutra, and the energy of the mantra *OM MANI PADME HUM* is a tantric practice.
- ❖ In tantra, Chenrezig have all the elements of 4 tantric schools and have all the stages of tantric practices. For example, common Chenrezig Action Tantra, Chenrezig Gyalwa Gyatso (Highest Yoga Tantra) and different Chenrezig manifestation like Hayagriva (embodiment of Chenrezig Highest Yoga Tantric Deity)
- ❖ For the common path; it is the altruistic common path which makes Compassionate Buddha practice one of the greatest:
 - From the object side, it reaches every sentient being.
 - From subject side, when you express Great Compassion, every single fundamental capability is expressed altruistically (much more than just expressing common renunciation, wisdom of selflessness, wisdom of emptiness, wisdom of impermanence), you express the entirety of your absolute potential of Buddha Nature; it is the greatest altruistic attitude.
- ❖ The *OM MANI PADME HUM* mantra is so powerful as it is the blessed energy of Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig. Even without understanding the meaning, you purify your three doors, and establish the seeds **unified of both Wisdom and Method**; actualise the imprints in a unified way.

MEANING OF OM MANI PADME HUM MANTRA


- ❖ *OM* has 2 symbolisms: in relation to basis of practitioner. It symbolises our ordinary body, speech and mind. By reciting *OM* act as an antidote to purify negativities accumulated through our body, speech and mind. It creates causes and conditions to actualise the resultant purified Buddha's body, speech and mind (which is also represented by syllable *OM*). The syllable *OM* ཨུམ་ is comprised of 3 letters **AH, U, MA** representing body, speech and mind. Causal body, speech and mind **AH, U, MA** (*OM*) as the basis causal stage of a practitioner which is our own body, speech and mind. By practising mantra *OM* through purification of impure contaminated aggregates of our body, speech and mind will bring about the purified Buddha's holy body, speech and mind.
- ❖ *MANI* refers to Great Compassion or Bodhicitta; the altruistic jewel, greatest wish-fulfilling jewel and our altruistic heart. *MANI* is the direct antidote to the self-cherishing attitude. By reciting *MANI* it purifies the self-cherishing attitude, which is one of the most powerful root causes of all our problems.
- ❖ *PADME* literally meaning lotus; lotus born from mud but unstained by mud, and it is one of the purest flowers. The meaning of it is emptiness.
 - Whatever existence (including the samsaric aggregates, enlightened aggregates, samsara, liberation, suffering, happiness, pure and impure), everything in our perception is like the filthy mud. Actual reality of existence is like the lotus (even though it is born from our impure hallucinated view)—the actual nature of existence lies in the lack of inherent existence, in the nature of emptiness. Everything arises from the imputation (projection) of our mind, everything arises from our mind and karma. Absolute nature of existence lies in the most pure existence like the lotus; no stain in its nature, no stain of true existence, no stain of inherent

existence, no stain of independent existence, no stain of hallucinational innate existence even in samsaric things like our own identity and aggregates, and whatever we actualise through our mind or through our karma.

- When we recite *PADME* (since this mantra is the blessed energy of the Compassionate Buddha) the actual blessings that we receive is the purification of one of the worst root cause of our entire problem i.e. self-grasping ignorance.
 - *MANI* is the direct antidote to the self-cherishing attitude. *PADME* is the direct antidote to the self-grasping ignorance.
 - The entire Buddhadharmas is for the purpose to eradicate the self-cherishing and self-grasping attitude, and to develop Bodhicitta and Emptiness.
- ❖ *HUM* - **unification of Method and Wisdom**; practise in **union of Method and Wisdom** just like a bird needs two wings to fly. Practising the common path of Bodhicitta and Emptiness is insufficient to actualise full Enlightenment to become Buddha. You also need to practise the tantric path; unification of Highest Yoga Tantric generation practice and completion practice as the swiftest path to Enlightenment.

BENEFITTING SENTIENT BEINGS OF SIX REALMS

- ❖ Recitations of six-syllable *OM MANI PADME HUM* mantra benefit greatly to your full Enlightenment, and also most powerful dedicated to benefit entire six realm beings.
- ❖ *OM* - antidote to purify sufferings of God realm, directly act as antidote to purify ego-centred mind, purify causes to be born in God realm (for those who haven't been born there yet) and for those already in God realm to purify that samsaric God realm existence and liberate them into the state of Chenrezig.
- ❖ *MA* - antidote to purify the delusion of jealousy which is the main cause to actualise rebirth in Demi-God realm. Reciting *MA* benefits those not born there yet, to purify karmic causes of jealousy. For those beings who are already born as Demi-Gods and experiencing the suffering as Demi-Gods (expressing so much jealousy and always fighting between Gods and Demi-Gods), you bring the benefit to purify that.
- ❖ *NI* – direct antidote to purify attachment; attachment is the main cause to be reborn as a human being. Help to protect those who are not yet born in Human realm to purify the main cause of attachment, and liberate them into the state of Chenrezighood. For those already born in the Human realm, by reciting syllable *NI* acts as antidote to purify sufferings of birth (by force of karma and delusion), sickness, ageing and death.
- ❖ *PAD* - helps to purify causes to be born in Animal realm, due to karma of ignorance or any action that causes suffering by abusive attitude. By reciting *PAD* helps to purify and protect those beings committing such karma of abusive attitude, liberate animals from suffering of mute, death, being in the food chain and suffering of eating each other (bigger to smaller animals).
- ❖ *ME* – purifies the delusion of miserliness (stinginess) that causes the karma to be born in *Preta* realm. Liberate hungry ghost beings from suffering of hunger and thirst, and liberate them into state of Chenrezighood.

- ❖ *HUM* – purifies the karma committed through the delusion of aversion (anger) and protect from being born in Hell realm. By reciting *HUM* acts as the direct antidote to liberate hell beings and abide them in the state of full Enlightenment.
 - ❖ Buddhas’ blessings and compassion have no discrimination and pervade in every single sentient being, but it depends on karma of sentient beings—need interdependent conducive conditions to receive the benefits; so it is a mutual effort.
 - ❖ Buddhas have all the capabilities to offer the benefits with skilful means, according to different mental disposition of each being, but sentient beings have to create the causes (though that does not bring limitation in Buddha’s power). Each and everyone must have specific karmic connection.
 - ❖ Though one Buddha could manifest into many different *deities* forms like 35 Confession Buddhas, 21 Taras and Thousand Fortunate Buddhas; all are actualised dependent on aspirations established with sentient beings when they were trainees.
 - ❖ Even though we dedicate our merits to all sentient beings, there is also conventional responsibilities to family members and those who come our way and ask for our help—from there, we establish concentrated aspirational connections with them. By the time we become Buddha—when we come to benefit whatever close aspirations before, they are the quickest to benefit.
-  By reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM*, we benefit the entire six realms of numberless sentient beings accordingly.
- ❖ Providing conditional virtuous help including to those trapped in lowest Vajra Hell till the time they get liberated from there.
 - ❖ There is a time that entire samsara will be empty; there will be no more suffering sentient beings. There is a time that the entire Buddha Nature within every sentient being will be fully awakened.
 - ❖ Not every being as fortunate as us in Human realm especially animals, *pretas* and hell beings. Our dedication to them will provide the conditional substance or conditional cause for them to be liberated from lower realms.
 - ❖ Every sentient being (including those beings in lowest Vajra Hell) have Buddha potential. Hell beings have no capability to get out of there as they are completely enveloped with delusions and sufferings (not even a single moment to arise or remember virtuous thoughts that can act as a condition to trigger their Buddha Nature to be able to take a new rebirth).
 - ❖ We as fortunate ones should play the role to liberate them through our dedication of merits to them to trigger their higher rebirths. For example, in one of the reincarnations of Shakyamuni Buddha before he actualised in Tushita God realm, he was one of the carriage carriers in the Hell realm. Through the prayers of other Buddhas who have the karmic affinity with that reincarnation of Shakyamuni Buddha in the Hell realm, triggered him to generate immeasurable compassion to his carriage carrier companion (who was in far greater suffering being beaten up by the Hell guard). He said “Please don’t beat him. I will carry his burden and liberate him.” Then, the Hell guard was so angry and beat him with an iron hammer until he (the reincarnation of Shakyamuni Buddha) passed away, and reborn in Tushita God realm. From then onwards, virtuous rebirths after virtuous rebirths.
 - ❖ Similarly, we can play that role, especially to those who have karmic affinities with us like our parents in this life. To repay the kindness of our mother, it is recommended to commit 1 million

OM MANI PADME HUM recitations--in the name of our mother, it can be conducted like an open retreat (without any time frame).

- ❖ Reciting Chenrezig's mantra *OM MANI PADME HUM* is so exceptional (in comparison to other *deities'* mantras, where there could be danger of mixing up with our self-cherishing or delusions). When you express anything in any way—whether with good or bad intention--through your body, speech and mind in relation to compassion, it is powerful pure virtue because of Chenrezig's pure Great Compassion.
- ❖ You can recite *OM MANI PADME HUM* while doing any sort of activities such as gardening, exercising, watching TV, while cooking (bless the food), and you can blow to bless water to benefit fish, etc. – anywhere, at any time with no restrictions at all. Eventually, you can train yourself to be multitasking.
- ❖ If it is not convenient to hold a *mala* in your hands, you can count the number of mantras recited by the amount of time you spend on reciting--by checking the number you can recite in one minute, then you are able to calculate how many recitations you can do in one hour, etc. It is not difficult to recite 1 million times, plus extra 100,000 mantras [in case of shortfall].
- ❖ Dedicate to mother of this life and the rest of mother sentient beings. Our Precious Human Rebirth becomes so meaningful! We should not miss out on doing Chenrezig *OM MANI PADME HUM* practice.


COMMITMENT FOR SAKA DAWA MANI RETREAT

- ❖ During *Saka Dawa*, for at least 15 days (or throughout the full month of 30 days), you can [choose to] commit recitations of 1 million mantras as a retreat, or you can commit recitations of 10 *malas* or 1,000 times of *OM MANI PADME HUM* daily, or even few rounds of recitations are also fine.
- ❖ If conducting recitations in the form of a retreat: There is element of commitment; one must do a minimum number of recitations every day, (without interruption, even for one day). For example, one can commit reciting 3 times of *OM MANI PADME HUM* daily (regardless how busy or how difficult your situation maybe), and when you are free you can recite more. Continuing in this way, even if it takes 50 years to complete 1 million mantras, you are still qualified as having completed the retreat.
- ❖ The term “retreat” has its special significance:
 1. Element of commitment
 2. Element of specific motivation i.e. altruistic motivation: “For the benefit of numberless sentient beings from temporary happiness up to the ultimate happiness of Enlightenment, I am going to engage in the Mani retreat. May every single existence of mine and every single action of my body, speech and mind be the cause for that.”
 3. Element of specific dedication. You can insert all your specific dedications that you wish to dedicate (or as motivated), and at the end you can dedicate similar way.

(Summary Notes based on the online teaching hosted by Chag Tong Chen Tong FPMT Tasmania, Australia on 12 May 2021. Please refer to recording of the teaching at <https://youtu.be/2tFxtYlthyQ> as the true and exact meaning)

2.2 Inspiration



 *Saka Dawa Duchen* is one of the most auspicious meritorious days in the entire existence of our time throughout the year. Feel delighted, rejoice and happy from the depths of our heart that we are still having this Precious Human Rebirth.

- ❖ We are still able to enjoy abundance of numberless vast profound extensive merits which are the abundance of causes for our future virtues and future happiness; not just for ourselves. So beneficial being able to accumulate so much virtuous meritorious causes for karmic affinity loved ones (starting from our parents and family) to the rest of sentient beings.
- ❖ Being in samsara, such opportunity is rare to come by. The amount of merits and virtuous deeds that we are able to accumulate will be so beneficial to the rest of sentient beings, and if not more, then is equal to all Buddhas, Bodhisattvas of past, present, future. How fortunate we are to have Precious Human Rebirth.

 In the world now, there are so much adversities and sufferings. That's the reality of samsara.

- ❖ We are in the midst of samsara carrying these samsaric aggregates with opportunities to benefit sentient beings. How precious each and every one of our life is.
- ❖ So, we have to be stronger and more uplifted to take advantage of this Precious Human Rebirth.
- ❖ We can't be feeling down together with others who are helpless (no freedom, tormented by suffering of pain, couldn't get away from intense domination of suffering and won't be able to think about virtues nor practise Dharma).
- ❖ Millions of people indulge in worldly sensual distractions, thus unable to utilise their full potential of altruistic basis with conducive conditions of this Precious Human Rebirth.
- ❖ Feel so happy, motivated and fortunate (compared to intense suffering aspect of others), with wholehearted sincerity to be more helpful. Count yourself to be in the category of (past, present) future Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.
- ❖ In the practice of altruism, whichever side we relate to, it has to become the cause for us to be stronger than ever before.
- ❖ Through cultivation of altruism and dedication of your merits in the deeds of altruism, dedicate one's own entirety of time in the deeds of altruism.
- ❖ Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig (His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama) said "The cause of all the suffering is due to past karma. The most effective antidote to purify past karma is altruism; help to condition other suffering sentient beings to purify their karma. To help ourselves to be free from negativities is to cultivate altruism."
- ❖ Anyone who dedicate during auspicious *Saka Dawa* month to stay focused in the practice of altruism to accumulate virtues of our body, speech and mind of altruism (such as accumulation of Compassionate Buddha name mantra, accumulation of *OM MANI PADME HUM* and physically

engaging in any form of practices like mandala offering, prostrations, doing Chenrezig sadhana and meditations in relation to Chenrezig), have made their lives so meaningful and beneficial.

- ❖ Utilise our physical energy in altruistic deeds, much like every day is as precious as *Saka Dawa*. Accumulating altruistic virtues surpass any other virtues. Altruistic merit is numberless (infinite), even after *Saka Dawa*—when we offer and dedicate numberless causes and conditions from temporary happiness up to ultimate happiness of Enlightenment for numberless sentient beings.
- ❖ Compassion becomes power (not weakness).
- ❖ Keeping that in our heart, having compassion altruism in our day-to-day life (either relating to Buddhas-Bodhisattvas or relating to immense suffering beings), we train ourselves to become more motivated, stronger than before.

 LIGHT OFFERING PRAYER COMPOSED BY LAMA ATISHA

May this vessel become as vast as the entire billionfold universe.

- ❖ Visualise your candlelight or vessel contains butter or oil, or any electricity light in the house, regard as vast as billionfold universe.

May its wick grow as large as Mt Meru, the king of mountains.

- ❖ Visualise wick or filament that sparks electricity light, regard as huge as Mount Meru.

May the oil within become as vast as the great ocean at the edge of the world.

- ❖ Visualise the candle wax, butter, oil or electricity, regard as vast as ocean filling the entire place.

And may a billion such lamps appear before each and every Buddha.

- ❖ Visualise your light as infinite in numbers.
- ❖ Visualise infinite merit field of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Gurus.
- ❖ Visualise each Buddha's merit field has numberless lights.

Their light banishing the darkness of ignorance everywhere,

- ❖ Lights conventionally brighten entire universe or entire existence.
- ❖ Effects from this merit (from practice of light offering to Buddha's merit field) become the antidote to purify darkness of Ignorance in every single numberless sentient being.
- ❖ To make this practice sensible, you look into your own mind and try to design your attitude be free from confusion towards reality of emptiness, karma, Dharma practices, due to effect and impact of ignorance.
- ❖ To make sense of "Their light banishing the darkness of ignorance," start from your heart, have irreversible faith on what Lama Atisha said and have 100% complete trust (conviction) on Buddha's teaching on Emptiness—ultimate reality of yourself, your aggregates and the rest of phenomena do not exist from its own side. Everything exists merely in the name labelled by mind. Whatever way we perceive does not exist in actual reality in that way. Every phenomena is lack of inherent

existence, lack of true existence, lack of intrinsic existence, lack of independent existence. Every single existence exists in the nature of dependent arising.

- ❖ See the absolute Dharmakaya of the Buddha (in that picture, statue, image of Buddha in our mind; not as a material object).
- ❖ Have absolute definite conviction that 'Buddha' means omniscience (omnipresence in entire existence, that Buddha is in everywhere, Buddha is in every pore of your existence, in every single space, in every single thought of yours; as if cannot differentiate what is your thought and what is Buddha's thought - in total oneness with the Buddha).
- ❖ Completely turn our awareness into pure view (pure view which is not a mistaken perception)– pure valid view of understanding the absolute truth of every existence. It is a powerful meditation to do daily to purify the root cause i.e. ignorance.

From the very peak of existence down to the lowest hell,

may they reveal all realms of the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas throughout the ten directions.

- ❖ Including yourself and the place you are in, everything becomes celestial–possible to become celestial beings (the Buddhas Bodhisattvas) within the celestial mansion.
- ❖ This is the way how we purify our contaminated aggregates–eventually we become just like the Buddha, the resultant one.
- ❖ Progress in profound stages of the path in this light offering practice.
- ❖ During light offering practice–based on the valid reasoning (especially in Wisdom of Emptiness), you really view everyone as Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and view everything as celestial mansion.

OM VAJRA ALOKE AH HUM

- ❖ Blessing the light offering.
- ❖ OM - the 3 basis that make up basis of a person i.e. yourself that is going to be purified in order to actualise the resultant OM ॐ (3-syllable letters **AH, U, MA**) representing Buddha's holy body, speech and mind.
- ❖ VAJRA – refer to Emptiness or Dharmakaya.
- ❖ ALOKE – light; VAJRA ALOKE is wisdom light, light of Dharmakaya, or light of Emptiness Wisdom which is the antidote.
- ❖ AH HUM - bring about absolute benefit actualising absolute purification and achieving resultant awakening state of the Buddha.

E MA HO This wondrous and amazing light, burning brightly,

I offer to the thousand Buddhas of this fortunate age, Gurus, *vidam deities, dakinis* and *dharmapālas*, and the *deities* of all the maṇḍalas, all the infinite realms of the ten directions.

- ❖ You visualise entire existence is completely filled by merit field. If you have specific karmic affinity with your Gurus, meditational *deities, dakas, dakinis* and *dharmapalas*, you visualise them among the merit field; but spotlighted like they are dedicated to you in the front row, face-to face with you.

May all beings, with my own parents foremost among them,

- ❖ Visualise starting from parents of this life and rest of sentient beings who need to accumulate merits and purify past karma in order to actualise resultant Buddha's realm.
- ❖ Visualise you are the chant leader, the leader of this practice holding light offering with your parents and the rest of the sentient beings having capability of understanding and following you in the practice—for the purpose of this practice, visualise all non-human sentient beings actualise Precious Human Rebirth like you, having full conviction and faith in the practice, refuge and merit field in this practice together led by you.

In this and in all lives to come, whatever our place of birth,

Always see directly the perfect Buddhas' realms,

- ❖ You dedicate to all sentient beings—here you can dedicate specifically to those who passed away (who are going through the death process, intermediate process and about to actualise the new rebirth/conception).
- ❖ You visualise this light offering practice becomes the cause and conditions to those in the journey to have meritorious karmic conditions—in their new rebirth to be born in the Buddhas' realm like Sukhavati (with opportunity to be guided directly by perfect Gurus and Buddhas, such as Chenrezig's Pureland and Amitabha's Pureland) and actualise full Enlightenment.
- ❖ So powerful and so beneficial—we can engage in this practice to help animals that died (from their side, they do not have capability to accumulate conducive conditions to protect themselves at death or during intermediate state).
- ❖ Visualise that no one will be reborn in the suffering realms. Once reborn in Buddhas' realm like Sukhavati, confirmed (within that Pureland) will actualise full Enlightenment.

And remain forever inseparable from Amitābha, 'Lord of Boundless Light'—

Grant your blessings so that, through the power of the truth

Of the Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha, and the *deities* of the Three Roots,

This prayer of aspiration may swiftly be fulfilled

- ❖ When dedicating your light offering to all numberless sentient beings (specifically to those going through 3 stages of life, death and rebirth; you should not doubt the prayer dedication), have full 100% confidence of being able to help them. This will make your prayers so powerful, effective to swiftly ripen onto sentient beings.
- ❖ Through the power of the Buddhas, *deities*, *dakas*, *dakinis* and Gurus, power of interdependence emptiness nature, power of your Aspirational Prayer and power of your sincere heart that you really want to help, your prayers will become so effective.

Tadyatha Pañcendriyāvabodhaniye Svāhā

- ❖ All prayers to be actualised in reality
- ❖ All these practices are so helpful—especially for sentient beings who still have opportunity not to experience their karmic consequences, due to their karma not fully completed—as a factor before the negative karmic condition is encountered. You save them and deliver that karmic condition to patch the virtuous karma of that sentient being.

Summary Notes: Inspiration

- ❖ So that, at the time of death, they do not have to complete with a negative karma conclusion. In the intermediate state, they still able to divert their journey from lower realm to higher realm. When they are about to be conceived in the mother's womb, their consciousness can be influenced.
- ❖ So much benefits we can offer, our practice becomes so beneficial.

THE LIGHT OFFERING PRACTICE

- ❖ Refuge and Bodhicitta prayers
- ❖ Purification practice to purify any ordinariness or negative substances
- ❖ Invocation of merit field
- ❖ Hold the light
- ❖ Chant in Tibetan or English, or read the text or meditate
- ❖ General blessing of the light
- ❖ Recite Samantabhadra offering prayer (in case, there is limitation in our visualisation and recitation, power of this prayer will help our practice becomes extensive)
- ❖ Light offering prayer
- ❖ Dedicate in Bodhicitta and Emptiness, unification of generation and completion stage of tantric path and general dedications of Bodhisattvas
- ❖ Recite Long Life prayers, dedicate to pacify all sufferings, dedicate to fulfil all entire mundane wishes and spiritual wishes of everyone
- ❖ Recite Lama Tsongkhapa's Migtsema prayer

(Summary Notes based on the online teaching hosted by Chag Tong Chen Tong FPMT Tasmania, Australia on 26 May 2021. Please refer to recording of the teaching at <https://youtu.be/8mabwZZdUXA> as the true and exact meaning)



2.3 Rejoicement and Dedications



IMMENSE REJOICE

- ❖ Set positive altruistic motivation on the basis of full conviction in enlightened capabilities of merit and refuge field objects – Guru Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.
- ❖ At the beginning of the retreat, on the basis of refuge, we have conducted the *Saka Dawa* Mani Retreat with proper altruistic motivation to be most beneficial for the numberless sentient beings' temporary happiness up to the ultimate happiness of Enlightenment.
- ❖ In the middle, we have gathered most precious Dharma of compassion with accumulation of the most powerful positive enlightened energy of *OM MANI PADME HUM*.
- ❖ The conclusion of the retreat with deeds of dedication of the vast merits. Today, the 30th day of *Saka Dawa* month coincides with the sun eclipse, whatever merits performed is multiplied 100 million times; this is the result of vast merits of the past committed by you.
- ❖ In the journey of life, we have the opportunity and time to accumulate one of most precious Dharma, the most fulfilling thing in our life bringing confidence for us to travel to next life (in case death comes the next moment), with joy, no regrets and confidence that we will be reborn in Amitabha Pureland, Chenrezig Pureland or reborn with Precious Human Rebirth meeting Mahayanist Guru, embodiment of Compassionate Buddha, so we can continue to develop our heart in altruism, and be most beneficial for entire numberless sentient beings.
- ❖ Wherever we may be reborn (Form Realm or Formless Realm) is equally meaningful; just like Bodhisattvas who pray to be reborn in lower realms–Hell, Hungry Ghost, Animals–to liberate beings, and to those with karmic affinity to make Bodhisattva deeds most effective.
- ❖ In the Dedication Prayers from the Dedication Chapter of Shantideva's *Bodhisattvacharyavatara (The Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life)*, Bodhisattvas make dedications to be born in lower realms to liberate sentient beings from suffering and abide them in the state of no more suffering.
- ❖ In order for us to be able to do that, we need to create the cause.
- ❖ Without the cause (even if we wish to), we cannot deliver that. What's the cause? From what we've done during *Saka Dawa* - accumulation of *OM MANI PADME HUM* mantras, meditating on compassion and developing our potential in altruism as much as possible.
- ❖ The cause created will deliver confidence in whichever rebirth in future lifetimes to become most beneficial.
- ❖ Each of the dedication prayers in the Eight Great Prayers clearly illustrates this.

REJOICEMENT

- ❖ Acknowledge the great merits achieved and rejoice, as by rejoicing in one's own merits, the merits accumulated is doubled.

- ❖ Shantideva in *The Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* states, "Rejoicing is a supreme virtue, rejoicing is the greatest virtue."
- ❖ Rejoicing is like a daily supplement to make you feel happy and peaceful, especially inner peace. Inner peace is the happiness that is generated through virtuous causes such as rejoicing.
- ❖ Through rejoicing from the depths of your heart, you feel good; inner peace is not like sensual happiness.
- ❖ Inner peace is very beneficial for our spiritual development, for sustaining our virtues, and acts as protection to our mind from delusion. Delusion is very harmful and disturbing. From delusion, our mind is disturbed with aversion, attachment, grasping, jealousy, ego pride and worst of all, wrong views of self, situation, entire existence, expressed in grasping. Negative emotion is toxic for our virtues, toxic to our sensual happiness, toxic to our conventional day-to-day samsaric happiness.
- ❖ When our mind is filled with rejoicing, there's no room for these toxic states.
- ❖ It's wonderful to have holy objects (such as seeing thangkas, statues, pictures of Gurus). First thing is to rejoice in merits and qualities of Gurus and Buddhas (even rejoice when seeing group picture of Dharma events such as Mani retreats).
- ❖ Rejoice when reflecting on virtuous deeds conducted, feel good and well done. If we rejoice daily, we have a happy day, happy life and accumulate double merits.
- ❖ Vast accumulation of merits such as accumulation of *OM MANI PADME HUM* (during *Saka Dawa* month, merits you achieve is multiplied 100 million times). Even with one single rejoice of your own virtue, your merits multiply in double. In particular, your rejoicing today multiplies by 100 million times.
- ❖ We rejoice among each other, rejoice with other Mani retreaters around the world and merits of Compassionate Buddha, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who achieved perfected enlightened qualities of compassion.
- ❖ If you rejoice in the merits of ordinary beings, you will create double of what they have achieved.
- ❖ If you rejoice in the merits of Bodhisattvas, you will achieve half or 50% of the Bodhisattva's merits.
- ❖ If you rejoice to the merits of the Buddha, you actualise one tenth of Buddha's merits.
- ❖ We want to be happy everyday but being in samsara, we at least do not want miserable suffering experiences.
- ❖ When hearing bad news - with heart of rejoicing and feeling meaningful in life, you're going to be beneficial to offer help to needy suffering people.
- ❖ Even bad news about yourself, immediately transform that suffering onto the path of Enlightenment.
- ❖ Rejoicing is a powerful tool to remind ourselves to always stay intact in Dharma, and helps us not to lose mindfulness in Dharma and to keep sustainable calmness in our continuum.

DEDICATION PRAYERS

- ❖ Firstly, take one moment to express rejoicing for all the merits accumulated from beginningless lifetimes, whatever merits you are going to accumulate in future, and the merits that you have accumulated in this *Saka Dawa* month in relation to Mani retreat. Rejoice to the merits from the rejoicing and to the merits of the three times. Feel that from the depths of your heart.

- ❖ Express how fortunate to have the opportunity to conduct so much of beneficial deeds like Mani Retreat.
- ❖ Feel blessed, definite with no doubt that my future lives will be auspicious with higher rebirths in uninterrupted journey towards Enlightenment.
- ❖ Feel so blessed that I am able to achieve accumulating of these causes before death comes in my way.
- ❖ Secondly, rejoice in whatever virtues accumulated by all ordinary sentient beings (similar to your status or any sentient beings) in particularly those who have performed virtues in relation to Chenrezig practices such as *Nyung Nä* retreats and Mani Retreats in the past, present and future in particular, in this month and this year. Feel happy for them, express wishes that may their virtues ever increase all the way to achieving state of full Enlightenment.
- ❖ Rejoice among each other within family, friends and Dharma brothers and sisters who have conducted virtues and charities such as Mani Retreat.
- ❖ Rejoice to the merits of Arhats, ordinary Bodhisattvas, Arya Bodhisattvas, Arya beings from Solitary Realisers and Hearers practitioners, Arya beings from the Bodhisattva path, and those beings from the past, present (and in the future) who are already on the path, we rejoice in their merits. Express “How wonderful that may I too—without delaying even a moment—be able to achieve similar kind of virtues and merits.”
- ❖ Rejoice to the merits of Gurus, Buddhas of past, present and future, living Gurus during this lifetime that we have established spiritual practices, lineage Gurus, enlightened beings such as *deities*, Buddhas such as Compassionate Buddha, Shakyamuni Buddha, Eight Medicine Buddhas, Twenty-one Taras, Thousand Fortunate Buddhas of this era to whom we have special karmic connection, we rejoice in their merits and aspire yourself—express yourself to be just like them without delaying a moment.
- ❖ Finally, rejoice to all the merits accumulated through rejoicement; feel so fortunate, so grateful and so happy.
- ❖ Aspire yourself that you are going to sustain this positive energy full of merits and the joyous effort in accumulating numberless vast perfected virtues in all existence in the future.



I. LAMRIM DEDICATION PRAYER

(Reflect on the meaning and at the same time, dedicate your merits accordingly):

Verse 1

***From my two types of merits, vast as space, that I have amassed
From working with effort at this practice for a great length of time,
May I become the chief leading Buddha for all those
Whose mind's wisdom eye is blinded by Ignorance.***

- ❖ “*From my two types of merits, vast as space*” that you have accumulated daily through this Mani retreat (like accumulation of *OM MANI PADME HUM*, meditations and the effort). You dedicate this way: “May these merits actualise me as the Omniscient Buddha leading the rest of numberless sentient beings who are blinded by wrong conception, the ignorance of self-grasping and liberate

them through the wisdom eye that is generated through accumulation of two vast merits of method and wisdom.”

Verse 2

***Even if I do not reach this state, may I be held
In your loving compassion for all lives, Manjushri,
May I find the best of complete graded paths of the teachings,
And may I please all the Buddhas by my practice.***

- ❖ In case, you are unable to become a Buddha (as dedicated in Verse 1) and continue to carry this samsaric rebirth, now dedicate merits (accumulated from Mani retreat) that oneself never to be separated from blessings of the Buddha in the expression of yourself always in cultivation of Great Compassion, bringing impact to actualise all the realisations on gradual path of Enlightenment such as realisations on Guru devotion, Precious Human Rebirth, death and impermanence, teachings and practices of three capable beings, and by surpassing five paths and ten grounds, actualise state of Enlightenment.
- ❖ Dedicate your life even though you may continue to reincarnate as a sentient being but you are ever pleasing all the ten directions Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

Verse 3

***Using skillful means drawn by the strong force of compassion
May I clear darkness from the minds of all beings
With the points of the path as I have discerned them:
May I uphold Buddha's teachings for a very long time.***

- ❖ Dedicate “May I be the upholder of the Buddhadharma ever engaging in extensive learning in Buddhadharma, ever progressing in actualisation of realisation on the stages of the path up to Enlightenment, ever working for the benefit of sentient beings through great force of compassion.”

Verse 4

***With my heart going out with Great Compassion
In whatever direction the most precious teachings
Have not yet spread, or once spread have declined,
May I reveal this treasure of happiness and aid.***

- ❖ Dedicate “Through the merits accumulated from Mani retreat, may myself be the upholder of Dharma, engage in the joyous effort in practice of generosity of Dharma (wherever I go, whichever direction I reside, whoever I encounter and whenever others think of me); my body, speech and mind become inspirational Dharma to everyone.”
- ❖ One self becomes like the treasure of happiness to everyone because you are blessed with compassion; bringing happiness, alleviating suffering of beings who comes in your way and abide them in happiness. May the merits become the cause for me to be able to do that.

Verse 5

***May the minds of those who wish for liberation be granted bounteous peace
And the Buddhas' deeds be nourished for a long time
By even this graded path to Enlightenment completed
Due to the wondrous virtuous conduct of the Buddhas and their sons.***

- ❖ Due to the blessings of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, you ever preserve Dharma in extensive learning, actualisation in realisations; make possible yourself as the cause and condition to help others to alleviate their suffering, cause of their happiness, cause for them to be liberated, cause to abide others in the path of Bodhisattvas, cause of ordinary Bodhisattvas to surpass onto Arya Bodhisattva path, cause for the ten *bhumis* Bodhisattvas to actualise the Path of No More Learning—the path of Buddhahood.

Verse 6

***May all human and nonhuman beings who eliminate adversity
And create conducive conditions for practicing the excellent paths
Never be parted in any of their lives
From the purest path praised by the Buddhas.***

- ❖ Through merits accumulated from Mani retreat, make dedication that you become the cause for others to prevent negativities. You become cause for others with evil, malicious, harmful heart to overcome and purify those negative emotions.
- ❖ You become the cause for *maras*, spirits, harm-givers to turn away from causing harm to others, like what past Buddhas have done; such as Guru Padmasambhava met *yakshas*, spirits or harm-givers, subdued and assigned them to become *Dharma Protectors*—resource of virtue and Dharma.
- ❖ This dedication is so important as we live in the nest of harm-givers. In samsaric world, many people or beings without any choice or control, by the force of past karma think negatively and cause harm to others (getting angry and delusional). So, the moment you see them, you cause them to overcome delusions and those harmful thoughts and lead them to cultivate or condition them to practise exalted Bodhisattva path—all lifetimes in future to never turn back to negative doings, and continue to cultivate the path praised by past, present and future Buddhas up to achieving Buddhahood.

Verse 7

***Whenever someone makes effort to act
In accordance with the tenfold Mahayana virtuous practices
May he always be assisted by the mighty ones,
And may oceans of prosperity spread everywhere.***

- ❖ Dedicate your merits from Mani retreat to those who are already conducting virtues. “May your merits be the causes and conditions for them to gather conducive conditions necessary to continue to develop these virtues.”
- ❖ Your merits dedication enables those on ten *bhumis* to gather conducive conditions to actualise Buddhahood. So many Hearers or Solitary Realisers abide in Nirvana Peace (in single-pointed concentration) for eons. Our merits dedication causes them to gather the causes for them to awake from concentration and enter into Mahayanist path to bring immense benefits to numberless sentient beings.

II. DEDICATION IN BODHICITTA

May the precious supreme Bodhichitta

Not yet born arise.

May that arisen not decline,

But increase more and more.

- ❖ Dedicate merits you have accumulated from Mani retreat to yourself and the rest of sentient beings.
- ❖ Many of us who have Bodhisattva Vows (but due to arising of negative emotions, it may have declined). You dedicate merits to re-establish Bodhisattva precepts in your continuum.
- ❖ If precepts are still intact, you dedicate to increase and develop further.
- ❖ For those who haven't received Bodhisattva precepts, you dedicate merits “May I have the courage and merits to actualise Bodhisattva precepts.”
- ❖ Also same way, you can dedicate the merits to family members who do not have Bodhisattva precepts; you will help them tremendously.
- ❖ To observe the Bodhisattva precepts is one of the very precious and valuable things that you can achieve in this precious human life. It is so beneficial.
- ❖ In similar way, you dedicate the merits to the rest of sentient beings.

III. DEDICATION IN EMPTINESS


May the precious view of emptiness

Not yet born arise.

May that arisen not decline,

But increase more and more.

- ❖ Having Bodhisattva precepts and actualising Bodhicitta is not good enough to actualise Buddhahood; you also need Wisdom of Emptiness to be able to eradicate self-grasping ignorance.
- ❖ Bodhicitta and Emptiness Wisdom have to go side by side. Therefore, you dedicate in the similar way in emptiness.

 IV. DEDICATION IN UNIFICATION OF TANTRIC TWO STAGES OF THE PATH

May the yoga of two stages

Not yet born arise.

May that arisen not decline,

But increase more and more.

- ❖ Even if you develop Bodhicitta and Emptiness, but the journey to actualise the perfected completed benefits for oneself and the rest of sentient beings may take a long time (most cases three countless eons of lifetimes).
- ❖ If we actualise the tantric path (and are able to develop the wisdom and altruism through the tantric path), then one will have the opportunity to actualise Enlightenment within this very short lifetime.
- ❖ Having this Precious Human Rebirth during the era of Shakyamuni Buddha's teaching still in existent, with complete Dharma of both sutra and tantra.
- ❖ Thus, you must utilise tantra. Otherwise, it's like losing one of biggest treasure (opportunity) like you are in diamond mountain cave yet die of starvation (poverty) because of not knowing the value (therefore not utilising the treasure). In our spiritual practice, tantra teaching is like the diamond mountain that can fulfil your entire wishes.
- ❖ Even if you know but not utilising it, it's wasted. In order to meet tantra requires greatest merits. To understand preciousness of tantra, to be able to practise and take full privilege of tantric practices require even greater merits.
- ❖ So, from our vast accumulation of merits from Mani retreat, we should dedicate to actualise the two stages of tantric path (the generation stage and completion stage) and whatever requirements to actualise the two paths—including meeting perfect qualified Vajrayana Tantric Guru, actualising initiation of karmic affinity *deity*, having conducive conditions to engage in four sessions of retreats daily and to engage in commitment retreats for the rest of your life until you gain realisation.
- ❖ Whenever we accumulate merits, make dedication prayers in our heart to gain realisations, so seriously (drastically) to actualise Dharmakaya (Enlightenment); as there are many possibilities to encounter distractions.
- ❖ Even if you have received the initiations of the three lower tantric schools, you are [still] unable to conduct the second stage of the tantric path i.e. the completion stage; then there is no way to actualise Enlightenment.
- ❖ Receiving tantric initiation is the doorway to learning, studying and practising tantra. One requires the Highest Yoga Tantric *deity yoga* practice (such as Yamantaka, Vajrayogini, Kalachakra, etc) to be able to conduct the generation stage and completion stage perfectly; in order to utilise the tools for the practice of three kayas.
- ❖ You can take death into the practice of Dharmakaya. You can take intermediate state into the practice of Sambhogakaya and take birth into the practice of Nirmanakaya.
- ❖ During the time of death, meditate through the death process; dissolution of 4 elements, dissolution of 80 conceptual hallucinated thoughts through the desorption of white, red and black near-appearances. Through the conclusion of all those conceptual hallucinations, then when you

reach the natural clear light of death (you at least have the natural support from the natural experience of clear light) to actualise emptiness and even to actualise the union of emptiness and great bliss; can turn into actualisation of Dharmakaya (Enlightenment).

- ❖ We need immense of merits in order to meet the Highest Yoga Tantric practice, then learn about the practices. Without the initiation, we can't even learn or study the path because initiation is the doorway. So we dedicate the merits for that.

V. GENERAL DEDICATION PRAYER

***I fully dedicate all these virtues
To be able to train just like
The hero Manjushri, who knows reality,
And just like Samantabhadra as well.***

- ❖ Whatever merit I have accumulated from Mani retreat, I too dedicate just like Bodhisattva Manjushri and Bodhisattva Samantabhadra—whenever they accumulate merits, they do the most extensive dedications without leaving out the benefits to any single being.

***I dedicate all these roots of virtue
With the dedication praised as the best
By the victorious ones thus gone of the three times,
So I might perform good works.***

- ❖ In the similar way, just like how the past Buddhas have dedicated their merits, I too dedicate in the same way; so that I can continue to perform virtuous deeds in future times.

DEDICATION TO PRECIOUS GURUS

- ❖ We dedicate—the importance of precious Gurus in highest practices like the Highest Yoga Tantric Path; without Vajra Guru, it is not possible at all to enter into the path.
- ❖ Dedicate merits for the long lives of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche and the rest of our other holy Gurus; (we need to create the meritorious cause) to create meritorious karma to receive teachings, initiation and vows in the future.
- ❖ Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche holds many lineages of initiations and vows, is a perfect fully ordained Sangha, observes perfected vows (individual liberation vows, Bodhisattva Vows, Tantric Vows) and is still granting these vows and precepts.
- ❖ Due to having karmic affinity with enlightened Guru in our past lives, we disciples receive kindness in three times (past, present and future) and kindness in three ways; whose kindness even at the time of death, in bardo and even reborn again as samsaric being, Guru will never give up on us.
- ❖ We are so fortunate, so we dedicate the merits.

 VI. PRAYER FOR HIS HOLINESS' WISHES TO BE SPONTANEOUSLY FULFILLED:

***Savior of the Land of Snow's teachings and transmigratory beings,
Who extensively clarifies the path that unifies emptiness and compassion,
To the Lotus Holder, Tenzin Gyatso, I beseech—
May all your holy wishes be spontaneously fulfilled.***

- ❖ We dedicate the merits for His Holiness to live a long life as he aspires for 120 years to benefit all sentient beings.
- ❖ That very much depends on the disciples' karma. Disciples need to play the role to observe pure samaya, listen to the Dharma, listen to Guru's advice and practise well (if not, Guru thinks it's meaningless in the present time, but rather pass into *Parinirvana*; that kind of things can happen).
- ❖ We dedicate merits to His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama to live a long life, and whatever His Holiness' wishes (like harmonising religious followers of all different faiths and harmonising different humanity together in the entire major world population) as well as the rest of His Holiness' wishes to be fulfilled.
- ❖ May Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche's wishes which are like the Bodhisattva's aspiration be fulfilled.

 VII. PRAYER FOR THE LONG LIFE OF KYABJE LAMA ZOPA RINPOCHE

***You who uphold the Subduer's moral way, who serve as the bountiful bearer-of-all,
Sustaining, preserving, and spreading Manjunath's victorious doctrine;
Who masterfully accomplish magnificent prayers honoring the Three Sublime Ones:
Savior of myself and others, your disciples, please, please live long.***

***May I not give rise to heresy for even a second
In regard to the actions of glorious Guru.
May I see whatever actions are done as the stainless (actions of a Buddha).
With this devotion, may I receive the Guru's blessings in my heart.***

- ❖ This is a very important dedication.
- ❖ One of the greatest obstacles in our spiritual practice or development is heresy to our spiritual teachers that we have established a spiritual connection.
- ❖ It's important to have lots of merits to make sure that all our actions of body, speech and mind only pleases Guru and become service to the holy wishes of Guru.
- ❖ If in case unintentionally, or due to lacking of mindfulness through our body, speech and mind cause any or even the slightest form of losing faith or slightest thought of not seeing Guru in Buddha, then may this merit be the antidote to purify them.
- ❖ May I always be equipped with vast merits, may I never encounter even a moment of negativity in relation to Guru and always increase the virtues in relation to Guru and bring immense pleasing to the Guru's heart. Then, our spiritual goals without any doubts will be fulfilled.

***In all my lives, never separated from perfect Gurus,
May I enjoy the magnificent Dharma.
By completing the qualities of the stages and paths,
May I quickly attain the state of Guru Vajradhara.***

- ❖ This is a very important dedication.
- ❖ In the past eons of lifetimes, due to us lacking merits and because we did not do dedication properly, many eons of lifetimes were interrupted for not meeting Guru (such as being born in barbaric land, born at a time when there's no Buddha's teachings, and even in the time of descending of Buddha but being born in lower realms particularly in Hell realm and Hungry Ghost realm far away from Buddha's teaching with no Guru residing or travelling nearby).
- ❖ If born in Animal realm, so fortunate to be Guru's pet or Dharma practitioners' pets, where you can bless animals by chanting mantras, bringing them around stupas, showing them pictures of Guru and holy objects and dedicate merits specifically for them.
- ❖ However, a lot of animals are too far away deep down in the oceans or the ocean is too far away that couldn't be reached (even when Guru is travelling on the ship or aeroplane).
- ❖ So, you require so much merits to be able to get close to Guru or to get near to the Guru.
- ❖ Despite being near the Guru, one needs a lot of merits to be able to cultivate Guru devotion. Don't be like Devadatta (who was one of the closest monks to the Buddha) who only see faults in the Guru, doing everything opposite (against) Buddha's conduct in his actions and motivation, created the karma only to be born in Hell. This is due to lacking in merits.
- ❖ So we need so much merit to be near Guru and to be near Guru with the perfected practice of Guru Yoga.

 VIII. PRAYER TO SEE OTHERS AS WISH-FULFILLING

***Determined to obtain the greatest possible benefit
From all sentient beings,
Who are more precious than a wish-fulfilling jewel,
I shall hold them most dear at all times.***

- ❖ To see others as wish-fulfilling and have pure view of all other sentient beings.
- ❖ Because of not having pure view of others, we have lots of negative emotions arise in relation to others—not only to those who harm you, but also to those you love being overwhelmed with attachment grasping—thus creating so much negative karma.
- ❖ Have merits with pure view, pure affection and unconditional pure love that is free from stain of attachment grasping towards our partners, parents and children.
- ❖ To have pure view in relation to others, by relating to others with Bodhicitta mind and emptiness understanding, with compassion, and with pure love. That way, you don't commit negative karma in relation to others.

- ❖ Others become the wish-fulfilling gem (if you are able to relate to them with emptiness view, Bodhicitta with love and compassion) to fulfil your wishes to actualise the two types of merits which will deliver you to become Buddha.
- ❖ We dedicate our merits that “May we always be able to achieve this pure view and see others as wish-fulfilling jewel.”

 IX. PRAYER TO BE WISH-FULLFILLING FOR OTHERS

***Like a wish-fulfilling jewel and wish-granting tree,
May I fulfill the hopes of sentient beings
Without need for effort and exertion.
May all be auspicious for me to accomplish their wishes.***

- ❖ We also dedicate the merits to be wish-fulfilling for others.
- ❖ Having the heart of altruism at all times. Upon waking up in the morning, first thought is to immediately arise the altruistic mind and dedicate our entire future existence as the cause for others’ happiness and the cause for others’ benefits.
- ❖ You dedicate just like how Shantideva dedicated, “Whoever sees me, remembers me (hears my name or even relate to me with negative emotions or with positivity like praises or service, etc.), every single existence of mine and every single relation to others, [may] I become a wish-granting jewel fulfilling their wishes.”
- ❖ Like the dedication in *The Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life*; those who need medicine, you become their medicine. Those who need shelter, you be their shelter. Those who need a friend, you become their friend. Those who need a parent, you become their parent and those who need children, you become their children. Basically, you dedicate your entire existence to be like the wish-fulfilling jewel to others. If we are able to live a life like that, then this is the Bodhisattva’s way of living.

***Whatever suffering transmigratory beings experience,
May it all ripen on me.
Whatever happiness and virtue I accumulate,
May it all ripen on others.***

- ❖ Heart practice of Bodhisattvas, Kadampa masters, great *panditas* and our Gurus like His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche with the practice of *tonglen*.
- ❖ Whatever happiness experiences coming your way, you instantly dedicate and transfer the merits and happiness through dedication to the rest of sentient beings.
- ❖ Whatever suffering you see out there (including the suffering that you experience), you dedicate to consume suffering of entire numberless sentient beings onto your own self-grasping and self-cherishing attitude.

- ❖ That way, you ever develop the wisdom of selflessness and attitude of Bodhicitta. Just to remember to do that, requires so much merits.
- ❖ Dedicate the vast merits from Mani retreat: “May I be able to do that.”
- ❖ Otherwise, when we’re happy we may forget to practise (totally distracted) and when we’re suffering, we feel so miserable that we cannot practise. Most of our time is very much wasted like that.
- ❖ During the neutral time, it’s like blank (like sleeping). We sleep around 6-7 hours daily; if we forget to motivate before going to sleep, then these 6-7 hours will be completely wasted.
- ❖ Have intact mindfulness that before we go to sleep, to really meditate and motivate in Bodhicitta or meditate on emptiness, so that the entire sleeping time can be taken onto the path to develop merit of wisdom or merit of method.
- ❖ Four phenomena (situations) that can be diverted through motivation. Sleep is one of the four phenomena that can be diverted through motivation.
- ❖ Even if you don’t motivate but sleep while meditating on emptiness, entire sleep is diverted to accumulation of merit of wisdom.
- ❖ If you sleep meditating on Bodhicitta (love and compassion), your entire sleep is nurturing your altruism (Bodhicitta mind) and accumulate merit of method (merit of altruism).
- ❖ If you can’t meditate before sleep, at least you can do motivation; say sincerely from your heart “May my entire sleep be the cause for numberless sentient beings’ temporary happiness up to the ultimate happiness of Enlightenment.”
- ❖ You will have a settled, comfortable, nice ending of the day, and feeling so good to go to bed.
- ❖ If you’ve been busy the whole day and didn’t get the chance to practise properly, you can motivate that “My day is not so marvellous in virtue, but may my entire sleep be the cause for numberless sentient beings’ Enlightenment.” Immediately change the entire atmosphere and entire mood (with Bodhicitta motivation).
- ❖ We need so much merits to be able to remember and have the joyous effort of mindfulness; accumulating pure complete, solid causes for your happiness, future happiness and Enlightenment.
- ❖ So we need to dedicate our merits for that.

X. SHANTIDEVA’S DEDICATION

***For as long as space endures and
For as long as sentient beings remain
For that long may I abide and
Eliminate the sufferings of transmigratory beings.***

- ❖ We dedicate merits for our life to be just like Shantideva’s life.
- ❖ “I dedicate this merit for me to be able to remember or for the rest of my entire existence be just like that; be the complete cause to eliminate the sufferings of sentient beings and be the complete cause to abide sentient beings from temporary happiness up to the ultimate happiness of Enlightenment.”

 MERIT MULTIPLYING PRAYERS

- ❖ This mantra has the power to multiply one merit by 100,000 times
- ❖ While reciting this prayer—though this prayer includes everything (every wish, every prayer) – you can also make specific dedication such as for specific person or for specific situation.

**CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ NAM
PAR NANG DZÄ Ö KYI GYÄL PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO (1X)**

**To Bhagavan, Tathagata, Arhat, Perfectly Complete Buddha, Vairochana, King of Light, I
prostrate. (1x)**

JANG CHHUB SEM PA SEM PA CHHEN PO KÜN TU ZANG PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO (1X)

To Bodhisattva Mahasattva Samantabhadra, I prostrate. (1x)

**TADYATHÄ / OM PAÑCHENDRIYA AVABODHANÄYE SVÄHÄ /
OM DHURU DHURU JAYA MUKHE SVÄHÄ (7x)**

**CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ MÄN GYI
LA BAI DUR YÄI Ö KYI GYÄL PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO (1X)**

**To Bhagavan, Tathagata, Arhat, Perfectly Complete Buddha, Medicine Guru, King of
Sapphire Light, I prostrate. (1x)**

**CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ NGO WA
DANG MÖN LAM THAM CHÄ RAB TU DRUB PÄ GYÄL PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO (1X)**

**To Bhagavan, Tathagata, Arhat, Perfectly Complete Buddha, King Fully Accomplishing All
Dedications and Prayers, I prostrate. (1x)**

MÄ JUNG SÄ CHÄ GYÄL WÄI JIN LAB DANG

Due to the blessings of the eminent victorious ones and their sons,

- ❖ First condition: Whatever prayers that we make, the results will be actualised effectively
 - due to the blessings power of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas (as we've conducted on the basis of refuge, thus we already have that power).
 - in relation to the Mani retreat, Compassionate Buddha as your object of refuge and object of merit field, therefore the first condition is there.

TEN DREL LU WA ME PÄI DEN PA DANG

The truth of infallible dependent arising,

- ❖ Second condition: In nature of emptiness, all prayers and wishes that you make will be actualised in the dependent arising nature of cause and effect. Whatever virtues you have accumulated, the

results are virtues (never non-virtues). Therefore, whatever we have accumulated will never be lost.

DAG GI LHAG SAM DAG PÄI THU TOB KYI

And the power of my pure special attitude of taking responsibility,

- ❖ Third condition: From the power of my pure, sincere altruistic intention that you have (to conduct Mani retreats, other practices and whatever merits you have dedicated), truly express sincerely from your heart. That sincerity is the third condition.

NAM DAG MÖN PÄI NÄ KÜN DRUB PAR SHOG

May all the aims of my pure prayers be accomplished.

- ❖ With these three conditions, may all the aims of my pure prayers be accomplished.

 **FOUR-LINE MIGTSEMA**

MIG ME TSE WÄI TER CHHEN CHÄN RÄ ZIG

Avalokiteshvara, great treasure of non- objectifying compassion;

DRI ME KHYEN PÄI WANG PO JAM PÄL YANG

Manjushri, master of stainless wisdom;

GANG CHÄN KHÄ PÄI TSUG GYÄN TSONG KHA PA

Tsongkhapa, crown ornament of the sages of the Land of Snow:

LOSANG DRAG PÄI ZHAB LA SÖL WA DEB (3X)

Lozang Dragpa, at your feet I make requests. (3x)

(Summary Notes based on the online teaching hosted by Chag Tong Chen Tong FPMT Tasmania, Australia on 10 June 2021. Please refer to recording of the teaching at <https://youtu.be/7HSLpb8A8GY> as the true and exact meaning)

2.4 SUPPLEMENTARY TEACHINGS

2.4 (i) Sadhana Practice: Brief Retreat Guidance for Meditation-Recitation of The Great Compassionate One



- ❖ *OM MANI PADME HUM* retreat and practice of cultivation of compassion in Mahayanic Buddhadharma is one of the greatest practices in relation to sutra and tantra.
- ❖ Practice of compassion, in particularly practice of altruism (the fully matured compassion, the Bodhicitta) only in Mahayanic Buddhadharma.
- ❖ This practice is beneficial for everything, beneficial for everyone; highlight of the meaning of our life, our Precious Human Rebirth.
- ❖ Should try to do all time; and not only during *Saka Dawa*.
- ❖ So powerful; real absolute fulfilment of your entire wishes all the way up to full Enlightenment, including fulfilling wishes of numberless sentient beings' aspiration up to full Enlightenment.
- ❖ Purpose of conducting your Mani Retreat, starts from your present life's mother, then to the rest of mother sentient beings from temporary happiness up to the ultimate happiness of full Enlightenment.

ADVICE ON RETREAT PRACTICE

- ❖ Number of recitations is minimum 1 *mala* a day; it is up to you on the number you want to commit.
- ❖ It will be so wonderful if you can commit 1 million recitations in your lifetime; without giving any time frame or any restrictions on when, where or how to do.
- ❖ For those who have received Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig's initiation—in particularly Thousand-Armed Chenrezig or Four-Armed Chenrezig—have common commitment retreat of 600,000 *OM MANI PADME HUM* recitations. Not necessarily have to be conducted in a strict way for those who have busy lives (as long as commit to accomplish 600,000).
- ❖ Whether the initiating Guru has given such a commitment or not—after receiving initiation, you become a family member of Chenrezig with commitment practice of 600,000 mantras.

ON CHENREZIG SADHANA PRACTICE

- ❖ There are so many different sadhana texts; it is absolutely individual's choice (no right or wrong).

- You can choose to put all the sadhana together to make it a whole day of sadhana practice.
 - Or just do one particular sadhana.
 - Or simply aspire to recite *OM MANI PADME HUM* is so beneficial as it contains everything. *OM MANI PADME HUM* practice is exceptional and beneficial for any situations.
- ❖ Counting of number of recitations; you can participate in many retreat groups. For the purpose of rejoicing and bringing more energy together, you can recite the same amount and contribute these same numbers to different retreat groups.
 - ❖ Mani retreat is one of the most extensive, most powerful and most easy retreat; suits any age and anyone is qualified to do this practice.
 - ❖ For this Mani retreat session, Venerable Lindy of CTCT FPMT Tasmania, Australia recommended this sadhana text *The Welfare of Living Beings that Pervades Space: The Meditation-Recitation of the Great Compassionate One* by Thangtong Gyalpo. [Please refer to the *Chenrezig sadhana text from the link below*]²
 - ❖ First verse on taking refuge and generating altruistic intention.
 - ❖ Next few verses on visualisation or defining of Compassionate Buddha.
 - ❖ Making supplication request prayer; thinking and visualising your father, mother and rest of sentient beings exactly like you. Having full faith and conviction in Chenrezig, voicing same kind of aspirations led by you to purify samsara and actualise Enlightenment of Chenrezig.
 - ❖ Do requesting prayer for 1, 3, 7 or even 100 times until you sincerely get moved from the depth of your heart for purification of samsara and actualisation of Enlightenment.
 - ❖ Do recitations of *OM MANI PADME HUM* mantra; while reciting the mantra, you can also do these things simultaneously or alternately:
 - Reflect on the meaning of your request expressed before.
 - Meditate or visualise Compassionate Buddha. If you have Highest Yoga Tantric Initiation or *jenang* of Chenrezig, do the self-generation of Chenrezig. If not, visualise Chenrezig on top of your crown or in front, granting all the blessings to your requests.
 - Meditate on Bodhicitta (remember the definition, meditate expressing your aspiration to actualise full Enlightenment for benefit of numberless sentient beings' Enlightenment).
 - Meditate on emptiness: voidness of 3 circles of subject (yourself), object (the practice of Mani retreat) and action (the purpose that you are dedicating this practice) all lies in lack of inherent existence; integrate whatever understanding of emptiness that you have.
 - Meditate on 3 circles: subject (the mind/perception), object (entire rest of phenomena, starting from your aggregates) and action (the subject/mind relating to object); everything you meditate on as empty of inherent.
 - Meditate in sessions alternately on love, compassion, forgiveness, etc.
 - Do healing practice (to heal sickness/problems of family members, self or the world with problems) through visualisation of nectar and light rays from visualised Chenrezig bringing about healing.

² https://fpmt.org/wp-content/uploads/education/teachings/texts/welfare_living_beings_that_pervades_space_a5.pdf

- ❖ At the end, dedicate properly in Bodhicitta and Emptiness (similar way as explained before).
- ❖ Rejoice and try to end the session with perfect mood of rejoicement with much joy, with sense of fulfilment, sense of happiness and sense of you becoming so worthwhile for the benefit of numberless sentient beings' well-being, starting with your parents and family.
- ❖ Look forward to the next session (with the mood of rejoicement); which could be the next moment, next hour or next day.

THE RECITATIONS OF *OM MANI PADME HUM*

- ❖ Recitations can be chanted in whatever tune you like (as there are many different tunes); such as the tune used in relation to Amitabha practice and Chenrezig practice.
- ❖ You can also just read plainly or put in another tune you like.
- ❖ For **verbal recitations**, recite in the volume only can be heard by yourself.
- ❖ For **mental recitations**, at the centre of your heart, there is seed syllable *Hrih* surrounded by *OM MANI PADME HUM* letters; visualise reading the letters *OM MANI PADME HUM*.
- ❖ While chanting/reading, you can focus on the visualisation and the meaning of the text.
- ❖ So beneficial to occupy your speech with *OM MANI PADME HUM*. You can recite anywhere, in any situation, in any manner (such as while exercising, walking, watching television/news, while lying on the bed, etc); with no restrictions at all.
- ❖ If you can, doing disciplined sessions have great benefits.
- ❖ Mani Practice is so precious. But due to our daily responsibilities, many are unable to do such precious practice. So, by just reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM* will be so beneficial and meaningful.

(Summary Notes based on the online teaching hosted by Taitung Foundation on 17 May 2021.

Please refer to recording of the teaching in this link as the true and exact meaning)

<http://www.tenzinopa.com/externallinks/vids3/ManiretreatPractice.m4v>



2.4 (ii) Meditation on Two Aspects of Bodhicitta



- ❁ The wisdom of altruistic attitude is the sole antidote to purify karma and also the sole practice to accumulate merits. It is the one practice that delivers both purification of karma and accumulation of merits.
- ❖ The Guru Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig himself (His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama) said this is the one practice that can deliver the two most important purposes of spiritual practice which is purification and accumulation.
- ❖ It actualises the essence of the Buddha's teachings—the Buddhadharma which is accumulating perfected virtue and purifying the negativities.
- ❖ In the cultivation of altruism, even though some actions are non-virtue in nature, the negative karmic consequences won't be heavy (that negative action won't be forceful). Through the force of altruistic motivation, even the action (or job) which is by nature non-virtue or neutral, the individual can still accumulate great virtues of altruism.
- ❖ When we engage virtuous conduct with altruistic intention, it will be supreme virtue.

❁ TRANSFORMING ACTIVITIES IN DAILY LIFE

- ❖ Because of the power of just reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM*, your entire day of doing ordinary daily activities (such as cooking, watching TV, relaxing and sleeping) become most meaningful, and become an altruistic day of gathering great supreme virtue.
- ❖ If you accumulate *OM MANI PADME HUM* or generate Bodhicitta motivation before going to bed, your entire sleeping period is not wasted and becomes a gathering of supreme virtue. Just that, can make our life so meaningful.

❁ ANTIDOTE TO PURIFY PAST NEGATIVE KARMA

- ❖ The practice of *OM MANI PADME HUM* and any practices related to Chenrezig are the most powerful antidote to overcome any form of obstacles that come in our way.
- ❖ By reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM*, doing visualisation in relation to Chenrezig practice generating loving kindness and compassion—Bodhicitta is the most powerful antidote to heal past karmic actions in relation to causing harm to others and purify all negativities and all negative suffering experiences (which are the result of causing harm to sentient beings).

❁ A NATURAL AFFINITY WITH ALL

- ❖ There are numberless emanations of different Buddhas or *deities* that you can gather your practices in relation to them; if you have affinity with them to develop the path. If you cannot

manage, then if you are able to do Chenrezig practice *OM MANI PADME HUM* and compassion—that is good enough and sufficient of practising entire Buddhas and entire *deities*.

- ❖ Everyone has natural affinity with Chenrezig and compassion. Therefore, whoever does practices in relation to compassion, the benefit is immense.
- ❖ To help loved ones who are suffering from sickness or any obstacles, just chant *OM MANI PADME HUM* and generate compassion towards them. Visualise Chenrezig, then transfer merits to them through visualising lights and nectar to purify them.
- ❖ Practice of *OM MANI PADME HUM* and compassion is most forceful, most powerful and most effective. No need to specifically seek separate Buddhas or other *deities* to deal with different problems. It is one antidote to all the problems.
- ❖ Every single numberless sentient being (even non-believers, other religious followers, animals, harm-givers, doesn't matter Buddhist followers of Mahayana or Hinayana, etc.) all have complete affinity with compassion.
- ❖ Our absolute being, our true nature is compassionate one. Fundamental energy of all the Buddhas and ours is compassion—it matches perfectly.

IT IS THE ULTIMATE PRACTICE

- ❖ The practice of altruism (Great Compassion) is the ultimate practice—complete and greatest Dharma to achieve your entire wishes including the ultimate wishes of Enlightenment, and the most complete causes fulfilling the ultimate wishes of numberless sentient beings all the way up to Enlightenment.
- ❖ In the taking of Bodhisattva precepts, you generate altruism for the purpose of actualising yours and all others' ultimate wishes.
- ❖ When you are happy, the practice of compassion is a marvellous practice to engage in, as it brings about increase in happiness by rejoicing.
- ❖ When you are sad and suffering, this practice of compassion is a marvellous practice to be engaged in, as it heals our suffering.
- ❖ When encountering many forces of harm-givers, this is the most forceful and powerful practice to be cultivated to benefit those harm-givers.
- ❖ When everyone comes in your way to benefit you, the best way to repay the kindness of the benefactors is to generate compassion towards them.

CAUSING OTHERS TO ACCUMULATE FUTURE HAPPINESS AND PREVENT FUTURE SUFFERING

- ❖ This practice of compassion is so effective and so powerful that even in the situation when you are unable to overcome the suffering of sentient beings who are going through the ripening of past negative karmic results—even though you are unable to heal that suffering right now—but in the generation of compassion, you definitely will benefit others.
- ❖ Through dedication of great virtue of altruism to the suffering being (such as a wounded dog), you create the conditions for the suffering being to prevent future suffering and accumulate future happiness all the way up to Enlightenment.


PRACTICE OF COMPASSION FOR ALL SITUATIONS

- ❖ In the practice of compassion, everywhere and in any situation, there is strength to practise, to help others and you always carry a solution to help others. You are never helpless in the practice of compassion. A few examples that you can relate to:
- ❖ To those who do not believe in reincarnation or karma, the practice can help them to enjoy the benefit or virtue in the future.
- ❖ If someone is being very violent or very destructive causing harm to others (like terrorists, etc), the practice creates causes for their future happiness, create the conditions for an end to negative actions in the future and help to generate the conditions to stop future suffering.
- ❖ At the market, when seeing so many butchers about to kill so many animals, you don't have to feel helpless. Instead, generate compassion and use your energy in the force of compassion to help them to create the conditions for prevention of such negative karma in future, create condition to prevent future suffering and condition for virtuous seeds to be established.
- ❖ When you see animals knocked down by cars on the roads, immediately generate compassion to the animal and the person driving who created the karma, or at least recite *OM MANI PADME HUM* mantras; feel purposeful to be able to help them and benefit them.
- ❖ Animals have no capabilities on their own to accumulate merit or purify their karma (unlike us humans especially like ourselves). When you see animals, immediately recite *OM MANI PADME HUM* and generate compassion towards them. If they are nearby you, chant loudly *OM MANI PADME HUM* to directly relate to them for immense of effective benefits.
- ❖ For suffering sick or dying animals, reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM* and blowing on them can condition them to have precious human life in the future or be born in Chenrezig Pureland; you condition them never to be born in such condition in future lifetimes.
- ❖ Anywhere you see any living beings such as ants, flies or garden bugs, instantly generate compassion and recite *OM MANI PADME HUM* to establish altruistic relationship with them and causing them towards developing the path up to Enlightenment.
- ❖ Everywhere, there are so many opportunities to practise compassion and to develop your heart, and to bring yourself closer to Enlightenment and also to help others to be closer to Enlightenment.
- ❖ As long as there is samsara and samsaric aggregates, that is the greatest disaster; we have to use that awareness with full of compassion.
- ❖ If you hear your neighbours quarrelling with their partners, generate compassion thinking of them by reciting *OM MANI PADME HUM*; prevent their future suffering and condition them for future happiness (even greater if you dedicate merits to them at the end).
- ❖ If someone irritates you, scolds you, or blaming mistakes [on you], respond with recitations of *OM MANI PADME HUM*. That will not disturb you as the power of *OM MANI PADME HUM* will bless your heart and at the same time, as you are doing this in relation to that particular person's action, you are also blessing them.

A POWERFUL HEALING PRACTICE

- ❖ Historically many real-life stories encountering practitioners of Compassionate Buddha, the practice of compassion is one of the most powerful healing, even for chronic diseases—such as

leprosy, like Gelongma Palmo after doing a few rounds of *Nyung Nä*, she purified the leprosy sickness, had direct vision of Compassionate Buddha and within that lifetime, she achieved Compassionate Buddha Enlightenment.

- ❖ Within our lifetime, many practitioners who had cancer that engage in Compassionate Buddha practices like conducting *Nyung Nä* and some villagers in the Himalayas who are illiterate, just by accumulating *OM MANI PADME HUM*, their chronic sickness like cancer is cured.
 - ❖ Individuals who are going through the ripening experience of their past karma, by the altruistic practice of compassion and knowing the value of *OM MANI PADME HUM*, emotionally they won't suffer even though physically going through decay from the sickness. No emotional suffering, feel happy emotionally and feel meaningful.
 - ❖ It is truly helpful that when we receive bad news of people suffering from chronic sickness or trouble, we immediately generate compassion. With understanding of the value of compassion, we will gain power and courage, instead of feeling depressed. Recite *OM MANI PADME HUM* and turn the prayer wheel, our heart will gain so much strength and change our entire perspective.
 - ❖ Utilise our body and speech to accumulate the energy of compassion through *OM MANI PADME HUM*, protect from overwhelming emotional suffering (not feeling helpless) and help those in need.
 - ❖ Even when hearing one's own unfavourable health diagnosis, cultivating the compassionate energy may help gain better immune system to fight the disease. It is a really practical thing that every practitioner can utilise.
-  Guru Chenrezig (His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama) emphasised after granting Bodhisattva precepts; it is most beneficial and so important for those who practise Bodhicitta and Great Compassion to take the meditation on **conventional altruism** and **ultimate altruism** as the daily commitment.

MEDITATION ON TWO ASPECTS OF BODHICITTA

- ❖ Firstly, meditation on generation on **conventional altruism** which is the mind or aspiration expressing "May I actualise state of full Enlightenment for the benefit of numberless sentient beings' Enlightenment." That thought, that mind transforms into bright white full moon disc, residing right at the centre of your heart inseparable from your mind (oneness with your mind or heart). Place your awareness on that for as much as you can meditate.
- ❖ Secondly, meditation on **ultimate altruism**. Express with the understanding of the meaning "Self and rest of the phenomena are completely in the nature of empty of inherent existence." That understanding turns into a white vajra with five spokes (five points) on the top. The white vajra rested in the centre of the white moon. That empty nature too, is not separate or no different from conventional altruistic of your mind which appears in the moon.
- ❖ Thirdly, meditation on the **union of Conventional Bodhicitta and Ultimate Bodhicitta**. Place your awareness completely in the expression of conventional altruism in the sense of joy or blissfulness—yet you understood in the nature of voidness of inherent existence; the union of empty and bliss. Place your focus on that, and remain in meditation for as long as you can.
- ❖ Meditate daily; try to do at least once a day (or even for a short time). Beneficial to develop our altruism the realisation on stages of the path of Wisdom and Conventional Bodhicitta.

Summary Notes: Meditation on Two Aspects of Bodhicitta

- ❖ When you do retreat sessions at home, you can integrate meditation on Lamrim topics. Best to do this particular meditation first. Then, when you feel that you are losing concentration, you release the meditation. After that, you can engage in accumulation of recitation of the mantra.

(Transcribed based on the online teaching hosted by Taitung Foundation on 2 June 2021.

Please refer to recording of the teaching in this link as the true and exact meaning)

<http://www.tenzinzopa.com/externallinks/taitungvid/Maninmeditation.mp4>





2.5 Questions and Answers Sessions



➤ **Question:** *Just to clarify, Geshe-la mentioned that while doing gardening or cooking, we can recite OM MANI PADME HUM. I had the impression that when we recite mantra, we are supposed to focus on the deity.*

🌸 **Geshe-la:** If you can focus, well done! If you have time to do that, well done! But you also have responsibilities like cooking, gardening, driving—then as far as concern with any mantras, in particular the Chenrezig mantra, just by simply saying it, is already so powerful and so beneficial.

➤ **Question:** *Please explain the syllable Hrih in the context of Mani Retreat practices*

🌸 **Geshe-la:** Syllable *Hrih* is the seed syllable of Chenrezig



- ❖ It's like the continuum. Like our self when we take rebirth, we need the continuum to be reborn in the new body. So, for Chenrezig to arise, it needs to have the enlightened continuum, which is represented by syllable *Hrih*.
- ❖ If we want to generate our self as *deity* Chenrezig, without the seed syllable, we cannot be born or cannot arise into Chenrezig.
- ❖ It's exactly like our consciousness, on the basis of 2 substances of our father and mother, consciousness is established there and your new rebirth begins.
- ❖ In a similar way, lotus (regard as mother's womb), sun disc (as father's substance) and moon disc (as mother's substance).
- ❖ Syllable *Hrih* is like previous consciousness that's going to place onto it, and from there miraculously actualise Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig.
- ❖ While syllable *Hrih* is the seed syllable of Chenrezig, other deities have their own different seed syllables.

➤ **Question:** *In maintaining pure view, do we not lose the suffering aspect of samsara?*


🌸 **Geshe-la:** If we really succeed in actualising pure view, definitely suffering of samsara is going to be lost.

- ❖ Why to the Buddha there's no suffering or suffering world? Because Buddha carries pure view of enlightened mind and have lost the impure view.
- ❖ Even though suffering world exists to the Buddha, but in Buddha's perception, suffering and impure world do not exist because He had perfected in the pure view.
- ❖ If we train our mind till we achieve perfected state of pure view, even while we are carrying this contaminated body, we don't experience the suffering.

- ❖ But that's very very tough. Especially for those in the 3 precious higher realms like humans who are unable to differentiate what exactly pervasive suffering is, unless we use wisdom of the Dharma.
- ❖ We can only understand pervasive suffering or actual samsaric suffering after learning about how destructive the negative emotions are, but otherwise we don't feel it.
- ❖ What we recognise as so-called 'suffering' is suffering of pain and suffering of change, which are superficial judgement; simply judged by our gross mind and our sensual perception.
- ❖ In fact, not even necessary to achieve perfected pure view like the Buddha, for as long as we are able to achieve certain steady degree of meditation:
 - if we are able to live our day-to-day life in meditative state like many yogis who are free from suffering of pain and suffering of change.
 - or by achieving serenity (*samatha*), you are not affected by suffering of pain and suffering of change.
- ❖ Physically—flesh may be deteriorating and bleeding from cut or beaten up or even occurrence of death, but the person doesn't suffer as the person is in the meditative state.
- ❖ You can balance pure view between an active mind and the focused mind:
 - If you want to train to be free from suffering of pain and suffering of change, we can train through focused serenity training.
 - If we train in pure view, which is one of the key practices of tantra and generally it is the practice of Buddhadharma to purify impurity of impure perception and to actualise liberation.
- ❖ Meaning of 'tantra' is pure view and tantra means protection to the impure view.
- ❖ The moment you do tantric practice whether to do with mantra, *deity yoga* visualisations, you immediately transform entirety, everything becomes divine, non-real to our normal reality.
- ❖ Our normal reality is actually a false reality, not a real reality; only experiences on the impure mind. After training in the pure view is immediate effect to liberate yourself so effectively gradually. Eventually we reach a point that is "dagparamjam" like everything—all sound is blissful, all things you see is blissful, that even in so-called 'samsara' by the impure view, but for you it's not a samsara.
- ❖ One of the key practices of Buddhadharma, (in whatever *yana* you practise—sutra or tantra), one of the main sadhana is to train our mind into pure view in relation to our job, people we encounter among us, good or bad experiences that come our way.
- ❖ *Lojong* teachings and practices is all about training our mind in pure view. Every Buddha's teaching discusses on the fundamental basis of emptiness transforming into truthful reality.
- ❖ In the beginning it's hard to train in pure view. We have worked so hard for beginningless lifetimes to store so many numberless complete karma to ensure that we can't get away from the whip of karma such as death and the perishing of this body.
- ❖ Dharma is still the solution, and Dharma is the ultimate solution.
- ❖ We need to experience the definite karmic results of pain and suffering. But through transformation of the mind in pure view, we can be like the meditators who are free from suffering of pain and suffering of change, and we can go through painless old age, sickness and death.
- ❖ For painless pervasive suffering, we need to clear away all our debts of past completed karma.

- ❖ With perishing of this body, we can merge with Dharmakaya. Many meditators at time of death, they get into clear light and attain Enlightenment utilising clear light practice. If unable to do so, then in intermediate state, try to become Buddha in Sambhogakaya form. If not successful, take another human rebirth, and within that life, do as much purification as possible and one can be fully liberated.
 - ❖ Understand this from teachings related to *Sravaka* and *Pratyeka*, *Nirvana With Remain* i.e. achieve *Nirvana* before discarding this contaminated body, and *Nirvana Without Remain* i.e. at the time you perish this body, merge your continuum into the ultimate continuum which is your Dharmakaya.
- **Question:** Please explain about Hayagriva practice, especially during the COVID-19 situation.
-  **Geshe-la:** Hayagriva is the wrathful aspect of Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig.
- ❖ Hayagriva is a *Dharma protector* and also a *vidam*, Highest Yogic Tantric enlightened *deity* (meditational *deity*). Even though Hayagriva [appears] in a wrathful aspect, and the mantra and its practices have many wrathful aspects, but many may not know that Hayagriva is Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig (of the most peaceful aspect of Chenrezig).
 - ❖ However, certain karma or certain negative forces are so intense that requires Buddha's manifestation in the wrathful antidote. There are many different activities of the Buddha; one of them is the wrathful activity.
 - ❖ There are many different practices in relation to Hayagriva *deity yoga* practice to overcome intense, very hard habitual karmic debts and negative forces.
 - ❖ By just reciting the mantra is regarded so powerful to overcome evil forces such as negative black magic, spirit harm, etc. Carrying Hayagriva mandala protection with you is also regarded very powerful.
 - ❖ The main lineage of this practice comes from Nyingma tradition, but is also commonly used in Gelug tradition such as Sera Jey Monastery, where the main meditational *vidam* or *protector* is Hayagriva to bring about conducive conditions to do with very tough journey in spiritual practice (like Geshe studies).
 - ❖ By relying on refuge in Hayagriva will help to keep you focused and help clear all disturbances and distractions.
- **Question:** After receiving great initiation of Chenrezig, you mentioned that generally there will be commitment of 600,000 OM MANI PADME HUM mantra recitations, is that right? Does this commitment include recitation of the long mantra dharani? Also during this OM MANI PADME HUM retreat, Geshe-la mentioned that even though we are busy, we must remember to do as many recitations as we can—even while doing our daily chores. I am distracted and do not remember to do throughout the day, and only remember when I am sitting down. How can I increase the number of recitation of mantras the whole day as you suggested?
-  **Geshe-la:** The commitment is generally 600,000 OM MANI PADME HUM mantra recitations. Recitation of long mantra *dharani* is not required. Even though we are busy, we must remember to

do as many recitations as we can—even while doing our daily chores. To overcome lack of mindfulness and lack of discipline in relation to the practice of Chenrezig:

- ❖ It is beneficial to pray to Hayagriva or pray to Six-Armed Mahakala. Six-Armed Mahakala is like the attendant to Chenrezig, and the *Dharma protector* for Chenrezig's practice to assist practitioners of Chenrezig. There is a short prayer to Mahakala that you can recite and you don't need an initiation to do that. Pray to Mahakala to overcome the lack of mindfulness in relation to the practice of Chenrezig.
 - ❖ *Dharma protector's* help is so necessary especially for beginner practitioners.
 - ❖ They are like the close companion to make sure there is no transgression of the practices and make sure that you stay focused in the commitments.
 - ❖ Utilise of *Dharma protector's* practice is so beneficial and so helpful to do when one is losing inspiration or having no motivation to practise, when one is lacking focus and unable to focus in the practice.
 - ❖ All the different *deities* have their own karmic affinity protectors. And these protectors naturally will also become your karmic affinity protectors because you have karmic affinity with the practice of that particular *deity*.
 - ❖ In order to clear the obstacles on the path and to gather resources on the path is to do the protector's practice of that *deity*. You can find major protector prayers in the FPMT Prayer Books.
 - ❖ Just by simply reciting the mantra and praying is already good.
 - ❖ But there are many more practices that you can engage in—such as black tea offerings, protector's pujas and extensive protector sadhana puja practices. But one can start by reciting the prayers.
 - ❖ You can also do this meditation. Pause for a moment. Generate compassion, by thinking how fortunate you are—compared to so many suffering sentient beings who are unable to utilise their full potential. Each and every one of them is no different from your dearest mother of this life. So, if we don't do the virtue to help them, who else can help them? Similarly when we think about our immediate family, with understanding of the value of Dharma and if we don't practise Dharma, who else can help them? Thus, think that I must practise and how wonderful I can practise.
 - ❖ Whenever you do any kind of retreat, you need to have uplifting inspiration (like going on wonderful holidays), having joyous effort to continue (like don't want to stop practising) and always looking forward to the next session. Thus you always stop at a good time, feeling so happy and so thankful because you can start a new session.
- **Question:** *Geshe-la*, are you advising that we should do the short Mahakala practice during this Mani retreat?
-  **Geshe-la:** If possible, [especially] for those people who feel similar kind of obstacles and are unable to focus.
- ❖ Sometimes there is no motivation or inspiration even though you know it's beneficial. Whenever you do any kind of retreat, you need to have uplifting inspiration and joyous effort. And you will feel like you don't want to stop [the retreat]. But because you are looking forward to the next

session, therefore you want to stop the session in a good time. So when you are in low kind of spirits and losing aspiration, protector practices can be very helpful and beneficial.

- ❖ Also, you pause for a moment, then meditate on generating compassion by thinking of how fortunate you are compared to so many other suffering sentient beings that are unable to utilise their full potential. But each and every one of them is no different from your dearest mother of this life. So, when you are in this position and you don't do the virtue to help them, who is going to help them? Just thinking of our parents and children, siblings or partner in this life who are still 'happy' in samsara and yet, if you who understand the value of Dharma and don't practise Dharma, who else can help them? Then, think that "I must practise and how wonderful that I can practise." This kind of meditation also can be helpful.

➤ **Question:** *How to visualise the mantra garland of OM MANI PADME HUM during the retreat? Is the mantra garland moving? Can we visualise the mantra OM MANI PADME HUM in Chinese?*

🌸 **Geshe-la:** You can visualise the mantra garland in two ways:

1. On the front-generation *deity*—without initiation—you visualise Chenrezig in front facing towards you. In the centre of Chenrezig's heart, there is a syllable *Hrih*, surrounded by *OM MANI PADME HUM*. When you recite you are like reading the letters *OM MANI PADME HUM* (in clockwise circumambulating direction).
 2. On self-generation—with initiation—then you generate yourself as Chenrezig. In the centre of your heart, there is a syllable *Hrih* surrounded by *OM MANI PADME HUM*. Again your mind is [visually] reading the letters *OM MANI PADME HUM* (in clockwise circumambulating direction); not necessary to say it in pronunciation.
- ❖ The mantra garland is still (it is not moving) and your mind is reading. You can visualise the mantra in any form, but most beneficial to visualise characters (letters) of *OM MANI PADME HUM* in the nature of light energy in different colours. Even if you don't know the character (letter)—as long as you know it appears in that particular colour in light energy; as colour also has its representation and it is easier for visualisation.

➤ **Question:** *Does it matter if we visualise Thousand-Armed Chenrezig or Four-Armed Chenrezig?*

🌸 **Geshe-la:** It doesn't matter; you can visualise image of Kuan Yin, Eleven-Faced Thousand-Armed Chenrezig or Four-Armed Chenrezig. You can also visualise in the image of your Guru—the Chenrezig. If you are doing self-generation, then in the image of you—the Chenrezig (that your awareness and recognition is Chenrezig). After generating yourself as Chenrezig—unless you have obtained irreversible conviction that you are definitely Chenrezig—with high quality concentration, then you may be able to visualise (image of) yourself with image of Chenrezig.

➤ **Question:** *Is there a final dissolution of the moon disc and the white vajra? Do you dissolve that at the end?*

🌸 **Geshe-la:** No. There is nothing to dissolve because that is already dissolved and already actualise oneness with your mind.

- ❖ For the purpose of meditation, you illustrate (like in labelling or drawing) how it looks like in the form of image—**Conventional Bodhicitta** is represented by the moon disc and **Ultimate Bodhicitta** is represented by the five-spoked white vajra.
- ❖ In actual fact, it is your own mind or the Compassionate Buddha’s mind. (When you do visualisation of Chenrezig on top of your crown or in the front, then you can do the practice of dissolution).
- ❖ At the conclusion part (within your heart already), no need to do dissolution.
- ❖ End the session effortlessly without the need to define anything; just stop and move on to the next session just by resuming the session, and so on.
- ❖ This meditation practice is very powerful creating focused concentration in accumulation of direct cause for your Rupakaya and Dharmakaya (if you have the support of enough merits, you may be able to actualise the actual resultant Buddhahood within Dharmakaya and Rupakaya, by the direct cause of this meditation).
- ❖ When we are passing away (when we are dying), if we can just focus on this meditation practice with certain capability of awareness, by pinpointing glimpse understanding on the **Conventional Bodhicitta and Ultimate Bodhicitta—the union of method and wisdom**—finally be in absolute oneness; just remain in that (like going into sleep in that and dissolve into the death process in that). Without any doubt—if you are able to do this, you will be born in Chenrezig Pureland or Amitabha Pureland. It is so simple; thus practise from now on.
- ❖ At the time of dying, our memory will be so weak (very hard to meditate on the detailed understanding of Emptiness and Bodhicitta). Then, initially you just express once “May I actualise the state of full Enlightenment for the benefit of numberless sentient beings.” That thought literally turn into the image of a full white moon in your heart (that is your mind).
- ❖ Before the last breath (very weak mind), express (say) that “Myself and the rest of the phenomena lies in the nature of emptiness.” See that idea (that wisdom) appears in a white glowing five-spoked vajra.
- ❖ As you are dying, feel the union of sense of empty (void)—literally losing all conceptual ideas, losing awareness, losing grasping, naturally feel released from some kind of chain, feel liberating and releasing. You feel good as you are meditating (instead of focusing on dying); that is the actual natural experience of clear light. The natural experience of clear light is the expression of voidness and feeling of bliss.
- ❖ During the dissolution of the fourth element—the wind element, we lose all our sensual awareness. Then we go through the three empty—white appearance, red appearance and black-near appearance—then the clear light appears.
- ❖ What we need is something to join the clear light natural experience of emptiness and bliss, with your gross mind’s awareness of **Conventional Bodhicitta and Ultimate Bodhicitta**.
- ❖ Thus, this meditation is so effective and so beneficial. This can be practised by anybody; whether you have initiation or not. So wonderful!

(Collection of Questions and Answers sessions transcribed based on the online teachings hosted by Chag Tong Chen Tong FPMT Tasmania, Australia on 26 May 2021 and Taitung Foundation on 2 June 2021. Please refer to recording of teachings in these links as the true and exact meaning)

<https://youtu.be/8mabwZZdUXA>

<http://www.tenzinzopa.com/externallinks/taitungvid/Maninmeditation.mp4>

CARING FOR DHARMA MATERIALS

Dharma books and all written materials containing Dharma teachings should be handled with respect as they contain the teachings of the Buddha, have the power to protect against lower rebirth and contain the tools that lead to your attainment of liberation and Enlightenment.

Dharma books and Dharma materials, whether hard copy or digital, should not be placed directly on the floor; a nice cloth or text table should be placed underneath them. They should not be stepped over and should be kept off places where people sit or walk.

It is best to keep all Dharma texts in a high clean place separated from other mundane materials; they should be placed on the uppermost shelf of your bookcase or altar. Other objects, including statues or stupa, should not be placed on top of Dharma books and materials. They should be covered with cloth or protected for transporting.

If it is necessary to dispose of written Dharma materials, they should be burned rather than thrown in the trash. When burning Dharma texts, it is taught to first recite a prayer or mantra such as OM AH HUM. Then, you visualise the letters of the texts transform into an AH and the AH absorbs into your heart, transmitting their wisdom to your mindstream. As you burn the texts, you can continue to recite OM AH HUM.

Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche has recommended that photos or images of holy beings, deities and other holy objects should not be burned; instead placed with respect in stupas or other high clean places so that they do not end up on the ground.

BIODATA OF GESHE TENZIN ZOPA



Geshe Tenzin Zopa holds the honoured Geshe (Doctorate in Buddhist Philosophy) degree from Sera Jey Monastic University, South India having completed the 20-year monastic curriculum in just 17 years.

He was born in the remote Himalayan region of Tsum Valley in Nepal and was ordained at the age of 9 in Kopan Monastery by the Great Mahasiddha Geshe Lama Konchog. He received novice ordination from H.E. Geshe Lundrup Sopa Rinpoche and full ordination from H.H. the Fourteenth Dalai Lama.

Geshe-la was under the direct tutelage of H.E. Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche, H.E. Khensur Rinpoche Lama Lhundrup Rigsel, The Great Mahasiddha Geshe Lama Konchog and Eminent Gurus including those from the Sera Jey Monastic University H.E. 104th Gaden Tri Rinpoche Losang Tenzin, 70th Abbot of Sera Jey Monastic University H.E. Khensur Losang Tsering Rinpoche and the 76th Abbot of Sera Jey Monastic University H.E. Logoan Tulku Tenzin Jampa Choesang Rinpoche.

Geshe-la possesses vast scriptural knowledge and holds many rare transmissions and lineages of initiations. He has completed many retreats (including a 6-month Highest Yoga Tantra retreat) and is highly skilled in rituals and astrological observations. He has undertaken many meaningful projects (including the building of Thousand Buddha Relic Stupa at Kopan Monastery in Nepal, overseeing the development of Rachen Nunnery and Mu Monastery in the remote Tsum Valley, Nepal) and has successfully managed major humanitarian projects.

He is the principal and focal point of the award-winning documentary film titled "Unmistaken Child" which chronicles the search for the reincarnation of his late master Geshe Lama Konchog. Now he is taking responsibility of overseeing the overall wellbeing of H.E. Tulku Tenzin Phuntsok Rinpoche, the reincarnation of late Great Mahasiddha Geshe Lama Konchog.

A prolific international teacher, Geshe-la has extensive teaching experience and has frequently been invited as a speaker at many Buddhist conferences, interfaith and peace dialogues over many years. In 2018, Geshe-la taught at The University of Oxford in United Kingdom under "Visitorship for Traditional Scholars" in the Tibetan and Himalayan Studies programme. In 2019, Geshe Tenzin Zopa was awarded the "Global Peace Leadership and Excellence Award" during the World Peace Congress in Mumbai, India in recognition of his leadership and contributions to society.

Since the year 2000, Geshe-la has been teaching in the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT) centres as a visiting and resident teacher. He is currently serving as the FPMT touring teacher for FPMT centres and has extensive commitments worldwide.

“Mani Retreat is one of the most extensive and most powerful retreats. It is the most easy retreat, suitable for all ages and everyone is qualified to do practices of compassion.

It can be done during any time of the year (not only during *Saka Dawe* or Vesak merit-multiplying month). *OM MANI PADME HUM* mantra can be recited at any time, any moment, anywhere and any day throughout one’s precious lifetime. It is how we can make our lives as meaningful as they can possibly be.”

— Geshe Tenzin Zopa

