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Tibet House

Cultural Centre of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

STAGES OF MEDITATION - THE MIDDLE SECTION (*Bhavanakrama*)

ACHARYA KAMALASHILA



3-Day Intensive Course

(September 27 - 29, 2013)

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(*Bhavanakrama*)

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Dedicated
to the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama
and
the swift fulfillment of his wishes.

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Preliminary Prayers

The moment you wake up, say and reflect thus:

Enthused by great compassion,
 You taught the immaculate Dharma
 To dispel the perverted views;
 To you, the Buddha Gautama, I pay homage.

Tendrel Nyingpo Mantra (*the essence of Dependent Origination mantra*)

OM YEY DHARMA HAY-TU PRABAWA HAYTUN TAY SHAN
 TATHAGATO HAYA-WATAT TAY-SHAN CHAYO NIRODHA
 EVAM VADI MAHA SHRAMANA YEY SVAHA
 (x 3)

Meaning of the mantra

All phenomena arise from causes;
 The causes are taught by the Tathagata.
 The cessation of the causes as well,
 Is taught by the Great Seer.

Refuge and Generating Bodhicitta

I go for refuge until I am enlightened
 To the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.
 By my accumulations of the practice of giving and so forth,
 May I become a Buddha to benefit all sentient beings. (x 3)

Inspired by wisdom and compassion
 Today in the Buddha's presence,
 I generate the Mind of Full-Awakening
 For the benefit of all sentient beings.

Four Immeasurables

1. *Immeasurable Compassion:*

How good would it be that all beings are freed from suffering and the causes of suffering, primarily the self-grasping ignorance and the self-cherishing attitude. (x 3)
May all beings be freed from suffering and the causes of suffering. (x 3)

I will take the responsibility to free all beings from suffering and the causes of suffering. (x 3)

2. *Immeasurable loving kindness:*

How good would it be that all beings are endowed with happiness and the causes of happiness, primarily Bodhicitta which cherishes others more than oneself and the wisdom of dependent origination. (x 3)

May all beings be endowed with happiness and the causes of happiness. (x 3)

I will take the responsibility that all beings be endowed with happiness and the causes of happiness. (x 3)

3. *Immeasurable joy:*

How good would it be that all beings are not separated from happiness and the causes of happiness. (x 3)

May all beings not be separated from happiness and the causes of happiness. (x 3)

I will take the responsibility that all beings are not separated from happiness and the causes of happiness. (x 3)

4. *Immeasurable equanimity:*

How good would it be that all beings abide in the state of equanimity which is freed of the biased attitude of excessive attachment towards some and aversion towards others. (x 3)

May all beings abide in the state of equanimity which is freed of the biased attitude of excessive attachment towards some and aversion towards others. (x 3)

I will take the responsibility that all beings abide in the state of equanimity which is freed of the biased attitude of excessive attachment towards some and aversion towards others. (x 3)

The Heart Sutra

(Perfection of Wisdom Sutra)

(Skt: *Arya bhagavati prajnaparamita bridaya sutra*)

(Tib: *Sherab Nyingpo*)

I prostrate to the Arya Triple Gem.

Thus did I hear at one time. The Bhagavan was dwelling on Mass of Vultures Mountain in Rajagriha together with a great community of monks and a great community of bodhisattvas. At that time, the Bhagavan was absorbed in the concentration on the categories of phenomenon called “Profound Illumination”.

Also, at that time, the bodhisattva mahasattva arya Avalokiteshvara looked upon the very practice of the profound illumination of wisdom and beheld those five aggregates also as empty of inherent nature.

Then, through the power of Buddha, the venerable Shariputra said this to the bodhisattva mahasattva arya Avalokiteshvara: “How should any child of the lineage train who wishes to practise the activity of the profound perfection of wisdom?”

He said that and the bodhisattva mahasattva arya Avalokiteshvara said this to the venerable Sharadvatiputra: “Shariputra, any son of the lineage or daughter of the lineage who wishes to practise the activity of the profound perfection of wisdom should look upon it like this, correctly and repeatedly beholding those five aggregates also as empty of inherent nature.

Form is empty;

(Pause for a while at this point to meditate on emptiness)

Emptiness is form.

Emptiness is not other than form;

Form is also not other than emptiness.

In the same way, feeling, discrimination, compositional factors and consciousness are empty. Shariputra, likewise, all phenomena are empty; without characteristic; unproduced, unceased; stainless, not without stain; not deficient, not fulfilled. Shariputra, therefore, in emptiness there is no form, no feeling, no discrimination, no compositional factors, no consciousness; no eye, no ear, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind; no visual form, no sound, no odor, no taste, no object of touch, and no phenomenon. There is no eye element and so on up to and including no mind element and no mental consciousness element. There is no ignorance, no extinction of ignorance, and so on up to and including no aging and death and no extinction of aging and death. Similarly, there is no suffering, origination, cessation, and path; there is no exalted wisdom, no attainment, and also no non-attainment.”

“Shariputra, therefore, because there is no attainment, bodhisattvas rely on and dwell in the perfection of wisdom, the mind without obscuration, thus without fear. Having completely passed beyond error, they reach the end-point of nirvana. All the Buddhas who dwell in the three times also manifestly, completely awaken to unsurpassable, perfect, complete enlightenment in reliance on the perfection of wisdom.

Therefore, the mantra of perfection of wisdom, the mantra of great knowledge, the unsurpassed mantra, the mantra equal to the unequalled, the mantra that thoroughly pacifies all suffering, should be known as truth since it is not false.

The mantra of perfection of wisdom is declared:

TADYATHA (OM) GATAY GATAY PARAGATAY PARASAMGATAY
BODHI SVAHA

Shariputra, the bodhisattva mahasattva should train in the profound perfection of wisdom like that.”

Then the Bhagavan arose from that concentration and commended the bodhisattva mahasattva arya Avalokiteshvara saying: “Well said, well said, son of the lineage, it is like that. It is like that; one should practise the profound perfection of wisdom just as you have indicated; even the Tathagatas rejoice.”

The Bhagavan having thus spoken, the venerable Sharadvatiputra, the bodhisattva mahasattva arya Avalokiteshvara, those surrounding in their entirety along with the world of gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas were overjoyed and highly praised that spoken by the Bhagavan.

(This completes the Arya bhagavati prajnaparamita bridaya sutra)

TADYATHA (OM) GATAY GATAY PARAGATAY PARASAMGATAY
BODHI SVAHA

By the teachings of the three Supreme Jewels possessing the power of truth,
 May inner and outer hindrances be transformed;
 May they be dispelled (*clap hands once*);
 May they be non-existent (*clap hands once*);
 May they be pacified (*clap hands once*).
 May all negative forces opposed to Dharma be completely pacified;
 May the host of eighty thousand obstacles be pacified;
 May we be separated from problems and harmful conditions to Dharma;
 May all enjoyments be in accord with the Dharma;
 May there be auspiciousness and perfect happiness here right now.

The Foundation of All Good Qualities

(Tib: *Yonten-shi gyur-ma*)

-- *Lama Tsongkhapa*

1. The foundation of all good qualities is the kind and perfect pure Guru;
Correct devotion to him is the root of the path.
By clearly seeing this and applying great effort,
Please bless me to rely upon him with great respect.
 2. Understanding that the precious freedom of this rebirth is found only once,
Is greatly meaningful and is difficult to find again,
Please bless me to generate the mind that unceasingly,
Day and night, takes its essence.
 3. This life is as impermanent as a water bubble;
Remember how quickly it decays and death comes.
After death, just like a shadow follows the body,
The results of virtuous and non-virtuous karma follow.
 4. Finding firm and definite conviction in this,
Please bless me always to be careful
To abandon even the slightest negativity
And accomplish all virtuous deeds.
 5. Seeking samsaric pleasures is the door to all suffering:
They are uncertain and cannot be relied upon.
Recognizing these shortcomings,
Please bless me to generate the strong wish for the bliss of liberation.
 6. Led by this pure thought,
Mindfulness, alertness and great caution arise.
The root of the teachings is keeping the pratimoksha vows,
Please bless me to accomplish this essential practice.
-

7. Just as I have fallen into the sea of samsara,
So have all mother migratory beings.
Please bless me to see this, train in supreme Bodhicitta,
And bear the responsibility of freeing migratory beings.
 8. Even if I develop only Bodhicitta, but I don't practise
the three types of morality,
I will not achieve enlightenment.
With my clear recognition of this,
Please bless me to practise the bodhisattva vows with
great energy.
 9. Once I have pacified distractions to wrong objects
And correctly analysed the meaning of reality,
Please bless me to generate quickly within my mind stream
The unified path of Calm Abiding and Special Insight.
 10. Having become a pure vessel by training in the general path,
Please bless me to enter
The holy gateway of the fortunate ones,
The supreme Vajra Vehicle.
 11. At that time, the basis of accomplishing the two
attainments
Is keeping pure vows and samaya.
As I have become firmly convinced of this,
Please bless me to protect these vows and pledges like
my life.
 12. Then, having realized the importance of the two stages,
The essence of Vajrayana,
By practicing with great energy, never giving up the four
sessions,
Please bless me to realize the teachings of the Holy Guru.
-

13. Like that, may the Gurus who show the noble path
And the spiritual friends who practise it have long lives.
Please bless me to pacify completely
All outer and inner hindrances.

 14. 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 Vajradhara.
-

STAGES OF MEDITATION – THE MIDDLE SECTION

Homage to the youthful Manjushri.

I shall briefly explain the stages of meditation for those who follow the system of Mahayana Sutras. The intelligent, who wish to actualize omniscience extremely quickly should make a deliberate effort to fulfill its causes and conditions.

What is the Mind ?

It is not possible for omniscience to be produced without causes, because if it were everything could always be omniscient. If things were produced without reliance on something else, they could exist without constraint – there would be no reason why everything could not be omniscient. Therefore, since all functional things arise only occasionally, they depend strictly on their causes. Omniscience too is rare because it does not occur at all times and in all places, and everything cannot become omniscient. Therefore, it definitely depends on causes and conditions.

Training the Mind

Also from among these causes and conditions, you should cultivate correct and complete causes. If you put the wrong causes into practice, even if you work hard for a long time, the desired goal cannot be achieved. It will be like milking a (cow's) horn. Likewise, the result will not be produced when all the causes are not put into effect. For example, if the seed or any other cause is missing, then the result, a

sprout, and so forth, will not be produced. Therefore, those who desire a particular result should cultivate its complete and unmistakable causes and conditions.

If you ask, ‘What are the causes and conditions of the final fruit of omniscience?’ I, who am like a blind man, may not be in a position to explain (by myself), but I shall employ the Buddha’s own words just as he spoke them to his disciples after his enlightenment. He said, “Vajrapani, Lord of Secrets, the transcendental wisdom of omniscience has its root in compassion, arises from a cause – the altruistic thought, the awakening mind of Bodhicitta and the perfection of skillful means.” Therefore, if you are interested in achieving omniscience, you need to practice these three: compassion, the awakening mind of Bodhicitta and skillful means.

Compassion

Moved by compassion, bodhisattvas take the vow to liberate all sentient beings. Then by overcoming their self-centered outlook, they engage eagerly and continuously in the very difficult practices of accumulating merits and insights. Having entered into this practice they will certainly complete the collection of merit and insight. Accomplishing the accumulation of merit and insight is like having omniscience itself in the palm of your hand. Therefore, since compassion is the only root of omniscience, you should become familiar with this practice from the very beginning.

The *Compendium of Perfect Dharma* reads, “O Buddha, a Bodhisattva should not train in many practices. If a

Bodhisattva properly holds to one Dharma and learns it perfectly, he has all the Buddha's qualities in the palm of his hands. And, if you ask what that one Dharma is, it is great compassion."

The Buddhas have already achieved all their own objectives, but remain in the cycle of existence for as long as there are sentient beings. This is because they possess great compassion. They also do not enter the immensely peaceful abode of nirvana like the Hearers. Considering the interests of the sentient beings, they abandon the peaceful abode of nirvana as if it were a burning iron house. Therefore, great compassion alone is the cause of the non-abiding Nirvana of the Buddha.

Developing Equanimity, the Root of Loving Kindness

The way to meditate on compassion will be taught from the outset. Begin the practice by meditating on equanimity. Try to actualize impartiality towards all sentient beings by eliminating attachment and hatred. All sentient beings desire happiness and do not desire misery. Think deeply about how, in this beginningless cycle of existence, there is not one sentient being who has not been my friend and relative hundreds of times. Therefore, since there is no ground for being attached to some and hating others, I shall develop a mind of equanimity towards all sentient beings. Begin the meditation on equanimity by thinking of a neutral person and then consider people who are friends and foes. After the mind has developed equanimity towards all sentient beings meditate on loving-kindness. Moisten the mental continuum with the water of loving-kindness and prepare it as you would a piece of fertile

ground. When the seed of compassion is planted in such a mind, germination will be swift, proper and complete. Once you have irrigated the mind stream with loving-kindness, meditate on compassion.

Identifying the Nature of Suffering

The compassionate mind has the nature of wishing all suffering beings to be free from suffering. Meditate on compassion for all sentient beings, because the beings in the three realms of existence are intensely tortured by the three types of sufferings in various forms. The Buddha has said that heat and other types of pain constantly torture beings in the hells for a very long time. He has also said that hungry ghosts are scorched by hunger and thirst and experience immense physical suffering. We can also see animals suffering in many miserable ways: they eat each other, become angry, and are hurt and killed.

We can see that the human beings too experience various acute kinds of pain. Not able to find what they want, they are resentful and harm each other. They suffer the great pain of losing the desirable things and confronting the undesirable things, as well as the pain of poverty. There are those whose minds are bound by various fetters of disturbing emotions like craving. Others are in turmoil with different types of wrong views. These are all causes of misery, therefore, they are always in excruciating pain, like being on a precipice.

Gods suffer the misery of change. For example, signs of impending death and their fall to unfortunate states

constantly oppress the minds of gods of the desire realm. How can they live in happiness?

Pervasive misery is what arises under the power of causes characterized by actions and disturbing emotions. It has the nature and characteristics of momentary disintegration and pervades all wandering beings. Therefore, see all wandering beings as immersed in a great fire of misery. Think that they are all like you in not desiring misery at all: ‘Alas! All my beloved sentient beings are in such pain. What can I do to set them free?’ and make their sufferings your own. Whether you are engaged in one-pointed meditation or pursuing your ordinary activities, meditate on compassion at all times, focusing on all sentient beings and wishing that they all be free from suffering. Begin by meditating on your friends and relatives. Recognize how they experience the various sufferings that have been explained. Then having seen all sentient beings as equal with no difference between them, you should meditate on sentient beings to whom you are neutral. When the compassion you feel towards them is the same as the compassion you feel toward your friends and relatives, meditate on compassion for all sentient beings throughout the ten directions of the universe. Just as a mother responds to her small, beloved and suffering child, when you develop a spontaneous and equal sense of compassion towards all sentient beings, you have perfected the practice of compassion. And this is known as great compassion.

Meditation on loving-kindness begins with friends and people you are fond of. It has the nature of wishing that they meet with happiness. Gradually extend the meditation to include strangers and even your enemies. Habituating

yourself with compassion you will gradually generate a spontaneous wish to liberate all sentient beings. Therefore, having familiarized yourself with compassion as the basis, meditate on the awakening mind of bodhicitta.

Bodhicitta is of two types: conventional and ultimate. Conventional bodhicitta is the cultivation of the initial thought that aspires to attain unsurpassable and perfectly consummated Buddhahood in order to benefit all wandering sentient beings, after having taken the vow, out of compassion to release all of them from suffering. That conventional bodhicitta should be cultivated in a process similar to that described in the chapter on moral ethics (in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*), generating this mind by taking the Bodhisattva vow before a master who abides by the bodhisattva precepts. After generating the conventional awakening mind of bodhicitta, endeavour to cultivate the ultimate awakening mind of bodhicitta. The ultimate bodhicitta is transcendental and free from all elaborations. It is extremely clear, the object of the ultimate, stainless, unwavering, like a butter lamp undisturbed by the wind.

This is achieved through constant and respectful familiarity with the yoga of calm abiding meditation and special insight over a long period of time. The *Unravelling the True Intention Arya Sutra* says, “O Maitreya you must know that all the virtuous Dharmas of Hearers, Bodhisattvas or Tathagatas, whether worldly or transcendental, are the fruits of calm abiding meditation and special insight.” Since all kinds of concentration can be included in these two, all yogis must at all times seek calm abiding meditation and special insight.

Again the *Unravelling the True Intention Arya Sutra* says: “The Buddha said, “I declare that it should be known that the teachings of various types of concentrations sought by Hearers, Bodhisattvas and Tathagatas are all contained in calm abiding meditation and special insight.””

Yogis cannot eliminate mental obscurations merely by familiarising themselves with calm abiding meditation alone. It will only suppress the disturbing emotions temporarily. Without the light of wisdom, the latent potential of the disturbing emotions cannot be thoroughly destroyed, and therefore their complete destruction will not be possible. For this reason the *Unravelling the True Intention Arya Sutra* says, ‘Concentration can suppress the disturbing emotions properly and the wisdom can thoroughly destroy their latent potential.’

The King of Meditative Stabilization Arya Sutra also says:

Even if you meditate with single-pointed concentration
 You will not destroy the misconception of the self
 And your disturbing emotions will disturb you again;
 This is like Udrak’s single-pointed meditation.
 When the selflessness of phenomena is examined
 discretely,
 And meditations are performed on the basis of that
 analysis,
 That is the cause of achieving the resultant liberation;
 No other cause can bring peace.

Also the *Bodhisattva Compilation* says, “Those who haven’t heard these various teachings of the *Bodhisattva Compilation* and have also not heard the implemented teaching on

Arya's Morality, who think that single-pointed concentration alone is enough, will fall into the pit of arrogance due to pride. As such, they cannot gain complete release from rebirth, old age, sickness, death, misery, lamentation, suffering, mental unhappiness and disturbances. Neither do they gain complete liberation from the cycle of the six states of existence, nor from the heaps of suffering mental and physical aggregates. Keeping this in mind the Tathagata has said that hearing the teachings will help you gain liberation from old age and death." For these reasons, those who wish to attain the thoroughly purified transcendent wisdom by eliminating all obscurations should meditate on wisdom while remaining in calm abiding meditation.

Wisdom

The Heap of Jewel Arya Sutra says: "Single-pointed concentration is achieved by adhering to moral ethics. With the achievement of single-pointed concentration, you meditate on wisdom. Wisdom helps you to attain a pure pristine awareness. Through pure pristine awareness your moral conduct is perfected." *The Meditation on Faith in the Arya Mahayana Sutra* says: "O child of noble family, if you do not abide by wisdom, I cannot say how Bodhisattva's have faith in the Mahayana, or how they will set forth in the Mahayana. O child of noble family, you should know that this is because the Bodhisattvas' faith in Mahayana and setting forth in the Mahayana occurs as a result of contemplating the perfect Dharma and reality with a mind free of distraction."

A yogi's mind will be distracted to various objects if he cultivates only special insight without developing on a calmly abiding mind. It will be unstable like a butter lamp in wind. Since clarity of pristine awareness will be absent, these two (special insight and a calmly abiding mind) should be cultivated equally. Therefore, the *Arya Sutra of the Great and Complete Transcendence of Suffering* says: "Hearers cannot see Buddha-nature, because their single-pointed absorption is stronger and wisdom is weaker." "Bodhisattvas can see it, but not clearly, because their wisdom is stronger and their single-pointed concentration is weaker. Whereas, Tathagatas can see all, because they possess a calmly abiding mind and a special insight to an equal degree."

Due to the power of calm abiding meditation, the mind will not be disturbed by the wind of conceptual thoughts, like a butter lamp undisturbed by the breeze. Special insight eliminates every stain of wrong views, thus you will not be affected by (the views of) others.

The Moon Lamp Sutra says: "By the force of calm abiding meditation, the mind will become unwavering, and with special insight it will become like a mountain." Therefore, maintain a yogic practice on them both.

Common Prerequisites for Meditating on Calm Abiding and Special Insight

Initially the yogi should seek the prerequisites that can assist him in actualizing calm abiding meditation and special insight quickly and easily.

The prerequisites necessary for the development of calm abiding meditation are: to live in a conducive environment; to limit your desires and practice contentment; not being involved in too many activities; maintaining pure moral ethics and fully eliminating attachment and all other kinds of conceptual thoughts.

A conducive environment should be known by these five characteristics: providing easy access to food and clothes; being free of evil beings and enemies; being free from disease; containing good friends who maintain moral ethics and who share similar views; and being visited by few people in the day time and with little noise at night.

Limiting your desires refers to not being excessively attached to many or good clothes, such as religious robes, and so forth. The practice of contentment means always being satisfied with any little thing, like inferior religious robes, and so forth. Not being involved in many activities refers to giving up ordinary activities like business; avoiding too close association with householders and monks; and totally abandoning the practice of medicine and astrology.

Even in the case of the statement that a transgression of the Hearers' vows cannot be restored, if there is regret and an awareness of the intension not to repeat it, and the awareness of the lack of a true identity of the mind that performed the action, or familiarity with the lack of true identity of all phenomena, that person's morality can be said to be pure. This should be understood from *the Arya Sutra on the Elimination of Ajatashatru's Regret*. You should

overcome your regret and make special effort in meditation.

Being mindful of the various defects of attachment in this life and future lives helps eliminate misconceptions in this regard. Some common features of both beautiful and ugly things in the cycle of existence are that they are all unstable and subject to disintegration. It is beyond doubt that you will be separated from all these things without delay. So, meditate on why you should be so excessively attached to these things and then discard all misconceptions.

What are the prerequisites of special insight? They are relying on holy persons, seriously seeking extensive instruction, and proper contemplation.

What type of holy person should you rely upon? One who has heard many (teachings), who expresses himself clearly, who is endowed with compassion and able to withstand hardship.

What is meant by seriously seeking extensive instruction? This is to listen seriously with respect to the definitive and interpretable meaning of the twelve branches of the Buddha's teachings. The *Unravelling the True Intention Arya Sutra* says: "Not listening to superior beings' teachings as you wish is an obstacle to special insight." The same sutra says: "Special insight arises from its cause, correct view, which in turn arises from listening and contemplation." The *Questions of Narayana Arya Sutra* says: "Through the experience of listening (to teachings) you gain wisdom, and with wisdom disturbing emotions are thoroughly pacified."

What is meant by proper contemplation? It is properly establishing the definitive and interpretable sutras. When Bodhisattvas are free of doubt, they can meditate single-pointedly. Otherwise, if doubt and indecision beset them, they will be like a man at the crossroads uncertain of which path to follow.

Yogis should at all times avoid fish, meat, and so forth, should eat with moderation and avoid foods that are not conducive to health.

Thus, Bodhisattvas who have assembled all the prerequisites for calm abiding meditation and special insight should enter into meditation.

When meditating, the yogi should first complete all the preparatory practices. He should go to the toilet and in a pleasant location free of disturbing noise he should think, 'I will deliver all sentient beings to the state of enlightenment.' Then he should manifest great compassion, the thought wishing to liberate all sentient beings, and pay homage to all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in the ten directions by touching the five limbs of his body to the ground.

He should place the image of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, such as a painting, in front of him or in some other place. He should make as many offerings and praises as he can. He should confess his misdeeds and rejoice in the merit of all other beings. Then, he should sit in the full lotus posture of Vairochana or the half lotus posture on a comfortable cushion. The eyes should not be too widely open or too tightly closed. Let them focus on the tip of the

nose. The body should not be bent forward or backward. Keep it straight and turn the attention inwards. The shoulders should rest in their natural position and the head should not lean back, forward or to either side. The nose should be in line with the naval. The teeth and lips should rest in their natural state with the tongue touching the upper palate. Breathe very gently and softly without causing any noise, without laboring and without unevenness. Inhale and exhale naturally, slowly and unnoticeably.

The Practice of Calm Abiding

Calm abiding meditation should be achieved first. Calm abiding is that mind which has overcome distraction to external objects and which spontaneously and continuously turns towards the object of meditation with bliss and pliancy.

That which properly examines suchness from within a state of calm abiding is special insight. *The Cloud of Jewel Arya Sutra* reads, “Calm abiding meditation is a single-pointed mind; special insight makes specific analysis of the ultimate.” Also, from the *Unravelling the True Intention Arya Sutra*: “Maitreya asked, ‘O Buddha, how should (people) thoroughly search for calm abiding meditation and gain expertise in special insight?’ The Buddha answered, ‘Maitreya, I have given the following teachings to the Bodhisattvas: Sutras; Melodious Praises; Prophetic teachings; Verses; Specific Instructions; Advice from Specific Experiences; Expressions of Realization; Legends; Birth Tales; Extensive Teachings; Marvelous Teachings; Established Doctrine and Instructions.’”

‘Bodhisattvas should properly listen to these teachings, remember their contents, train in verbal recitation, and thoroughly examine them mentally. With perfect comprehension, they should go alone to remote areas and reflect on these teachings and continue to focus their minds upon them. They should focus mentally only on those topics that they have reflected about and maintain this continuously. That is called mental engagement.’”

“When the mind has been repeatedly engaged in this way and physical and mental pliancy have been achieved, that mind is called calm abiding. This is how Bodhisattvas properly seek the calmly abiding mind.”

“When the Bodhisattva has achieved physical and mental pliancy and abides only in them, he eliminates mental distraction. The phenomenon that has been contemplated as the object of inner single-pointed concentration should be analyzed and regarded as like a reflection. This reflection or image, which is the object of single-pointed concentration, should be thoroughly discerned as an object of knowledge. It should be completely investigated and thoroughly examined. Practice patience and take delight in it. With proper analysis, observe and understand it. This is what is known as special insight. Thus, Bodhisattvas are skilled in the ways of special insight.”

The yogis who are interested in actualizing a calmly abiding mind should initially concentrate closely on the fact that the twelve set of scriptures – the Sutras, Melodious Praises and so forth – can be summarized as all leading to suchness, that they will lead to suchness, and that they have led to suchness.

One way of doing this meditation is to set the mind closely on the mental and physical aggregates, as an object that includes all phenomena. Another way is to place the mind on an image of the Buddha. The *King of Meditative Stabilization Sutra* says:

With his body gold in colour,
The lord of the universe is extremely beautiful.
The Bodhisattva who places his mind on this object,
Is referred to as one in meditative absorption.

In this way place the mind on the object of your choice and, having done so, repeatedly and continuously place the mind. Having placed the mind in this way, examine it and check whether it is properly focused on the object. Also check for dullness and see whether the mind is being distracted to external objects.

If the mind is found to be dull due to sleepiness and mental torpor or if you fear that dullness is approaching, then the mind should attend to a supremely delightful object such as an image of the Buddha, or a notion of light. In this process, having dispelled dullness the mind should try to see the object very clearly. You should recognize the presence of dullness when the mind cannot see the object very clearly, when you feel as if you are blind or in a dark place or that you have closed your eyes. If, while you are in meditation, your mind chases after qualities of external objects such as form, or turns its attention to other phenomena, or is distracted by desire for an object you have previously experienced, or if you suspect distraction is approaching, reflect that all composite phenomena are

impermanent. Think about suffering and so forth, topics that will temper the mind.

In this process, distraction should be eliminated and with the rope of mindfulness and alertness, the elephant-like mind should be fastened to the tree of the object of meditation. When you find that the mind is free of dullness and excitement and that it naturally abides on the object, you should relax your effort and remain neutral as long as it continues thus.

You should understand that calm abiding is actualized when you enjoy physical and mental pliancy through prolonged familiarity with the meditation and the mind gains the power to engage the object as it chooses.

Actualising Special Insight

After realising calm abiding, meditate on special insight thinking as follows: All the teachings of the Buddha are perfect teachings and they directly or indirectly reveal and lead to suchness with utmost clarity. If you understand suchness, you will be free of all the nets of wrong views, just as darkness is dispelled when light appears. Mere calm abiding meditation cannot purify pristine awareness, nor can it eliminate the darkness of obscurations. When I meditate properly on suchness with wisdom, pristine awareness will be purified. Only with wisdom can I realize suchness. Only with wisdom can I effectively eradicate obscurations. Therefore, engaging in calm abiding meditation I shall search for suchness with wisdom. And I shall not remain content with calm abiding alone.

What is suchness like? It is the nature of all phenomena that ultimately they are empty of the self of person and the self of phenomena. This is realized through the perfection of wisdom and not otherwise. *Unravelling the True Intention Arya Sutra* reads, “O Tathagata, by which perfection do Bodhisattvas apprehend the identitylessness of phenomena?” ‘Avalokiteshvara, it is apprehended by the perfection of wisdom.” Therefore, meditate on wisdom while engaging in calm abiding.

Yogis should analyse in the following manner: a person is not observed as separate from the mental and physical aggregates, the elements and sense powers. Nor is a person of the nature of the aggregates and so forth, because the aggregates and so forth have the entity of being many and impermanent. Others have imputed the person as permanent and single. The person as a phenomenon cannot exist except as one or many, because there is no other way of existing. Therefore, we must conclude that the assertion of the worldly “I” and “mine” is wholly mistaken.

Meditation on the selflessness of phenomena should also be done in the following manner: phenomena, in short, are included under five aggregates, the twelve sources of perception and the eighteen elements. The physical aspects of the aggregates, sources of perception and elements are, in the ultimate sense, nothing other than aspects of the mind. This is because when they are broken into subtle particles and the nature of the paths of these subtle particles is individually examined, no definite identity can be found.

In the ultimate sense, the mind too cannot be real. How can the mind that apprehends only the false nature or physical form, and so forth, and appears in various aspects, be real? Just as physical forms, and so forth, are false, since the mind that does not exist separately from the physical forms, and so forth, which are false, it too is false. Just as physical forms, and so forth, possess various aspects and their identities are neither one nor many, similarly, since the mind is not different from them, its identity too is neither one nor many. Therefore, the mind by nature is like an illusion.

Analyse that, just like the mind, the nature of all phenomena too is like an illusion. In this way, when the identity of the mind is specifically examined by wisdom, in the ultimate sense it is perceived neither within nor without. It is also not perceived in the absence of both. Neither the mind of the past, nor that of the future, nor that of the present is perceived. When the mind is born, it comes from nowhere, and when it ceases it goes nowhere because it is inapprehensible, un-demonstrable and non-physical. If you ask, “What is the entity of that which is inapprehensible, un-demonstrable and non-physical?” *The Heap of Jewel Arya Sutra* states: “O Kashyapa, when the mind is thoroughly sought, it cannot be found. What is not found cannot be perceived. And what is not perceived is neither past nor future nor present.” Through such analysis, the beginning of the mind is ultimately not seen, the end of the mind is ultimately not seen and the middle of the mind is ultimately not seen.

All phenomena should be understood as lacking an end and a middle, just as the mind does not have an end or a

middle. With the knowledge that the mind is without an end or a middle, no identity of the mind is perceived. What is thoroughly realized by the mind too is realized as being empty. By realizing that, the very identity, which is established as the aspect of the mind, like the identity of physical form, and so forth, is also ultimately not perceived. In this way, when the person does not ultimately see the identity of all phenomena through wisdom, he will not analyze whether physical form is permanent or impermanent, empty or not empty, contaminated or not contaminated, produced or non-produced and existent or non-existent. Just as physical form is not examined, similarly feeling, recognition, compositional factors and consciousness are not examined. When the object does not exist, its characteristics also cannot exist. So how can they be examined? In this way, when the person does not firmly apprehend the entity of a thing as ultimately existing, having investigated it with wisdom, the practitioner engages in non-conceptual single-pointed concentration. And thus the identitylessness of all phenomena is realized.

Those who do not meditate with wisdom by analyzing the entity of things specifically, but merely meditate on the elimination of the mental activity, cannot avert conceptual thoughts and also cannot realize identitylessness, because they lack the light of wisdom. If the fire of consciousness knowing phenomena as they are is produced from individual analysis of suchness, then like the fire produced by rubbing wood it will burn the wood of conceptual thought. The Buddha has spoken in this way.

The Cloud of Jewel Arya Sutra also states, “One skilled in discerning the faults engages in the yoga of meditation of

emptiness in order to get rid of all conceptual elaborations. Such a person, due to his repeated meditation on emptiness, when he thoroughly searches for the object and the identity of the object, which delights the mind and distracts it, realizes them to be empty. When that very mind is also examined, it is realized to be empty. When the identity of what is realized by the mind is thoroughly sought, this too is realized as empty. Realizing in this way one enters into the yoga of signlessness.” This shows that only those who have engaged in complete analysis can enter into the yoga of signlessness.

It has been explained very clearly that through mere elimination of mental activity, without examining the identity of things with wisdom, it is not possible to engage in non-conceptual meditation. Thus, concentration is done after the actual identity of things like physical form, and so forth, has been perfectly analyzed with wisdom and not by concentrating on physical form, and so forth. Concentration is also not done by abiding between this world and the world beyond, because physical forms, and so forth, are not perceived. It is thus called the non-abiding concentration. (Such a practitioner) is then called a meditator of supreme wisdom, because, by specifically examining the identity of all things with wisdom, he has perceived nothing. This is as stated in the *Space Treasure Arya Sutra* and the *Jewel in the Crown Arya Sutra* and so forth.

In this way, by entering into the suchness of the selflessness of persons and phenomena, you are free from concepts and analysis, because there is nothing to be thoroughly examined and observed. You are free from expression and with single-pointed mental engagement you

automatically enter into meditation without exertion. Thus, you very clearly meditate on suchness and abide in it. While abiding in that meditation, the continuity of the mind should not be distracted. When the mind is distracted to external objects due to attachment, and so forth, such distraction should be noted. Quickly pacify the distraction by meditating on the repulsive aspect of such objects and swiftly replace the mind on suchness. If the mind appears to be disinclined to do that, reflecting on the advantages of single-pointed concentration, meditate with delight. The disinclination should be pacified by also seeing the defects of distraction.

If the function of the mind becomes unclear and starts sinking, or when there is a risk of it sinking due to being overpowered by mental torpor or sleep, then as before quickly attempt to overcome such dullness by focusing the mind on supremely delightful things. Then the object suchness should be held in very tight focus. At times when the mind is observed to be excited or tempted to become distracted by the memory of past events of laughter and play, then as in the earlier cases pacify the distraction by reflecting on such things as impermanence, and so forth, which will help subdue the mind. Then, again endeavor to engage the mind on suchness without applying counter forces.

If and when the mind spontaneously engages in meditation on suchness, free of sinking and mental agitation, it should be left naturally and your efforts should be relaxed. If effort is applied when the mind is in meditative equipoise, it will distract the mind. But if effort is not applied when the mind becomes dull, it will become like a blind man due

to extreme dullness and you will not achieve special insight. So, when the mind becomes dull, apply effort and when in absorption effort should be relaxed. When, by meditating on special insight, excessive wisdom is generated and calm abiding is weak, the mind will waver like a butter lamp in the wind and you will not perceive suchness very clearly. Therefore, at that time meditate on calm abiding. When calm abiding meditation becomes excessive, meditate on wisdom.

Unifying Method and Wisdom

When both are equally engaged, keep still, effortlessly, so long as there is no physical or mental discomfort. If physical or mental discomfort arises, see the whole world like an illusion, a mirage, a dream, a reflection of the moon in water and an apparition. And think: “These sentient beings are very troubled in the cycle of existence due to their not understanding such profound knowledge.” Then, generate great compassion and the awakening mind of bodhicitta thinking: “I shall earnestly endeavor to help them understand suchness.” Take rest. Again, in the same way, engage in a single-pointed concentration on the non-appearance of all phenomena. If the mind is discouraged, then similarly take rest. This is the path of engaging in a union of calm abiding meditation and special insight. It focuses on the image conceptually and non-conceptually.

Thus, through this progress, a yogi should meditate on suchness for an hour or half a session in the night or one full session or for as long as is comfortable. This is the meditative stabilization thoroughly discerning the ultimate, as taught in the *Descent into Lanka Sutra*.

Then, if you wish to arise from the concentration, while your legs are still crossed think as follows: “Although ultimately all these phenomena lack identity, conventionally they definitely exist. If this were not the case, how would the relationship between cause and effect, and so forth, prevail? The Buddha has also said:

Things are produced conventionally;
But ultimately they lack intrinsic identity.

Sentient beings with a childish attitude exaggerate phenomena, thinking of them as having an intrinsic identity when they lack it. Thus attributing intrinsic existence to those things that lack it confuses their minds, and they wander in the cycle of existence for a long time. For these reasons, I shall endeavor without fail to achieve the omniscient state by accomplishing the unsurpassable accumulations of merits and insights in order to help them realize suchness.” Then slowly arise from the cross-legged position and make prostration to the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas of the ten directions. Make them offerings and sing their praises. And make vast prayers by reciting the *Prayer of Noble Conduct*, and so forth. Thereafter, engage in conscious efforts to actualize the accumulations of merit and insight by practicing generosity, and so forth, which are endowed with the essence of emptiness and great compassion.

If you act thus, your meditative stabilization will actualize that emptiness that possesses the best of all qualities. The *Jewel in the Crown Arya Sutra* states, “Donning the armour of loving-kindness, while abiding in the state of great compassion, practice meditative stabilization that actualizes

the emptiness possessing the best of all qualities. What is the emptiness possessing the best of all qualities? It is that which is not divorced from generosity, ethics, patience, effort, meditative stabilization, wisdom or skillful means.” Bodhisattvas must rely on virtuous practices like generosity as means to thoroughly ripen all sentient beings and in order to perfect the place, body and manifold retinue.

If it were not so, what would be the causes of these fields, the field of Buddhas and so forth, that the Buddha spoke about? The omniscient wisdom possessing the best of all qualities can be accomplished through generosity and other skillful means. Therefore, the Buddha has said that omniscient wisdom is perfected by skillful means. Therefore, Bodhisattvas should also cultivate generosity and other skillful means and not only emptiness.

The Summary of the Extensive Classification of All Phenomena Arya Sutra also says, “O Maitreya, Bodhisattvas thoroughly accomplish the six perfections in order to attain the final fruit of Buddhahood. But to this the foolish respond, ‘Bodhisattvas should train only in the perfection of wisdom – what is the need for the rest of the perfection?’ They repudiate the other perfections. Maitreya, what do you think of this? When the king of Kashi offered his flesh to the hawk for the sake of a pigeon was it a corruption of wisdom?” Maitreya replied, “This is not so.” The Buddha said, “Maitreya, Bodhisattvas accumulated roots of merits through their deeds in conjunction with the six perfections. Are these roots of merits harmful?” Maitreya replied, “O Buddha, this is not so.” The Buddha further spoke, “Maitreya, you have also correctly practiced the perfection of generosity for sixty aeons, the perfection of ethics for

sixty eons, the perfection of patience for sixty eons, the perfection of enthusiastic perseverance for sixty aeons, the perfection of meditative stabilization for sixty eons, and the perfection of wisdom for sixty eons. To this the foolish respond: ‘There is only one way to attain Buddhahood. And that is the way of emptiness.’ Their practice is completely mistaken.”

A Bodhisattva possessing wisdom but not skillful means would be like the Hearers, who are unable to engage in the deeds of the Buddhas. But they can do so when supported by skillful means. As the *Heap of Jewels Arya Sutra* says, “Kashyapa, it is like this. For instance, kings who are supported by ministers can accomplish all their purposes. Similarly, (when) the wisdom of Bodhisattva is thoroughly supported by skillful means, such a Bodhisattva also performs all the activities of a Buddha.” The philosophical view of the path of Bodhisattvas is different and the philosophical path of the non-Buddhists and Hearers are also different. For example, since the philosophical view of the path of non-Buddhists perversely observe a (truly existent) self, and so forth, such a path is completely and always divorced from wisdom. Therefore, they cannot attain liberation.

The Hearers are separated from great compassion and devoid of skillful means. Therefore, they single-mindedly endeavor to achieve Nirvana. In their path, Bodhisattvas enshrine wisdom and skillful means, so they endeavor to achieve the non-abiding Nirvana. The Bodhisattva path consists of wisdom and skillful means and, therefore, (they) attain the non-abiding Nirvana. Because of the power of wisdom, (they) do not fall into the cycle of existence and

due to the power of skillful means, (they) do not fall to Nirvana.

The *Hill of Gaya Head Arya Sutra* says, “The Bodhisattva path, in short is twofold. The two are skillful means and wisdom.” The *First Among the Supreme and Glorious* says, “The perfection of wisdom is the mother and expertise in skillful means is the father.”

The Teaching of Vimalakirti also says, “What is bondage for Bodhisattvas and what is liberation? Upholding a life in the cycle of existence devoid of skillful means is bondage for Bodhisattvas. (But) to lead a life in the cycle of existence with skillful means is liberation. Upholding a life in the cycle of existence devoid of wisdom is bondage for Bodhisattvas. (But) to lead a life in the cycle of existence with wisdom is liberation. Wisdom not conjoined with skillful means is bondage, (but) wisdom conjoined with skillful means is liberation. This skillful means not conjoined with wisdom is bondage, (but) skillful means conjoined with wisdom is liberation.”

If a Bodhisattva cultivates mere wisdom, (he) falls to the Nirvana desired by Hearers. Thus, it is like bondage. And (he) cannot achieve non-abiding Nirvana. So, wisdom separated from skillful means is bondage for Bodhisattvas. Therefore, just as a person chilled by the wind seeks the comfort of fire, so a Bodhisattva cultivates the wisdom of emptiness along with skillful means to eliminate the wind of wrong view. (But he) does not (endeavor) to actualize it as the Hearers do. The *Ten Qualities Arya Sutra* says, “O son of a good family, it is like this. For instance, a person who is thoroughly devoted to fire, who respects it and regards it

as guru will not think: ‘Because I respect, honour and venerate fire, I should hold it in both hands.’ This is because he realizes that to do so would give him physical pain and cause mental discomfort. Similarly, a Bodhisattva also is aware of Nirvana, but also does not try to actualize it. This is because he realizes that by doing so he would be turning away from enlightenment.”

If he relies merely on skillful means the Bodhisattva will not transcend the ordinary level and thus there will only be bondage. Therefore, (he) cultivates skillful means along with wisdom. By the power of wisdom, Bodhisattvas can transform even the disturbing emotions into nectar, like poison under a tantric spell. There is no need to express (the goodness) of generosity, and so forth, which leads to naturally elevated states of existence.

The Heap of Jewels Arya Sutra states, “Kashyapa, it is like this. Due to the power of Tantra and medicine a poison may not cause death. Similarly, since the disturbing emotions of Bodhisattvas are under the power of wisdom, they cannot cause them downfalls. Therefore, due to the power of skillful means Bodhisattvas do not abandon the cycle of existence; they do not fall to Nirvana. Due to the power of wisdom, (they) eliminate all objects (misconceived as truly existent) and therefore (they) do not fall in the cycle of existence. Thus, they attain the non-abiding Nirvana of Buddhahood alone.” *The Space Treasure Arya Sutra* also says, “Because of the knowledge of wisdom, Bodhisattvas eliminate all disturbing emotions and due to their knowledge of skillful means, they do not abandon sentient beings.” *Unravelling the True Intention Arya Sutra* also says, “I have not taught that someone who is not concerned for

the welfare of sentient beings and who is not inclined to realize the nature of all composite phenomena will achieve unsurpassable and perfectly accomplished Buddhahood.” Therefore, those interested in Buddhahood must cultivate both wisdom and skillful means.

While you are meditating on transcendental wisdom or while you are in deep meditative absorption, you cannot engage in skillful means such as practicing generosity. But skillful means can be cultivated along with wisdom during the preparatory and post-meditative periods. That is the way to engage in wisdom and skillful means simultaneously.

Moreover, this is the path of Bodhisattvas in which they engage in an integrated practice of wisdom and skillful means. This is cultivating the transcendental path that is thoroughly imbued with great compassion focusing on all sentient beings. And while practicing skillful means, after arising from meditative absorption, you practice generosity and other skillful means, without misconception, like a magician. *The Teaching of Akshayamati Sutra* says, “What is a Bodhisattva’s skillful means and what wisdom is actualised? The Bodhisattva’s skillful means are thinking and placing the mind closely on sentient beings with great compassion while in meditative absorption. And engaging in meditative equipoise with peace and extreme peace is wisdom.” There are many more such references. The *Chapter on Conquering Evil Forces* also says: “Furthermore, the perfect activities of Bodhisattvas refer to conscious efforts by the mind of wisdom and the collection of all meritorious Dharma by the mind of skillful means. The mind of wisdom also leads to selflessness, the non-existence of (inherently existent)

sentient beings, and of life, sustenance and the person. And the mind of skillful means leads to thoroughly ripening all sentient beings.”

The Summary of the Extensive Classification of All Phenomena Arya Sutra also states:

Just as a magician endeavors to free his creation,
 Since he already knows the (nature of his) creation,
 He has no attachment to it.
 Similarly, the three worlds are like an illusion,
 Which the wise Buddha discerned.
 He wore an armour of perseverance for sentient beings,
 (Although) he had discerned (the nature of) sentient beings
 as thus since early on.

It is because of the Bodhisattva’s practice of wisdom and skillful means that it is said: In their activities they remain in the cycle of existence, but in their thoughts they abide in Nirvana. In this way, become familiar with generosity and other skillful means that are dedicated to unsurpassable and perfectly accomplished enlightenment, having the essence of emptiness and great compassion. In order to generate the ultimate awakening mind of Bodhicitta, as was done earlier, practice calm abiding meditation and special insight as much as you can in regular sessions. As it was taught in the *Pure Field of Engagement Arya Sutra*, always familiarise yourself with skillful means by closely placing mindfulness on the good qualities of Bodhisattvas who work for the welfare of sentient beings at all times.

Those who become familiar with compassion, skillful means and the awakening mind of Bodhicitta in this way

will undoubtedly excel in this life. Buddhas and Bodhisattvas will always be seen in dreams, and other pleasant dreams will also occur, and appreciative gods will protect you. There will be immense accumulation of merit and insight at every moment. Disturbing emotions and other bad states of existence will be purified. You will enjoy much happiness and mental peace at all times and a great many beings will cherish you. Physically, too, you will be free of disease. You will attain supreme mental facility, and thus you will achieve special qualities like clairvoyance.

Then you will travel by miraculous power to innumerable worlds, making offerings to the Buddhas and listen to teachings from them. At the time of death too you will undoubtedly see Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. In future lives you will be reborn in special families and places, where you will not be separated from Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Thus, you will effortlessly accomplish all accumulations of merit and insight. You will have great wealth, a large following and many attendants. Possessing a sharp intelligence, you will be able to ripen the mind streams of many beings. In all lives such a person will be able to recall past lives. Try to understand such immeasurable advantages that are also described in other sutras.

In this way, if you meditate on compassion, skillful means and the awakening mind of Bodhicitta for a long time with great admiration, the mind stream will gradually become thoroughly purified and ripened. Then, like producing fire by rubbing together pieces of wood, you will accomplish your meditation on the perfect reality. You will thus achieve an extremely clear knowledge of the sphere of phenomena free from conceptual elaborations, the

transcendental wisdom free of the impending nets of conceptual thought. The wisdom of ultimate Bodhicitta is stainless like an unwavering butter lamp undisturbed by the wind. Thus, such a mind in the entity of ultimate Bodhicitta is included within the path of seeing which apprehends the selfless nature of all phenomena. Through this achievement you enter into the path focusing on the reality of things and you are then born in the family of Tathagatas; you enter the stainless state of a Bodhisattva, turn away from all wandering births, abide in the suchness of Bodhisattvas and attain the first Bodhisattva level. You can find more details of these advantages in other texts such as the *Ten Spiritual Levels*. This is how meditative stabilization focusing on suchness is taught in the *Descent into Lanka Arya Sutra*. This is how Bodhisattvas enter into the non-conceptual meditation free from elaborations.

Those in the Engaging Through Aspiration Level are said to engage through thought and not through pure application. Once that wisdom is evolved one enters (this level). In this way, a person who has entered the first level, later on in the path of meditation familiarizes himself with the two wisdoms of the transcendental state and the subsequent wisdom and skillful means. In this way he gradually purifies the subtlest accumulation of obscurations that are the object of purification of the path of meditation. And in order to achieve higher qualities he thoroughly purifies the lower spiritual level. All purposes and objectives are completely fulfilled by entering the transcendental wisdom of the Tathagatas and by entering the ocean of omniscience. In this way by gradual practice, the mind stream is thoroughly purified. The *Descent into Lanka Arya Sutra* explains this. *The Unravelling of the Thought*

too reads, “In order to achieve those higher levels, the mind should be purified just as you refine gold, until you realize the unsurpassable and perfectly consummated Buddhahood.”

Entering the ocean of omniscience, you possess impeccable jewel-like qualities to sustain sentient beings and these fulfill your previous positive prayers. The individual then becomes the embodiment of compassion, possessing various skillful means that function spontaneously and work in various emanations in the interest of all wandering beings. In addition, all marvelous attributes are perfected. With total elimination of all defilements and their latent potential, all Buddhas abide to help every sentient being. Through such realization, generate faith in the Buddhas, the source of all wonderful knowledge and qualities. Everyone should endeavour to actualize these qualities.

The Buddha thus said, “The omniscient transcendental wisdom is produced with compassion as its root, the awakening mind of Bodhicitta as its cause and is perfected by skillful means.”

The wise distance themselves from jealousy and other stains;
 Their thirst for knowledge is unquenchable like an ocean.
 They retain only what is proper through discrimination,
 Just like swans extracting milk from water.
 Thus, scholars should distance themselves
 From divisive attitudes and bigotry.
 Even from a child good words are received.
 Whatever merit I derive,

With exposition of this Middle Path,
I dedicate for all beings
To actualise the Middle Path.

The Middle Section of the Stages of Meditation by Acharya Kamalashila is here completed. Translated and edited in Tibetan by the Indian abbot Prajna Verma and the monk Yeshe De.

Translated and edited in English by Ven. Geshe Lobsang Jordhen, Lobsang Choephel Gangchenpa and Jeremy Russell – published with the commentary of HH the Dalai Lama by Snow Lion 2001.

Supplication to H.H. the Dalai Lama

Tong nyi nyingjay soong tu jug-pay lam
Chay chayr selzay ghangchen ten-droe goen
Chagna paymo Tenzin Gyatso la
Solwa dhepso shay dhoen lhun drup shog

The path of union of emptiness and compassion
Is lucidly explained by the Protector of the dharma and the
beings of the Snow Land;
You are the Lotus Holder Tenzin Gyatso;
We supplicate you that your wishes are fulfilled spontaneously.

Final Lamrim Prayer

(Tib: *Lamrim monlam*)

-- *Lama Tsongkhapa*

1. From my two collections, 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.
 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 the complete graded paths of the teachings,
And may I please all the Buddhas by my practice.
 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 teaching for a very long time.
 4. With my heart going out with great compassion
In whatever directions the most precious teachings
Have not yet spread, or once spread have declined,
May I reveal this treasure of happiness and aid.
 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 children.
-

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

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

Verses to generate Bodhicitta

With the wish to free all beings
I shall always go for refuge
To the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha
Until I reach full enlightenment.

Inspired by wisdom and compassion,
Today in the Buddha's presence,
I Generate the Mind of full awakening
For the benefit of all sentient beings.

I go for refuge to the Triple Gem;
I confess the negativities individually;
I rejoice in the virtues of all beings;
I hold Full Enlightenment in my heart.

As long as space remains
As long as sentient beings remain,
Until then may I too remain
And dispel the miseries of the world.

Additional Prayers

Due to the merits of these virtuous actions,
May I quickly attain the state of a Guru-Buddha
And lead all beings, without exception,
Into that enlightened state.

May the supreme bodhicitta
That has not arisen, arise and grow;
And may that which has arisen not diminish
But increase for ever more.

Jangchup semchok rinpoche
Ma-khay pa nam khayghurchik
Khaypa nyam-pa may-pa yang
Gong nay gong dhu phelvarshok

Prayer for disseminating the wisdom of dependent origination/emptiness

-- Lama Tsongkhapa

Throughout my future lifetimes,
May I always be guided by Arya Manjushri,
And be able to uphold the Dharma in general and the teachings
on Dependent Origination in particular,
Even at the cost of my life.

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