

Correct Cultivation
LEARNING FROM BUDDHA ACADEMY

Establishing a
Preliminary Practice



WHAT AND WHY?

WHAT ARE PRELIMINARY PRACTICES AND WHY DO WE DO THEM?

THESE PRACTICES - SOMETIMES REFERRED TO AS NGONDRO or PRAYOGAS- ARE *METHODS* TO HELP US

- PURIFY OUR MINDS AND CONDUCT AND REDUCE MENTAL OBSTACLES TO PRACTICE
- DEVELOP HUMILITY AND REVERENCE
- DEVELOP VIRTUE
- CREATE HEART RESONANCE AND FAMILIARITY WITH THE QUALITIES OF THE BUDDHA AND OTHER HOLY BEINGS
- RELEASE ATTACHMENTS
- PLANT SEEDS OF MERIT THAT WILL PRODUCE THE CONDITIONS FOR AWAKENING

With these practices, we are recognizing and utilizing the universal law of cause and effect by initiating the causes for happiness and freedom from suffering and eventually full liberation from cyclic existence.

Each practice is a skillful means to clear away the layers of obscurations covering our true nature.

Power is generated through concentration and faith which builds over time

Traditionally, the prostrations, mandala offering, and Vajrasattva recitation are done 100,000 times. There are additional contemplations that are also considered part of the preliminary practices several of which you will find on the following pages.

SETTING UP A HOME ALTER



THE ALTAR SHOULD BE HIGHER THAN THE LEVEL OF YOUR HEAD AS YOU SIT FACING IT

OBJECTS:

IMAGE OR STATUE OF BUDDHA SHAKYAMUNI (WHO SHOULD BE CENTRAL FIGURE)

MAY INCLUDE IMAGES OF ROOT MASTER, TEACHER, YIDAM, OTHER DEITIES

8 OFFERING BOWLS

MAY INCLUDE ADDITIONAL WATER BOWLS OR INCENSE, LIGHTS OR CANDLES

Prostration Refuge



WITH HANDS IN LOTUS BUD MUDRA.

VISUALIZE AND REPEAT “**OM**” AT FOREHEAD

VISUALIZE AND REPEAT “**AH**” AT THROAT

VISUALIZE AND REPEAT “**HUM**” AT CHEST

AS YOU GO DOWN INTO PROSTRATION, YOUR HANDS GO IN FRONT OF YOU AND YOU REPEAT THE REFUGE MANTRA,

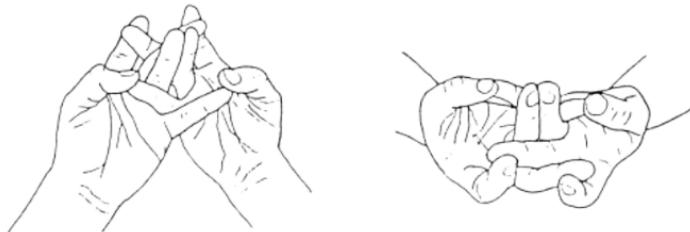
NAMO BUDDHA YAH

NAMO DHARMA YAH

NAMO SANGHA YAH

WHILE SAYING THE MANTRA YOU RAISE YOUR HANDS OVER YOUR HEAD IN THE LOTUS-BUD MUDRA AND LOWER THEM. THEN YOU RISE AND REPEAT 3 OR MORE TIMES.

Mandala Offering



ONG BANZAR BO BI YA HONG (OM BENZAR BHUMI AH HUNG!)
[THE VAJRA GROUND]

ONG BANZAR REKA YA HONG! (OM BENZAR REKHE AH HUNG!)
[THE VAJRA BOUNDARY]

Mount Sumeru, its surrounding four continents, its sun and its moon constitute the universe. I offer all treasures in the universe to the buddhas.

All of the great merit that I thereby earn I am willing to share with all living beings so that they may realize enlightenment.

I and other living beings offer all of our physical actions, speech, thoughts, wealth, and good fortune in our past, present, and future lifetimes, and wonderful treasure to the master, the yidam, and the three jewels.

May they compassionately accept our offerings and thereby empower us.

OM SARVA TATHAGATHA, IDA M GURU RATNA-MANDALAKAM
NIRYATAYAMI!
[“GURU, I OFFER UP THIS MANDALA!”]

8 Offerings

ONG (OM)

AER GANG (WOR GAN)

WATER FOR THE FACE

BA DANG

WATER FOR THE FEET

BU BI (BU BEH)

FLOWERS

DU BI (DU BEH)

INCENSE

WU LUO GE (WOR LO GEH)

LIGHT/LAMPS

GENG DE (GEN DEH)

PERFUME

LE WEI DE (LEH WEH DEH)

FOOD

XIABU DA (SHAB DA)

MUSIC,SOUND

ZA DI ZA HONG SUO HA!

ACCEPT THIS OFFERING!

Preliminary Contemplations & Recitations

REFUGE

To the Buddha I return and rely, vowing that all living beings profoundly understand the great way and bring forth the Bodhi Mind.

To the Dharma I return and rely, vowing that all living beings deeply enter the sutra and have wisdom like the sea.

To the Sangha I return and rely, vowing that all living beings apply love and compassion to all.

FOUR IMMEASURABLES

May all living beings always be peaceful and happy and maintain the causes of peace and happiness.

May all living beings always be free from suffering and the causes of suffering.

May all living beings always be free from suffering and my own heart be delighted about this.

May all living beings stay far away from greed and anger and abide in non-differentiating generosity.

GENERATING BODHICITTA

All sentient beings throughout time and space have been my mother.

* They have shown me every kindness and I am forever in their debt. They desire happiness but do not know how to create the causes for happiness, instead creating only the causes for suffering. May I feel great compassion for living beings.

CONTEMPLATION OF IMPERMANENCE

All conditional phenomena are like a dream, an illusion, a bubble, a shadow, morning dew or a flash of lightning.

All sentient beings will definitely die.

All inanimate things will definitely perish.

This principle also applies to my body, which is composed of the four great elements.

I will be separated from my family and friends one day.

Time is pushing my age forward, early youth is followed by the robust years of life, which is followed by old age, which is followed by death. Sounds or flowing water never return after they are gone.

The thoughts and words of this very moment have already become impermanent.

I will come closer and closer to death.

Death has no set time to it.

I could go to the next world at any moment simply because my breathing stops.

I can take no worldly possessions whatsoever with me to the next world. These principles apply to my very own body.

FOUR CONVICTIONS OF RENUNCIATION

Obtaining a human birth is extremely rare. If I take this to heart, I will seize the essence of this precious life. If wasted, this rare opportunity will be destroyed.

The root of all happiness is bringing benefit to others and attaining immeasurable freedom. Therefore, the more I reduce grasping, the more I will experience true happiness.

Since the time of death is uncertain, I must act now and not be lazy or procrastinate in my practice.

By just recognizing that all dharmas are empty, dependent on causes and conditions, I will become skilled in what to adopt and what to discard.

ASPIRATION FOR ENLIGHTENMENT

“How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings, including myself, family, friends, enemies and strangers, could reach the state of Buddhahood -- the ultimate freedom!”

From this day forward I will use each day to increase and offer my merits and virtues, cultivate unerring kindness and compassion and attain through prajna, the reality state. I take on the responsibility to attain this state by engaging in limitless and unsurpassable conduct of body, speech and mind, including perfecting the six paramitas in order to save living beings!

TEN WHOLESOME CHARACTERISTICS

I will not kill. Rather, I will save lives by freeing captive animals and people.

I will not steal. Rather, I will perform charity.

I will not engage in sexual misconduct. Rather, I will practice chastity.

I will not lie. Rather, I will speak the truth.

I will not use filthy or inappropriate language. Rather, I will speak upright words.

I will not speak in ways that cause division among people. Rather, I will speak words that bring about peace and accord among people.

I will not use coarse or harsh language. Rather, I will speak gentle words.

I will not be lustful or greedy. Rather, I will practice the meditation on the repulsiveness of the body (asubha).

I will not be angry. Rather, I will practice the meditation on loving-kindness and compassion.

I will not be ignorant. Rather, I will practice the meditation on the twelve links that constitute the chain of conditioned arising.

SIX PARAMITAS (PERFECTIONS)

I will be generous or charitable in order to overcome stinginess and greed.

I will be virtuous and abide by the precepts in order to overcome violations and offenses.

I will be patient and endure insults in order to overcome anger.

I will be energetic in order to overcome laziness.

I will be concentrated in order to overcome scatter-mindedness.

I will be wise in order to overcome ignorance.

Vajrasattva

CHINESE

ONG, BAN ZAER SA DUO SA MA YA/ MA NU BA NA YA/
BAN ZAER SA DUO DE LUO BA DI CHA/
ZHI ZHUO MAI BA WA/ SU DUO KA YUE MAI BA WA/
SU BO KA YUE MAI BA WA/ A NU RE DUO MAI BA WA/
SA WA SI DI MAI ZHA YA CHA/ SA WA GA MA SU ZA MAI/
ZI DANG XIER YANG GU RU HONG/
HA HA HA HA, HUO/ BA GA WA NA/
SA WA DA TA GA DA/ BAN ZAER MA MAI MU ZA/
BAN ZA BA WA,
MA HA SA MA YA/
SA DUO A/ HONG PEI/ DUO JIE SHENG BA LA QIA CHE.

SANSKRIT

OM VAJRASATTVA SAMAYA MANUPALAYA
VAJRASATTVA TVENOPATISHTHA
DRIDHO ME BHAVA
SUTOSHYO ME BHAVA
SUPOSHYO ME BHAVA
ANURAKTO ME BHAVA
SARVA SIDDHIM ME PRAYACCHA
SARVA KARMA SU CHAME
CHITTAM SHRIYAM KURU HUM
HA HA HA HA HO
BHAGAVAN SARVA TATHAGATA
VAJRA MAME MUNCHA

VAJRA BHAVA MAHA SAMAYA SATTVA
AH HUM PHAT

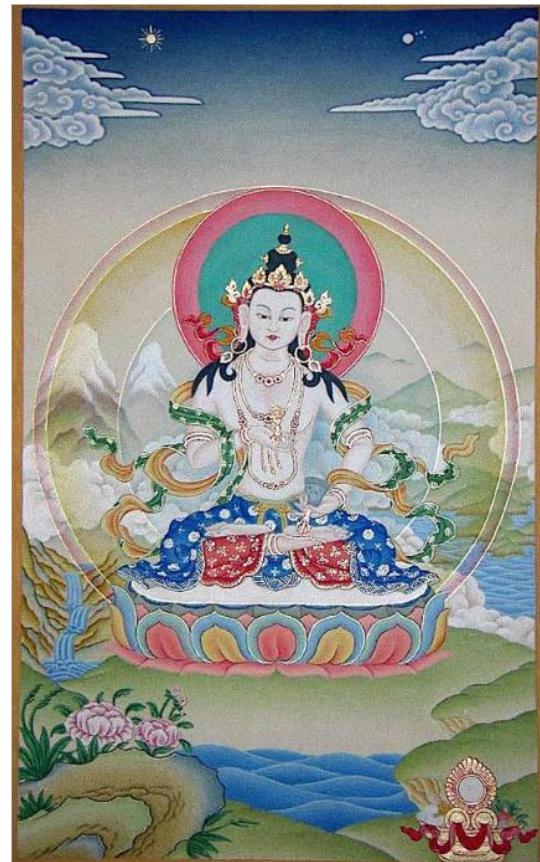
Translation of Vajrasattva Mantra

om

O Vajrasattva honor the
agreement!
Reveal yourself as the
vajra-being!
Be steadfast for me!
Be very pleased for me!
Be fully nourishing for
me!
Be passionate for me!
Grant me all success and
attainment!
And in all actions make
my mind more lucid!

hūṃ

ha ha ha ha hoḥ
O Blessed One, vajra of all
those in that state, don't
abandon me!
O being of the great
contract be a vajra-
bearer!
āḥ





Dedication of Merit

By virtue of my merits,
May all beings everywhere, plagued by sufferings of body
and mind, obtain an ocean of happiness and joy by virtue of
my merits.

May no living being suffer, commit evil or ever fall ill. May
no one be afraid or belittled, with a mind weighed down by
depression.

May the blind see forms, and the deaf hear sounds. May
those whose bodies are worn with toil be restored on finding
repose.

May the naked find clothing, the hungry find food. May the
thirsty find water and delicious drinks.

May the poor find wealth, those weak with sorrow find joy.
May the forlorn find hope, constant happiness, and
prosperity.

May there be timely rains and bountiful harvests. May all
medicines be effective and wholesome prayers bear fruit.

May all who are sick and ill quickly be freed from their
ailments. Whatever diseases there are in the world, may they
never occur again.

May the frightened cease to be afraid and those bound be
freed. May the powerless find power and may all people
think of benefiting each other.

- *Shantideva*

Resources

Vajrasattva Mantra in Sanskrit

