

A Short Vajrasattva Meditation

*Purification with the Four
Opponent Powers*

By Lama Zopa Rinpoche

FPMT



Lama Zopa Rinpoche
Practice Series

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Set in Calibri 12/15, Century Gothic, Helvetica Light, and Lydian BT.

Practice Requirements:

Anyone can do this practice. However, you are permitted to do the visualization of Vajrasattva together with his wisdom mother only if you have received a highest yoga tantra initiation. Otherwise, you should visualize the solitary form of Vajrasattva above your head.

The *Lama Zopa Rinpoche Practice Series* is a special collection of practice materials that serves to present and preserve Rinpoche's lineage of practice, oral instructions, and translations.

Technical Note

Comments by the compiler or editor are contained in instruction boxes. For example:

Recite these two verses three times.

Italics and a small font size indicate instructions and comments in the original composition. Words in square brackets have been added by the translator or by Lama Zopa Rinpoche for clarification. For example:

This is how to correctly follow the virtuous friend, [the root of the path to full enlightenment].

A Guide to Pronouncing Sanskrit

The following points will enable you to easily learn the pronunciation of most transliterated Sanskrit terms and mantras:

1. Ś and Ṣ produce sounds similar to the English “sh” in “shoe.” The difference between the two is where the tongue is positioned in the mouth.
2. C is pronounced similarly to the “ch” in “chap.” CH is similar but is more heavily aspirated.
3. Ṭ, ṬH, Ḍ, ḌH, Ṇ are retroflex letters and have no exact equivalent in English. These sounds are made by curling the tongue towards the front section of the palate. They correspond roughly to the sounds “tra” (Ṭ), aspirated “tra” (ṬH), “dra” (Ḍ), aspirated “dra” (ḌH), and “nra” (Ṇ).
4. All consonants followed by an H are aspirated: KH, GH, CH, JH, TH, DH, PH, BH. Note that TH and ṬH are pronounced like the “t” in “target” and “tr” in “trap” respectively, not like the “th” in “the.” The PH is pronounced like the “p” in “partial,” not like the “ph” in “pharaoh.”
5. Long vowels with a dash above them (Ā, Ī, Ū, Ṛ, and Ḍ) and take approximately double the amount of time to pronounce versus their short counterparts (A, I, U, Ṛ, and Ḍ).
6. Ṃ indicates a nasal sound. At the end of a word it is generally pronounced as an “m.” Ḥ indicates an “h”-sounding aspiration. Ṛ is pronounced similar to the “ri” in “cringe.” Ṇ is pronounced similar to the “ng” in “king.”

For more information, please consult the FPMT Translation Services' *A Guide to Sanskrit Transliteration and Pronunciation*, available online: https://fpmt.org/wp-content/uploads/education/translation/guide_to_sanskrit_transliteration_and_pronunciation.pdf

A Short Vajrasattva Meditation

Purification with the Four Opponent Powers

Visualization

Seated on your right side is your father; on your left side, your mother. Your enemies and the sentient beings who disturb you are seated in front of you. Your friends and those to whom you are attached are seated behind you. All other sentient beings, in human form, surround you.

Visualize the objects of refuge in the space in front of you with either the elaborate visualization of “the one into many,” as in Jorcho; or the simple visualization of “the many into one,” that is, all Buddhas, Dharma, and Sangha in the one aspect of Buddha Śākyamuni.

As you recite this verse, think that you are taking refuge and generating bodhicitta together with all sentient beings.

The Power of Reliance: Taking Refuge and Generating Bodhicitta

SANG GYÄ CHHÖ DANG TSHOG KYI CHHOG NAM LA

JANG CHHUB BAR DU DAG NI KYAB SU CHHI

DAG GI JIN SOG GYI PÄI TSHOG NAM KYI

DRO LA PHÄN CHHIR SANG GYÄ DRUB PAR SHOG (3x)

I take refuge until I am enlightened

In the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Supreme Assembly.

By my merits of generosity and so forth,

May I become a buddha to benefit transmigratory beings. (3x)

The Power of Regret

First, recall the definition of negative karma: any action that results in suffering. Generally, this is an action motivated by ignorance, attachment, or anger.

Remembering Your Negative Karmas

Almost every action I do, twenty-four hours a day, is motivated by worldly concern attached to the happiness of this life. It has been like that from beginningless saṃsāric rebirths and it is like this from birth to death in this life. Nearly every action I have created has been nonvirtuous, the cause of suffering. Not only that, but I have also continuously been breaking my prātimokṣa, bodhisattva, and tantric vows. Worst of all, I have created the heaviest of negative karmas in relation to my virtuous friends by harming their holy bodies, disobeying their advice, disturbing their holy minds, having nondevotional thoughts, and giving rise to heresy and anger. Having all these negative imprints on my mental continuum is unbearable. It is as if I have swallowed a lethal poison. Therefore, I must purify all these negative karmas immediately with the antidote of the four powers.

In this way, generate a strong feeling of regret together with the awareness of the need to urgently purify your negative karmas.

Remembering Impermanence and Death

Many people my age or younger have died. It is a miracle that I am still alive and have this incredible opportunity to purify my negative karmas. Death is certain, but the time of death is totally uncertain. If I were to die right now, I would definitely be reborn in the lower realms. Because I could not practice Dharma there, I would remain in the lower realms for countless eons. Therefore, how unbelievably fortunate I am to be able to purify my negative karmas right now, without even a second's delay, by practicing the Vajrasattva meditation.

The Power of Reliance: Generating Bodhicitta

But, I am not practicing this Vajrasattva purification for myself alone. The purpose of my life is to free all hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, human beings, asuras, *suras*, and intermediate state beings from all their suffering and its causes and lead them to the peerless happiness of enlightenment. In order to do this, I must first reach enlightenment myself. Therefore, I must purify all my negative karmas immediately by practicing this Vajrasattva meditation.

Visualization

Visualize Vajrasattva Father-Mother above your crown only if you have received a highest yoga tantra initiation. Otherwise, you should visualize the solitary aspect of Vajrasattva, i.e., without a wisdom mother, his right hand holding a vajra at his heart and his left hand resting on his thigh and holding a bell.

Above the crown of my head, seated upon a lotus and moon, are Vajrasattva Father-Mother. Their holy bodies are white, with one face and two arms. Vajrasattva holds a vajra and bell; the wisdom mother, a curved knife and skullcup. They embrace each other. Vajrasattva is adorned with six mudrās, the wisdom mother with five. He sits in the vajra posture, she in the lotus posture.

Vajrasattva is my root guru, the holy mind of all the buddhas, the dharmakāya. Out of unbearable compassion encompassing me and all other sentient beings, my root guru appears in this form to purify me and all sentient beings.

Thinking in this way, your mind is transformed into guru devotion—the source of all blessings and realizations of the path to enlightenment.

The Power of the Remedy: Vajrasattva Mantra Recitation

In the center of the moon disc at Vajrasattva’s heart stands a HŪṂ encircled by a garland of the hundred-syllable mantra. A powerful stream of white nectar flows from the HŪṂ and mantra garland, entering the crown of my head and filling my entire body. All my negative karmas, obscurations, sicknesses, and spirit harms are completely purified.

OM VAJRASATVA SAMAYA / MANUPĀLAYA / VAJRASATVA
TVENOPATIṢṬHA / DRḌHO ME BHAVA / SUTOṢYO ME
BHAVA / SUPOṢYO ME BHAVA / ANURAKTO ME BHAVA /
SARVA SIDDHIM ME PRAYACCHA / SARVA KARMASU CA
ME / CITTAṂ ŚRĪYAṂ KURU HŪṂ / HA HA HA HA HOḤ /
BHAGAVĀN SARVA TATHĀGATA / VAJRA MĀ ME MUÑCA /
VAJRĪ BHAVA / MAHĀ SAMAYASATVA ĀḤ HŪṂ PHAṬ

(21x or as many times as possible)

Or:

OM VAJRASATVA HŪṂ (28x)

For the meaning of the long mantra and its translation, see page 12.

“Through ignorance and delusion, I have broken and degenerated my commitments. Guru, be my savior and refuge. Lord, holder of the vajra, endowed with great compassion, in you, the foremost of beings, I take refuge.”

The Power of Restraint: Refraining from Creating Negative Karmas Again

“Before Guru Vajrasattva, I vow never again to commit those negative actions from which I can easily abstain. I vow not to commit those negative actions from which I find it difficult to abstain for [*mention how long you can realistically refrain from doing these negative actions*].”

Generating Faith in Having Been Purified

From the crown of my head, Guru Vajrasattva says, “Son¹ of the lineage, your negative karmas, obscurations, and broken and degenerated *samayas* have been completely purified.”

Generate strong faith that everything has been completely purified just as Guru Vajrasattva has said.

Absorption

Guru Vajrasattva is extremely pleased with your promise. Vajrasattva Father-Mother melt into light and absorb into you. Your body, speech, and mind become inseparably one with Guru Vajrasattva’s holy body, holy speech, and holy mind.

Meditation on Emptiness

In emptiness, there is no I, the creator of negative karma; no action of creating negative karma; and no negative karma created.

Place your mind in that emptiness for a little while. In this way, look at yourself and all phenomena as empty—they do not exist from their own side. With this awareness of emptiness, dedicate the merits.

Dedications

To Actualize Bodhicitta

JANG CHHUB SEM CHHOG RIN PO CHHE

MA KYE PA NAM KYE GYUR CHIG

KYE PA NYAM PA ME PA YI

GONG NÄ GONG DU PHEL WAR SHOG

May the precious supreme bodhicitta

Not yet born arise.

May that arisen not decline,

But increase more and more.

For the Long Life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

JIG TEN KHAM DIR PHÄN DE MA LÜ PA
 GANG LÄ JUNG WÄI SAM PHEL YI ZHIN NOR
 KA DRIN TSHUNG ME TÄN DZIN GYA TSHO CHHOG
 KU TSHE TÄN CHING THUG ZHE LHÜN DRUB SHOG

**Incomparably kind and supreme Tenzin Gyatso,
 The wish-granting Wish-Fulfilling Jewel—
 Source of every single benefit and happiness in this world—
 May you have a long life and all your holy wishes be
 spontaneously fulfilled.**

For the Long Life of Lama Zopa Rinpoche

THUB TSHÜL CHHANG ZHING JAM GÖN GYÄL WÄI TÄN
 DZIN KYONG PEL WÄ KÜN ZÖ DOG POR DZÄ
 CHHOG SUM KUR WÄI LEG MÖN THU DRUB PA
 DAG SOG DÜL JÄI GÖN DU ZHAB TÄN SHOG

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

To Seal the Merits with Emptiness

Due to all the past, present, and future merits collected by me, the numberless buddhas, and the numberless sentient beings, which are completely empty of existing from their own side, may I, who am completely empty of existing from my own side, achieve the state of Vajrasattva, which is completely empty of existing from its own side, and lead all sentient beings, who are completely empty of existing from their own side, to that

state of Vajrasattva, which is completely empty of existing from its own side, by myself alone, who am completely empty of existing from my own side.

*To Dedicate in the Same Way as All the Past Buddhas
and Bodhisattvas*

JAM PÄL PA WÖ JI TAR KHYEN PA DANG
KÜN TU ZANG PO DE YANG DE ZHIN TE
DE DAG KÜN GYI JE SU DAG LOB CHHIR
GE WA DI DAG THAM CHÄ RAB TU NGO

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

DÜ SUM SHEG PÄI GYÄL WA THAM CHÄ KYI
NGO WA GANG LA CHHOG TU NGAG PA DE
DAG GI GE WÄI TSA WA DI KÜN KYANG
ZANG PO CHÖ CHHIR RAB TU NGO WAR GYI

**I fully dedicate all my roots of virtue
With the dedication praised as the best
By all the gone-beyond victorious ones of the three times
In order to have good conduct.**

Colophon:

This teaching was given by Lama Zopa Rinpoche during a Vajrasattva retreat, Land of Medicine Buddha, Soquel, California, USA, 1999, and revised in New York, November 1999. Edited by Nicholas Ribush, 2001. Lightly revised by Ven. Constance Miller, FPMT Education Department, 2001. Edited by Ven. Joan Nicell, FPMT Education Services, August 2020. Sanskrit terms transliterated by FPMT Education Services, December 2020.

The Meaning of the Long Vajrasattva Mantra

OM: The qualities of a buddha's holy body, speech, and mind; all that is auspicious and of great value.

VAJRASATVA: The being who has the wisdom of inseparable bliss and emptiness.

SAMAYA: A samaya that must not be transgressed.

MANUPĀLAYA: Lead me along the path you took to enlightenment.

VAJRASATVA TVENOPATIṢṬHA: Make me abide close to Vajrasattva's vajra holy mind.

DR̥ḌHO ME BHAVA: Please grant me a stable realization of the ultimate nature of phenomena.

SUTOṢYO ME BHAVA: Please grant me the blessings of being extremely pleased with me.

SUPOṢYO ME BHAVA: Bless me with the nature of well-developed great bliss.

ANURAKTO ME BHAVA: Bless me with the nature of the love that leads me to your state.

SARVA SIDDHIM ME PRAYACCHA: Please grant all the powerful attainments.

SARVA KARMASU CA ME: Please grant all virtuous actions.

CITTAṂ ŚRĪYAṂ KURU: Please grant me your glorious qualities.

HŪṢ: The vajra holy mind.

HA HA HA HA HOḤ: The five transcendental wisdoms.

BHAGAVĀN: One who has destroyed every obscuration, attained all realizations, and passed beyond suffering.

SARVA TATHĀGATA / VAJRA: All those who have realized emptiness, knowing things just as they are.

MA ME MUÑCA: Do not abandon me.

VAJRĪ BHAVA: The nature of indestructible inseparability.

MAHĀ SAMAYASATVA: The great being who has the samaya, the vajra holy mind.

ĀḤ: The vajra holy speech.

HŪṢ: The transcendental wisdom of great bliss.

PHATḤ: Clarifying the transcendental wisdom of inseparable bliss and emptiness and destroying the dualistic mind that obstructs its attainment.

A Translation of the Mantra²

You, Vajrasattva, have generated the holy mind [of bodhicitta] according to your samaya. Your holy mind is enriched with the simultaneously-born holy action of liberating transmigratory beings from saṃsāra. Whatever happiness and suffering, good and bad, happens to me, by my pleasing the holy mind, never give me up and guide me. Please stabilize the realizations of the paths and *bhūmis*, including the happiness of the upper realms; actualize all actions and the common and sublime realizations; and make the glory of the five wisdoms abide in my heart.

Colophons

The Meaning of the Long Vajrasattva Mantra excerpted from *The Vajrasattva Meditation: Rays of the Sun to Burn All Negative Karmas and Moral Downfalls*, composed by Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Publications for Wisdom Culture, 1979. Edited by Ven. Joan Nicell, July 2020.

The translation of the mantra, original translator unknown, was lightly edited by Ven. Joan Nicell, FPMT Education Services, April 2017, on the basis of teachings given by Lama Zopa Rinpoche during a Vajrasattva initiation at Kopan Monastery, Nepal, December 2016.

Notes

- 1 According to Lama Zopa Rinpoche: “The term ‘son’ is not used in dependence upon the characteristics of the body, but of the mind. This term is used because it is normally the son who becomes the king.”
- 2 This is not a literal translation of the individual Sanskrit words of the mantra.

Care of Dharma Materials



Dharma materials contain the teachings of the Buddha and thus protect against lower rebirth and reveal the path to enlightenment. Therefore, they should be treated with respect.

Printed Dharma materials, as well as phones, tablets, laptops, and hard drives containing Dharma, should be kept off the floor, beds, chairs, meditation cushions, and all other places where people sit or walk. Dharma materials should not be stepped over or put in places where the feet or buttocks will point at them. They should be covered or protected for transporting and kept in a high, clean place separate from more mundane materials. Other objects, including statues, stūpas, ritual implements, *mālās*, reading glasses, and so forth, should not be placed on top of Dharma books and devices containing Dharma materials. Avoid licking the fingers to turn the pages of Dharma texts.

If it is necessary to dispose of printed Dharma materials, they should be burned rather than thrown in the trash. When burning Dharma texts, visualize that the letters transform into an A (ॐ) and the A absorbs into your heart. Imagine burning blank paper. As the paper burns, recite OM ĀḤ HŪM or the *Heart Sūtra*, while meditating on emptiness.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche recommends that images of holy beings, deities, and holy objects not be burned. Ideally, if undamaged, they should be put in a stūpa. Otherwise, put them high up in a tree inside a well-sealed structure, something like a bird house, so that the images are protected from the weather and do not end up on the ground.



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