PRAYER TO THE FOUR BODIES OF THE TEACHER

Dromgön Tsangpa Gyare
Prayer to the Four Bodies of the Teacher

Dromgön Tsangpa Gyare
The Marpa Dharma Translation Group, under the direction of H.E. Dorzong Rinpoche, is devoted to the publication of texts from the Drukpa Kagyü lineage of Tibetan Buddhism. It is presently based in Tashi Jong, the seat of H.E. Khamtrul Rinpoche, in Himachal Pradesh, Northern India.

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Prayer to the Four Bodies of the Teacher
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This handbook is not intended for unauthorized use.
It is a practice text, to be used under the guidance of your teacher.

Dedicated to the long life of
H.E. Dorzong Rinpoche and V.Ven. Choegyal Rinpoche
For the benefit of all sentient beings
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LETTER FROM H.E. DORZONG RINPOCHE</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROOT TEXT - Tibetan</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROOT TEXT - English version</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PRACTICE SESSION</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROOT TEXT - Annotated English version.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
H.E. Dorzong Rinpoche

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ཕོ་ཤེས་བོ་རིླུའི་དོན་དུས་བཞིན་ཐོབ་པར་ཐོབ་པར་ཐོབ་པར་ཐོབ་པར་ཐོབ་པར
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ཐུན་ཆོས་ལྟེག་ཆུ་ཤིང་ཤིང་བཞིན་པས་
The main objective of Buddhist practice is not to achieve happiness in this life or our following lives. Rather, it is the attainment of enlightenment. Enlightenment is not possible without the realization of the clear and profound coemergent wisdom. This wisdom cannot happen without trusting the teacher’s blessings. And for these blessings to enter our heart we need unwavering devotion. This is why Dromgön Tsangpa Gyare composed this Prayer to the Four Bodies of the Teacher. At the conclusion of this practice empowerments are received, and as a consequence the body, speech and mind of the teacher and the disciple become one and remain in that state.

This Guru Yoga text is easy to put into practice and very beneficial. Susana and Mariano have translated it into English and I congratulate them on this. For those in the future who wish to attain liberation from samsara it is very important to practice this prayer. If they practice it, they will be serving a great kindness to themselves.

From the one named the Eighth Dorzong Rinpoche.
TSANGPA GYARE
Thangka from the collection of Dorzong Rinpoche
NAMO GURU

★ Tsangpa Gyare. The author of this text was born in central Tibet in the Tsang province from which is derived his name, 'Tsangpa'. From an early age he showed a strong propensity towards spiritual life. For example, he usually acted as 'teacher' for his playmates. After his mother's death when he was only 8 years old, he took novice vows. Fifteen years later he invited to his region a famous teacher called Kharlungpa who recognized him as a learned scholar.

When Tsangpa Gyare was 23 years old, he had a vision of Linchen Repa and felt strong devotion. Later Linchen Repa would become his root teacher. He travelled far and wide before he could meet his teacher, be accepted as a disciple, and receive numerous teachings.

One day Linchen Repa asked all his disciples to build a temple. Rather than collaborate with this, Tsangpa Gyare told his teacher he would prefer to stay in retreat. Linchen Repa grudgingly gave his approval. A short time into the retreat, Tsangpa Gyare realized that was not the way to practice and that the teacher's instructions are to be respected. He broke his retreat and started work on the new temple. His humble attitude was then apparent to everyone. He readily and respectfully accepted his colleagues' instructions. When the temple was finally completed, his teacher sent him to do an extended retreat. It eventuated that he had all kinds of difficulties: physical illnesses, serious emotional troubles, problems with food, and so on. Not for a single instant did he think to interrupt his retreat. From the depths of his great discomfort gradually emerged a profound devotion for Linchen Repa. Then suddenly he collapsed. Regaining his wits, it dawned on him that he had realized Mahamudra, the nature of mind. It is said that his mind became as vast and free as the sky. In the treasure revealers, or 'tertön', tradition, he discovered a teaching called the 'Sixfold Transmission of Equal Taste' that had been hidden by Rechungpa, one of the two main disciples of Milarepa (the other being Gampopa). Tsangpa Gyare taught this particular teaching so frequently that this eventually became one of the main teachings of the Drukpa Kagyu lineage.

When he reached 33 years of age, Tsangpa Gyare took full vows, and received the ordination name of Yeshe Dorje. Shortly afterwards, at the behest of Linchen Repa, he travelled to the Nam area to establish a retreat centre and a monastery. Upon arrival there he had a vision of nine dragons which later appeared in the sky. This was the origin of the name of the lineage that was established by Tsangpa Gyare, the Drukpa Kagyu ('druk' meaning 'dragon'). His disciples were well known for their excellent renunciation, bodhicitta and practice abilities. They were always very clear when teaching and their conduct extremely humble. The lineage developed so much that today it is still remembered by the saying, 'Half of the Tibetan practitioners are Drukpa Kagyu, and half of those are beggars. Of these beggars, half are Mahasiddhas (beings with an extraordinary level of spiritual realisation').

Tsangpa Gyare died peacefully in 1221. Every one of the vertebrae recovered from his cremation ashes showed a different image of Chenrezi. Two of these are still in existence: one is kept in H.H. the Drukchen's monastery, and the other in Choengon Rinpoche's monastery.

Among his main disciples, Lorepa, Gotsangpa and Urgyenpa were highly respected by all schools of Tibetan Buddhism.

★ The suggested mode of use of this handbook is to read through the whole text once, to get a general idea, and then start learning and rehearsing the practices in short successive sections until a complete mastery is attained. To this end, you can use one or more of the three sections in each part: the root text in Tibetan, its English version, and the annotated English version.

In the annotated English section, you will find the English version of the root text repeated and framed in short segments. Within each segment, we have indicated in bold characters the words or concepts that are explained in detail after each frame.
The Tsangpa Gyare root text is the basis of the practice. Some complementary details are given in the annotated version; your teacher will fill in the rest. There is no adequate substitute for this personal contact, as he/she knows what you need, and how and when to transmit it to you. So, all your doubts should be checked with him/her, as many times as you need, until all of them have been totally clarified.

This handbook has been written with the average reader in the mind of the authors, and their own criteria and experience. Nevertheless, each one of us is a unique case, and therefore what is read will generally be only an approximation to specific, individual needs. Therefore, once more, there is no adequate substitute for the one to one contact with your teacher.

The relationship between teacher and disciple is a subject of the utmost importance. The relationship should be essentially adult and healthy, avoiding extremes.

- A very submissive or devotional approach will hinder understanding and progress.
- An approach strongly relying on 'my inner teacher' or 'my own essence' rather than an external teacher, can be confusing for someone without a certain degree of realisation. It will not always be clear when the 'messages' are from the inner teacher or when they are coming from the ego.
- The suggested course is an approach that balances all factors, such as faith, devotion, self-confidence, understanding, and so on.

Moreover, it should be remembered that this relationship is to be seen as temporary and liberating. Gradually it evolves towards the final, total freedom of an enlightened being, who no longer needs any teacher nor any teachings.

Be sure you understand clearly not only the formal aspects, but also the meaning behind what you are doing. Practising mechanically will not be of real benefit.

Try to develop trust in yourself and in your practice, avoiding inputs from other persons, no matter how well intentioned they might be. Do not divulge, comment, or compare what you are doing with others, as this will usually confuse you rather than being a help.

From Tulku Thondup, "The Healing Power of Mind", pg. 67, (see bibliography): "Often spiritual training becomes more effective when given as a secret instruction, kept as a secret treasure and practised in secret without confiding in anybody but the teacher. The ultimate goal of the teaching is to open us up, not to limit, or isolate ourselves in seclusion. But especially at the beginning, we need to gather our energy and concentration. Secrecy can help us to do this. "If we use what we learn for dinner-table chatter or as a business commodity, a tool for mundane goals, we risk dispersing our energy and inspiration."

It is better not to expect results. They will eventually appear spontaneously. Waiting for results is not a good method of practice. The mind gets distracted as in everyday life with hopes, fears, and doubts and the practice becomes weak. Relax, practice, enjoy and forget all the rest.

Practices such as these include two aspects:

- Oral transmission (Tib: lung) A ceremony in which the Teacher, by reading aloud a particular text in the presence of the student confers the permission to read, study, and practice it. The Teacher should have himself/herself received this transmission from a holder of the teaching.
- Instructions (Tib: trig) The oral, personal instructions on how to actually perform the specific practice.

Your teacher will give both of them to you before beginning the practice.

In the words of H.H. the XIV Dalai Lama of Tibet ("Cultivating a Daily Meditation", pg. 67. See bibliography):
"For the beginner, the meditation place is quite important. Once we have developed certain experiences, the external factors have very little effect. However, generally speaking, the place for medi-
tation should be quiet. When we clean and tidy up the room, our wish should not be just to have a clean place, but to put our minds in order. When later we visualise deities, make offerings, recite mantras, it is as if we had prepared to receive important guests. When we expect an invited guest, we first clean and tidy up. It is not nice to invite a guest into an untidy place. In order to practice meditation, first clean your room. Your wish to do this should not be polluted by negative states of mind like attachment, aversion or similar attitudes.

You can also prepare the place so it will feel inspiring and conducive to your practice. Cushions, a carpet, light, eventually flowers or incense, whatever you think would make you happy and comfortable, you can think about it and implement it.

Chapters three and four of the above mentioned book by Tulku Thondup are another source of good advice on how to get settled to start practicing.

Finally, we wish to share the advice of H.H. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche (The Heart Treasure of the Enlightened Ones. by Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, Shechen and Shambala, Kathmandu and Boston, 1995):

"Racing around, here and thither, only tires us out for no reason. We are always rushing off to see what is happening somewhere else and getting involved in all sorts of events in the world outside. But all this time there is actually more than enough to look at inwardly, in the movement of our thoughts, and plenty to be done to master them."
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<th>Page</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<td>1</td>
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THE ROOT TEXT
TIBETAN
Prayer to the Four Bodies of the Teacher

Lord, all pervading without exception, having purified the two obscurations
I take refuge in you, Teacher, buddha dharmakaya
I take refuge in you, Lord, buddha dharmakaya
All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
Take refuge in you, Teacher, buddha dharmakaya
Take refuge in you, Lord, buddha dharmakaya

Grant your blessings to manifest the dharmakaya of all sentient beings
Grant your blessings that all sentient beings realize the merging of meditation and post-meditation
Grant your blessings that all sentient beings stabilize uninterrupted experiences.
All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
Take refuge in you, Teacher, buddha dharmakaya
Take refuge in you, Lord, buddha dharmakaya

Lord, unceasing and all pervading; in your body manifest the pure worlds
Gathering as a cluster of clouds of the victorious ones of the three times
I take refuge in you, Teacher, sambhogakaya
I take refuge in you, Lord, sambhogakaya
All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
Take refuge in you, Teacher, sambhogakaya
Take refuge in you, Lord, sambhogakaya

Grant your blessings that all sentient beings' bodies be endowed with the major and minor marks
Grant your blessings that all sentient beings' speeches possess the sixty melodious tones
Grant your blessings that all sentient beings' minds clearly encompass
The mandala of all that is knowable
All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
Take refuge in you, Teacher, sambhogakaya
Take refuge in you, Lord, sambhogakaya
Lord, with your unobjectified compassion manifest in whatever form needed to tame beings,

Make them ripen without exception
I take refuge in you, Teacher, nirmanakaya
I take refuge in you, Lord, nirmanakaya
All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
Take refuge in you, Teacher, nirmanakaya
Take refuge in you, Lord, nirmanakaya
Grant your blessings that we may emanate for each and every sentient being
Grant your blessings that immediately after these emanations
All sentient beings attain perfect enlightenment
All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
Take refuge in you, Teacher, nirmanakaya
Take refuge in you, Lord, nirmanakaya

Lord, uncontaminated, all-pervading and unborn dharmakaya
Unobstructed unification of appearance and emptiness, sambhogakaya
Taking all-pervading appropriate forms to tame beings, nirmanakaya
Lord, I take refuge in you, embodiment of the three kayas
All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
Take refuge in you, Teacher, precious buddha
Take refuge in you, Lord, precious buddha

Grant your blessings that all sentient beings realize the essence of unborn dharmakaya
Grant your blessings that all sentient beings emanate as unobstructed sambhogakaya
Grant your blessings that all sentient beings unbiasedly support the activity of nirmanakaya
All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
Take refuge in you, Teacher, precious buddha
Take refuge in you, Lord, precious buddha.
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10
Next inspiringly chant and earnestly pray:

The four places of the glorious Teacher are endowed with

OM AH HUNG HO

In white, red, blue, and green

As the essence blessings of his Body, Speech, Mind and Indestructible Primordial Wisdom.

And my own four places,

The nature of the body, speech, mind and wisdom,

Are endowed with the same four syllables.

From OM in the Teacher's forehead

Radiate the blessings of Body as white luminous rays

Entering my body nature, OM in my forehead.

The waking state obscurations are thus purified.

Vase empowerment is obtained and the body becomes indestructible.

From AH in the Teacher's throat

Radiate the blessings of Speech as red luminous rays

Entering my speech nature, AH in my throat.

The dream time obscurations are thus purified.

Secret empowerment is obtained and the speech becomes indestructible.

From HUNG in the Teacher's heart

Radiate the blessings of Mind as blue luminous rays

Entering my mind nature, HUNG in my heart.

The deep sleep obscurations are thus purified.

Wisdom-knowledge empowerment is obtained and the mind becomes indestructible.

From HO in the Teacher's navel

Radiate the blessings of Primordial Wisdom as green luminous rays

Entering my wisdom nature, HO in my navel.

The fourth time obscurations are thus purified.

Great wisdom-knowledge empowerment is obtained and wisdom becomes indestructible.
བདེན་བཅོས་གྱི་དོན།

རྫོང་ཁག་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་

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དུས་གཏོང་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་

དུས་གཏོང་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་

13

དུས་གཏོང་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་

དུས་གཏོང་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་

14

དུས་གཏོང་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་

དུས་གཏོང་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་

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དུས་གཏོང་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་

དུས་གཏོང་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་

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དུས་གཏོང་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་

དུས་གཏོང་ཚོགས་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཚོགས་
The Teacher melts into light and mixes with me as water poured into water
Rest in the unmodified flow of mind, non-dual wisdom, free from all fabrications.

**Visualize**

OM AH HUNG HO

Teacher's body with all perfect marks,
Through entering my forehead, body's energy spot,
I request you to purify the obscurations of the waking state
With the joyful water of vase initiation.

Voice of the entire sambhogakaya,
Through entering my throat, speech's energy spot,
I request you to burn the latencies of the dream state,
With the joyful fire of great secret initiation.

Glorious Teacher, dharmakaya,
Through entering my heart, mind's energy spot,
I request you to dispel the darkness of deep sleep,
With the sun of wisdom-knowledge.

Protector, co-emergent body,
Through entering my navel, wisdom's energy spot,
I request you to bless me to attain the immutable,
With the fourth initiation.

And

In that way, I and all sentient beings,
Body, speech, mind and wisdom
May we be unified in equanimity with the four vajras (the four indestructible)
And attain the four-fold bodies enriched with all abilities.
བོད་སྐད་ཡིག་ལ་མཐུན་ཞིག་དུས་དཔེ་དབེ་བདག་སྣ་ཚོགས་དབང་བོར་བརྩེ་བ།

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[18]
The Teacher's mind and one's mind remain spontaneously inseparable as long as possible

Then recite

By the power of all the seeds of virtue accumulated by me
May all sentient beings become the supreme glorious Teacher,
One with the inconceivable qualities of Body, Speech, Mind and Wisdom
Of all the buddhas of the three times

Complete with any other appropriate dedication.
If you are doing only the Dorje Sempa practice in the session, as in all your sessions make the practice 'good in the beginning' by starting with taking refuge and enlightened attitude in a concise form. For your convenience, we give here the corresponding prayer. Taking refuge means we feel the need for protection from the sufferings of the cycle of conditioned existence, and require support on the path to enlightenment. Therefore, we go for refuge in the Three Jewels: the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. The enlightened attitude is the altruistic intention to attain enlightenment in order to benefit all sentient beings.

SANG GYE CHÖ TANG TSOK KYI CHOK NAM LA
In the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha,
until attaining enlightenment I take refuge.

DAK GUI GUE JOR GYI PEY SÖ NAM KYI
By the merit of my virtuous activities, may I attain buddhahood in order to benefit all beings.

Recite this prayer three times, in Tibetan or in your own language, according to your wish. As with all prayers and recitations, if you decide to do it in Tibetan, make sure you remember the meaning.

If this practice is the continuation of previous practice in the same session, then all of the above has been performed at the beginning of the session, and you do not need to repeat it now.
DORJE CHANG

Details of the image
Visualize your teacher in front of you, at a level slightly above you. All the elements of this visualization should be seen and felt as immaterial - transparent, and brilliant, as if made out of light. This 'light' should not be considered physically real but it does give a sense of the insubstantiality of the visualization. According to one's individual preferences, the teacher can be visualized as a buddha or in his ordinary appearance.

Expanding on this subject, H.E. Dorzong Rinpoche says:
"In general, it is best to practice with whatever one relates to better. For example, visualizing the teacher as Buddha, as Dorje Chang or in his everyday appearance. I, like many lamas and Westerners prefer this last option. Most Tibetans, due to their great devotion, prefer the Dorje Chang form. The same happens with pictures of the lamas: some prefer a photo of their lama in his ordinary life, others the same lama on a throne with ceremonial robes".

We suggest you use Dorje Chang in your visualization if you have not yet established a formal teacher-disciple connection with a qualified lama. Dorje Chang is the dharmakaya buddha, the indivisible union of all the buddhas of the three times and the ten directions. His image appears on the cover of this publication.

Another reason for the root teacher to be in the form of a buddha like Dorje Chang is that the results that will be obtained from the practice will depend on how we relate to him/her during the actual course of the practice. If seen as a qualified teacher, the results will be limited. If perceived as a bodhisattva, the result will eventually be at most the attainment of that level. Only if we feel our mentor to be a totally enlightened being, an actual buddha, can we be helped to secure the ultimate level.

In this respect, Tulku Thondup cites a Tibetan proverb:

\[
\text{From whomever one sees as a Buddha} \\
\text{The blessings are received as from a Buddha.} \\
\text{From whomever one sees as a fool} \\
\text{The effects come as from a fool.}
\]

Nevertheless, this should not be taken too literally. It refers to remembering and contacting the buddha nature intrinsic in all beings.

Dorje Chang is visualized transparent, as if made out of non-physical light, deep blue, thus indicating his infinite sky-like wisdom. He has one face and two arms. He is holding at his heart level with his right hand the golden dorje, the method, which is also translated as skilful means (see next note on method), and with the left the silver bell, the wisdom. The crossing of the hands indicates the inseparability of both characteristics. He is dressed in the traditional way of the ancient Indian princes, with precious ornaments and silken garments. Each one of these elements manifests a different aspect of enlightenment. It is important to realize at the time of visualizing that the enlightened manifestations are not a mere representation or reminder of qualities, as a picture would be, but the actual qualities themselves. An image of Dorje Chang is shown on the cover of this publication.

In the absolute sense, Dorje Chang is the complete enlightenment.
Prayer to the Four Bodies of the Teacher

Lord, all pervading without exception, having purified the two obscurations
I take refuge in you, Teacher, buddha dharmakaya
I take refuge in you, Lord, buddha dharmakaya
All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
Take refuge in you, Teacher, buddha dharmakaya
Take refuge in you, Lord, buddha dharmakaya
Grant your blessings to manifest the dharmakaya of all sentient beings

Grant your blessings that all sentient beings
Realize the merging of meditation and post-meditation
Grant your blessings that all sentient beings stabilize uninterrupted experiences.
All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
Take refuge in you, Teacher, buddha dharmakaya
Take refuge in you, Lord, buddha dharmakaya

*Obscurations.* (Tib. sgrīb pa, phonetic dribpa. Skt. avarana) Sometimes translated as 'obstructions' or 'veils', they are mental factors that temporarily prevent us from realizing our own buddha nature. They are classified as:

- Obscurations of the negative emotions, such as hatred, pride, jealousy and so on.
- Cognitive obscurations that limit our present understanding of reality to the conceptual, relative level.

As the terms themselves indicate, the first category of obscurations inhibits the individual from gaining total freedom from the cycle of conditioned existence, and the second from attaining a direct and non-deceptive knowledge of all aspects of reality.

The first category include not only the conscious states of our deluded mind, such as desire, hatred, harmful intent, etc., but also the habitual tendencies imprinted by these states of mind, which serve as seeds for their continuity and recurrence.

The second category of obscurations refers to the subtle dispositions which are deeply ingrained within an individual's psyche and which are at the base of the dualistic perceptions of the phenomenal world. They are related to the deluded perceptions of subject, object, and action. For example, my believing in an observer, the item observed, and the action of observing, the three of them conceived as permanent, separate, and inherently existent.

There are many traditional metaphors used to convey the idea of the obscurations covering our direct, experiential realization of our buddha nature. For example, the dirt that covers a recently found gold nugget, or a coffer of jewels buried under the floor of a beggar's dwelling.

A total overcoming of both obscurations marks the attainment of Buddhahood.

*Dharmakaya.* Absolute body, complete enjoyment body, enlightened manifestation body and essential body are not four physical bodies or places, but intellectual efforts intended to conceptualise totality. As such, the division in four aspects is artificial, and can only be understood by laboriously trying to explain in words what is mostly beyond words.

The absolute body, (Tib. chos sku, phonetic chöku. Skt. dharmakaya) is the absolute, the expanse from where everything can happen or manifest and into where everything can disappear. We can relate it to emptiness, unobstructedness.

The complete enjoyment body, (Tib. longs sku, phonetic longku. Skt. sambhogakaya) sometimes translated as intangible appearance body, can be thought of as a bridge between the absolute and the enlightened manifestation bodies. It is the expanse without substance, the sphere of light, sound, visions. We can relate it to energy, again in a non-physical aspect. Enlightened beings can manifest in this level in order to help sentient beings. Although not visible to ordinary beings, they are usually represented in the iconography and practice texts as extraordinarily richly attired royal-
ty, with the purpose of inspiring and enriching a practitioner’s meditation. It must be remembered that when we use terms such as energy, light, and sound, we are not implying physical elements. These are non-physical characteristics, and they are not part of the experience of ordinary beings. We try to approximate them by using metaphors.

The enlightened manifestation body, (Tib. sprul sku, phonetic tulku. Skt. nirmanakaya) can be related to form. Enlightened beings arise out of emptiness as energy, and coalesce into form, with wisdom and awareness. These embodiments appear in a variety of roles, in order to be able to help beings with different needs and capacities: as an ordinary looking being, as a great teacher, as a buddha, and the like.

The essential body, (Tib. ngo bo nyid sku, phonetic ngowo nyiku. Skt. Svabhavikakaya) is the indivisible union of the three previous bodies.

The underlying indivisible union of these three bodies is referred as the essential body (Tib. ngowo nyiku. Skt. Svabhavikakaya).

Higher tantras speak of five bodies, including the abhisambodhikaya and vajrakaya, as the expressive and indivisible aspects of the absolute body respectively.

The term 'body' in this context is used to refer not only to the physical body of a buddha, but also to the differing 'dimensions' in which the embodiment of fully enlightened attributes occurs, as explained above.

* All mother sentient beings, equal to unlimited space. A technical expression that connotes two meanings:
  * All sentient beings, whose number is unlimited as the expanse of space is infinite.
  * We have all lived, since beginningless time, an infinite number of lives. All beings therefore, on infinite number of occasions, have been our mother.

This reflection is one of the methods used to support the generation of the enlightened activity of helping all beings, as a means of repaying their kindness to us when, in an unlimited number of previous lives, they were our mother.

* Blessings. In a Dharma context, the word 'blessing' relates to a sense of inspiration from an external source, which transforms the potentials inherent within the individual's mental continuum. The Tibetan term &\text{\&}n\&lab' that is commonly translated into English as 'blessing' is composed of &\text{\&}n\& meaning 'magnificence', 'excellence', 'splendour', 'brilliance', and 'lab' meaning 'wave', also with a connotation of 'transformed', 'overwhelmed' and 'enveloped'. Thus, together, the two syllables can be rendered as 'to be transformed through the waves of inspiring magnificence'.

This term might mislead persons with a non-Buddhist background, as the term translated as 'blessing' has different meanings in different spiritual traditions. In addition, even within the Buddhist tradition, it will take different meanings depending on the level of understanding.

On the relative level, as a result of a perfect teacher’s realization and compassion, which are the source of the blessings, he/she generates power, the blessings in themselves. Compassion is the key to realization, as it means the teacher has gone beyond the ego fixation that otherwise would hinder his/her realization and all other capacities.

According to the interaction of the teacher’s realization and compassion, these blessings can take many forms. If the sources are limited, then the blessings will have a limited effect. In addition, as they can be expressed through any combination of body, speech, and mind activities, they will manifest in myriad different forms. His/her physical attitudes, clothes, any other item in contact with his/her body, his/her relics after death, can all have positive effects. Hearing his/her voice or teachings can help with the practice of the student. His/her practice, prayers, and meditations can create beneficial or protective conditions according to the particular needs. In Tibet, for centuries, faith in these capacities has proved to be truly effective.

In a teacher-student practice context, a student can relate with the teacher through confidence, faith, or devotion in his/her Mind. Then, and only then, the lama can transmit wisdom. This process is individual, Mind to mind, and its success depends on the level of realization of the teacher and his/her compassion on one hand, and on the openness and devotion of the student on the other. Without these components, no blessing, seen as wisdom transference, can take place.
Although the student's future depends on his/her past and present actions, the blessings of a realised teacher can partially modify this by creating favourable, inspiring, energising conditions for the practice. It is for these reasons that practices such as the ngöndro are recommended.

When teaching on this subject, Dorzong Rinpoche gave the example of Pakmo Drupa and his disciple Lingchen Repa. Pakmo Drupa, a realized master, one day told his attendants that he was expecting someone who would arrive soon, in which case he was to be shown in immediately. The attendants were expecting some important person, but nobody like that showed up. Only a beggar appeared during the day, asking to see Pakmo Drupa. Of course he was told that the master was absolutely not able to meet him because he was very busy, etc., etc. By the end of the day Pakmo Drupa inquired whether someone had appeared or not, and was told that nobody had come, except a beggar, who obviously was not his expected guest. "But yes, he is the one I am waiting for, show him in!" And so the surprised attendants did just that. When the newcomer was ushered into the master's room, he suddenly jumped towards Pakmo Drupa, embraced him and started weeping from joy. The attendants, overwhelmed by this breach of all the norms of protocol when meeting a master of Pakmo Drupa's standing, tried to drag him out, excusing themselves at the same time. "Let him be with me, he is my son and we will not be separated now!" said the master. And Lingchen Repa attained instantaneously the realization of Chakchen, and spiritually grew to become in due course a realized master himself, and the founder of the Drukpa Kagyü lineage. This is an example of the auspicious coincidence of a realized master, a ripe disciple, at the appropriate moment, resulting in the instantaneous indivisible union of the two minds. This process can also be described as the blessings of the master inspiring the disciple.

**Meditation and postmeditation.** In general terms, the period of formal meditation and the subsequent period. In stricter terms, meditation implies a non-distracted moment and postmeditation is when distraction is present. Therefore, during 'meditation', even if the formal aspects are maintained, if the practitioner is distracted he/she are in 'postmeditation'.

**Stabilize uninterrupted experiences.** Have continuous meditative experiences, not one day yes and another day no. Also, they are clear, without doubt and confusion.

Lord, **unceasing and all pervading;** in your body manifest the pure worlds
Gathering as a cluster of clouds of the victorious ones of the three times
I take refuge in you, Teacher, sambhogakaya
I take refuge in you, Lord, sambhogakaya
All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
Take refuge in you, Teacher, sambhogakaya
Take refuge in you, Lord, sambhogakaya
Grant your blessings that all sentient beings' bodies be endowed with the major and minor marks
Grant your blessings that all sentient beings' speeches possess the sixty melodious tones
Grant your blessings that all sentient beings' minds clearly encompass
The mandala of all that is knowable
All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
Take refuge in you, Teacher, sambhogakaya
Take refuge in you, Lord, sambhogakaya.

**Unceasing and all pervading.** In the usual deluded state, what is perceived is impure, in the sense that it is contaminated by confusion. Perceptions are fragmented into subject, object and action, they are considered inherently existent, etc. When duality disappears perceptions continue, but now in its pure form, without illusory divisions. They are recognized as unborn, beyond the extremes of existence and non existence. Enlightened beings do not react in a conditioned way, as it happens when the experience is dualist. There are no more obstacles. As there are no more obstacles, the teacher is all pervading.
Prayer to the Four Bodies of the Teacher

**Pure worlds.** The teacher, while manifesting ‘unceasing and all pervading’, also manifests the pure worlds. Of the three dimensions of reality, common beings perceive only the elements of the nirmanakaya level; this planet, its inhabitants and its associated phenomena. Enlightened beings perceive also the sambhogakaya (buddhas’ realms) and the dharma (absolute mind) levels. The pure and impure concept is an illusory definition assigned by the mind of unenlightened beings.

**Victorious of the three times.** The buddhas of the past, present and future. They attained victory over their own limitations.

**Major and minor marks.** Also known as the thirty-two major and the eighty minor marks, they are physical characteristics of the body of a buddha. Some of the major marks are:

- The palms of the hands and the soles of the feet show signs of a wheel.
- The body is golden.
- The skin is smooth.
- The eyes are the colour of sapphire.
- Each hair curls to the right.

Some of the minor marks in its external meaning are:

- The nails are copper coloured.
- The gait is elegant.
- The eyebrows are long.
- The ear sense is perfect.
- The hair is soft.

**Sixty melodious tones.** Similarly to the previous note, sixty aspects of the voice of a buddha are mentioned. Some of them are:

- deep as the thunder.
- sweet and soft to the ear.
- pleasing and joyful.
- clear and audible.

Lord, with your unobjectified compassion manifest in whatever form needed to tame beings,
Make them ripen without exception
I take refuge in you, Teacher, nirmanakaya
I take refuge in you, Lord, nirmanakaya
All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
Take refuge in you, Teacher, nirmanakaya
Take refuge in you, Lord, nirmanakaya
Grant your blessings that we may emanate for each and every sentient being
Grant your blessings that immediately after these emanations
All sentient beings attain perfect enlightenment
All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
Take refuge in you, Teacher, nirmanakaya
Take refuge in you, Lord, nirmanakaya

Lord, uncontaminated, all-pervading and unborn dharma
Unobstructed unification of appearance and emptiness, sambhogakaya
Taking all-pervading appropriate forms to tame beings, nirmanakaya
Lord, I take refuge in you, embodiment of the three kayas
All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
Take refuge in you, Teacher, precious buddha
Take refuge in you, Lord, precious buddha
Grant your blessings that all sentient beings realize the essence of unborn dharma
Grant your blessings that all sentient beings emanate as unobstructed sambhogakaya
Grant your blessings that all sentient beings unbiasedly support the activity of nirmanakaya
   All mothers, sentient beings, equal to whole space
   Take refuge in you, Teacher, precious buddha
   Take refuge in you, Lord, precious buddha.

Now begins the empowerment given by the teacher to the disciple. The text gives two versions, one with seed syllables and another with energy centers. H.E. Dorzong Rinpoche oral teaching states that either one, or both, can be practiced. If you decide for this last option, the dissolution and integration of the teacher in you is done at the end of the second.

Next inspiringly chant and earnestly pray:

   The four places of the glorious Teacher are endowed with
   OM AH HUNG HO
   In white, red, blue, and green
   As the essence blessings of his Body, Speech, Mind and Indestructible Primordial Wisdom.
   And my own four places,
   The nature of the body, speech, mind and wisdom,
   Are endowed with the same four syllables.

   From OM in the Teacher's forehead
   Radiate the blessings of Body as white luminous rays
   Entering my body nature, OM in my forehead.
   The waking state obscurations are thus purified.
   Vase empowerment is obtained and the body becomes indestructible.

   From AH in the Teacher's throat
   Radiate the blessings of Speech as red luminous rays
   Entering my speech nature, AH in my throat.
   The dream time obscurations are thus purified.
   Secret empowerment is obtained and the speech becomes indestructible.

   From HUNG in the Teacher's heart
   Radiate the blessings of Mind as blue luminous rays
   Entering my mind nature, HUNG in my heart.
   The deep sleep obscurations are thus purified.
   Wisdom-knowledge empowerment is obtained and the mind becomes indestructible.

   From HO in the Teacher's navel
   Radiate the blessings of Primordial Wisdom as green luminous rays
   Entering my wisdom nature, HO in my navel.
   The fourth time obscurations are thus purified.
   Great wisdom-knowledge empowerment is obtained and wisdom becomes indestructible.

   The Teacher melts into light and mixes with me as water poured into water
   Rest in the unmodified flow of mind, non-dual wisdom, free from all fabrications.

We will describe the visualization of this section, and afterwards explain the terms highlighted in bold above. All the elements of the visualization are to be seen and felt as non-material, as if made of non-physical light, transparent, bright.
Prayer to the Four Bodies of the Teacher

Four seed syllables, OM AH HUNG HO are visualized as being transparent, bright, luminous letters, the size of a pea. For their appearance in Tibetan script refer to the figure. They are in a transversal position, so a person on the left of the practitioner would read them correctly, and are vertically positioned at the four levels indicated. The corresponding syllables in the disciple are dull and low intensity. When the teachers’ syllables are absorbed into the disciples’, these become brilliant, undifferentiated from the teachers’ syllables.

You might also find the seed syllables facing the front. As already mentioned before, do not get confused or generate doubts, but maintain the instructions for this practice.

**Vase, secret, wisdom-knowledge and great wisdom-knowledge empowerments.** See notes *empowerment* on page 33 and *four empowerments* on page 34.

**Dream state** and related states. The night sleep period, when examined in detail, shows different activities of the mind. Referring to the diagram, the first stage is the gradual passage from the awakened state to being asleep. The second one, where all mental activity practically ceases, a period without thoughts or dreams, lasts for some hours, and may or may not be punctuated by short periods of midnight awakening, for example, to relieve oneself, or due to noises, etc. The dream period usually starts some time after midnight, and lasts until just before awakening. The passage from being asleep to being awake (the reverse of the passage into sleep) can be gradual or sudden, clear or muddy, depending on the propensities of the person.

The teachings emphasize that the whole sleeping period is a good opportunity for practice. It lasts for eight hours in average, thus taking one third of the life of a human being. If it can be put to conscious use, it is said that it is much better than 'sleeping like a corpse'.

The teachings on dreams propose:

- During the waking period, remember that all phenomena are insubstantial, devoid of self-existence, illusory. In the Chakchen path this practice is called the 'illusory body practice'.
- Remain conscious during the passage into sleep, instead of experiencing a gradual heavy drowsiness or a sudden collapse into sleep. See how the appearances of one state gradually dissolve, and those of the next state start to appear. The last thoughts before falling asleep are quite important, as they carry on during the night, and impact on the dreams. So it is recommended to keep in mind, with strong intention, the thought - "Tonight, I will recognize my dreams as dreams, and not get attached or repulsed by them".
- Recognize the deep sleep period. It is taught that this is a very difficult proposition, due to the profound depths where the mind stays during this period, known as the 'basis of all'. During the eventual midnight intermissions, keep remembering clearly the dream practice.
- During the dream period train into three successively more advanced stages:
  - Recognize that what is dreamt is a dream and not 'reality'.
  - Do not run away or get involved into what 'happens' in the dream.
  - Be able to transform the dream in whatever you wish. In the dream state, if you are
aware that you are dreaming, you can decide to fly, or stay in the bottom of the ocean, or whatever. There are no physical limitations, as they seem to be in the 'real' waking period.

It is clear that these proposals are also helpful for the waking period, in order to realize the emptiness of self and the emptiness of phenomena.

Finally, it is taught that the cycle 'awake-asleep-awake' is not different from the cycle 'life-death-life' and that exactly the same mechanisms and processes are present and operational. Therefore, mastering dream practice will also be helpful at the moment of death and during the intermediate period before the next rebirth.

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The texts refer to not being carried away by the habitual tendencies on our mind, which provide the contents of the dreams and then make us believe they are really happening. Finally, we remember the Buddha, who in his discourse 'The Supreme Mound of Jewels' taught:

\[
\text{My form appeared like a dream} \\
\text{To sentient beings that are like a dream.} \\
\text{I taught them dreamlike teachings} \\
\text{To attain dreamlike enlightenment.}
\]

Further reading in Thinley Norbu Rinpoche's book, 'Magic Dance', in the chapter 'Habit, Dream and Time'.

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{OM AH HUNG HO} \\
&\text{Teacher's body with all perfect marks,} \\
&\text{Through entering my forehead, body's energy spot,} \\
&\text{I request you to purify the obscurations of the waking state} \\
&\text{With the joyful water of vase initiation.} \\
&\text{Voice of the entire sambhogakaya,} \\
&\text{Through entering my throat, speech's energy spot,} \\
&\text{I request you to burn the latencies of the dream state,} \\
&\text{With the joyful fire of great secret initiation.} \\
&\text{Glorious Teacher, dharmakaya,} \\
&\text{Through entering my heart, mind's energy spot,} \\
&\text{I request you to dispel the darkness of deep sleep,} \\
&\text{With the sun of wisdom-knowledge.} \\
&\text{Protector, co-emergent body,} \\
&\text{Through entering my navel, wisdom's energy spot,} \\
&\text{I request you to bless me to attain the immutable,} \\
&\text{With the fourth initiation.} \\
&\text{In that way, I and all sentient beings,} \\
&\text{Body, speech, mind and wisdom} \\
&\text{May we be unified in equanimity with the four vajras (the four indestructible)} \\
&\text{And attain the four-fold bodies enriched with all abilities.}
\end{align*}
\]

The Teacher's mind and one's mind remain spontaneously inseparable as long as possible.●
This is the second alternative for the four initiations. The first one has already been explained beginning on page 30. They are similar, except that now the four seed syllables are replaced by the four tigles, the four energy centers. See note below.

Tigle. (Tib. thig le, phonetic tigle, Skt. bindu). Variously translated as 'essence', 'seminal point', 'energy centers' or 'drop of energy', the term 'tigle' conveys a wide range of meanings. According to context, it can refer to:

- The pure essence of the white/male and red/female generative or seminal fluids of the body which, along with the energy channels, and the winds flowing through the channels, form an important aspect of human physiology according to Buddhist medical theory and tantra.
- Synonym for the absolute body, dharmakaya, known as the 'unique seminal point'.
- The seminal points of light that appear during the togal practices of dzogchen.

In the present text, the tigle is a spot in the form of non-physical light that concentrates the whole body (the tigle in the forehead), the whole speech (the tigle in the throat) and the whole mind (the tigle in the heart). In the case of four tigles, the fourth (in the navel) concentrates the whole pristine cognition.

Empowerment. (Tib. dbang, phonetic wang, Skt. abisheka). Sometimes translated as 'initiation'. This term has many different meanings. In some contexts, it refers to a ritual, public or private, during which the master confers on the student the permission and the capacity to train in a specific practice, thus reinforcing its effectiveness, and creating a closer bond between them. At other times, it refers to the transmission of wisdom from teacher to disciple in the course of a practice such as this practice of guru yoga.

In the words of H.E. Dorzong Rinpoche:
“In the dorje vehicle tradition there are two stages: The empowerment that ripens and the instructions that liberate. For instance, farmers make the soil suitable by first ploughing it, crushing the big lumps, and so forth. Only when the time is ready, they plant a healthy seed. Similarly, through the empowerment that ripens, the wisdom of the particular empowerment arises in the mind stream of the disciple according to his capability. This is called ‘empowerment’.
“Subsequently, one does not allow the seed to rot, dry up or be wasted by any other kind of damage. Instead, one preserves it properly by watering it, applying manure, and so forth. By this, one obtains the sprout, the stalk, and the rest and finally the fruit becomes ripened. The same happens with the instructions that liberate. The wisdom of the empowerment that was born in the mind of the student must be continuously developed by depending on the master’s instructions.”

However, some conditions are to be met if the objective of the empowerment, the transmission of wisdom, is to happen:

The master:
- Should be a realized master.
- Should have compassion for all beings.
- His motivation should be pure, that is, he is not giving empowerments for personal gain, or to amass wealth, or prestige. The reason for his giving empowerments is to contribute to other beings' liberation.
- He should bestow them only to worthy recipients.

The disciple:
- Should be a sincere and qualified student.
- Should feel strong devotion to his teacher.
His motivation should be pure. Should not request empowerments for temporal gains, or protection from harm or sickness, or to gain membership to what is felt to be the exclusive club of those that have received a particular initiation from a specific master, and so on. The wish to attain liberation for the sake of all beings is the pure motivation mentioned in the texts.

Then when all these conditions are met, it is like two candles. One burns with a stable, strong flame. The other, not yet burning, has a dry wick and good wax. Then, the simple contact of the two instantaneously ignites the second candle. If some conditions are not met, for example because the wicks are short, or wet, nothing will happen. The same is valid for the latent possibility of wisdom transmission through an empowerment.

An empowerment can be received in many different forms: in an elaborate ceremony, in a common life situation, from mind to mind in the course of meditation, etc. There are no fixed rules, and certainly it does not depend upon a vase touching the top of the head, or water being sprinkled on those attending a particular ceremony.

On the effects of an empowerment, Tulku Thondup, in 'Enlightened Journey' (see bibliography), says:

"There are three main benefits listed in the texts:

- The supreme effect of the empowerment causes you to realize primordial wisdom, the meaning of the empowerment. If you are a gifted person and all conditions are perfect, then, during the empowerment you will realize primordial wisdom, the meaning or true goal of the empowerment, the actual goal of spiritual practice.
- The middle level effect of the empowerment causes you to develop experiences of bliss, clarity, and non-thought.
- The lesser effect of the empowerment causes the arising of confidence in seeing your own three doors as the body, speech and mind of the deity.

These are the three categories of effects given in the texts, but they all seem too elevated or too hard for many of us to achieve in the empowerments. My personal feeling is that when we receive an empowerment, even if we do not have any of these three types of experience, as long as we have a peaceful, blissful or devotional mind that opens, relaxes, pacifies and calms us down, this will become a transmission of the blessings of the teacher and deity, and will establish a connection with the particular esoteric practice. So, we should feel fortunate. Also, when we receive transmission from an authentic teacher, at least we are receiving permission to study and practice the particular teaching. We may not be receiving even the lesser effects, but we should still be proud of our good fortune".

In Tibet, initiation ceremonies were often performed in public and attended by all the people in the area.

**Four empowerments.** Here the practitioner renews, or actualizes, the empowerments received from his teacher. This process is also called *self-empowerment.*

The four empowerments are:

1. the vase empowerment.
2. the secret empowerment.
3. the knowledge-wisdom empowerment.
4. the word empowerment.

Each one of these empowerments dispels one specific type of obscuration. Respectively:

1. the obscurations of the waking time. It helps to realize the indivisibility of perceptions and emptiness. 'All forms are empty'.
2. the obscurations of the dreaming time. It helps to realize the indivisibility of sounds and emptiness.
3. the obscurations of the deep sleep time (for the dream and deep sleep periods see note on *dream state* on pg. 31). It helps to realize the indivisibility of bliss and emptiness.
4. the obscurations at the time of union. In the words of Dorzong Rinpoche, 'nyon jug ki dribma', translated as *time of union obscuration*, refers to the very powerful veils arising before and during the sexual orgasm. They are overwhelming, related with strong desire.
and deep mental opacity. The metaphor traditionally used is milk that has been added a big amount of sugar. The original taste of the milk is entirely lost beneath the strong sweetness. This empowerment helps to realize the view.

From another perspective, the vase empowerment, received from the Body of the teacher, purifies the body of the practitioner. The secret empowerment, received from the Speech of the teacher, purifies the speech of the practitioner. The knowledge-wisdom empowerment, received from the Mind of the teacher, purifies the mind of the practitioner. The word empowerment, received from the dorje Wisdom of the teacher, purifies the subtle defilements of body, speech and mind of the practitioner.

This subject is vast and important. Many different meanings and purposes are given in the texts. You can read more in Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche's book 'The Wish-fulfilling Jewel', pg. 66 and in Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche's 'Indisputable Truth', pg 148.

To summarize the different elements of the visualization and recitation described up to this point, refer to the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLACE</th>
<th>COLOR</th>
<th>BLESSING</th>
<th>EMPOWERMENT</th>
<th>OBSCURATION</th>
<th>BODY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crown of head</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Body</td>
<td>Vase</td>
<td>Awake</td>
<td>Nirmanakaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throat</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>Secret</td>
<td>Dream</td>
<td>Sambhogakaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Mind</td>
<td>Knowledge-wisdom</td>
<td>Deep sleep</td>
<td>Dharmakaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navel</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>The three united</td>
<td>Word</td>
<td>Time of union</td>
<td>Svabhavikakaya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Four dorjes. Means the four tigles, the essence of Body, Speech, Mind and Wisdom.

Then recite

By the power of all the seeds of virtue accumulated by me
May all sentient beings become the supreme glorious Teacher,
One with the inconceivable qualities of Body, Speech, Mind and Wisdom
Of all the buddhas of the three times

Complete with any other appropriate dedication.

Dedication. The practice was made 'good at the beginning' because you took refuge and established the enlightened attitude. It was made 'good in the middle' because you practiced with awareness. It will be made 'good in the end' through its dedication to the benefit of all beings. The dedication is an essential element of Dharma practice enacted normally in form of the recitation of certain verses at the conclusion of a spiritual practice. In all practices, the motivation at the beginning and the dedication at the end are regarded as highly significant. The two most common objectives of the dedication are:

- The flourishing of the teachings throughout the universe.
- Attainment of full enlightenment by all sentient beings.

In the present context, dedication is the wish that all the worthwhile activities performed during the practice session may become the cause for all beings attaining enlightenment.

Thrangu Rinpoche in 'King of Samadhi', pg. 47 (see bibliography), teaches:
"Dedicating or sharing merit is something we should always train in at the conclusion of any spir-
Itual practice. We should imagine that whatever good may arise from our practice we share or distribute to all other beings for the general welfare of everyone. What is the use of that? Some people may inject hope and fear into this, perhaps expecting that by dedicating the merit to a sick friend, he or she will be cured and happy. This will not necessarily happen right at that moment. It is not that we can do a good action right now and the result will immediately be transferred to the other person so that he or she is freed from their bad karma. Cause and effect are not directly and immediately linked in this way.

"We need not get caught up in a lot of hope and expectations. On the other hand, some people may fear, 'If I wish the merit I have created through my practice to ripen on other beings, it will all be wasted and I myself will have nothing left.' We need not get involved in expecting too much. There really is not anything to have hope or fear about, because each person will reap exactly what he or she has sown.

"Merit is dedicated to cultivate our altruistic attitude, to develop pure intent. Rather than clinging selfishly to the frame of mind that thinks, 'This is my merit, I need it myself' make the wish 'May whatever good I have created be for the welfare of everyone', without any particular focal point. "This is training in a pure attitude. Growing accustomed to and training in this pure motivation of dedicating the merit will ensure that at some point when we will be really able to help someone we will do it in a very open and vast way."

It is also taught that dedicating one's positive potential in this way ensures its stability, which could otherwise be vulnerable to destruction by anger and other adverse reactions. This refers to the fact that the arousal of negative emotions towards the practice that has been done ('it is not helpful', 'it does not work', 'I am wasting my time' and similar states of mind) destroys its beneficial results. Negative emotions experienced in other circumstances carry their own karmic consequences, but they do not interfere directly with the eventual benefits of the practice. What is referred to above is the relative dedication, involving concepts. This should be finally sealed by the absolute dedication without concepts. It is the recognition that the one who dedicates, the dedication itself, and the object of the dedication are all inherently empty. Rest in this state, devoid of the three concepts.

Summarizing, when we dedicate the merit of the practice we must sustain a very strong motivation to benefit all sentient beings, the enlightened attitude. In addition, we maintain a clear realization of the empty, illusion-like nature of all phenomena.

A practice 'good in the beginning' means praying to the lama, taking refuge and establishing the correct motivation, the intention to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. A practice 'good in the middle' means practising earnestly and without distractions or attachment. A practice is made 'good in the end' by dedicating all the merits that have been developed for the temporary benefit and ultimate enlightenment of all beings. The prayer is given below.

```
SÖ NAM DI YI TAM CHE ZIK PA NYI       TOB NE NYE PEY DRA NAM PAM JE TE
By this merit, having attained omniscience, overcoming the forces of wrongdoings,

KYE GA NA CHY BA LAB TRÜK PA YI       SI PEY TSO LE DRO WA DRÖL WAr SHok
May I liberate all beings - buffeted by the waves of birth, old age, sickness, and death - from the ocean of existence.
```

Recite this prayer three times, in Tibetan or in your own language, according to your wish. As with all prayers and recitations, if you decide to do it in Tibetan, make sure you remember the meaning.

* At the end of this practice period, you can keep the feeling of your teacher either in your heart or above your head. Remember him/her and feel his/her presence during your daily activities.
You have completed a period of practice intended to benefit you and, through your spiritual development, all other sentient beings. You have done it with the guidance of your kind teacher, and to the best of your present abilities. It is therefore a very worthwhile endeavour. Appreciate it.

After you finish your session, try not to rush over to your other activities. Allow yourself time to gradually shift and adjust from one environment to the other. Be kind to yourself. Be a friend to yourself.

In the closing sentences of H.H. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche to his teaching "The Heart Treasure of the Enlightened Ones", Rinpoche says:

"Whether practising formally in a session or carrying the practice into the activities of your daily life, you should remember three supreme points applied to the preparation, the substance, and the conclusion of whatever you are doing. The preparation is to wish that what you are about to do may benefit all beings, bringing them happiness and ultimately leading them to enlightenment. The substance is to be fully attentive to what you are doing, without ever taking subject, object, or action as having any true existence. The conclusion is to dedicate to all beings the merit you may have accumulated through your practice or activity. By sealing everything you do with this dedication, you ensure that the merit will ripen into the fruit of buddhahood both for yourself and for others.

In this age troubled by war, famine, disease, disasters, and physical and mental suffering of all kinds, to think even for an instant of the welfare of others is of inconceivable merit. Please take these teachings to heart and put them into practice. That will render everything I have said here truly worthwhile."

MAY WISDOM AND PEACE PREVAIL
MAY ALL SENTIENT BEINGS BENEFIT