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The Union of Mahamudra and Dzogchen

Venerable
Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche

A Commentary On
The Direct Instructions
of The Great Compassionate One

by

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Translated from Tibetan by Lama Yeshe Gyamtso

Foreword

These teachings come from the text written by Karma Chagmey [1605 - 1670] a prominent master of the Karma Kagyu lineage. He authored more than 55 volumes, and his teachings are so revered that they are practiced to this date in both the Kagyu and Nyingma traditions. This text is entitled, *The Direct Instructions of The Great Compassionate One*. It is a collection of eighteen chapters and is structured for usage within a formal eighteen day retreat. Each chapter is presented in the mornings by the teacher and the students then meditate on the instructions for the rest of the day. In that way the students are able to travel the entire path, beginning with the preliminaries and including the final practices. In addition, countless meditator yogis and lay practitioners would use this text, as a guide for their practice.

In June of 2003, the Ven. Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche presented his commentary orally on the last nine chapters from the text to a group of students at Crestone, Colorado, with Lama Yeshe Gyamtso providing the translation. Rinpoche omitted the beginning chapters on devotion, the common and the uncommon preliminaries, and began the teachings with the generation of bodhicitta chapter. He then presented the remaining chapters, the generation stage, the completion stage, the Mahamudra sections and the Great Perfection practices.

What follows are Rinpoche's comments transcribed from just five of the audio tapes. Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche begins with the direct insight teaching from both traditions, the Mahamudra and the Great Perfection traditions, called the analytic meditation of a Pandita. Rinpoche presented pointing out instructions from Rangjung Dorje, the Third Karmapa, from Kunga Nangyal, the Fourth Trungpa Rinpoche and from Jigmey Linpa the realized master of the Nyingma tradition. These commentaries contain practical examples from these three masters own experiences, which can be applied immediately by practitioners. Rinpoche then uses quotations from the Mahasiddha Tilopa, Jetsun Milarepa and Guru Padmasambhava, which contain the instructions on the practice of Mahamudra and the view of the Great Perfection, Trekcho.

Thrangu Rinpoche is able to bring these direct pointing out instructions into plain view to the students, by sharing his understanding on the meanings in these quotations.

In the concluding sections Rinpoche provides the students with the explanation of the Dzogchen leap-over practice or Togel instructions. He began by presenting both aspects to the Togel practice. The preliminary practice is the separation of samsara from nirvana. The samsara part is called the instructions for preventing rebirth in the six realms, and the nirvana part is the contemplation of the Three Jewels and the natural settling of the body, speech and mind. He then taught the second aspect to the Togel practice, the six lamps, the main part of the Togel practice. The six lamps are the training or familiarization to achieve liberation at the time of death in the bardo of dharmata. Through the familiarization with these practices in this lifetime the present bardo, the practitioner with the ability of some recognition of his or her minds nature, can gain the ability not to be overwhelmed by the appearances during the bardo of dying. This recognition is what is known as the merging of the luminosity of mother and child; their previous recognition will mix with their identification of it. The mother is the luminosity of the ground which is recognized and the child is the experience of dharmata which one previously cultivated.

Analytic Meditation of a Pandita

Within the instructions on Mahamudra and The Great Perfection which are presented in this text, we have reached the insight methods from both of these traditions. I feel of these two systems of instruction the one that is most beneficial for practitioners nowadays are Mahamudra. And, I feel therefore that Mahamudra teaching and practice is the most important.

The reason is that, although, there are many profound instructions which if practiced with great diligence while living in retreat, and having given up the world are very effective, nowadays it is very rare for people to be able to give up all the concerns of this life. What we really need, practically speaking, is a system of practice that can be properly implemented while we continue to maintain active lives, a system that can be practiced without any harm to the course of our lives, or our livelihood. The system of practice most applicable in this context is Mahamudra.

King Indrabhuti was not only a ruler but lived a life of luxury where as Nargarjuna was a great scholar and teacher. Both reached realization thru the practice of Mahamudra. The Kagyu forefathers Tilopa, Marpa, Milarepa and Gampopa all had different lifestyles involved with certain different responsibilities. Whatever their circumstances they integrated it with Mahamudra preserving mindfulness and alertness throughout all of their activities.

In short, whatever your lifestyle may be and whatever form your practice may take, if it includes the practice of Mahamudra it will be successful. Mahamudra is essential or necessary practice even if you do other practices as well. For example, there are profound methods such as the Six Dharmas of Naropa, and the leap-over or Togel practice within The Great Perfection tradition; but if you do these practices without Mahamudra practice they are not as affective. For example, you can practice Tummo or Dream Yoga and so on, and if you do them conjoined with Mahamudra practice they are tremendously powerful and effective. If you don't conjoin them with Mahamudra they are really not that useful. Now we can't say that they are useless, no Dharma practice is useless, but they don't fulfill their proper function unless Mahamudra practice is integrated into them. The same thing is true of the leap-over practice or Togel practice of The Great Perfection. Togel includes powerful methods such as the white instruction, red instruction, yellow instruction and the darkness teaching, but if these techniques are practiced in the absence of Mahamudra experience, not much benefit will accrue. Where, if they are practices in the context of Mahamudra they are tremendously powerful. On the other hand, you can practice just Mahamudra without any of these methods and it is still tremendously beneficial by itself.

In this text the practice of direct valid cognition is divided into two styles of practice. One called the analytical meditation of a Pandita, and the other called the placement of a Kusulu or yogi. A Pandita is a scholar, and here it means the use of some kind of examination or analysis like direct observation. On the other hand the other aspect of the usage of direct valid cognition, the placement meditation of a Kusulu or yogi is very simple and direct without the usage of directed or analytically oriented observation.

In the analytical direct observation of a Pandita you are observing specific characteristics or things.

What you are doing is attempting to directly observe certain features or characteristics. The practitioner looks directly at his or her own mind. In this practice you think, well the mind appears to be there, where? And you try to look at the mind and determine where it is? Where it is seated? Again, if the mind is present if the mind is there, how is it there? In what way is the mind present and what is it?

We believe the mind to be around somewhere. What is this mind? Now looking at these things you have to remember there are two aspects to things, how they appear and how they are. In the contexts of how things appear, it appears of course. It appears that our minds are seated in our heads or our hearts or all over the body. It appears that our minds are composed of lots of thoughts and so on. Here you are not looking at how things appear, you are looking at what the mind is. So in order to do this you first let the mind settle down, let it come to rest of itself. And, then you look at it to see what it is really like, and what it is that experiences. We define the mind as that which experiences; well what is it that experiences everything? This is not analysis, because you are not inferring these things, you are trying to observe them. This is called the eradication of misconception within; rather than an outward direct way.

The Third Karmapa Rangjung Dorje wrote, "When you repeatedly look at the mind which can not be looked at." This means that when you look at your mind you don't discover or find your mind as an object or as a subject, but nevertheless, you can still look, you are still searching. Now, when you do this repeatedly by thinking, "What is my mind really like?" and looking at it, "Where is it?" and looking for it, "What is its nature?" and looking at that. "What are its characteristics?" And really looking for them, you can do so. And when you do so, as Rangjung Dorje continues, "The mind that can not be seen is clearly seen." Now, again this means when you look at your mind you don't see anything in the sense of discovering some object, such as a color or a shape. You don't discover anything like that, but on the other hand, the mind is not nothing either. You experience clearly without any vagueness or doubt, the mind in a way that is not seeing something; and at the same time you see clearly through that experience, that there is nothing to be seen. Now, this means in spite of the fact that there is nothing in or of the mind that can be seen in the usual sense, the mind can experience, and the experience of the mind clearly just as it is, is what we call insight or vipashyana. When you do this repeatedly doubts about the mind, is it or isn't it, and so forth, are all eradicated. "In that way may I come to know my own nature without bewilderment." This means, when you see the mind or experience the mind as it is, any kind of ideas, confusion or doubts about it being one thing or another are transcended or therefore eradicated. What you experience is your own nature. It isn't something outside of yourself that you have to reach outside of yourself to find.

When you see that which can not be seen; when you experience your mind as it is, what do you experience? What do you discover? The Third Karmapa continues, "It is not something and therefore not seen by the Buddhas." When you look at your mind you don't find anything that can be called something, anything, that you can say exists. You might think that the reason that you don't discover anything is because the mind is somehow too subtle or maybe it is too small to be seen or maybe you are just not looking at it in the right way.

These are not the reasons for which you do not find anything, because even Buddhas, who certainly know how to look at it, in the right way don't see a thing, something, that exists, when they look at the mind. Nevertheless, Rangjung Dorje continues: "It is not nothing; it is the ground of all samsara and nirvana." While when you look at the mind you don't find anything, nevertheless, your mind remains the source or root of all experience. All of the pleasure and pain and variety of experience that you experience, are experienced by your mind. And when you recognize the nature of your mind you achieve buddhahood. In that way it is the mind that experiences samsara and nirvana.

Now, normally in ordinary simple logic, we would say; that if a thing is not something, it must be nothing. If it does not exist it must not exist. And, if a thing is not nothing it must be something. If it does not, not exist it must exist. So we would regard these statements as contradictory, that the mind is not something and yet not nothing. Nevertheless the Karmapa continues: "This is not a contradiction, this is the middle way of unity." Unity here means that the mind is the abiding unity of cognitive lucidity and emptiness. He goes on to say, "This is the Dharmata or nature of the mind beyond extremes."

The nature of your mind is beyond any kind of concept, conceptual elaboration or extreme you can come up with. It is not something, it is not nothing, it is not both, and it is not some other thing that is neither something or nothing. We describe this nature in using all sorts of terms, 'the unity of the expanse and wisdom,' 'the unity of cognitive lucidity and emptiness,' 'the unity of bliss and emptiness,' and so on. All of these things refer to the mind's nature, and is how in his *Aspiration of Mahamudra*, the Third Karmapa describes what you experience when you look at the mind. In that way, the nature of the mind is described in the Mahamudra tradition.

In the tradition of The Great Perfection, it is described similarly. For example, from the words of the omniscient Jigme Lingpa, "It is not something and is not seen even by the Buddhas. It is not nothing for it is the ground for all samsara and nirvana. This is not a contradiction; this is the Middle Way of unity. May the nature of the ground, the Great Perfection be realized." In other words, exactly the same thing is said in both traditions. And the way you discover this is simply by looking at your own mind, without making any attempt to alter it or to control what you experience.

When we use the word 'looking' in ordinary speech, we mean to look at something and to see it as it is. So for example, with your eyes when you look at a color you want and expect to see the color properly. You want to see red as red, and white as white, and so on. In the same way the practice of vipashyana or insight, is looking directly and without prejudice at your mind's nature, so that you see it, as it is. This is therefore not an attempt to control what you experience or to prejudice yourself about what you will experience. When you look at the mind you don't attempt to reinforce a conceptual view, such as the 'mind is empty,' it is nothing whatsoever. That is what I must see and so on.

At this point in the text a quotation is provided from Karma Chagmey, by the Fourth Trungpa Rinpoche, Kunga Namgyal. The instructions given in this quotation are particularly beneficial. He says, "When you are meditating by looking at the nature of your mind, whether you are doing so through primarily the application of conscious effort in tension or through a conscious effort in relaxation, what you need to do is engage in direct observation." Direct observation means you are not using faculty of reasoning, here you are using your faculty of observation. So one thing that will happen

when you are meditating, at some point your mind will come to rest. When your mind is still, when your mind is at rest, then you look at that state of stillness. If your mind is at rest, what is that stillness? Of what does it consist? What are the qualities of that stillness? What are the characteristics of that stillness? For example, does the stillness have color? Does it have form or shape? And, if so 'what?' and if not, 'what does it have?' Here you have to be careful, Kunga Nangyal says, to observe these things carefully. Which means you keep on looking until you have directly observed the present or absence of the looked for characteristics. You don't stop when you decide, well it probably doesn't have these things, or it must not possess these things. That is not enough you have to experience it directly through observation.

Now, when you are in the midst of this observation at some point a thought is going to suddenly appear. Since your mind is no longer in a state of stillness you look at the thought. It doesn't matter whether the thought is a particular coarse or vivid thought, or a more subtle one. And it can be any kind of thought, even the most unpleasant ones. It can be thoughts of hatred, of jealousy, of intense sadness or fear. In any case whatever the thought is, you look at it. By looking at it with the faculty of direct observation, you see the thought arise.

Now thoughts do arise, we do experience thoughts. The first thing you need to look to see is, when we say thoughts arise, do they arise from somewhere? Do thoughts arise from some prior state, or place, or origin? So first you look to see where the thought has come from. Now, after a thought arises it remains present for a little bit. While the thought is present, while it is still apparent within your mind, look directly at it and try to observe its nature.

Now the problem that can occur here is the temptation to use the faculty of reasoning in this instead of direct observation. If you use the faculty of reasoning you wouldn't be able to detect or observe anything. You'll just be trying to figure it out. So here you are trying to observe these things directly, and only through experiential direct observation, will there be experience of the nature of thought. At a certain point the thought will disappear, this is how thoughts are. A thought initially appears in your mind, remains for a bit, and then it disappears.

When the thought disappears where does the thought go? Where does it end up? What does it become? Kunga Nangyal says; "When a thought disappears is it that it existed and it then ceased to exist? Or is it that it is a product of some source and then dissolves back into that source? Or is it that the thought becomes emptiness? Which of these things is actually happening when a thought dissolves or disappears?" He continues, "Sometimes the thoughts that arise in our minds are not so much as concepts, but as images. For example it might be an image of a person, or people, of a horse, of buildings and places." Nowadays we would have to add of cars, of airplanes and images from movies and so on. Now technically, such an image is considered as an abstraction derived from experience, but fundamentally speaking these things do appear in our minds as fairly concrete images. Kunga Nangyal continues, "When such an image appears in your mind look to see where it came from? We say they appear, and they do seem to appear, from where do they appear? Do they come from outside your body, and somehow enter into it? Do they come from some place in your body? While the image is present within your mind, where is it? And finally when the image dissolves and disappears like any other thought, where does it go? What does it become? What happen to it?"

Now when you look at this in the manor or sense of direct observation, you see that even while the image is apparent, even while the image is vividly present as an image in your mind, it is empty of existence. While being utterly empty, even while being present, it still appears vividly. Now these two things, its being empty and its being apparent are not contradictory. We might imagine that something can either appear, or be empty, but in fact things are both. And, you can experience this directly by looking at these images. This is finally what your mind is like which is why we categorize it as the unity of cognitive lucidity and emptiness, or appearance and emptiness. So, in this way, conducting direct or experiential observation of the mind, and of the thoughts and images that arise within the mind and in that way discovering that the mind is appearance, that at the same time is emptiness, is what is called the analytic meditation of a Pandita.

The View

In the fourteenth chapter of the Karma Chagmey text, the practice of Mahamudra and the view of The Great Perfection called Trekcho, are presented together. Most of it is presented in the context of Mahamudra and it points out that what is taught here applies also to the view and practice of Trekcho.

The next quotation comes from the Mahasiddha Tilopa, and Tilopa taught: "This is self-aware wisdom; it is beyond the speech and is not an object of conceptual mind, therefore, I, Tilopa have nothing whatsoever to show you. Know by yourself your own supreme self-awareness." Now the first thing that Tilopa explains is that what is discovered as the nature of the mind is self-aware, and it discovers itself. So it is called self-aware wisdom. But it can only be discovered in that way, as an object of direct experience. The reason is because it can not be correctly contained in thought or language. This means that we always assume in the way we think and in the way we speak about things that something must either exist or not. Sometimes we come up with ideas like it might both exist and not exist, or it might neither exist nor not exist.

The nature of mind is way beyond all of these ideas or concepts and it is not comprised within or contained within any such linguistical description of its state. In fact, not only can you not describe it in words, you can't even think about it. It can only be experienced directly. Therefore, the Buddha said that Prajnaparamita is inconceivable, indescribable and unnameable. So Tilopa is saying what has to be recognized can't be described or even thought about. He can't show it, there is nothing for him to show. All he can do is direct you to look at your mind because it is discovered by someone looking at their own mind in the way which is the mind looking at itself.

In this chapter another quotation is given from Guru Rinpoche, Guru Padmasambhava, in which he is giving meditation instructions. He says, "When you allow your mind to rest naturally and simply without alteration, then in that state look at this knowing, look at this cognition, this experience directly. When you look at your mind in that way your thoughts will subside, they will be pacified; the thoughts will stop. When you do that is there a state within the context of no alteration? Is there a state of the mind being completely at rest? That is tranquility; it is not the nature of the mind." It is not the nature described in Mahamudra and it is not the view of Trekcho. He continues,

“But in that state of tranquility look directly at the nature of that which is at rest. When you do so you observe that it has no substantial entity, nor the characteristics of such things as shape and color. It has no substantial existence whatsoever. In that way there isn’t an utter emptiness, an utter absence of a substantial entity that of itself is nothing whatsoever. That is what is called the empty nature of the mind.” The quotation continues, “But if you look further at that emptiness which you experience the mind to be, don’t you see that while it is utterly empty it has an unceasing and unlimited lucidity or knowingness that is its characteristic, and that lucidity is limpid or clear without any crud in it? Isn’t it a lucidity that is completely open and spacious, not blank or neutral? That is what is called the cognitive lucidity that is the mind’s characteristic.”

So Guru Rinpoche is pointing out two things. The first is the mind’s nature which is emptiness and the second thing is the mind’s characteristic quality which is cognitive lucidity. So, it seems at this point, as if there are two distinct aspects to the mind. However, if you keep on looking you will see that utter emptiness that is the absence of any kind of essence, any kind of creative substantial entity, and the radiance of that emptiness which is this unceasing cognitive lucidity; these two are not really different things, they are the same thing.

And their sameness is that very receptive glaring awareness, that in its receptivity is empty and in its glaring quality is lucidity.

So when you look at your mind you see that in spite of its emptiness, it is literally glaring and blaringly aware. Other than the fact that the mind is aware, and you can experience that, there is nothing else you can say about it. You can’t say that this awareness is like this or like that. For example Lord Marpa, one of the Kagyu lineage forefathers said: “The experience of recognizing it is like the experience of a mute person tasting sugar. They can experience it, but they can’t describe it.” This awareness, which is glaring in its intensity and always present, in the present, that is what is given the name awareness or rigpa.

The Fifteenth chapter of this text talks about how to practice this in meditation. There are basically two ways of viewing or looking at the mind, one is looking at the mind in stillness and the other is looking at the mind in motion or occurrence. When no thoughts are present, this is looking at the mind in stillness. When thoughts arise, which are seen as occurring in the brain, and you look at the nature of the thought, rather than the nature of the mind; that is looking at the mind within occurrence.

These two things are distinct. In one case you are looking at the nature of the mind itself and in the other case, you are looking at the nature of thoughts. These two states are distinct. One state is stillness, no thoughts are present, and the other state is occurrence. The mind is full of thoughts and possibly very busy. But the nature that is looked at is the same nature; and the characteristic is the same characteristic. When you look directly at your mind, you experience its characteristic cognitive lucidity and its nature, which is emptiness. When you look at thoughts you see that thoughts are cognitive lucidity that are empty in nature. Now, if you feel that one of these two states is preferable to the other and substantially different, then there is a third way of looking that is the remedy for that, the belief which is looking to see if stillness and occurrence are the same or different. As to how you implement them, you implement them as these states arise, and these methods are designed to enable you, within different types of states of mind, to rest in the Dharmata.

All of this is summarized in a clear way by Jetsun Milarepa in one of his songs in which he says: "Appearance, emptiness and their inseparability, these three things summarize the view." Now appearance here means not only external appearance but the whole aspect of appearance or lucidity. So it includes cognitive lucidity and the cognitive lucidity which is the mind's defining characteristic as a mind, and is at the same time utterly empty; not only is the mind's cognitive lucidity empty, but the cognitive lucidity and its emptiness are not two different things. So knowing this summarizes the view. As for meditation he says: "Lucidity, non-thought and non-distraction, these three summarize meditation." Now when we meditate and rest in and look at the mind's nature, we experience cognitive lucidity, but while we experience that lucidity, the lucidity is neither created by, or limited to, thought. It is innate to the mind and does not depend on the existence of thought in order to be maintained. So, therefore, the lucidity is not only experienced, it is recognized as being fundamentally non conceptual.

Now in order to rest in this you need the faculties of mindfulness and alertness. So the key point in resting in the mind's lucidity, a non-thought or non-conceptuality is being undistracted, because sometime you observe this nature and are able to rest in that observance, and then you find that you've lost track of it, which means you've become distracted. So the key points to meditation are lucidity, non-conceptuality and non-distraction. That is how you practice in even placement, in meditation.

The most important condition, the thing that needs to be present for progress in samadhi, both in meditation and post meditation is faith and devotion. Both are necessary for your practice to develop and to increase. Even more than that, faith and devotion are necessary to even practice at all. If you don't have faith and devotion you are not going to do the practices.

The first and foremost devotion is Dharma itself. If you have the attitude that Dharma is what you need in this life, to insure your welfare and benefit in future lives, to be a benefit to yourself and others, you will continue to progress. To practice you must believe there is something to be realized and that the methods you've been taught will enable you to realize it. If you believe these two things you will do the practice and if you do it you will realize it. The second object of faith and devotion are the root and lineage Gurus. The previous masters put the teachings into practice and by doing so they gained realization. If you have confidence in the practice and the transmission of the practice you will be diligent and will achieve the result. The other aspect of practice is post meditation. The practice of meditation is not enough because no matter who you are you still have enough normal everyday activity to do that you are going to be spending a lot of time in post meditation. If you don't do anything about your state of mind in post meditation, even if you are diligent in meditation, you are not going to progress. The reason for this is if you let your mind wander utterly lost the whole time in post meditation then whatever is achieved in your formal meditation will be undone. So attempt to carry the awareness and mindfulness achieved in meditation as much as possible into your post meditation activity. From time to time you will lose track of it and you will become bewildered but at least you won't become bewildered intentionally. If you don't try to maintain awareness in post-meditation then, from the end of one meditation session until the next, there will be one whole interrupted period of utter distraction. By attempting to bring what is achieved in meditation into your post meditation, each part of your life will enhance the other and you will make progress.

Togel Preliminaries

The second half of the Dzogchen is called Togel or leap over. The outlook of this practice is that the mental events of the mind's cognitive lucidity, when experienced in their true or pure form they are the peaceful and wrathful deities. The peaceful ones are in the heart, the Vidyadharas in the throat and the wrathful deities in the mind. They abide in the channels as body, speech and mind.

Because they are there if the right circumstances are created, they can be seen. You create these circumstances through external and internal conditions, such as gaze, as you will see. Initially, when you first see them, you see them as circles or spheres of light or rays of light. When you see them within the context of the proper conscious application of method, such as the use of light and the use of darkness, then what you will see gradually ripens or develops and gradually the circles become more distinct and brighter. Then the forms of the deities with their ornaments and scepters will appear. This method is called Togel.

There are two situations in which you can see these deities; one is within the Togel practice of meditation and the other when you experience the bardo of death.

While alive these deities abide within your body, within the various channels. They are not present physically in the form of deities; they are present in the form of thoughts and the function of mind. When we die the body and mind separate and these deities emerge from the channels where they are present until this time. When they do so you see them, sometimes as the peaceful deities, other times as the wrathful deities and at other times as the Vidyadharas. If you are unfamiliar with them, you will not recognize them. Either they will appear so quickly that you will not notice their appearance, or you will not recognize them at all, and be terrorized by them and run away from them. The terror that you generate for the display of your own nature is the immediate cause generating the mental body in the bardo. The mental body is in turn the vehicle for the next cultivation of attachment, craving, acceptance, which causes you to seek and unfortunately find a rebirth. At that point, once you are conceived in your next life, the deities are withdrawn once again into the channels in which you are starting to develop.

Now during this life you can see these deities using the technique of light, either the sun or an electric light or darkness. If you perform these techniques their appearances will arise as sound, light and as rays of light. However, for this to be of any use, you need to have experience of your mind's nature. The nature of these deities is spontaneous presence, they are the natural display of Dharmata itself. But if you have no experience of that nature of mind, Dharmata, you will mistake them to be substantial which will in turn cause further bewilderment.

The practice of Togel has two parts, the preliminary and the main practice. The Togel preliminaries consist of the separation of samsara from nirvana, and this is done in body, speech and mind, [the separation of body, the separation of speech and the separation of mind.]

We start the practice with the focus on samsara. Now samsara consists of six realms or the six states; so there is a separate meditation for each of these. In each case you meditate on the sensations of that specific realm and then on the emptiness of those sensations. You do so by looking at the direct nature of your own mind and thereby experiencing the emptiness of the sensations.

So the first realm is the hell realm and, among the two types of hell realms, the hot hell. During these meditations you will be visualizing yourself in your ordinary form with the exception that you visualize your body as hollow. So, from the outside, you will look as you look and from the inside there are no bones or guts.

In the center of your right foot towards its heel, visualize a black Duh syllable. You then think that all of the karma which is likely to cause your rebirth anytime in hell, all of the karma accumulated by others which will cause their rebirth in hell, and all of the hellish kleshas that afflict you and others, are drawn into that black Duh syllable. The syllable in your foot is then transformed into the realm of the hot hell, clearly like an image in a mirror. Then you imagine that you, in the form of a little body, are actually in that hot hell inside your right foot. Try to imagine it as clearly as possible, the inconceivable suffering of the hot hells. While you are doing so, you repeat the mantra Ram Naraka at least seven times. The first part, while doing this contemplation, is to imagine yourself burning in the hot hell and then towards the end of it you look directly at the nature your mind which causes the appearance and the sensations of the hot hell realm to dissolve into emptiness.

Next, in the same way, you visualize in the corresponding place in your left foot an identical black Duh syllable, and withdraw into that all the karma and kleshas accumulated this life and in previous lives by yourself and others that causes rebirth in the cold hell. Again, imagine that you are stuck there and are experiencing all the inconceivable suffering of extreme cold. While doing so, you recite the mantra Kham Naraka seven times and then you look at the nature of the mind of the meditator, the person visualizing this, the experiencer, the person who is experiencing the suffering and looking at the nature of the mind. At this point of course is the return to the practice of Mahamudra or Trekcho, and by doing so the appearances dissolve into emptiness.

The purpose of these first two meditations is, through the direct experience of emptiness, to purify the habit of the two hells. The second realm, from the bottom up, is the preta or hungry ghost realm. The corresponding meditation concerned with this realm begins by visualizing a red Preh in your lower abdomen that is in the center of your body at the level of the genitals. You think that all of the karma accumulated by yourself and others, through greed and the klesha of greed itself, in short all wrong doings and obscurations that can cause birth as a preta are withdrawn into this red syllable. At that point, it is transformed into the preta realm. You imagine, after being born there, intense suffering of hunger, thirst and craving. You recite the mantra Sarva Pretaka at least seven times and then again you look at the nature of the mind of the person meditating, the person experiencing, and by doing so the contents of the meditation dissolve into emptiness.

The third samsaric realm is the animal realm. For this you visualize a dark red colored syllable at the level of the navel in the center of your body; its a dark red Trih.

You think that all of the karma and kleshas that cause the rebirth as an animal, principally the karma and kleshas associated with stupidity and apathy, are drawn into

this syllable which is transformed into the habitat or realm of animals. You imagine yourself born in this realm and, as vivid as possible, imagine the suffering you are experiencing being born an animal, such as enslavement and being preyed upon. The suffering that is fundamental to this realm is the suffering of stupidity and the inability to communicate. You recite the mantra *Sarva Tiryaka*, at least seven times. Then at the end, as before, you look at the nature of the mind of the meditator, the experiencer, causing all the appearances of the meditation to dissolve into emptiness.

The fourth realm, the first of the so called fortunate or higher realms, is the human realm. Here you visualize the syllable at the center of the heart and the syllable is *Nrih*, it is green. Then you think of all of the causes of human rebirth, principally the *klesha* of desire and the karma accumulated through desire by yourself and others, dissolving into this green syllable which becomes the four continents of the human world. Imagine yourself born there and the sufferings most astigmatic to the human realm are birth, aging, sickness and death. Try to imagine these four as clear as possible. While doing so the mantra that is recited is *Sarva Anuse*, seven times. Then afterwards you look at the nature of the mind, the meditator, the experiencer, and the appearances dissolve into emptiness.

The second of the higher realms and the fifth realm in *samsara* is the realm of the *Asuras* or non gods. Here the place is the center of the throat, the syllable is *Suh*, and it is yellow. You visualize that while thinking that all of the causes of rebirth, principally the *klesha* of jealousy and the actions motivated by jealousy, are drawn into that syllable which is transformed into the *Asura* realm. You then imagine you are born in and stuck in this realm and that you are undergoing the suffering of an *Asura*. Now, because their nature is jealousy, their principal suffering is unsuccessful warfare against the gods and you imagine all the experiences of being killed and wounded. You recite the mantra *Sarva Asurra* seven times. And then again you look at the nature of the mind, the meditator, the experiencer, and the appearances of the *Asura* realm dissolves into emptiness.

The sixth and highest realm within *samsara* is the god or *deva* realm. You visualize the syllable *Ah*, white in color, inside your head toward the top. Again you think that all of the causes for rebirth in the *deva* realm are withdrawn into the syllable. Principal among these are the *klesha* of pride and actions motivated by pride. All of this dissolves into the syllable which is transformed into the god realm, specifically the type of god realm which is called the *deva* realm of desire. You imagine that you are born in that realm and experience the suffering of a *deva*. Now, generally speaking, the *devas* enjoy tremendous pleasure, comfort and prosperity, but since they are still within *samsara* it ends and when it ends they experience incredible suffering, the suffering of death and downfall. Because the *deva* realm and life in the *deva* realm is so pleasant, when they see signs of their impending death, [they do sometimes before it occurs] they suffer terribly because of what they are losing. Now, because of the contrast with the subsequent rebirth, which they can see; so obviously if they know that they are going to be reborn in one of the three lower realms they suffer. But, even if they are going to be reborn as a human or as an *Asura*, they suffer because of not having control or choice. Think that you are experiencing the suffering of a *deva*, and repeat the mantra *Sarva Deva* seven times. And as before, look at the nature of the mind of the meditator, the experiencer, which is

the practice of Mahamudra or Trekcho, and the appearance of the meditation of the deva realm dissolves.

In that way you eradicate or prevent the birth in and experience of the suffering of the six realms. At the end of all six phases of the meditation you again look at the nature of your mind. The point is to realize that the experience of suffering, such as the individual sufferings of the six realms, the experience of suffering is mind; it is not something other than mind. These sufferings occur, but they occur as manifestations or display of mind and mind is not anything, it is empty of being anything. So by recognizing the emptiness of mind and the emptiness of the experiences of mind, this is an instruction for preventing rebirth in the six realms. This is also referred to closing the door of rebirth in the six types of existence.

At this point or phase of the contemplation you recite the six syllable mantra of The Great Perfection, which prevents rebirth in the six realms.

AH AH SAH SAH MAH HAH

Next, in the same meditation, you visualize the embodiment of the wisdom body speech and mind of all buddhas, as the three syllables in your three places. So, inside your head, you visualize a white Om, inside your throat, a red Ah, and in your heart, a blue Hum. You then think that the blessing and wisdom of the body speech and minds of all the buddhas are drawn into these three syllables. Once these blessing and wisdom of the buddhas are drawn into these syllables, they blaze with wisdom fire, the fire of five colors in each case.

Now, previously after visualizing each realm, you looked at the nature of your mind, and the visualization of each realm dissolved, but you didn't totally get rid of the realms. Here you are going to get rid of them. So you think that the wisdom fire which comes from these three syllable fills your whole body, burning up and away the six realms all at once, and the seeds which cause the rebirth in them. While visualizing that, you recite the mantra OH AH HUM. That's the samsara part.

Now we come to the nirvana part. The nirvana part is the contemplation of the Three Jewels, but starting from the bottom up. So first sangha, the dharma and then the buddha. Now during the previous meditation you visualized yourself in your ordinary form. You are going to change that; first you are going to visualize yourself as the sangha. The supreme member of the Mahayana sangha is the Bodhisattva Maitreya because he is going to be the next buddha. He is the closest member of the sangha to buddhahood. You visualize yourself as Maitreya and while doing so you recite the mantra; NAMO SANGHAYA.

Next is the contemplation of the jewel of the dharma. You think that your body, as the Bodhisattva Maitreya, is transformed in an instant into the embodiment of dharma. The realization of dharma is depicted as the female deity. The cause of all awakening, the cause of all buddhahood is the perfection of discernment, Prajnaparamita. Although the perfection of discernment is truly the realization of the nature of all things, because it is the cause of all awakening when it is depicted as a deity, it is called the great mother Prajnaparamita. So you visualize yourself as her because she is the embodiment of all dharma. She is gold in color with four arms and so on. You recite the mantra; NAMO DHARMAYA, three times.

Then there is the jewel of the buddha. You think that you, as the form of the great mother, are transformed in an instant into the Buddha Sakayamuni, and visualizing yourself as the buddha you recite the mantra NAMO BUDDHAYA, three times. Then having visualized yourself as the buddha, you visualize yourself as the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara. The reason you visualize yourself as Chenrezig at this point is that he is the embodiment of the compassion of all buddhas. So you think that you, the Buddha Sakayamuni, are transformed into the Bodhisattva Avllokiteshvara, and you visualize yourself as him in the usual manner, white in color with one face and four arms, and you recite the mantra OH MANI PADME HUM, three times.

Then in order to reveal or enhance the power of compassion you think that Avalokiteshvara is transformed into his ferocious or wrathful form, Hayagriva. Now Avalokiteshvara has these two aspects because compassion itself is embodied in the peaceful form and the power or effectiveness of compassion is in the wrathful form. So you visualize yourself as Hayagriva, who is red in color and recite the mantra; OM HAYAGRIVA HUM PHAT, three times.

Now all of this is basically connected with the purification of the body, and your body is composed of the five elements, earth, water, fire, air, and space. Not only your body but all of the external phenomena are composed of the five elements as well. While reflecting that the five elements do not exist independently, that things appear that way as the display of mind, you recite the essence syllable of the five elements; E YAM RAM BAM LAM, three times. E, the essence of space, YAM, the essence of wind or air, RAM, the essence of fire, BAM, the essence of water and LAM, the essence of earth. That section is the purification of body.

The second section is the purification of speech. The purification of speech is done through the use of the syllable HUM, by mantra.

You sit in the same posture, except that you join the palms of the hands above the top of the head, and you visualize your body as a five prong golden vajra. In the center of the vajra you visualize your mind as a blue HUM, and you think that from the bindu at the top of the HUM lots of blue HUMS emerge and come out of your body, the golden vajra, and fill the entire universe with HUMS. Then you think; they return and come together into one cubic size HUM, in the space in front of you. Then you think from the HUM, in the center of the vajra, which is somewhat identified with your heart, more HUMS come out and this time they fill your body. While doing this recite three long HUMS, and then after that, for the rest of the time you do short HUMS, recited in groups of three.

The final part of the preliminaries done after that is called the natural settling of body, speech and mind. So after doing all of these you then rest your mind without any contrivance or artifice in primordial purity, which means you return to the Trekcho or breakthrough practice that you did earlier.

Togel Principle Practice

The principle practice of The Great Perfection can be divided into two aspects; Trekcho, or breakthrough, and Togel or leap over. Of these two, this section is concerned with the practice of Togel. The practice of breakthrough or Trekcho is the basis for the

teachings and practice of the six lamps, which constitute the path of the leap over. The practice of Togel in itself has two aspects, the preliminaries and the main practice.

Now we come to the presentation of the actual practice, which is called the introduction of the six lamps. The use of the term lamp, or torch, connotes or denotes something that dispels darkness. What we are trying to do in our practice is recognize a direct experience of the Dharmata, or nature of all dharmas or things. This is of course the nature of our own mind. Principally we recognize it by looking at our own mind. The first thing you can say about your own mind is that it is emptiness because it is empty of any substantial existence. If that was all the mind was, just emptiness and it was nothing, then we could not call the mind, or the nature of the mind, a lamp. It would not have the capacity to dispel darkness; in fact it would be darkness itself. While your mind's nature is emptiness, it is not obscurity or darkness, it is illumination. Along with the mind's emptiness, the other character that defines the mind is cognitive lucidity or awareness. So here the first use of the term lamp is to refer to the nature of your mind, which is like a lamp, in being the unity of cognitive lucidity and emptiness.

There are six aspects to this lamp or the illuminating quality of ones basic nature. The first is called the abiding lamp of the ground. This is what was pointed out in the chapter which introduced Mahamudra and Trekcho or breakthrough. Any sentient being by definition has a mind. Any being that has a mind possesses the same fundamental nature. All minds are of the same nature and this nature is emptiness, not obscurity. It is an emptiness that is inseparability from lucidity. This lucidity which is the defining characteristic of a mind, or of cognition, is at the same time the innate ability to achieve the perfect wisdom of buddhahood, the innate ability to realize the nature of all things. Therefore, this lucidity, which characterizes any and all minds, is called Sugatagarba or the seed or nature of those who have gone to bliss. Now the term sugata refers to a buddha and it means those who have gone to bliss, those who no longer are remaining in a state of suffering. When it is said we all possess the basic nature of that, it means we all possess the ability to transcend suffering, the ability to achieve buddhahood. So cognitive lucidity in and of itself is the seed of the potential to achieve and the ability to achieve awakening. And this is so because we always have this as our basic nature.

The first of the six lamps, the abiding lamp of the ground, is in a sense an explanation or common to Togel and Trekcho. The others are uncommon, in that they are only explained or pointed out in the contents of Togel instruction. Now Dharmata, the nature of things, if you look at it from the point of view of its vastness in scope is literally the nature of all things. Therefore it is all pervasive. But the root of Dharmata is the mind and therefore the primary observation of Dharmata is in one's own mind.

We saw before that the mind has two aspects, what it is or how it really is, and what it appears to be or how it appears. In terms of how the mind appears, the mind appears to reside in the body. The way we experience is our appearing to be a resident of our body. This means that while Dharmata is all pervasive, because it is the nature of mind and because the mind appears to reside within the body, Dharmata is most apparent within your body. Now your mind pervades your whole body, but especially the mind itself.

In the primordial wisdom of the sugatas, the principle mind is seated within the heart. Therefore, the second lamp is called the citta flesh lamp. So the heart is the lamp made of flesh or living tissue. The reason for this is that, as we saw earlier, while you are alive the fundamental seat of the eighth consciousness is your heart. Now when you die and your

mind leaves your body, that's a whole different thing. Your body becomes a corpse. But as long as you are alive, your body and mind are interconnected. Therefore, the second lamp is the heart, which is the seat of mind.

The third lamp is called the smooth white channel lamp. This is the channel which connects the heart to the eyes. The eyes are the fourth lamp and the third lamp is the channel that connects these two. It is this channel that causes the appearances of Dharmata, seated in the heart to be visible. In order to be visible obviously they have to appear to the eyes and the connection between the heart and eyes is called the smooth white channel lamp. Now it is a channel, but it is a channel that does not contain either blood or lymph. It is empty of everything except wind. For example, in some Dzogchen tantras it says, "It is in the white place of the brain that the appearances arise to the senses." This refers to the vision of the eyes because this channel passing from the heart, the smooth white channel lamp, passes via or through the brain.

The fourth lamp is called the distant lasso water lamp. This refers to something that is in the center of the eyes. Because you can see things that are distant, its called the distant lasso water because of the composition of the eye. It refers, not to the entire eye, but to the sense faculty within the eye that is at the end of the smooth white channel lamp. The smooth white channel lamp starts at the heart and ends at the optic nerve.

The fourth lamp is the gate for the appearance of wisdom. The wisdom, in this case, refers to the display of Dharmata and the condition for its appearance is the use of the eyes in a particular way, or gaze, in connection with a source of light. Traditionally the sun is given as the main example but it can also be the light of the moon, an electric light, or a light from a flame. Through the application of gaze you cause to appear to the fourth lamp, or in the fourth lamp, the eyes, a rainbow like light phenomenon. This embodies the purity of the Dharmakaya and the five certainties of the Sambhogakaya, initially appearing as multi colored light and circles of light. The gate for that appearance is the distant lasso water lamp. When you do this and apply the gaze and make use of the four lamps explained thus far, what you will see looks something like the tail of a peacock which contains circles, which are often five different colors; one surrounding another like circular shields used in warfare.

What you are seeing with the fourth lamp is the fifth lamp which is called the pure lamp of the expanse. Here it is called the pure lamp of Dharmadhatu. Through the meeting of the fourth and fifth lamps you experience the spontaneous display of the nature of all things. This means that what you are seeing is not a created or composite physical phenomenon. Within the rays of light, which are created by the gaze, you see not only large circles or spheres but lots of minute or little ones, like a net of pearls or little drops like fish eyes, and sometimes they appear in moving patterns of lattice networks. That aspect of what you are seeing is the appearance of the unceasing activity of Nirmanakaya. What you experience is called the display of the Trikaya in the form of rainbow lights; they are the unlimited display of the same nature; the Dharmata. What you are seeing are the three kayas as the unified appearances. Know that they appear in different ways; know that in reality the different modes of appearances of the three embodiments are in essence indivisible from reality itself.

The way you do this is by using a light source and in this text the example used is the sun. Usually you use the sun as soon as it has arisen or as it sets. But, whenever you do it, it has to be done in a certain way for this to work and for it to be safe.

First thing, you do not look at the sun. You are not trying to get the direct light of the sun into your eyes. Nor do you look at the rays of the sun in the usual sense, as the sun has rays coming out of it. What you do is look one cubit below the sun, some distance from it, and you cause the appearance of rays by squinting. By closing your eyes half way you adjust them exactly as to how much you close them, to what or how much you need to, in order to generate the appearance of rays. When this happens, one of the things that occurs is you cause the appearance of refractions of the light, so that it appears in different colors. The squinting of the eyes causes the rays of light to appear like aligned weapons, like parallel spears, which seem like a downpour of weapons shooting into oneself at your heart.

This one aspect of this training, and one benefit of this, is that you prepare yourself for the appearances of the bardo. Because, in the bardo after death the light of wisdom appears in part as brilliant rays of light that you perceive as threatening, as weapons, as something that you have to be afraid of. So one thing you are doing in this practice is learning to recognize such phenomena as your own display and not as something coming from outside yourself.

When you do this you see five colors of light. The five colors of light are considered the display of emptiness. The reason that you see the five colors is because in the impure context or form, we experience the five poisons, attachment, aversion, pride, jealousy and apathy. If they are recognized in their pure nature, these are the five wisdoms, which are inseparable from the five buddhas. In the impure context we experience the five aggregates, form, sensation, perception, mental formation and consciousness. In the pure form they are the five buddhas; Varochana, Akshobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitabha and Amoghasiddhi. In the impure contents we experience the five elements. Blue light is the element of space, white light of water, yellow light of earth, red light of fire and green light of air. In their pure form they are the five female buddhas. The dark blue light is Akasadhātvisvari; the white light is Buddhālocana; the yellow light is Mamaki; the red light is Pandaravasini and the green light is Samayatara.

The five colors of light are the five families in nature, white sugata family; blue vajra family; yellow ratna family; red padma; and green karma. But if they are unrecognized, they are the five winds which give rise to the five physical elements. Again, if unrecognized, they are the five directions; the center, south, west, east and north. If their nature is recognized they are the five pure realms. If unrecognized they are the five maras; the mara of the lord of death, means everyone is subject to death which of course interrupts their practice. The mara of the aggregates refers to the physical body, encased in this material human body subject to its changes. The klesha mara or mara of disturbing emotions is to be caught up in these emotions, as all sentient beings are. The mara of the child of the gods is the demon of seduction. It is our inner voice that whispers to oneself and gives wrong advice, such as, there is something more interesting than practicing. Do it later, tomorrow, next week or next month. If recognized they are the five wrathful deities, vajra heruka, ratna heruka, and so forth.

The technique just presented using the creation of appearances of rays from a light source, such as the sun, is called the 'introduction to rays.' The appearances are classified as light rays and sound.

Another instruction that is given is called the 'introduction to squeezing the oceans.' The word 'oceans' is referring to the eyes and this is the technique where you squeeze or

press on your eyes with your fingers, and by doing so you see light. The light that you see is said to be the display of the wisdom light of the peaceful deities in your heart. In order to see this particular light you have to squeeze quite hard. So don't do it for very long.

The third one which is connected to sound is called 'the introduction to the waves of the ocean.' This one, with your fingers, you block the ears by pressing on them. First very indistinct and then progressively louder and louder, you hear a hum or humming, that is said to be the nature sound of Dharmata.

Now the point of all these techniques is to use the appearance as a means for realizing the nature itself, or Dharmata. You can also do this by remaining in complete darkness. Generally speaking the techniques that use light are called instructions or guidance in brightness and the ones that depend on darkness are called the instruction in darkness.

These appearances can arise through meditation practice using these techniques or they also happen after you die in the bardo. When these appearances arise in the bardo they constitute the sixth lamp, which is called the 'bardo lamp of time.' Although in the bardo the appearances of light and sound are far more intense than what you experience through practice in this life. Nevertheless, through familiarization with this phenomenon in this life in practice, you gain the ability not to be intimidated by these appearances through your recognition of them as empty display.

Now the part of the bardo or the phase of the bardo, in which these things appear, is called the 'bardo of Dharmata.' When you are dying, what is called the life wind is gradually weakening. Now, it is the life wind that keeps you alive, and the life wind also keeps the white element, which you have inherited from your father in place at the top of your body; and the red element that you have inherited from your mother in place in the lower abdomen. As the life wind becomes weaker and weakening, these two start to move. It is as though the wind has a pressure that keeps these elements in place. As the life wind starts to become more and more impaired the white element, inherited from your father, descends from the top of your head downward through your body, you experience an all encompassing whiteness. As the red element inherited from your mother begins to move upward from the lower abdomen, you experience an all encompassing redness. When the life wind is no longer functioning, then these two elements meet at the heart and encapsulate the seed of the mind within the heart causing an experience of all encompassing blackness, or darkness.

Immediately after that there is an experience of emptiness, an experience of the nature of all things, just as it is, without any other appearances or other factors interfering with it. That initial experience of emptiness and what happens immediately after that, is called the 'bardo Dharmata,' because it is the display or experience of the nature of things itself.

If you have become familiar with the nature of things through meditation, in the preceding life, then there will be no difference between the Dharmata that you have experience and the Dharmata that presents itself to you at that point and being able to recognize the present Dharmata. Because of your experience with it in practice is called the 'meeting of the mother and child Dharmatas.' The mother is what arises for everyone, and the child is what you have cultivated and familiarized in practice.

So in that way through practice you are able to recognize the nature, then you remain in that recognition in the state of samadhi for sometime. If you do not recognize it, then that brief glimpse of emptiness ceases and you start to see the appearances of the clear light such as the peaceful and wrathful deities, lights and sounds and so on. It is at that

point that familiarity with these, through meditating on the lights, circles and the forms of deities will be of benefit.

In Trekcho and essence Mahamudra the main point is to be able to rest in and sustain the continuity of the view. When practicing Togel while maintaining the view, one uses whatever manifests as an adornment in the sense of acknowledging that all the different experiences are actually the display or manifestation of innate wakefulness.

If you have the habit of meditating on this aspect of The Great Perfection, then you can achieve liberation at that point in the bardo. So therefore, at this point, Karma Chagmey Rinpoche says, "In order to prepare for that aspect of the after death experience, you should regularly gaze at light in this way." He also says, "If you do this assiduously you will see truly wondrous things." He cautions us at this point. He says, "Make no mistake what you are seeing when you do this authentically is not like looking at a rainbow that appears in the sky. It is not external light in that way, because it is the spontaneous display of the five families. Therefore, when you see these five color rays of light, it is no different from seeing the five Buddhas themselves." He concludes, "If you have purified karma you will actually see the forms of deities, peaceful deities like Avalokiteshvara, Amitabha and Guru Rinpoche, wrathful deities, like Hayagriva, and so on."

As I mentioned before, the main requirement for this technique to function properly is there needs to be some degree of recognition of what was pointed out in the Mahamudra and Trekcho presentation. It is our ability to simply relax in ordinary mind, in the state which is empty yet cognizant emptiness indivisible from cognizance.

Dedication

The eighteenth chapter is concerned with dedication and aspiration and in this chapter we find advice about these. The first point that Chagmey Rinpoche makes here is how we need to be diligent and he quotes previous teachers who said: "It is not enough that the Dharma be the great perfection, in addition the practitioner, the person, must be greatly perfect. However, I have seen many people who in spite of the profundity of what they claim to practice, remain completely ordinary." In other words we need to actually apply ourselves to practice and this involves the two aspects of diligence, continuous diligence and devoted diligence. Chagmey Rinpoche says that if you are diligent in practice the final result will be good. In the best case this means the achievement through the utmost diligence of perfect awakening of buddhahood in this life. If not, but one has assiduously practiced the generation and completion stages in general, and Mahamudra and Dzogchen practices, then in the bardo after one's death, then one will achieve the state of one's yidam and, in that way, achieve awakening and liberation. If not that, then at least one should, through intense aspiration, insure that one is born in a pure realm. To be reborn in most of the great pure realms, one needs immeasurable store of merit. The exception to this is the realm of Sukhavati; which, although an authentic pure realm, is easy to be born in because of the aspiration by the Buddha Amitabha. So, therefore, Chagmey Rinpoche advises us to make the intense aspiration to achieve rebirth in Sukhavati. If you are not born in a pure realm and if you don't achieve awakening then of course you might be reborn in one of the higher realms within samsara, but it is not really

that great. So at best we wish, through the practice of generation and completion, the practice of Mahamudra and Dzogchen to achieve awakening, but if not, we must insure that we are reborn in a pure realm, and he advises us to aspire to be reborn in Sukhavati, in particular.

Chagmey Rinpoche summarizes the context of his entire book and how to implement all the things he has taught in the eighteen chapters. The practice, of course, consists of the common preliminaries, the four thoughts, the uncommon preliminaries, the practice of generation and completion of Mahamudra and the Dzogchen practices of Trekcho and Tögel. So at this point he presents a way to apply these as an on going practice. First of all, whatever you practice you must insure that you don't do it for your own benefit alone. At the beginning of any session of practice clarify concisely your motivation for doing it. Recollect that there are innumerable beings who are suffering intensely, who lack the happiness that they seek. So resolve that whatever practice that you do, whatever virtuous actions that you perform will be done for their benefit. In that way, before the session begins, generate bodhicitta. Then at the beginning of the session briefly recollect in sequence the four thoughts which turns the mind and then briefly meditate in sequence on the uncommon preliminaries; each of the four or five, if refuge and bodhicitta are considered separate uncommon preliminaries. For the main practice visualize yourself as Chenrezig, as instructed in the text, and visualize the Buddha Amitabha present above your head as the lord of your family. Then think that Amitabha is the embodiment of all the root and lineage gurus and in order to reinforce that thought, invite all the root and lineage gurus, including all of the siddhas of India and Tibet, and cause them to dissolve into Amitabha. Next invite all of the yidams which you are connected with, such as Vajrasattva, whomever, invite all of them and dissolve them into yourself as Chenrezig. Then visualize the seed syllable HRIH in your heart and the six syllable mantra OM MANI PADME HUNG surrounding it. Reflect upon the fact that the mantra is the essence mantra of all yidams without exception. Now the reason for this recollection of Amitabha as the embodiment of all gurus and Chenrezig as the embodiment of all yidams, and his mantra as the embodiment of all essence mantras, is so while doing this one practice you can be simultaneously accomplishing all gurus, all yidams, and all mantras. Think that rays of light from the syllable HRIH and its surrounding mantra in your heart emerge filling the entire universe which is transformed into the realm of Sukhavati. These rays of light also strike all beings, transforming each and every one of them into the bodhisattva Chenrezig, resting in the attitude that the entire universe is Sukhavati, and all beings within it are Chenrezig. It is the maintenance of the first of what are called the three barings, and this is the baring or outlook of all appearances as the body or presence of the deity.

After that commence the repetition of the mantra OM MANI PADME HUNG, and while you recite it, think that simultaneously all beings in the form of Chenrezig recite the mantra along with you. Contemplating that, while reciting the mantra, is the practice of the second baring or outlook, which is the attitude that all sound is the speech or mantra of the deity. The particular value of this is that by contemplating, without distraction, that all beings without exception recite the mantra along with you, every single mantra that you recite is the equivalent of billions of mantras. After the recitation, then look at your mind and whatever thoughts arise, good or bad, simply look at them without distraction and without any attempt to alter them. Practicing that is the third

baring, the attitude that all thoughts and memories are the mind or wisdom of the deity. In that way, you practice what is called the three fold baring.

The third part of the three fold baring is the outlook that all thoughts and recollections are the mind of the deity includes the practice of Mahamudra and the Trekcho aspect of the practice of the Great Perfection. In that way, the practice of the three fold baring, appearances as the deity's presence, sound as the deity's speech or mantra and thoughts and recollections as the deity's mind or wisdom, includes the practice of the generation stage, the completion stage and their unity. As to how to perform these, you can practice all three barings simultaneously. In that way, you have one simple practice which includes all the essential points. But if that is difficult, you can also practice them in sequence as they were explained here.

Now in addition to this Chagmey Rinpoche says: "At sunrise and sunset or if you don't use the sun, when you have access to a suitable electric light or candle, do the Togel practice of gazing at the rays and when you first arise in the morning and the last thing before you go to sleep at night practice Tonglen, taking and sending. This is the taking of the suffering of others and the giving to them of your happiness, in coordination with the breathing. Finally, just before you go to sleep, dedicate all of the virtue you have accumulated during that day to the awakening of all beings with the aspiration that all beings achieve buddhahood without impediment as quickly as possible. In addition, from time to time, make the aspiration to be reborn in the pure realm of Sukhavati. If you practice all of this in a relatively simple and concise format you have a complete practice of dharma.

The main point of this eighteenth chapter is how to implement the contents of this book in continuing practice, extensively. However this chapter is about dedication. A particular point is made about the practice of dedication. In general the dedication of virtue and the dedication of merit consist of the dedication of all of the virtue you have accumulated to the awakening of all beings. This is due in connection with a sincere aspiration that all beings actually receive and benefit from that virtue, so that they achieve the desired awakening as quickly as possible. However, if such a dedication is made with a spirit of fixation grasping at the reality of things it is weakened. Therefore we are instructed to perform dedication that is free of three fold recertification, which is the belief in the true or inherent reality of the person making the dedication, the virtue that is dedicated and those to whom it is dedicated. Therefore the ideal dedication is one which you are free of the idea that the dedication exists, the dedicated virtue exists and the recipient of the dedication exists. But you might ask, how do you do this? The best way is to rest in the state of practice without straying and remain looking at the nature of your own mind, without straying from that recognition, dedicate the virtue to all beings. That is the most effective way to dedicate virtue. That completes an explanation on Karma Chagmey Rinpoche's text, *The Union of Mahamudra and Dzogchen*.

As I said, this text contains eighteen chapters. Of these I omitted most of the chapters concerned with the preliminary practices, the exception to this being the chapter on bodhicitta. But I gave an explanation and practical instruction in the chapters on all aspects of the main practice.

Now I realize that all of you are already practicing so you don't need my encouragement to practice, but remember if times arise where the conditions conducive to practice are not present don't despair. Maintain the attitude I will practice as much as I

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can given the conditions, because every time you practice, every time you contemplate these things and every time you listen to them, seeds or habits are imprinted in you all-basis consciousness, habits of generation stage practice, completion stage practice, Mahamudra, and so on. So you are very fortunate to have exposure to these things, to practice these things, to gain experience of these things. Recollecting that even when it becomes difficult, maintain an attitude of confidence, enthusiasm and devotion. In short practice as much as you can.

*If there are any mistakes, I ask the realized ones for forgiveness.
May all beings attain rebirth in the realm of Sukhavat.*

**Transcriber Lodro Gyatso
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