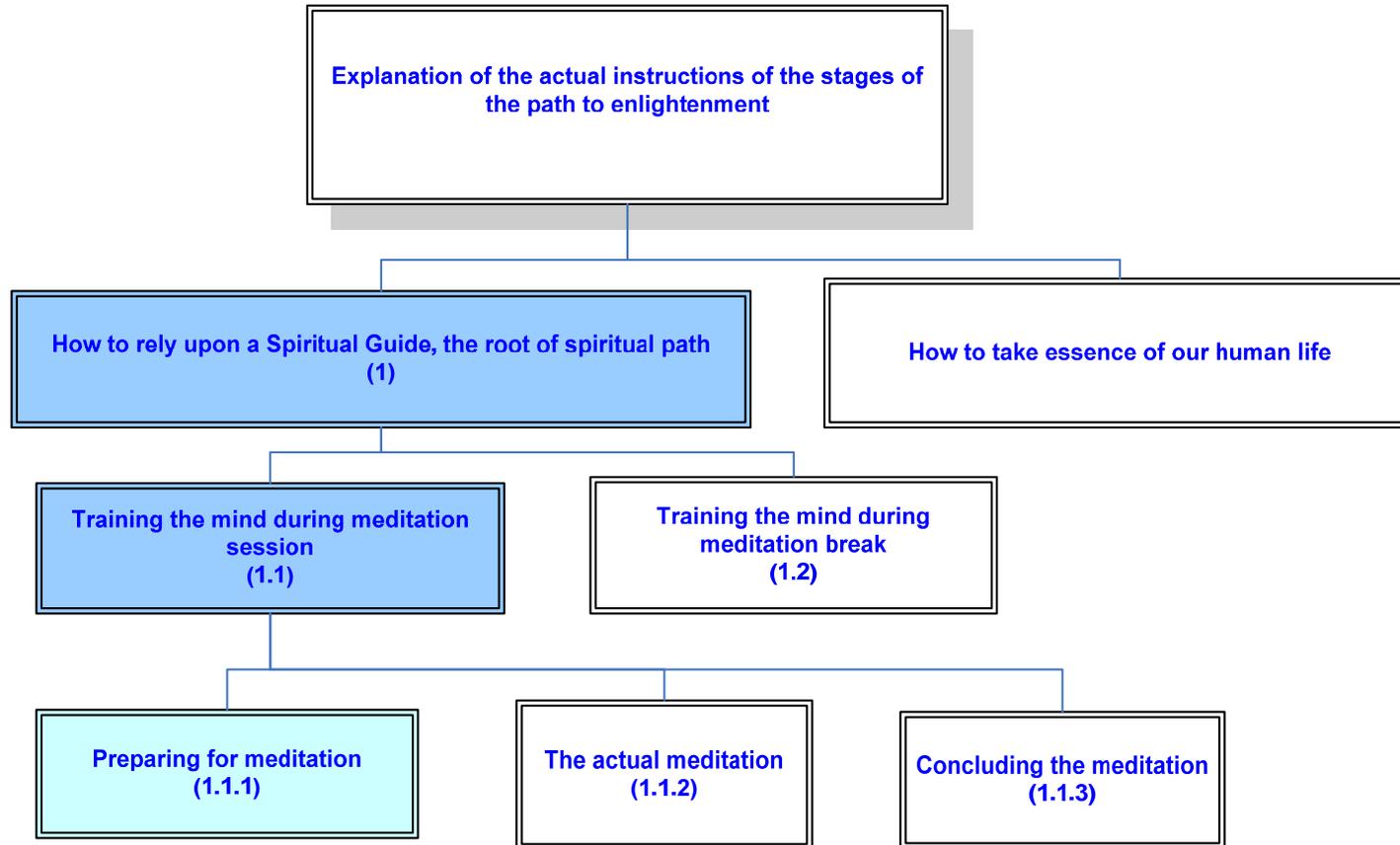




Preparing for meditation / study

Road Map – What will you learn?



1. How to rely upon a spiritual guide



Instructions for the training the mind in each of the stages of the path are divided into these two parts:-

1. During meditation session:-

1.1) Preparing for meditation [1.1.1]

1.2) The Actual meditation [1.1.2]

1.3) Concluding the meditation [1.1.3]

2. During meditation break *[1.2]*

1.1.1 Preparing for meditation



The success of our meditation / study depends upon our making six preparations in order to experience good results

- Cleaning meditation room and setting up a shrine (1.1.1A)
- Arranging suitable offerings (1.1.1B)
- Sitting in correct meditation posture (1.1.1C)
- Visualizing Field for Accumulating Merit (1.1.1D)
- Accumulating merit and purifying negativity by offering practice of 7 limbs and mandala (1.1.1E)
- Requesting Field for Accumulating Merit in general & bestow Lamrim Lineage Guru blessings (1.1.1F)

1.1.1A Cleaning meditation room



5 results come from cleaning our meditation room with this motivation:

- Our mind becomes clearer
- The minds of others who enter our room become clearer too
- The Deities are delighted to enter our room
- We create cause to be born with beautiful form
- We create cause to be reborn in Pure Land

1.1.1B Arranging suitable offerings



- In front of image of Buddha on our shrine, we set up beautiful offerings
- When offerings, guard against feelings of greed or miserliness
- Practice of offering – important because it creates vast merit and makes our mind very strong

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1.1.1C Sitting in correct meditation posture



Seven features of Vairochana's posture:

- Legs crossed in Varja posture
- Right hand placed in left hand, palms upwards, with tips of thumb slightly raised and gently touching. Hands held 4 fingers' width below navel
- Back straight but not tense
- Lips and teeth are held as usual, but tongue touches against back of upper teeth

1.1.1Ca Sitting in correct meditation posture



Seven features of Vairochana's posture (Cont'd):

- Head is tipped a little forward with chin slightly tucked in so that eyes are cast down
- Eyes neither wide open nor completely closed, but remain half open and gaze down along the line of nose
- Shoulders are level and elbows are held slightly away from the sides

A further feature of Vairochana's posture is the preliminary breathing meditation

1.1.1Cb Going for refuge



1. Once we are seated in the meditation posture and have generated a peaceful and alert state of mind, we can go for refuge and generate bodhichitta.
2. The objects for refuge are: Three Jewels (Buddha, Dharma and Sangha Jewels)

1.1.1Cc Generating Bodhichitta



1. Having gone for refuge, we then generate bodhichitta
2. Meditation on bodhichitta induces our mind a strong intention to become enlightened for the sake of others
3. Prayer to recite in generating bodhichitta
*Through the virtues I collect by giving and other perfections,
May I become a Buddha for the benefit of all.*
4. Bodhichitta is a mind that has two aspirations i.e., to benefit others and become a Buddha.

1.1.1Cc Generating Bodhichitta



5. To enhance our bodhichitta motivation, we practise the four immeasurables:

- Immeasurable equanimity*
- Immeasurable love*
- Immeasurable compassion*
- Immeasurable joy*

6. Immeasurables becos we practise them taking as our object all living beings whose number is immeasurable.

1.1.1Cc Generating Bodhichitta



7. [Immeasurable equanimity](#) – develop wish for all living beings to gain realization of equanimity, and we actively dedicate ourself to help them

8. [Immeasurable love and compassion](#) – Wish for others to experience only happiness and freedom from suffering, and dedicate ourself to help them

9. [Immeasurable joy](#) – wish that others should never lose the enjoyments and happiness they experience in fortunate states of human and gods, or supreme joy of liberation.

1.1.1D Visualizing the field for accumulating merit



1. Two ways of visualizing the Field for Accumulating Merit:
 - ✓ Imagine objects of refuge gradually gather into Guru Buddha Shakyamuni who comes to the crown of our head and descends to our heart, and then we visualize the Field for Accumulating Merit in the empty space in front of us.
 - ✓ Easier – simply impute the Field for Accumulating Merit upon our visualization of the objects of refuge.

1.1.1Da Visualizing the field for accumulating merit



2. Objects of refuge are taken as Field for Accumulating Merit because when we offer the practice of the seven limbs and mandala, the holy beings act as field in which we plant and nourish our seeds of virtue.
3. By making these offerings, we create and increase our virtuous energy, purify our negative karma, and increase our potentiality to gain realizations of the stages of the path.

1.1.1E Practice of the seven limbs and mandala



1. The practice of seven limbs involves:

- Prostration [1.1.1Ea]*
- Offering [1.1.1Eb]*
- Confession [1.1.1Ec]*
- Rejoicing [1.1.1Ed]*
- Beseeching Buddhas and Spiritual Guides not to pass away [1.1.1Ee]*
- Requesting Buddhas and Spiritual Guides to turn the Wheel of Dharma [1.1.1Ef]*
- Dedication [1.1.1Eg]*

1.1.1Ea Prostration



1. Three types of prostration taught by Buddha:

Physical

Full length or Half-length prostration, bowing head or pressing palms of our hands together

Verbal

By paying respect with our speech e.g., reciting praises to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas

Mental

Mental prostration by developing faith in Three Jewels

We can perform all three types of prostration together: physical with faith whilst reciting praises or mantras

1.1.1Ea Prostration



2. How to make physical prostration:

2.1 Place palms of our hands together with thumbs tucked in and then touch, in turn:-

✓ the crown of our head

*(to create cause to attain body of Buddha,
particularly the crown protrusion)*

✓ Point between our eyebrows

(to attain body of Buddha, particularly the hair-curl)

✓ Our throat and

(to attain speech of Buddha)

✓ Level of heart

(to attain mind of Buddha)

1.1.1Ea Prostration



2. How to make physical prostration:

2.2 Bring our body to the ground either in half-length prostration with our palms, knees and forehead touching the ground or full-length prostration with our whole body stretched face downwards on the ground

2.3 We can also recite prayers as we physically prostrate



1.1.1Ea Prostration

3 Ten benefits from making prostration:

- 3.1 A healthy and beautiful body*
- 3.2 Rebirth in an honoured family*
- 3.3 A great circle of assistants*
- 3.4 Offerings and respect from others*
- 3.5 Abundant resources*
- 3.6 The many benefits of listening to Dharma*
- 3.7 Strong faith in Three Jewels*
- 3.8 Good and vast memory*
- 3.9 Great wisdom*
- 3.10 A deep and vast realization of concentration*

1.1.1Eb Offering



1. Two types of offering:

Ordinary

All material offerings are ordinary offering (before shrine or imagined, owned or un-owned)

Sublime

- a) Offering of putting Dharma into practice*
- b) Offering of generating bodhichitta*
- c) Offering of putting into practice whatever instructions received from our Spiritual Guide*
- d) Offering our virtuous actions to the Three Jewels*

1.1.1Ec Confession



1. Practice of confession includes all practices of purification (not just verbally or mentally admitting to negative actions we have committed)
2. Why we need purification: main cause of all our suffering and unhappiness
3. To understand how our own negative actions have caused our present difficulties and unhappiness, we need to study and meditate on actions and effects, the law of Karma.

1.1.1Ec Confession



4. If we remember all the negative actions we have committed, we may be discouraged and conclude, “I am a hopeless case”.
5. If we feel discouraged, think and recall examples of Angulimala, Tong Den, Ajatashatru
6. All heinous crimes (even above) can be completely purified.

1.1.1Ec Confession



7. The degree of purification depends on the strength of the four opponent power

7.1 *The power of regret [1.1.1Eca]*

7.2 *The power of reliance [1.1.1Ecb]*

7.3 *The power of opponent force [1.1.1Ecc]*

7.4 *The power of promise [1.1.1Ecd]*

1.1.1Eca The power of regret



1. This is power of our regret for the harmful actions we have committed
2. Develop regret by remembering all the dangers of our negativity.
3. Indirectly, regret destroys both the potentialities of our non-virtuous actions and our wish to repeat such actions in future

1.1.1Ecb The power of reliance



1. There are two main objects of our negative actions i.e., Three Jewels and living beings
2. Most negative actions are committed against living beings (motivated by attachment, anger and ignorance)
3. Actions against Three Jewels are Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Spiritual Guides (e.g., abandoning Dharma, disrespect, denying their existence)

1.1.1Ecb The power of reliance



4. Power of reliance means going for refuge by relying on Three Jewels and generating compassion or Bodhichitta.

1.1.1Ecc The power of opponent force



1. This is the power of any virtuous action we perform as an opponent to whatever non-virtuous action we wish to purify.
2. The opponent can be any virtuous action performed with sincere regret for our negativity

1.1.1Ecd The power of promise



1. This is the power of promising to refrain from negative actions.
2. When we make a promise, we need to know for how long we are able to keep it.
3. When it comes to those we cannot avoid completely, we can promise to avoid them for a short time and gradually extend the duration as our capacity increases (e.g., those whose livelihood depends on killing)

1.1.1Ed Rejoicing



1. Whenever we rejoice in the virtues and accomplishments of those attainments that are higher than our own, we increase our merits abundantly.
2. Buddha Shakyamuni said we should practise rejoicing in virtues of five kinds of beings:
 - 2.1 *Buddhas*
 - 2.2 *Bodhisattvas*
 - 2.3 *Solitary Realizers*
 - 2.4 *Hearers*
 - 2.5 *Ordinary beings*

1.1.1Ed Rejoicing (Cont'd)



3. By contemplating the Buddhas', Bodhisattvas', Solitary Realizers' etc qualities and virtuous actions, we develop appreciation and rejoice in their attainment, thinking

“How wonderful it will be if I become a Buddha for the benefit of all beings” etc

4. Rejoicing to overcome depression and discouragement

(The story of King Prasenajit and begger, Tepa)

1.1.1Ee Beseeching Buddhas and Spiritual guides not to pass away



1. Although actual body of Buddha, the Truth body, never passes away, the bodies that Buddha emanates to guide living beings do pass away
2. Without Buddha teaching, the world will end up as “barbaric land”
3. Beseeching Buddhas and Spiritual guides to abide in this world to benefit living beings creates great merit.

1.1.1Ef Beseeching Buddhas and Spiritual guides to turn the Wheel of Dharma



1. Forty nine days after Buddha Shakyamuni attained enlightenment, gods Brahma and Indra requested Buddha to teach (turn the Wheel of Dharma) for the benefits of all living beings
2. As a result, countless beings have attained liberation and full enlightenment and countless beings are able to practise Dharma
3. With this request, we too shall accumulate merit and create the cause to receive Dharma in this and future lives (indirectly help other beings too)

1.1.1Eg Dedication



1. Dedication has six aspects:

1.1 What we dedicate

Virtuous actions of body, speech and mind

1.2 Purpose of dedication

To prevent merits from being destroyed or depleted

1.3 Goal to which we dedicate

Final goal towards our full enlightenment

1.1.1Eg Dedication (Cont'd)



1. Dedication has six aspects:

1.4 For whose benefit we dedicate

All living beings

1.5 The manner of dedicating

*Depends on whether we have realized emptiness or not
In gist, “Person making dedication”, “actions dedicated”
and “dedication itself” lack inherent existence.*

1.6 Nature of dedication

*By nature of virtuous mental factor. It is a virtuous
intention that functions both to prevent accumulated virtue
from degenerating and to cause its increase*

1.1.1Eh Offering the Mandala



1. Mandala means “universe”
2. When we offer a mandala to holy beings, we are offering everything – the whole universe with all its objects and all beings who inhabit it
3. Transforming mentally whole universe into Pure land with its inhabitants all pure beings and its objects precious substances

(Story of child filled bowl with dust and offered to Buddha Kashyapa)

1.1.1F Requesting field for accumulating merits
in general and Lamrim lineage gurus



1. Requesting blessings to attain three great purposes:-

1.1 Stop wrong thoughts and attitudes from arising in our minds

1.2 To cultivate correct thoughts and attitudes

1.3 To eliminate outer and inner obstacles to our Dharma practice

2. If we can perfectly accomplish these three aims, we shall attain enlightenment in this lifetime.

1.1.1F Requesting field for accumulating merits
in general and Lamrim lineage gurus



3. In particular, sixteen wrong thoughts and attitudes to abandon (Cont'd)

- 1) *Disliking or having disrespect for our Spiritual Guide*
- 2) *Not wishing to take essence of our precious human life*
- 3) *Not remembering death*
- 4) *Being attached to the pleasures and happiness of this life alone*
- 5) *Not fearing rebirth in lower realms*
- 6) *Not wishing to go for refuge in Three Jewels*

1.1.1F Requesting field for accumulating merits
in general and Lamrim lineage gurus



3. In particular, sixteen wrong thoughts and
attitudes to abandon (Cont'd)

7) Not having faith or conviction in laws of Karma

8) Seeking to accumulate non virtuous actions

*9) Regarding Samsara as having the nature of
happiness*

10) Wishing to increase delusions

11) Uninterested in attaining liberation

12) Not wanting to practise the three higher trainings

1.1.1F Requesting field for accumulating merits
in general and Lamrim lineage gurus



3. In particular, sixteen wrong thoughts and
attitudes to abandon (Cont'd)

13) Forsaking 'mother living beings'

14) Self cherishing

15) Self grasping

16) Disliking the practice of Secret Mantra

1.1G Summary



If we combine with our meditation, the practice of purifying negativity, accumulating merit and making request for inspiration to our Spiritual Guides and Yidams, there is no doubt that our mind will change.

Repeated practice will ensure we gain profound realizations quickly.



Go to Kadhampa Web page (Contact us) and email us if you need further clarification or explanation