

A Drop of Moonlight Nectar,

Notes on the approach and accomplishment practices of the mind treasure

Chimé Phakmé Nyingtik

The 'Heart Essence of the Glorious Goddess of Deathlessness'

By Jamgön Kongtrül Lödro Tayé



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Namo Guru Arya Tara

With unshakeable faith, I place Pema Ösel Dongak Lingpa¹—

Master of the seven transmissions²

And, in essence, one with the three immortal vidyadharas³—

Upon the lotus at the centre of my heart.

Introduction

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, the great universal monarch of all learned and accomplished masters of the Land of Snow, received many different treasures, including mind treasures, through all seven modes of transmission. The great Chimé Phakmé Nyingtik cycle appeared as one of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo's profound mind treasures, yet only the root *lejang* or sadhana, the sadhana cycle of the Lama⁴, and the sadhana cycle of Amitayus and Namgyalma could be deciphered and set down. Here we are concerned with 'a drop of primordial wisdom' that is the root sadhana for the practice.

¹ Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo

² Seven authoritative transmissions (Tib. *ka bab diin*) received by Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo and Chokgyur Dechen Lingpa: 1) *kama* - the continuous transmission of sutra and tantra; 2) *sa ter* - earth treasures; 3) *yang ter* - rediscovered treasures; 4) *gong ter* - mind treasures; 5) *nyen gyü* - oral transmission; 6) *dak nang* - visionary revelations; 7) *je dren* - revelations from memory.

³ Shri Singha, Guru Rinpoche, Vimalamitra—the three masters who attained the level of 'Vidyadhara who has power over life', one of the four Vidyadhara levels. As a result they can remain in their ordinary physical form without passing away.

⁴ Cycle of practices focussing on Vimalamitra.

Those practitioners who wish to do the approach, accomplishment, and activity of this practice, need to have received the empowerment and reading transmissions (*lung*), and to abide by the samaya precepts. Then they should practise in the following way, explained in three sections:

- 1) the preliminaries—the stages of ritual preparation;
- 2) the main part—approach, accomplishment and activity;
- 3) the conclusion—receiving siddhis and so on.

I-Preliminaries: the stages of ritual preparation

On a good date—such as the eighth day of the waxing moon of the first month of a lunar trimester—in a practice place clean and pleasant, ornamented with decorations, and with general supports of the three roots, together with a statue or image of the principal deity of this practice (Yishin Khorloma), cover the shelf with a beautiful square of patched brocade. On top, place the general peaceful eight door-ledges (*tabab*) mandala.

[Note:] Although in the mandala the sixteen offering goddesses are upon the red veranda [surrounding the palace], and the worldly protectors of positive inclination, such as the Seventy-Five Glorious Protectors, dwell within the vajra-rim and surrounding world system [i.e. the space between the palace and vajra-rim], when the mandala is drawn, only the environment is depicted, not the deities' specific characteristics.

To gather all the conditions for a colour sand mandala is difficult, so a correct drawing will suffice. Otherwise arrange a mandala plate, anoint it with scented water and arrange piles of white grain for each of the deities.

Place a tripod in the middle of the mandala. On top of the tripod arrange the practice support in the form of a good three-part kapala⁵ filled with white pills comprised of the twelve different substances presented in the text⁶, and cover it with a red cloth. In front or behind, whatever is easier, place the white round offering torma (*chötor*) ornamented with *kargyen*, and various offerings of food and drink around. On its right and left place *men* and *rakta*, in their respective containers. Then place the two waters and the other [five] offerings of sensual stimulants in front of or around the tormas, whichever is more convenient. Gather all the items you will need that are mentioned in the *lejang* text such as preliminary tormas—*kator* and *gektor*—top-up for *shalzë* and many *tepkjus*, tsok offerings, *cheto* and *tenma* tormas, and so on.

II. The main part: approach, accomplishment and activity

1. Approach

i. Preliminaries

Preliminary to the retreat

Before the start of the retreat perform the usual practices to prevent obstacles entering⁷.

Lineage prayers

Start during the afternoon session of the first day, with the Seven Line Prayer and the relevant lineage prayers.

⁵ ‘Three parts’ (Tib. *Dumbu sumpa*) is a characteristic of the kapala that is needed here. There are one-part, two-part, three-part, nine part kapalas and so on.

⁶ The texts Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche is commenting upon here—the root sadhana called *Activities for Uncovering Primordial Wisdom* (Tib. *Trinlé Yeshe Nangwa*). It says: ‘with calcite (Tib. cong zhi, “pacifying chronic disease”) bitumen, the three fruits, Indra’s Hand (a small light yellow wild orchid, medicinal, which is very rare), ‘weeping ceaselessly’ flower (a medicinal plant with yellow flowers which always has dew on it so looks like it is always crying), and the five roots, all mixed together and rolled into pills the size of peas.’

⁷ Such as making tsatsas, reading the Sutras, like the *Heap of Auspiciousness*, *Dispelling Darkness in the Ten Directions*, the *Eight Auspicious Ones*, *Long Life Sutra*, offering tormas—the ‘four times one hundred’, water torma...and so on.

Kator

Offer the white tormas (*kator*) to the local deities as it is generally performed. Enjoin them to carry out activities for the complete accomplishment of the practice.

Refuge, bodhichitta and seven branches

Visualise the field of refuge in the space in front of you and take refuge, generate bodhichitta, and offer the seven branches. Repeat each three times while you actualise this common visualisation. Then dissolve the field of refuge into you.

Gektor

This is followed by the command to the obstacle-makers (*gek*). Recite the following as you actualise the visualisation:

I instantly become the magnificent Pema Heruka so wrathful he is difficult to behold.

—As you hold the vajra pride of being the deity,
sprinkle water on the *gektor* and
purify with Ram Yam Kham.

—The syllable Droom arises from the state of emptiness and turns into vessels suiting each individual mind.

—These vessels contain the syllable Kham which transforms into tormas, and the five sensual stimulants which appear according to each one's individual experience.

—Recite the Akaro mantra⁸, together with its mudra, three times to bless them.

—Summon the obstacle-makers with the iron hook mudra saying, “Sarwa Buta Akarkaya Dza”.

⁸ om akaro mukam sarwa dharma nam atya nutpana tota om ah hung phet soha

—Recite the Sky Treasury Mantra (Sarwa Bighanen nama Sarwa Tathagata Jo Bisho etc. until Gagana Kham Grihana Edam Balingde Soha) together with its mudra three times to offer.

—Issue the command with the verses of the text starting with “**Hung dö né khor dé...**”

—Then say, “Om Pema nata krita hayagriwa sarwa bighanen hana hana hung phat” and the wrathful Sumbhani mantra⁹,

scatter blessed mustard seeds, scent with *gugul*, and set the boundaries.

Gektor is only given during the first session and is not necessary afterwards.

Then, meditate on the protective spheres and the descent of blessings in order to bless the environment, the beings within it, and the offering substances, reciting the mantra three times.

This is how the preliminaries are accomplished.

ii. Main part

The main part of the practice has two parts: the generation, and the recitation.

Generation of the samaya-mandala

The main Deity

The cause is the framework of the three samadhis like the three poles of a tepee. The result is the clear visualisation of the support—the seats of the deities and the palace—and the supported mandala of the deities, as presented in the text of the practice.

⁹ om sumbani sumbani hung grihana grihana hung grihanapaya grihanapaya hung anaya ho bagawan vidyadaradza hung phet

As for the colour of the body of the male deity Garwang, the Lord of the Dance, the text says,

As her natural radiance her supreme skilful means, the Lord of the Dance.

Accordingly, the appearing aspect of skilful means arises from her light. So fundamentally he is white. However, here the male and female deities are together in reversed union and as it is explained that the desire of the male is greater than that of the female, he should therefore be visualised as red in colour, full of desire.

The Four Tara Gate Keepers

The four Taras, one at each of the four gates, are in a dancing posture, with their right legs bent in a half-lotus position. They raise their right hands from their knees, in the gesture of bestowing refuge, and brandish their respective hand implements (iron hook, and so on) with the threatening mudra. Their left hands, in the gesture of supreme generosity, are at their hearts holding the stems of *utpala* flowers which blossom at the level of their left ears.

The *jñanasattvas* bless your three places and you invite them. They arrive and dissolve in the *samayasattva*-mandala. Pay respect with prostrations.

When first making the offering of the two waters and the other five sensual stimulants in the morning, it should be done in detail, offering each one individually. And for each of the *men*, *rakta* and *torma* add “khahi” at the end of the text. But during the later sessions of the day, simply do as indicated in the text without the need for these additions. Recite the absolute offering, and ‘praising with vajra songs’.

Recitation

The *jñanasattva*—white Amitayus—is in our heart [oneself clearly visualised as Tara]. At his heart on top of a white lotus and standing at the centre of a locket formed of conjoined sun and moon is the *samadhisattva*—a white syllable TAM—surrounded, clockwise, by the ten syllables of the mantra.

Concerning the visualisation of the encircling mantra-mala, in general we visualise:

- mainly its arrangement, for the approach,
- the mantra turning, for the close approach,
- the palanquin, during the accomplishment, and
- the emanation and reabsorption, during the great accomplishment.

Yet it is enough to visualise its arrangement when practising essentially.

In most of the Mother Tantra cycles and for female deities, which apply to this practice, the syllables are usually arranged anti-clockwise. However, here it is explained that the mantra should be arranged in a clockwise direction as in all the sadhanas of the Sarma tantras. The root mantra, the combined sadhana mantra, the *jñanasattva* mantra and the *nirmanasattva* mantra are all arranged in a clockwise direction.

First concentrate on this visualisation until it is completely familiar. Then you can start reciting the mantra while visualising the emanation and reabsorption. Once the visualisation of the mantra arrangement is extremely clear, we can also imagine it turning.

Visualise just the root mantra when reciting it. For the combined sadhana, visualise it with the mantras of the combined sadhana appended at the end. During the visualisation of the *jñanasattva*, the visualisation is as follows: the core seed syllable TAM becomes HRIH encircled by its specific mantra. At the heart of the *nirmanasattva*, in the sun and moon locket, is a syllable DROOM surrounded by its mantra-mala.

Then establish the ground of the generation phase, *kyerim*, with clear appearance, remembering the purity and stable confidence. Focussing single-pointedly on the visualisation of the core seed syllable and the mantra-mala, just recite the ten syllables with a mala blessed in the usual way.

When a mere clear appearance of it is attained, start visualising Ushnisha Vijaya, the *nirmanasattva*, who emanates through the top of Chimé Phakmé Nyingtik's head. Her right hand, in the gesture of granting refuge, is poised on her right knee, forming the threatening mudra and holding the hook that gathers nectar. Her left hand, at the level of her heart, holds a long life vase from which she pours a stream of nectar in the mudra of supreme giving.¹⁰ Her feet are loosely crossed in the *sattvasana*.¹¹

The “mercury” is obtained when she gathers the luminescent nectar of the animate and inanimate in samsara and nirvana. It is the substance of alchemy and rejuvenation (*chulen*), white like an autumn moon, shining bright as the sun, sparkling and gleaming with all kinds of auspicious patterns, like swastikas and coils of joy and symbols turning to the right. Its power is such, that whoever it touches, it can transform them, so they possess the strength of an elephant, the lifespan of sun and moon, and an indestructible body with the vigour of a sixteen year old. If it touches iron, it is transmuted into gold. If it is scattered on a dead and withered tree, it will immediately burst into life with leaves and fruits and flowers. So, imagine these forms and images gathering as the blazing, brilliant splendour of great bliss.

At the end of the session also recite a little of each mantra of the combined practice and of the *nirmanasattva* and the *jñanasattva*; then the mantras of Vowels and Consonants, the Hundred Syllable Mantra, and the Mantra of Interdependent Origination, three times each, to make up for omissions or additions.

¹⁰ According to the different thangkas of the Chimé Phakmé Nyingtik including the one used as a practice support by Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo, it is the opposite: the right is at the level of the heart and the left on her knee. Trulshik Rinpoche said it doesn't really matter, and that he himself practices as indicated on the thangkas.

¹¹ The *vajrasana* is the full lotus posture of male deities, and the posture when seating across them is the *sattvasana*, seating with legs crossed in a loose way.

Concerning the “recitation of offering and praise for every thousand mantras accumulated”, the authentic tradition of the vidyadharas of the past was to recite this briefly after every thousand mantras. However nowadays we only do it once at the end of a session. So make offerings by just reciting the offering mantra, and say the first and the last stanzas of the Praise Offering prayer.

Then confess with the lines in the *lejang* that begin “**Om Jetsun Phakmé Tsok kyi...**”¹², dissolve the mandala, and rest in equanimity. After, do the arising as the post-meditation deities, dedication, aspiration prayers and words of auspiciousness.

It is very good to offer a tsok during the first session. In this case, practise as just explained, then after the offering and praise of the thousand mantras, start by blessing the tsok as laid out clearly in the text. Continue up to and including the remainder. You can also do the *cheto*, *tenma* and horse dance. It is not necessary to do those three every day. After, recite the brief Offering and Praise, and Confession and continue as just explained.

[Note:] While practising the approach, it is also good to offer a tsok at the auspicious dates such as the 8th, 10th and 25th days of the lunar month. Each time you do that, at the end of the afternoon session, do the practice of tormas offering to the protectors of the Dharma and terma guardians, as it is generally practised. Replenish the offerings in the evening session. Recite simply according to the text starting with Refuge, Bodhichitta, Seven Branches, and Protective Spheres until the Offering of Praise. Conclude the session as before.

Next day start the early morning session with the lineage prayers and do the elaborate version of the practice following the *lejang*. Then practise in the morning, afternoon and evening periods, by dividing your day into four sessions. If you cannot do this, then practise in three sessions—morning, afternoon, and evening.

¹² The text says "Om Jetsun Pakmé Kyilkhör du" for the first line of the confession section.

2. *Accomplishment*

After the *nyenpa*, start with the accomplishment. Practise the morning session with the short conclusion as before.

Place a *phumba* made of precious materials containing the nectar of twenty-five substances¹³, with a white cloth tied at the neck below the aperture ornament, in the mandala to the right of the kapala, the main accomplishment substance. To its left put the food offering—a long life *torma* with tree leaves and flowers. And since “food offering” refers here to both food and *chang*, the food is made with alcohol, in the shape of a long life vase with pills around. Place also new *men*, *rakta* and *torma* as well as outer offerings.

In the afternoon session, do the elaborate practice based on the *lejang* starting with the lineage prayers. After the seven-branch accumulation, give the *gektor* and issue the command. Practise as before from the Protection Spheres up to and including Offering of Praise.

Then we need to “divide the house of the mantra” by reciting the following mantra,

Droom Bisho Bishudhe Tam Hrih Droom Tam Droom Hrih Hung Dzam
Hung Bam Ho Phet Dza.

From the mandala of the self-visualisation a second mandala separates out into the space in front of you, as when one butter-lamp lights the next. This second mandala divides up into support and supported, and simply remains amidst a mass of fire.

¹³ The twenty-five ingredients that are prepared to make the content of the *bhumpa*, comprise of five sets of five substances. They are five medicines, the five grains, the five precious substances, the five fragrant substances, and the five essences. (Most of five sets have different listing, so for further detail see Rigpa’s on-line encyclopaedia (www.rigpawiki.org)).

When you first start to practise the accumulation phase, briefly actualise the visualisation of the approach phase. Then, visualise according to the text in the lines starting with “Again, great cloud-like rays of light...”, and recite the mantra combining the three deities for a while, focussing on each one individually.

When the visualisation appears clearly, add the visualisation of the emanation and reabsorption of rays of light from the heart of the main deity to invoke her retinue. First, concentrate on accumulating Dorje Drolma (Vajra Tara)’s mantra, and recite the three others only briefly at the end of the session. Once her mantra accumulation is completed, you only need to recite a few each time, before accumulating the next mantra of Rinchen Drolma (Ratna Tara), for the main part of the session. And so on in this way.

The visualisation is as follows. In the heart of each of the Taras of the four families is a lotus. On top of the lotus, within Vajra Tara, is a dark blue syllable TAM; in Ratna Tara a yellow DROOM; in Pema Drolma a red HRIH; and Karma Drolma a black HUNG. Their respective mantra-mala revolves around the syllable.

The way to conclude the session and the rest is as for the approach, except that here it is important to offer a tsok every day.

3. Activity (Léjor)

Once the accomplishment mantra recitation commitment is fulfilled, practise the activity.

Divide the day into four sessions. The *lejang* should be recited in each one. Complete the accomplishment during the fourth session in the evening. The next day during the early morning session recite up to its mantra as before, briefly.

Then, recite the text starting with “I am the samayasattva, the jnanasattva...” and clearly actualise the visualisation.

Say “The four activity Taras with Dza Hung Bam Ho at their heart on lotus and moon discs”, and visualise the four seed syllables in their respective colours, surrounded by the mantra-malas.

Rays of light stream out from the five deities (the main deity and the four Taras in the retinue) to invoke Hook-Tara.

She manifests many bodies, rays of light and infinite miracles accomplishing the activity of pacifying all opposing forces, such as illnesses, spirits, negative actions, obscurations and so on. Do your session reciting only her mantra. The conclusion is as before.

Then alternate as follows. During the morning session, practise only Noose-Tara’s mantra and visualisation, accomplishing the enriching activity. In the afternoon session, practise only Iron-Chain’s mantra and visualisation, and accomplish the magnetising activity. During the evening session, practise only Bell-Tara’s mantra and visualisation, and accomplish the subjugating activity.

4. Measure of each phase of the practice

The *lejang* simply mentions the three ways of considering the measure of the length of the practice for approach, accomplishment and activity.

They are, in terms of time, number of recitations, and signs.

- **Time**

—Those of superior capacity should practice the approach for three weeks, the accomplishment for one week, and one day for activity, adding up to one month with the receiving of the siddhis.

—For those of medium capacity, multiply by three—three months in total.

—The practitioner of lesser acumen, by implication, should practise for six months.

- **Numbers**

In terms of numbers, we also distinguish those of superior, medium and lesser capacities.

They roughly correspond to the durations mentioned above. Yet in general, when considering primarily the number of recitations, the minimum is to recite,

—100,000 for each of the ten syllables of the main deity mantra, [so 1,000,000]

—700,000 of the nineteen syllable *nyenpa* mantra of the combined practice

—400,000 of the *jñanasattva*, and 400,000 of the *nirmanasattva* mantras

—100,000 of each of the accomplishment mantras of the four Taras

—40,000 of each of the mantras of the four gatekeepers for the activity.

The recitation count for someone of medium capacity is easy to work out: multiply by three as for the months [and for those of lesser capacity by six].

The minimum to be able to perform the activities¹⁴ is,

—400,000 of each of the ten syllables of the mantra of the main deity [so 4,000,000 mantras]

—100,000 for the combined practice

—40,000 for the *jñanasattva* and 40,000 for the *nirmanasattva* mantras,

—10,000 of each for the accomplishment mantras

—however much in one day for the activity.

This count is based on the accumulation time for practitioners of superior capacity.

- **Signs**

The signs are as clearly mentioned in the text: best is realisation, medium is experience, and lesser is the repeated experience of clarity in dreams.

¹⁴ Such as giving empowerments.

III. Concluding practices

1. *Receiving the siddhis*

It is very good if you can start the practice in the early morning session. The morning session is also fine.

Place a new offering torma (*chötor*) and—as the siddhi substance—*drangyé*¹⁵ of the four activities, or more simply a *drangyé norzükma*, surrounded by clean food and drink of all kinds such as the whites and the sweets, fruit, tea, *chang*, milk, yoghurt.

Do the elaborate practice based on the *lejang*. Recite briefly the mantras of approach, accomplishment and activity. Then perform the “offering and praise for a thousand recitations.”

From the hearts of the deities of the self-visualisation, and of the front-visualisation, emanate rays of light in the shape of iron hooks. All the vital energy of the worlds and the inhabitants of samsara and nirvana are gathered into nectar, appearing as rays of light, and dissolve into the siddhi substances. Actualise this, as you recite the mantra of the combined practice supplemented by “khaya waka tsitta guna karma sarwa siddhi pa la ho”, a thousand times or more, as you can.

Then, go through

—The *Yeshe Kuchokma* confession prayer

—The Descent of Blessings section from the text

—The elaborate Offering and Praise

—Requesting the Siddhis prayer that starts with “Om Jetsun Phakma...”

Actualising the usual visualisations, place the *phumba* on your head and take some of its water; place the *düdti* at your throat and drink some; place the *tsedrang* at your heart; take of the substances in the kapala; and keep consuming what remains for a long time, and so on, as usual.

¹⁵ A type of torma.

Then offer a large tsok. Enjoy it. If the remainder were withheld before, offer the remainder tormo together with it. Request to fulfil the command. Do the *cheto*, *tenma* and horse dance. After the confession and forgiveness, conclude with prayers of auspiciousness.

2. *Kakong (Completeness)*

Jinsek

It is good to do a *jinsek* (fire ritual) for completeness.

—If you choose to do this elaborately in relation to the mandala¹⁶, perform a fire ritual after the four activities are completed on the same day.

—If you do not relate it to the mandala, you can either offer a *jinsek* on the day of the completion of receiving the siddhis from the tsok, or at a later date.

Other activities

Also, for completeness, we should add recitation of one tenth of the mantra counts, and do whatever is necessary to accomplish activities such as lengthening life and so on.

Conclusion

Even though this practice could be explained in more detail following the structure of a *drupchen*, here we only explained the difficult points of the practice and so on.

Drupchö

During a Chime Phakmé Nyingtik *drupchö* for example, if it is an ordinary simple drupchö, we may recite the main ten-syllable mantra 1,000 times during each session; accordingly we should also recite

—300 mantras of the combined practice, the *jñanasattva*, and the *nirmanasattva*

—100 for each of the four Taras

—just 21 recitations for each of the four activities.

¹⁶ That is before receiving the siddhis when the accomplishment mandala is still there.

If you perform mainly the long life accomplishment (*tsedrup*), recite the ten-syllable mantra 300 times and the mantra of the combined practice 1,000 times since it is the mantra and clear visualisation of the *tsedrup*, whilst the other mantras are as before. The rest is the same as before.

During the mantra accumulation, it is possible to continuously practise the daily sadhana only for the approach phase, but not during the accumulations for the accomplishment and activity phases. As a main mantra of approach, the mantra of the combined practice is also very good. To practise more elaborately by reciting and visualising briefly the accomplishment and activity is not only *not* a fault, but is very good, since approach is the foundation that comes at the beginning of approach, accomplishment and activity. So, after the approach, it is good each time to practise some accomplishment and also a little bit of the activity.

*Glorious (Phakma) mother of the Victorious ones of the three times
Indivisible from the lama, in all my lives take care of me,
So that I may perfect the conduct of a bodhisattva following the vajra path,
And quickly accomplish completely and perfectly the liberation of Tara.*

Colophon

The supreme and omniscient great tertön lama¹⁷ determined I was to be among the first recipients of these teachings. So he granted me the complete ripening empowerment and liberating instructions, and gave me permission to write down these notes. Later at the request of many interested people, I, Pema Garwang Lodrö Tayé, the mere reflection of a vidyadhara, as my body aged to eighty-seven, expounded this briefly at the strong insistence of Tana Lama Karma Jikdröl (who said he recited 100 million Vajra Guru Mantra), in a solitary retreat place at Palpung, called Tsadra Rinchen Drak, in Kunzang Dechen Ösel Ling. Sang-Ngak Tenzin put it into writing. May virtue grow ever further!

¹⁷ Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo.