

THE MAIN PATH OF THE VICTORS

A ROOT TEXT FOR THE PRECIOUS
GELUG/KAGYU TRADITION
OF MAHAMUDRA



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Here, in explaining the instructions on Mahamudra from the tradition of the holy beings who are scholars (*pandita*) and adepts (*siddha*), there are three outlines:

- 1) activities for entering into the composition,
- 2) actual explanation of the composed instructions and
- 3) dedication of virtue arisen through having composed the instructions.

1. Activities for entering into the composition

NAMO MAHAMUDRAYA – Homage to the Great Seal

I respectfully bow at the feet of my peerless guru, master of adepts, who directly exposed the great seal of Mahamudra, the all-pervasive nature of everything, the indivisible, inexpressible and indestructible sphere of the mind.

I shall now write down instructions on Mahamudra coming from the Gelug/Kagyü tradition of the supreme adept Dharmavajra and his disciples, a tradition of excellent instructions having gathered the essence of the sutras and tantras and condensed oceans of oral instructions.

2. Actual explanation of the composed instructions

Regarding this, there are three outlines:

- 1) preliminaries,
- 2) actual practice and
- 3) conclusion.

2A. Preliminaries

In order to have a doorway for entering into the Dharma and a central pillar for the Mahayana, sincerely go for refuge and generate bodhicitta, without these being merely words from your mouth.

In general, as a preliminary to giving any profound instructions or engaging in meditation, all the holy beings of the different traditions in Tibet concord in doing what is called 'The Four Guiding Instructions':

- 1) Going for refuge and generating bodhicitta,
- 2) Vajrasattva meditation,
- 3) Mandala offering and
- 4) Guru yoga.

And in particular, with regard to first meditating on loving-kindness, compassion, bodhicitta, renunciation, karma, death and impermanence, the supreme disciple of highest yoga tantra, the lord of yogis, Milarepa also gave advice saying:

Being very afraid of the eight states of non-leisure
I meditated on impermanence and the disadvantages of samsara,
Meticulously followed the principles of karma, the law of cause and effect and
Constantly entrusted myself to the three jewels of refuge.

Having trained my mental continuum in the method of bodhicitta
I cut the flow of latency obscurations
And realized that all appearances are like illusions.
I am now without any fear of the three lower realms.

Similarly, as said by the great vajra-holder Dragpa Gyeltsen in *Parting from the Four Attachments*:

If you are attached to this life, you are not a true spiritual practitioner.
If you are attached to samsara, you do not have renunciation.

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If you are attached to your own self-interest, you do not have bodhicitta.

If there is grasping, you do not have the correct view.

Thus,

- 1) as an antidote to being attached to this life, it is necessary to train in the practices of the initial capacity person such as reflecting on freedoms and opportunities, impermanence and the sufferings of the lower realms,
- 2) as an antidote to being attached to samsara, it is necessary to train in the three higher trainings having understood that all the entire samsara is in the nature of suffering,
- 3) as an antidote to seeking peace and happiness for oneself alone, meditate on loving-kindness, compassion and bodhicitta, and
- 4) as an antidote to the self-grasping that is the root of samsara, it is necessary to meditate on the selflessness of person and phenomena.

Since in their treatises on authentic sutras and tantras, every Indian and Tibetan scholar and adept praised those paths highly, do not think that they are merely preliminaries even though they have been explained in the context of the preliminaries but rather practice them by integrating them into your actual practice.

Moreover, since seeing the ultimate nature of the mind is dependent upon having accumulated the collections and purified the obscurations, recite the hundred-syllable mantra of Vajrasattva at least a hundred thousand times and in addition, as an essential practice, earnestly confess negative actions and promise to refrain from doing them again by completing the four opponent powers through practices such as **making as many hundreds of prostrations as possible while reciting *The Admission of Downfalls*.**

Then, from the depths of your heart, make repeated requests to your root guru who is kind in three ways, seeing them as **inseparable from all the Buddhas of the three times** or as the essence of the three jewels combined.

2B. Actual practice

Even though there are many ways of approaching Mahamudra, they can all be classified as either

- 1) **Sutra Mahamudra or**
- 2) **Tantra Mahamudra.**

Here I will explain the first one rather extensively and since the latter one will be presented using very few words I will explain that first.

2B1. Tantra Mahamudra

Tantra Mahamudra refers to the luminosity that is the exalted wisdom **of co-emergent great bliss arisen through** the entering, abiding and dissolving of the winds into the central channel due to **skilful methods such as penetrating the vital points of the subtle vajra body.** This is dependent upon having obtained the four pure empowerments, having properly guarded the commitments (*samaya*) and vows (*samvara*) and having familiarized oneself with the generation stage.

When such an exalted wisdom realizes emptiness by way of a generic image it is a similitude luminosity and when it realizes emptiness directly it is the actual luminosity. The mind that is in the nature of that luminosity is taught using such terms as 'the definitive meaning short AH', 'the indestructible drop', 'the uncontrived mind', 'the ordinary mind' and 'the primordial mind'.

It is the Mahamudra accepted by Saraha, Nagarjuna, Naropa and Maitripa. It is the innermost essence of the anuttarayoga class of tantra and is the principal subject matter taught in *The Seven Accomplishment texts* and in Saraha's *Three Cycles of Dohas*.

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As said [by Sahara] in the Dohas:

By engaging in emptiness devoid of compassion
You will not find the supreme path.
Alternatively if you just cultivate compassion
You will remain here in samsara and will not attain liberation.
Whoever is able to conjoin those two
Will not abide in samsara and will not abide in nirvana.

Therefore it is necessary to join the subject – compassion which is the co-emergent great bliss – with the object – emptiness.

As for generating the realization of this Mahamudra, if the winds enter, abide and dissolve in the central channel through having trained in the preceding paths in previous lives or in the earlier part of this life, then such a person can actualize Mahamudra, luminosity, by observing any suitable object such as resting in a non-conceptual mind. Previous Kagyu masters gave this person the name 'the simultaneous one'.

For all other trainees it is definitely necessary to meditate on tummo and so forth in order to actualize the Mahamudra of this path. Accordingly, with respect meditating on the Mahamudra indicated here, it is necessary to obtain the four pure empowerments and to also train in the common paths, the generation stage, the completion stage and so forth. Such a person is given the name 'the serial one'. Thus even most of the great adepts of this path entered into the lineage of empowerment of the various classes of anuttarayoga tantras.

2B2. Sutra Mahamudra

Sutra Mahamudra refers to the ways of meditating on emptiness (*shunyata*) as directly indicated in the extensive, middling and brief *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*.

As said by the supreme Arya Nagarjuna:

There is no path to liberation other than this.

Here I shall give instructions on Mahamudra in accordance with his thought and describe ways to introduce the nature of the mind in accordance with the instructions of the lineage masters.

Why is that which is taught here called 'Mahamudra'?

As said in *The King of Concentrations Sutra*:

The nature of all phenomena is a seal.

In that way, since emptiness is the nature of all phenomena it is a seal (*mudra*). And since when it is realized one is liberated from all degenerations, it is great or supreme (*maha*).

There are many lineages of practice each one having their own unique name, such as

- ***The Co-emergent Union*** (Karma Kagyu),
- ***The Amulet Box*** (Shangpa Kagyu),
- ***The Five Parts*** (Drigung Kagyu),
- ***The Six Cycles of Equal Taste*** (Drugpa Kagyu),
- ***The Four Syllables*** (Maitripa),
- ***The Pacifier*** (Padampa Sangye),
- ***Chod – The Object to be Cut Off*** (Machig Labdron),
- ***Dzogchen – The Great Perfection*** (Nyingma),
- ***Instructions on The Madhyamaka View*** (Gelug) and so forth.

However, when investigated by a yogi learned in definitive meaning scriptures, skilled in logical reasoning and experienced in meditation, they all come down to the same intended meaning.

This being the case, from among the two systems within Sutra Mahamudra,

- 1) seeking to meditate after having gained the correct view and**
- 2) seeking the correct view after having meditated,**

here I shall explain in accordance with the latter system.

Now it is true that there are the two different systems, however the system of seeking the correct view after having meditated is in accordance with that said by the Protector Shantideva:

Vipashyana endowed with shamatha
Completely destroys the afflictions.
Knowing this, first seek shamatha.

And also that said in the *Pile of Jewels Sutra*:

Through abiding in ethics concentration is attained.
Having attained concentration cultivate wisdom.

This being the case, what is the method for initially cultivating shamatha?

2B2A. Shamatha

Regarding this, there are two outlines:

- 1) preparation and
- 2) actual practice.

2B2A-1. Preparation

As said in Venerable Maitreya's [*Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras*]:

The place where the intelligent practice
Is a place with easy access, a safe place,
A place with good ground and good friends,
And the requisites for yogic practice.

It is explained that while remaining in such a place it is necessary to rely on the prerequisites for shamatha by abiding in pure ethics, having few desires, being content and so forth and it is definitely necessary to do the six preparatory practices.

On a seat comfortable for cultivating concentration (*samadhi*), assume the sevenfold bodily posture and with the nine-round breathing exercise clear out stale subtle energies. Having thoroughly separated out the impurities from pure awareness then begin with a virtuous pure mind by going for refuge and generating bodhicitta. Meditate on the profound path of guru yoga and then, after making hundreds of very strong fervent requests, dissolve the guru into yourself.

2B2A-2. Actual practice

The concentration to be accomplished here is a concentration possessing two aspects:

- 1) vivid clarity and
- 2) a non-discursive single-pointedness.

Such an authentic shamatha arises from the ground of a non-equipoised mind and a single-pointed concentration of the desire realm. As said by the Protector Maitreya:

It arises from its causes. Relying on applying
The eight antidotes to abandon the five faults.

Thus it is taught that shamatha is accomplished through the nine mental abidings arising from applying the eight antidotes to abandon the five faults. Moreover, in his five treatises on the grounds Arya Asanga states that the nine mental abidings are accomplished by the six powers and the four mental engagements.

Through focussing on what type of object of meditation does one cultivate concentration? Although the Bhagavan taught that in general there are limitless objects that are a suitable basis for accomplishing faultless concentration since most of the previous gurus of these instructions accept focussing on the mind, here also this very method will be used.

Within that state of fleeting appearances, do not alter anything by discursive thoughts such as hopes thinking about accomplishing certain goals **or fears** concerned about whether or not certain undesirable things will eventuate. **Without wavering**, that is without dwelling in the past, without anticipating the future and without moving around in the present, **rest in meditative equipoise** (*samahita*) within that state **for a short while**.

When resting the mind in this way **it is not that you stop attention like when fainting or falling asleep. Rather, station the guard of non-forgetful mindfulness** (*smrti*) **so that the mind** that is unwaveringly still **does not become distracted**. In that way the observed object is bound by the rope of mindfulness. If however mindfulness degenerates there will be a great danger of the proliferation of thoughts that will move the mind. Therefore it is necessary to **set up introspection** (*samprajanya*) like a watcher **to be aware of** whether or not the mind is **moving** elsewhere due to the strength of mindfulness having become weak.

As said in [Bhavaviveka's] *Heart of the Middle Way*:

The elephant of the mind that is out of control
Is to be bound with certainty by the rope of mindfulness
To the firm post of the observed object
And gradually brought under control by the hook of introspection.

In brief, accomplishing faultless meditative stabilization does not go beyond the manner of maintaining mindfulness and introspection. Furthermore, mindfulness is principal and if this is present then introspection which is said to be the result of mindfulness comes naturally.

Attentively focus mindfulness **on the clear and knowing nature** of the mind **and observe it** single-pointedly and **nakedly**.

When observing in this way, **whatever thought arises simply recognize it**. Such a technique relies upon introspection. **Or alternatively, just like the swordsman's battle with the archer** taught in the Vinaya scriptures, having generated strong mindfulness and introspection, as soon as **any thought arises cut it off completely** not allowing it to continue.

When the proliferation of thoughts **has been finally severed and the mind is still then without losing mindfulness** or introspection, immediately **loosen** your concentration **and relax** into a state of meditative equipoise. **As said** by Machig Labdron:

Focus attentively and loosely relax.
It is there that the mind can be settled.

Moreover as said by Saraha:

If you relax the mind that is bound by tightness
It will undoubtedly become free.

In this way, relax without becoming distracted.

If your focus is too tight and you think that excitement is arising relax it a little. If your focus is too loose and you think that laxity is arising tighten it a little. By finding a balance between the two the mind is drawn away from the movement of thoughts. However it is necessary to be cautious of laxity whenever there is a factor of stillness. As said by Master Chandragomin:

If I rely upon exertion excitement will arise
And if I give it up laxity will occur.
Since it is difficult to find an appropriate balance
What should I do with my agitated mind?

When you observe the nature of any thoughts that arise, they vanish and a pristine emptiness dawns. Similarly, if you also investigate when the mind is still, there is an unobscured clear emptiness and vivid clarity. In seeing that there is no difference between the former and latter states, it is well known to meditators as 'the mixing of stillness and movement'.

Or alternatively, use the following method for sustaining the stillness of mind. **No matter what thoughts arise do not stop them. Recognize** where they are coming from and **where they are going. And by so doing** observe and **rest in the nature of those thoughts.** By resting in this way movement will eventually cease and there will be stillness. **It is similar to the analogy of releasing a bird that has been held** for a long time **on a ship** in the midst of a great ocean. Sustain this state in accordance with that said in Saraha's *Song of Realization*:

**It is similar to how a raven released from its ship
Circles in all directions and then settles back there again.**

As said by Yang Gonpa:

Do not view discursive thoughts as faults.
And do not intentionally cultivate non-conception.
Rest the mind in its natural state and keep a distant watch.
And the meditation will arrive at shamatha.

Furthermore, if the present-day trainees sustain this state by way of the six methods for resting the mind they will become kings of this instruction. What are the six methods?

As said:

Rest like the sun free from clouds.
Rest like an eagle soaring in the sky.
Rest like an ocean-going ship.
Rest like an infant looking in a temple.
Rest like the trail of a bird in the sky.
Rest like spread-out matted wool.
Through these methods of resting the mind
The practice will be meaningful.

1. Just as the sun free from clouds remains extremely clear and bright, by focusing on the clear light nature of the mind, it is not obscured by conceptions, laxity and excitement and so forth.
2. Just as an eagle soars through the sky naturally without much need to flap its wings, likewise without the mind being excessively tight or excessively loose sustain this state with a sharp clarity and in a relaxed manner without losing mindfulness and introspection.

3. Even though a great ocean is buffeted by winds, the waves are not able to disturb a ship even a little, likewise when resting the mind on an object, rest without being disturbed at all by coarse conceptions.
4. Just as when an infant looks inside a temple they do not investigate the fine details of the pictures but rather they look without distraction at the overall scene, likewise when resting the mind on the object, rest it single-pointedly on the object without investigating whether the objects of the five senses that appear are attractive or unattractive and without generating attachment or aversion.
5. Just as there is no trail left by a bird in the sky, likewise rest the mind evenly so that whenever pleasant, unpleasant or neutral feelings arise you don't allow yourself to fall under the influence of any of the three, attachment, aversion or confusion.
6. Just as when matted wool is spread out it becomes soft and pliable, likewise when resting the mind evenly it becomes free from the coarse contact of the manifest three poisons and laxity and excitement.

Through sustaining this state in that way what kind of marks of achievement will be seen?

The nature of meditative equipoise is lucid and extremely clear, not obscured by anything at all. And since it is not established in any way as a physical entity, it is a pristine emptiness like space. Moreover, **whichever** of the good or bad objects of the five senses that appear they **dawn vividly** just like reflections in a clear mirror. And the experience that dawns is beyond identifying it as 'this' or 'that'.

No matter how stable such concentration may be, if it is not imbued with the bliss of physical and mental pliancy, it is merely a single-pointed mind of the desire realm whereas concentration that is so imbued is said to be the mind of shamatha. It is the source of many excellent qualities such as extrasensory perception and paranormal abilities and in particular the Arya paths of all three vehicles are attained in dependence upon it.

Well then what is it like on this very path to be introduced [to the mind] in terms of its own nature?

In that way the nature of the mind can indeed be directly and clearly seen however it cannot be grasped or indicated saying 'It is this'. Rest naturally without grasping to whatever dawns.

The meditators of present-day Tibet are mostly of a single mind in proclaiming that these are oral instructions for pointing out the Buddha in the palm of your hand. Nevertheless I, Chökyi Gyeltsen, say that this approach is a marvellous skilful method for beginners to accomplish mental abiding and is a way to introduce the conventional nature of the mind.

2B2B. Vipashyana

I shall now describe how to introduce the ultimate nature of the mind based on the oral instructions of my root guru Sangye Yeshe who, assuming the guise of a saffron robed monk, eliminated the darkness obscuring my mind.

With regard to this there are two:

- 1) general presentation of the different ways to introduce the ultimate nature of the mind and
- 2) presenting having extracted the essence of those instructions.

2B2B-1. General presentation of the different ways to introduce the ultimate nature of the mind

As said by the Teacher:

When one realizes the mind there is enlightenment.
Therefore do not seek enlightenment elsewhere.

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Also as said by Saraha:

The mind alone is the seed of all.
It is that which elaborates nirvana and samsara.
I prostrate to the mind that is like a wish-fulfilling jewel.
It is that which bestows every desired result.

In this way, there is the great plight of samsara and the great reward of nirvana through respectively not realizing and realizing the ultimate reality (*dharmata*) of one's own mind as it is. All the sacred sutras and tantras are in complete agreement on this point.

Ways to meditate by cutting through a basis or root to the mind:

1) One tradition states that, 'Within a state of meditative equipoise one investigates whether one's own mind is established as being inside or outside, or as something that arises, abides or ceases. When one sees that it is not established in any of these ways then one has cut through a basis or root to the mind, one has been introduced to the nature of the mind and one has attained the meaning of Mahamudra.'

Because as said in the Doha:

When the mind and all appearances are sought
They are not found. Even a searcher does not exist.
Since that absence neither arises nor ceases in the three times
That very thing that never changes is the nature.
It is the mode of abiding of great bliss.
Thus all appearances are dharmakaya.

2) Another tradition states that, 'One searches for the mind within the parts of one's own body from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet. When one sees that it is not established as being any of these parts, that it is not established in any way as something physical having a shape, colour and so forth then one sees the nature of the mind.'

Because as said by Shang Rinpoche:

The nature of one's own mind is the seed of all.
It is from the very beginning not different from the minds
Of the buddhas and bodhisattvas. It appears as the dharmakaya.
It is not matter and it is clear by nature.
Not established as a functioning thing, it has no colour or size.

3) Yet another tradition states that, 'Without dwelling in the past or anticipating the future, rest serenely in a state of present awareness, fresh and uncontrived. In this way the nature of the mind will be nakedly and directly seen. At that time one has cut through a basis or root to the mind and has been introduced to the nature of the mind.'

Because as said by Saraha:

Rest in a fresh, uncontrived and relaxed manner.

And as said by Mahasiddha Lingrepa Padma Dorje:

When resting in an uncontrived and fresh manner realization dawns.
When sustaining this like the flow of a river, it will dawn even more fully.
You the yogi, thoroughly abandon all signs of fixation
And be constantly in equipoise.

4) Others state that, 'No matter what type of objects that dawn in the mind such as visual forms or sounds and also no matter what type of thoughts that dawn in the mind such as virtuous or non-virtuous neither suppress nor pursue them even slightly. By looking nakedly at their nature they will vanish and then rest in

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the vivid pristine emptiness that cannot be in any way identified. Such seeing is a realization of ultimate reality and one has been introduced to the nature of the mind.'

Because as said by Maitripa:

If you desire to realize the meaning beyond concepts, with nothing to be done
Cut through a basis or root to your own mind and rest nakedly in awareness.
Allow the water stained by conceptions to become clear
And rest naturally without suppressing or pursuing appearances.
Without abandoning and without grasping is Mahamudra.

5) Also many others state that, 'No matter what type of discursive thoughts are generated, focus on them without making them vanish. And in addition to that, by allowing them to become more extensive they will become self-liberated. Thus their dawning and liberation will be simultaneous. However many thoughts there are, there are that many enumerations of the dharmakaya.'

Because as said by Lama Shang:

When resting in such a state
And discursive thoughts suddenly occur
They are from the clear light dharmakaya.
Do not think that they are something else.
Thus the proliferation of discursive thoughts
Is emptiness emanating from emptiness,
Dharmakaya emanating from dharmakaya,
And unity emanating from unity.

2B2B-2. Presenting having extracted the essence of those instructions

As said in *The Sutra Requested by Rastrapala*:

Due to not knowing the way in which things are empty,
Peaceful and unproduced, migrators wander.
[The Teacher], possessing compassion for them,
Caused them to enter by skilful methods and hundreds of reasonings.

Thus it is taught that due to not knowing the profound emptiness – the way in which things are selflessness – migrators wander in samsara. The Teacher who possesses great compassion for those who wander in samsara, in order to liberate them from samsara, caused them to enter the path of realizing selflessness directly and indirectly by skilful methods for realizing selflessness and hundreds of reasonings for determining selflessness. Similarly as said by Master Shantideva:

All these branches were taught
By the Subduer for the sake of wisdom.

Furthermore, with respect to directly realizing selflessness, it is necessary to meditate having first determined selflessness through hearing and contemplating. Although for such a selflessness there is no division into coarse and subtle in terms of its entity, there are two types by way of a division into person and phenomena.

As said by Glorious Chandrakirti:

In order to thoroughly liberate migrators, this selflessness was taught
To be of two types by way of a division into person and phenomena.

Although in the scriptures along with their commentaries the selflessness of phenomena is determined first, when meditating it is necessary to first meditate on the selflessness of person. As said in *The King of Concentrations Sutra*:

Just as you discriminate the self

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Likewise that wisdom can be applied to all.
The nature of all those phenomena
Is utterly pure like space.
Therefore by one all are known.
Therefore by one all are seen.

With respect to meditating on the selflessness of person, initially it is necessary to identify the object of negation, that which is to be negated. As said in [Shantideva's] *Bodhisattvacharyavatara*:

Without contacting the thing to be investigated
You will not apprehend that thing's non-existence.

If the object of negation is not identified it is like shooting an arrow without seeing the target and leading an army without identifying the enemy. And also with respect to identifying the object of negation if there is an over-pervasion then you will fall to the extreme of nihilism and if there is an under-pervasion since the subtle-most object of negation will not be refuted you will fall to the extreme of eternalism. Thus the dangers are very great. As said in [Nagarjuna's] *Mulamadhyamakakarika*:

If their view of emptiness is faulty
Those of little wisdom will be ruined.
It is just like handling a snake in the wrong way
Or accomplishing a knowledge mantra in the wrong way.

Thus, knowing that for the weak-minded
This Dharma is difficult to fathom,
The mind of the Sage completely turned away
From teaching this Dharma.

Furthermore as said in *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Verses*:

Due to grasping to 'I' and 'mine' all sentient beings cycle in samsara.

The final root of all faults is innate self-grasping, the innate grasping to an 'I'. With respect to an awareness apprehending 'I' in general, there are three ways of apprehending 'I':

- 1) an 'I' qualified by being truly existent,
- 2) an 'I' qualified by lacking true existence or being a mere name, merely imputed by thought and
- 3) an 'I' that is not qualified by either of those two.

The third one is a conventional valid cognition positing the mere 'I'. The second one only occurs in the continuum of those who have gained certainty with respect to the madhyamaka view. It does not occur in others. The first one is the grasping to a self of person.

The grasping to true existence having taken another person as the observed object is a grasping to a self of person however it is not innate self-grasping. Innate self-grasping, the view of the transitory collection, is an afflicted wisdom that grasps its observed object – the 'I' within one's own continuum – as inherently existent. That is produced by its own cause, the subtle grasping to a self of phenomena. As said by the Protector Nagarjuna:

As long as there is grasping to the aggregates
There will be grasping to an 'I' with respect to those aggregates.
And if there is grasping to an 'I' there is also karma.
And due to karma there is also rebirth.

Since [self-grasping] is the root of samsara, without refuting the object of the mode of apprehension of that (ie. the conceived object of that) you will not be able to abandon self-grasping. As said by Dharmakirti:

Without refuting the object of this [self-grasping]
You will not be able to abandon it.

Since the conceived object of grasping to the being, the 'I', the person, as truly existent is a truly existent being, 'I', person, it is necessary to refute that. Refuting that is to view the person as lacking true existence because by ascertaining that the person lacks true existence and then familiarizing oneself with that, grasping to the person as truly existent will be reversed. For that reason, I will first explain with guiding instructions the way in which the object of negation appears and the way in which it is apprehended.

Within that state of meditative equipoise of shamatha, in the same way as a tiny fish flashes through a still clear pool of water, use a subtle awareness to intelligently investigate the nature of the person who is meditating. That is, investigate the way in which it appears to the mind, the way in which it is apprehended by the mind and the way in which it actually exists. When investigated is this way, the way in which all phenomena such the being, the 'I', the person, actually exist is as a mere name, merely imputed by conception and merely labelled like [labelling] 'snake' onto a rope or 'human' onto a cairn or pile of wood.

The person does not exist as it appears since

- neither of the two individually – the body nor the mind of the person – is the person,
- the collection of the two – the body and the mind – is also not the person,
- none of the six elements individually is the person,
- the mere collection of the six elements is also not the person, and
- other than the six elements there is no person.

As said by the Protector Arya Nagarjuna:

**The person is not earth, not water, not fire,
Not wind, not space, not consciousness.
Nor is the person all of these together.
Yet other than them, what person is there?**

Also said in a *Sutra*:

The body is not the self.
Feelings are not the self.
Discrimination is not the self.
Compositional factors are not the self.
And consciousness is not the self.

In that way none of the five aggregates, the individual six elements, the collection, the shape of the collection of the meditator is the meditator. If that were the case then there would also be many faults such as

- the basis of designation and the designated phenomena would be identical,
- the appropriated and the appropriator would be identical,
- the parts and the whole would be identical, and
- if the aggregates were the self then since there are multiple aggregates there would be multiple selves.

In particular if the consciousness were the person then

- hearing, speaking, seeing, procreating and so forth would not be tenable and
- even though there is only one person just as there are six consciousnesses there would be six persons
- or alternatively just as there is only one person the six consciousnesses would be a partless one.

Also other than the five aggregates there is no person because [if they were other] then they would be an inherently unrelated other and the person would not possess the characteristics that characterize the collection of the aggregates. [If they were other] then would also be many faults. As said:

If it were other than the aggregates

Then it would not have the characteristics of the aggregates.

Thus within that state of meditative equipoise when you investigate using a subtle awareness and a total emptiness arises such that for you yourself there is no appearance of even a mere atom of the being, the person, the 'I', who is equipoised then when the generic image of that pristine emptiness becomes clear, equipoise single-pointedly without any further elaborations or mental activity. If your manner of apprehending that non-affirming negative, that pristine emptiness, becomes a little feeble then from within the state of equipoise meditate single-pointedly investigating as before. This is the way to sustain the space-like meditative equipoise.

It is said that when you initially ascertain this, if you have not previously familiarized yourself with the view then fear will arise in your mind and that if you have previously familiarized yourself with the view previously then joy will arise in your mind.

Now setting out the presentation for post-meditation. As said [by the Protector Arya Nagarjuna]:

The person is not an ultimate

Since it is a collection of six elements.

After arising from that meditative equipoise, if you investigate, it is true that the person that mistakenly appears to us due to our own mind being under the control of the demon of ignorance does in fact not exist. Nevertheless, the being, the person, the mere 'I' definitely does exist.

Moreover develop conviction with respect to the way in which it exists. Like imputing 'human' onto a cairn or imputing 'snake' onto a rope, 'person' is a mere name imputed upon the mere collection of the six elements or five aggregates. It is merely labelled, it is merely imputed by conception and it is merely dawning as a dependent-arising which is not an ultimate and is empty like an illusion.

Thus when you have gained experience in cultivating the selflessness of person included within your own continuum then as said in *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Verses*:

Just as with the self know all sentient beings in a similar way.

Just as with sentient beings know all phenomena in a similar way.

Thus indicating the way of meditating on the selflessness of other persons and phenomena. As said [by the Protector Arya Nagarjuna]:

Similarly, each of those elements are not ultimates

Since they too are collections.

In accordance with that, when you search you will not find even a mere atom of a meditative equipoise, meditator and so forth. At that time sustain the space-like meditative equipoise single-pointedly without distraction.

Furthermore when individually and collectively all phenomena of samsara and nirvana such as all ordinary and Arya beings, the outer and inner earth elements, and likewise the water, fire, wind and consciousness elements have been ascertained in your own mind then determine [how they exist] just as you did previously when having investigated the way in which the person appeared and the way in which it was apprehended you settled into meditative equipoise.

At that time when do not find even a mere atom of inherent existence just as it is said 'not finding is the best finding' and 'not seeing is the true seeing' you are seeing the ultimate nature of the mind and thus you have been introduced to the nature of the mind. Therefore within that state sustain the space-like meditative equipoise upon the ultimate reality, the mere negation of true existence, single-pointedly without distraction.

Alternatively, since the extremely subtle wind-mind is taught to be the subtle basis of designation of the 'I' and also those who give oral instructions accept introducing the nature of the mind when determining the ultimate reality of the mind I shall instruct in accordance with that.

As said by Chandrakirti:

It is the mind itself that formulates the many varieties
Of the animate and inanimate worlds.

Since it is taught that the mind is the root of all animate and inanimate worlds then if you cut through a basis or root to the mind then it will not resemble the other illusions. Thus do the following. **Within that state** of the previous continuity of **meditative equipoise**, if you investigate **the mind – which is a pristine emptiness not established in any way as a physical entity, is unobscured** like the sun [being unobscured] by clouds **and engages continuously with diverse thoughts dawning and proliferating within an unceasing continuum of clarity and awareness** – then to the awareness that apprehends the mind **the conceived object appears to not depend** upon anything else whatsoever **and is apprehended in that way.**

As said in Master Shantideva's *Bodhisattvacharyavatara*:

**Those things that are said to be a continuum or a collection
Are falsities, just like a rosary, an army and so forth.**

Having threaded together the individual beads of a rosary there is the mere designation 'rosary'. And having assembled together the individuals who carry weapons there is the mere designation 'army'. Apart from just that they do not inherently exist.

By using such scriptures and reasoning, set your mind single-pointedly in meditative equipoise within a state where you ascertain that **the mind is not established in the way that it appears.**

Furthermore, as said in *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Verses*:

There is no mind in the mind.
The nature of the mind is luminosity.

This states that there is no inherently existent mind in the mind. The nature of the mind is luminosity-emptiness.

And as said in the *Pile of Jewels Sutra*:

The mind has never been seen, it is not seen now nor will it ever be seen,
Even by any of the past, present or future Buddhas.

Also as said by the Protector of Migrators Pagmo Drupa:

The root of both samsara and nirvana is the mind.
The mind is from the very beginning pure thusness (*tathata*).
Since from the very beginning it is peaceful and unproduced
The mind is primordially free from the extreme of elaboration.

**In brief, as my virtuous spiritual friend, the truly omniscient Sangye Yeshe, has personally said:
When you are fully aware that whatever dawns is that apprehended by
conceptual thought,**

The ultimate sphere of phenomena (*dharmadhatu*) dawns without depending upon anything else.

Rest your awareness within that state of dawning and set your mind single-pointedly in equipoise.

E ma ho!

'When you are fully aware that whatever dawns is that apprehended by conceptual thought...' means that when you are aware that whatever dawns is that merely imputed by conception, the ultimate nature of phenomena dawns as an object of awareness without depending upon any other conditions.

It is as said in Chandrakirti's *Supplement to the Middle Way*:

Conventional truth is the means

And ultimate truth arises from the means.

'Rest your awareness within that state of dawning...' accords with that said:

Having unified single-pointedly 1) the ultimate nature – that dawning as the object of awareness and 2) the object possessor – the consciousness, set your mind in equipoise. That is amazing!

Similarly, as said by Padampa Sangye:

Within the state of emptiness the lance of awareness swirls around.

O people of Dingri, the view is without obstruction.

All such statements have the same intended meaning.

2C. Conclusion

Dedicate whatever virtue that has arisen from having meditated on Mahamudra together with your ocean-like collection of virtue of the three times towards unsurpassable great enlightenment.

Having familiarized yourself in this way in meditative equipoise, then during subsequent attainment investigate in detail the way in which appearances that dawn as objects of the six consciousnesses are appearing. The way in which they exist as dream-like dependent-arising will then dawn nakedly and resplendently. Through that, your ascertainment of the ultimate nature of phenomena will increase.

As said by Venerable Maitripa:

Recognizing whatever dawns is the essential point of the view.

In brief, do not grasp to any of those things which appear to you, even your own mind. Constantly maintain your practice by alternating the space-like meditative equipoise of **ascertaining the way in which they exist** with the subsequent attainment of the undeniable dawning of dependently related agents and actions.

Through knowing how to maintain meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment **in this way**, it is necessary to familiarize yourself with the meditative equipoise of **applying the single ultimate nature to all the phenomena of samsara and nirvana** and the subsequent attainment of applying the conventional nature of being illusory-like mere appearances to all phenomena.

As Aryadeva has also said:

Whoever is the seer of one thing

They are said to be the seer of all.

Whatever is the emptiness of one

That is the emptiness of all.

In that way, it is true that from the perspective of a correct meditative equipoise upon the ultimate nature there is freedom from the elaborations of the extremes of existence and non-existence and so forth with respect to samsara and nirvana. However after arising from that meditative equipoise, when you investigate it is undeniable that there are dependently related agents and actions that exist as being merely imputed by name and they naturally dawn as being like a dream, like a mirage, like a reflection of a moon in water and like an illusion.

When emptiness is not obscured by appearances and when appearances are not blocked by emptiness, at that time the excellent path of emptiness and dependent-arising being equivalent becomes directly manifest. In concordance with this as said by Je Tsongkhapa:

As long the assertions of appearances being undeceiving dependent-arisings
And emptiness are understood to be two separate things,
As long as they appear individually,
You have still not understood the intent of the Sage.
When without alternating, as soon as the ascertaining consciousness
Merely sees dependent-arisings as non-deceptive
And all modes of grasping to the object are destroyed
Then your investigation of the view is complete.

Also said by the Protector Nagarjuna:

Someone who through understanding the emptiness of phenomena
Sees cause and effect as tenable
This is more amazing than amazing!
This is more marvelous than marvelous!

Through sustaining Mahamudra by riding on the horse of shamatha in that way, when a concentration imbued with the bliss of physical and mental pliancy is attained by the force of analysis focused on emptiness then the heat level of the path of preparation is attained.

Some previous Kagyu masters presented the path of Mahamudra in terms of the four yogas. They are:

- 1) the yoga of single-pointedness due to observing the mind single-pointedly,
- 2) the yoga of freedom from elaborations due to realizing the mind free from elaborations,
- 3) the yoga of one-taste due to realizing the mind and appearances as one taste, and
- 4) the yoga of non-meditation due to it being a meditation without signs.

According to Venerable Gotsangpa, the boundaries for the four yogas are:

- 1) intentional conduct [the paths of accumulation and preparation],
- 2) the path of seeing,
- 3) the second through the seventh grounds, and
- 4) the pure grounds and so forth.

3. Dedication of virtue arisen through having composed the instructions

By the virtue of I, Losang Chökyi Gyeltsen – a renunciate who has heard many teachings, having composed this text, may all migrators quickly gain victory over the two obscurations by means of this path as there is no other second gateway to the state of peace.

It is the supreme essence churned from the oceans of sutras and tantras.
It is the key point of the full intent of the scholars and adepts of India and Tibet.
It is the path traversed without exception by the holy Mahasiddas.
May the sun of Mahamudra teachings dawn here today.

Colophon:

Moreover, this manner of introducing the great seal of Mahamudra was compiled at the repeated requests of both Gendun Gyeltsen from Nachu who holds the monastic degree of Rabjampa (Scholar of the Ten Fields of Knowledge) and Sherab Sengye from Hatong who holds the monastic degree of Kachupa (Master of the Ten Difficult Texts). Having seen that the eight worldly concerns of this life are like the dramas of an insane person, they now live a straightforward way of life in remote solitude making this path their essential practice. Many of my own disciples who desire to practice the definitive meaning of Mahamudra also made such requests.

Furthermore, the great all-knowing conqueror Ensapa, distinguished master, lord of adepts, has said in one of his songs of realisation composed to instruct himself and others:

This is not a path that can be explained immediately after having given instructions according to the *lam rim* – the stages of the path from the Kadam tradition beginning with how to rely upon a virtuous spiritual friend all the way up through shamatha and vipashyana. And since the final ultimate oral instructions on Mahamudra are not currently well known amongst Tibetans I am not able to record them at this time.

Thus what was not recorded at that time due to the need for restriction was intended for a later time. This assertion is established through similar scriptures. For example, *The Sutra of the White Lotus of the Sacred Dharma* says:

Because it is that which is thoroughly realized by a Buddha's exalted wisdom you could never say to those who write about this method of their own accord that you are enlightened. If asked why, it is because of people having a regard for the times.

There is an unbroken lineage of blessings of directly practising this path beginning from the incomparable Teacher, the king of the Shakyas, right down through to my root guru, the all-knowing and all-seeing Sangye Yeshe. And I, the renunciate Losang Chökyi Gyeltsen, who have been born into this family of not losing the pledges and who upholds the oral instructions of the sacred sutras and tantras, have compiled this at Ganden Monastery.

Sarva mangalam

Translated by Glen Svensson
Dharamsala, September 2008
Updated December 2012 & February 2016

Note: The text in **bold** is a translation of the root text while the non-bold text is sourced from Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyeltsen's own commentary to his root text.

THE THREE VEHICLES

VEHICLE	ASPIRATION	GOAL	PRACTICES	VIPASHYANA
THERAVADA	Renunciation (<i>nihisarana</i>) (Renunciate)	Nirvana (Arhat)	<u>3 higher trainings</u> 1. ethics (<i>shila</i>) 2. concentration (<i>samadhi</i>) 3. wisdom (<i>prajna</i>) <u>8-fold path</u> right speech right action right livelihood right effort right mindfulness right concentration right view right thought	<u>3 marks of existence</u> 1. impermanence (<i>aniya</i>) 2. suffering (<i>dukkha</i>) 3. no self (<i>anatman</i>)
MAHAYANA	Bodhicitta (Bodhisattva)	Enlightenment (<i>bodhi</i>) (Buddha)	<u>6 perfections</u> 1. generosity (<i>dana</i>) 2. ethics (<i>shila</i>) 3. patience (<i>kshanti</i>) 4. joyous effort (<i>virya</i>) 5. concentration (<i>dhyana</i>) <i>shamatha</i> 6. wisdom (<i>prajna</i>) <i>vipashyana</i>	Emptiness (<i>shunyata</i>)
VAJRAYANA (tantra)	Bodhicitta (Bodhisattva)	Enlightenment (<i>bodhi</i>) (Buddha)	<u>2 stages</u> 1. generation stage (<i>utpattikrama</i>) 2. completion stage (<i>sampannakrama</i>)	Emptiness (<i>shunyata</i>)

Renunciation – the mind intent on liberation from samsara

Bodhicitta – the aspiration for complete enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings

Nirvana – freedom from the afflictive obscurations

Enlightenment – freedom from the afflictive & cognitive obscurations

Afflictive obscurations – ignorance & seeds of ignorance

Cognitive obscurations – latencies (stains) of ignorance & mistaken dualistic appearance arising due to stains

Shamatha – calm abiding

Vipashyana – special insight

THE FOUR IMMEASURABLES

Source: *Cultivating Virtues of the Heart* – B. Alan Wallace

THE FOUR IMMEASURABLES	DEFINITIONS	PROXIMATE CAUSE	FALSE FACSIMILE OR NEAR ENEMY	THAT WHICH IS DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED OR DISTANT ENEMY	SIGN OF SUCCESS	REMEDY (BODYGUARD OR GUARDIAN)
LOVING KINDNESS	Heartfelt yearning and vision for oneself and others to experience happiness and the causes of happiness	Seeing the loveable qualities of another person and oneself	Self-centered attachment	Ill-will (Intention to harm and taking joy in another's misfortune)	Less ill –will as well as an increase in friendliness and warm heartedness	Equanimity
COMPASSION	Heartfelt yearning that all be free of suffering and it's causes Asking what can I do?	Recognizing that others wish to be free of suffering; the helplessness of their suffering and you're poised to do something or that something can be done	Despair and depression	Contempt and cruelty – taking pleasure in someone else's suffering	Our capacity for cruelty and delight in other people's misfortunes subsides	Empathetic Joy
EMPATHETIC JOY	Delight in other people's virtues, successes and joys	Attending to the virtues, successes, and joys of others and oneself	Frivolous joy [Attachment to hedonic pleasure]	Envy and cynicism	Reduction of envy and cynicism	Loving Kindness
EQUANIMITY	Even-heartedness, even-mindedness and impartiality Attending without attachment or aversion	Taking responsibility for our own conduct and actions	Cold or aloof indifference	Craving or attachment to those who are like us/an aversion to those who are different	Less craving, attachment and hostility	Compassion

SUFFERING AND ITS CAUSES

As said in Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*

By extinguishing actions and mental afflictions, there is liberation.

Actions and mental afflictions arise from misconceptions.

And misconceptions arise from elaborations.

Elaborations will cease through cultivating emptiness. [18.5]

-----> LATENCY (STAIN) OF IGNORANCE + OBJECT



-----> 1. SEED OF IGNORANCE + MISTAKEN DUALISTIC APPEARANCE (object appearing as inherently existent)



-----> 2. IGNORANCE + FEELING (pleasant / unpleasant / neutral)



3. MISCONCEPTION (inherently attractive / inherently unattractive / inherently neutral)



4. ATTACHMENT / AVERSION / CONFUSION



5. ACTION (KARMA)



6. SUFFERING (DUHKHA)

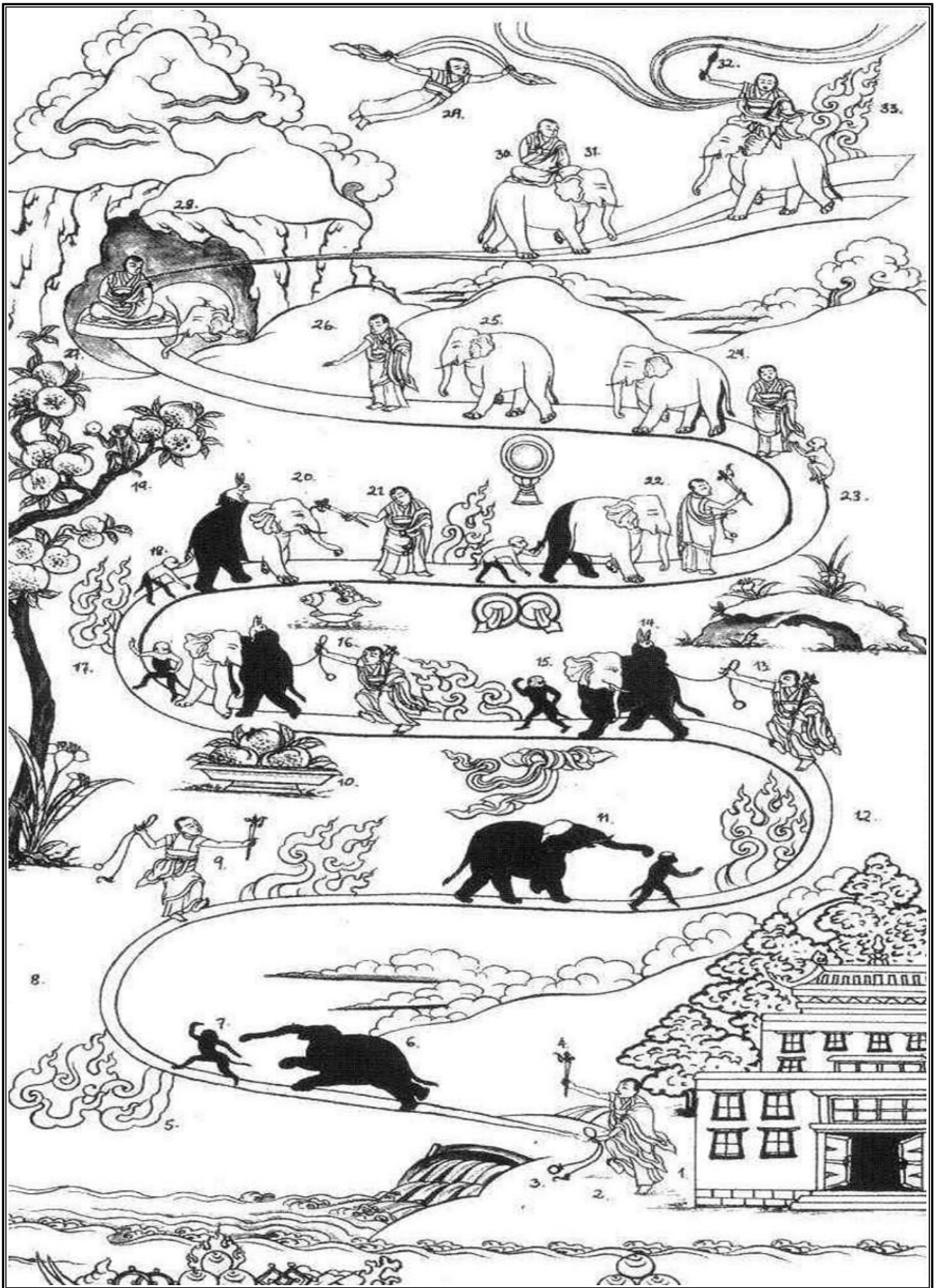
Ignorance – conception of inherent existence; Confusion – grasping as inherently existent

TWO OBSCURATIONS

1. Afflictive obscurations – conception of inherent existence along with its seeds

2. Cognitive obscurations – latencies of the conception of inherent existence and all factors of mistaken dualistic appearance that arise due to the force of those

SHAMATHA



Shamatha is attained by progressing through the nine stages, relying on the eight antidotes to abandon the five faults. This is accomplished through the six powers and the four mental engagements.

Fault	Antidote
1. laziness	1. faith 2. aspiration 3. effort 4. pliancy
2. forgetfulness	5. mindfulness
3. laxity and excitement	6. introspection
4. non-application	7. application
5. over-application	8. equanimity

1. The first stage is attained through the *power of hearing*.
- 2. Stage 1 - Setting the mind**
3. Mindfulness
4. Introspection
5. From here until the seventh stage the flame progressively decreases in size until it becomes absent. This difference denotes the measure of the strength of effort required regarding mindfulness and introspection.
6. The elephant is the mind and the black colour symbolises laxity.
7. The monkey is the proliferation of thoughts and the black colour symbolises excitement.
8. The second stage is attained through the *power of thinking*.
- 9. Stage 2 - Continuous setting**
10. Excitement has the five sense pleasures as its objects.
11. From here, the black colour progressively becomes white. This symbolises the factor of clarity and the factor of stability progressively increasing.
12. The third and fourth stages are attained through the *power of mindfulness*.
- 13. Stage 3 - Resetting**
14. The rabbit is subtle laxity. From here, one can individually identify coarse and subtle laxity.
15. Looking back means that having recognized that the mind has wandered, it is again directed back to the object.
- 16. Stage 4 - Close setting**
17. The fifth and sixth stages are attained through the *power of introspection*.
18. The potential for excitement to arise prior to meditation has weakened.
19. Since virtuous thoughts are an interruption at the time of shamatha meditation, it is necessary to stop them. At other times it is not necessary.
20. Due to introspection the mind does not fall into scattering and through being uplifted, it is drawn into concentration.
- 21. Stage 5 - Disciplining**
- 22. Stage 6 - Pacifying**
23. The seventh and eighth stages are attained through the *power of effort*.
- 24. Stage 7 - Thorough pacifying**
- At this stage it is difficult for subtle laxity or excitement to arise and even if they do arise a little, they are immediately eliminated with the slightest effort.
25. The black colour of the elephant is gone and there is no monkey. This means that in dependence on initially applying a little mindfulness and introspection, the mind can engage continuously in concentration without any potential of being interrupted by laxity, excitement or thoughts.
- 26. Stage 8 - Making one-pointed**
27. The ninth stage is attained through the *power of familiarity*.
- 28. Stage 9 - Setting in equipoise**
29. Physical pliancy
30. Mental pliancy
31. Attainment of **shamatha**
32. The root of samsara is cut by the union of shamatha and vipashyana observing emptiness.
33. Equipped with mindfulness and introspection, seek the correct view of emptiness.

THE NINE STAGES LEADING TO SHAMATHA

SOURCE: B. ALAN WALLACE

Stage	What is achieved	Power by which that is achieved	What problems persist	Attentional imbalances	Type of mental engagement	Quality of experience	Involuntary thoughts
1. directed attention	One is able to direct the attention to the chosen object	Learning the instructions	There is no attentional continuity on the object	Coarse excitation	Focused	Movement	The flow of involuntary thoughts is like a cascading waterfall
2. continuous attention	Attentional continuity on the chosen object up to a minute	Thinking about the practice	Most of the time the attention is not on the object				
3. resurgent attention	Swift recovery of distracted attention, mostly on the object	Mindfulness	One still forgets the object entirely for brief periods	Coarse laxity and medium excitation	Interrupted	Achievement	Involuntary thoughts are like a river quickly flowing through a gorge
4. close attention	One no longer completely forgets the chosen object		Some degree of complacency concerning samadhi				
5. tamed attention	One takes satisfaction in samadhi	Introspection	Some resistance to samadhi	Medium laxity and medium excitation	Familiarity	Involuntary thoughts are like a river slowly flowing through a valley	The conceptually discursive mind is calm like an ocean unmoved by waves
6. pacified attention	No resistance to training the attention		Desire, depression, lethargy and drowsiness	Medium laxity and subtle excitation			
7. fully pacified attention	Pacification of attachment, melancholy and lethargy	Enthusiasm	Subtle imbalances of the attention, swiftly rectified	Subtle laxity and subtle excitation	Uninterrupted	Stillness	The conceptually discursive mind is still like Mount Meru, King of Mountains
8. single-pointed attention	Samadhi is long and sustained without any excitation or laxity		It still takes effort to ward off excitation and laxity	Latent impulses for subtle laxity and subtle excitation			
9. attentional balance	Flawless samadhi is long and sustained effortlessly	Familiarity	Attentional imbalances may recur in the future	The causes for those imbalances are still latent	Effortless	Perfection	

Coarse excitation: The attention completely disengages from the meditative object

Medium excitation: Involuntary thoughts occupy the centre of attention, while the meditative object is displaced to the periphery

Subtle excitation: The meditative object remains at the centre of attention, but involuntary thoughts emerge at the periphery of attention

Coarse laxity: The attention mostly disengages from the object due to insufficient vividness

Medium laxity: The object appears, but with not much vividness

Subtle laxity: The object appears vividly, but the attention is slightly slack

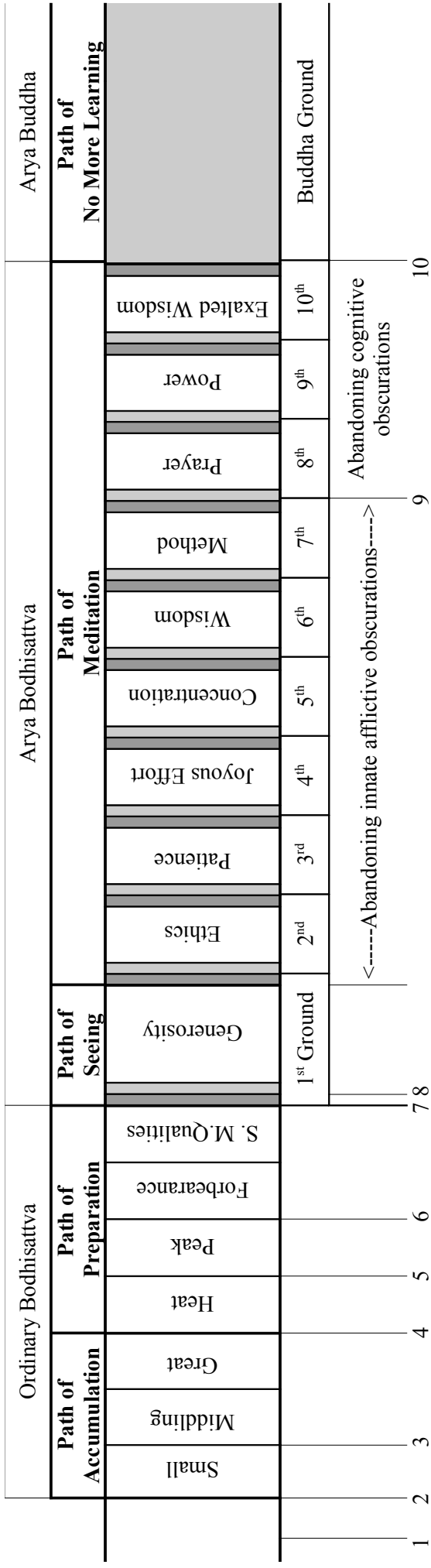
COARSE AND SUBTLE SELFLESSNESS

Source: *Presentation of Tenets* - Jetsun Chögyi Gyeltsen

SCHOOL	SELFLESSNESS OF PERSON		SELFLESSNESS OF PHENOMENA
	COARSE	SUBTLE	
MADHYAMIKA (Middle Way)	Prasangika (Consequence)	Person being empty of inherent existence	All phenomena being empty of inherent existence
	Svatantrika (Autonomy)	Person being empty of being permanent, unitary and independent	All phenomena being empty of true existence
CITTAMATRA (Mind Only)	Person being empty of being permanent, unitary and independent	Person being empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent	Form and the valid cognition apprehending that form being empty of being different substances
SAUTRANTIKA (Sutra)	Person being empty of being permanent, unitary and independent	Person being empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent	None (They accept a self of phenomena)
VAIBHASIKA (Great Exposition)	Person being empty of being permanent, unitary and independent	Person being empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent	None (They accept a self of phenomena)

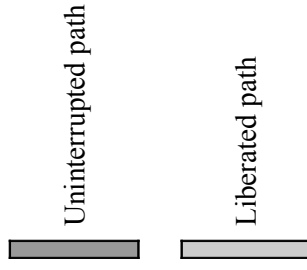
MAHAYANA PATH

According to Madhyamika Prasangika (Middle Way Consequence school)



Milestones

- 1 – Inferential realization of emptiness (sharp faculty trainees)
- 2 – Uncontrived renunciation and bodhicitta
- 3 – Will never fall to a lower vehicle
- 4 – Union of calm abiding and special insight observing emptiness
- 5 – Roots of virtue cannot be severed
- 6 – No more rebirths in lower realms
- 7 – Initial direct realization of emptiness (Arya)
- 8 – Abandoned intellectually acquired afflictive obscurations
- 9 – Nirvana (Arhat)
- 10 – Enlightenment (Buddha)



Afflictive Obscurations	Conception of inherent existence along with its seeds
Cognitive Obscurations	Latencies of the conception of inherent existence and all factors of mistaken dualistic appearance that arise due to the force of those

PRAYERS FOR MEDITATION

The Four Thoughts

This precious life of leisure and opportunity is rare and easily lost.
The world and those within it are impermanent. I too will die soon.
The results of my virtuous and non-virtuous actions will without fail ripen within me.
And since there is no genuine happiness to be found within the abodes of samsara
I must correctly practice the true Dharma.

Going for Refuge and Generating Bodhicitta

I go for refuge until I am enlightened
To the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.
By my practice of giving and other perfections
May I become a buddha to benefit all sentient beings. (3x)

The Four Immeasurables

May all beings have happiness and the causes of happiness.
May they be free from suffering and the causes of suffering.
May they never be separated from the happiness that is without suffering.
May they abide in equanimity, free from attachment and aversion to those near and far.

Seven-Limb Prayer

Reverently, I prostrate with my body, speech, and mind;
I present clouds of every type of offering, actual and imagined;
I declare all my negative actions accumulated since beginningless time
And rejoice in the merit of all holy and ordinary beings.
Please remain until the end of cyclic existence
And turn the wheel of Dharma for sentient beings.
I dedicate all the virtues of myself and others to the great enlightenment.

Request

Please bless me to cease all deluded minds immediately,
From disrespect for the gurus to the subtle dualistic conception.
Bless me to generate all unmistakable minds instantly,
From respect for the gurus to the realisation of emptiness.
Bless me to completely pacify all outer and inner obstacles.

Dedication Prayers

Due to the merits of these virtuous actions,
May I quickly attain the state of a guru-buddha
And lead all sentient beings, without exception
Into that enlightened state.

May the supreme jewel bodhicitta
That has not arisen, arise and grow;
And may that which has arisen not diminish
But increase more and more.

DEDICATION PRAYER

From Master Shantideva's *Bodhicharyavatara*

May all beings everywhere
Plagued by sufferings of body and mind,
Obtain an ocean of happiness and joy
By virtue of my merits.

May no living creature suffer,
Commit evil or ever fall ill.
May no one be afraid or belittled,
With a mind weighed down by depression.

May the blind see forms
And the deaf hear sounds.
May those whose bodies are worn with toil
Be restored on finding repose.

May the naked find clothing
The hungry find food;
May the thirsty find water
And delicious drinks.

May the poor find wealth,
Those weak with sorrow find joy;
May the forlorn find hope,
Constant happiness and prosperity.

May there be timely rains
And bountiful harvests;
May all medicines be effective
And wholesome prayers bear fruit.

May all who are sick and ill
Quickly be freed from their ailments.
Whatever diseases there are in the world,
May they never occur again.

May the frightened cease to be afraid
And those bound be freed;
May the powerless find power
And may people think of benefiting each other.

For as long as space remains,
For as long as sentient beings remain,
Until then may I too remain
To dispel the miseries of the world.