



# Liberating Animals from the Danger of Death



How fortunate we are. How kind these people are! They realized we do not want suffering and only want happiness, so they stopped giving harm. Wow!

How can anyone imagine being boiled alive is fun?

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Well, if they have human brains, they should realize harming others is no good at all, because it becomes the cause of suffering for themselves.

Just wait till you're born as pigs and see pigs' suffering!

Whatever I am, I also want to thank them for not eating me!

I completely agree! We have a very long body, so we have to suffer very much.

I'm rejoicing!

It's not enough to thank from my mouth - I offer this wish-granting jewel.

That's very true! Even I realized that.

I'm thanking in silence.



FPMT Inc.  
1632 SE 11th Avenue  
Portland, OR 97214 USA  
[www.fpmt.org](http://www.fpmt.org)

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*The Mahasiddha Tilopa*

# Preface



One of the many special qualities of Lama Zopa Rinpoche is his concern for and kindness towards animals. From rescuing ants outside a hotel in Hong Kong, to building a stupa in the backyard for his dog to circumambulate, to establishing an animal sanctuary in Nepal, Lama Zopa Rinpoche's activity to benefit animals is limitless. Rinpoche composed the practice of liberating animals in the 1990s and it has since become one of the most popular practices performed in FPMT centers and by students around the world.

This book brings together for the first time all of Lama Zopa Rinpoche's advice on how to be of the most benefit to animals. The first part of the book contains the most updated version of *Liberating Animals From the Danger of Death*, a practice composed by Lama Zopa Rinpoche for benefiting animals that are threatened with death and creating extensive merit to prolong one's own or another's life.

The second part of the book, *Teachings and Advice on Ways of Benefiting Animals*, contains commentary from Lama Zopa Rinpoche on how to perform the practice of liberating animals and how to set up the animal liberation altar. Following that is advice from Rinpoche on how to benefit the animals that we live with every day, as well as how to benefit insects. Also included is Rinpoche's advice on hunting and fishing. This section concludes with precious advice on how to benefit animals who are sick or dying.

The third part of the book, *Practices, Mantras, and Texts to Benefit Animals*, brings together all of the practices that are most beneficial for all animals to hear, whether they are sick or healthy (an audio CD entitled *Recitations for Animals* contains many of these practices as chanted by Lama Zopa Rinpoche. This CD is available from the Foundation Store. [www.fpmt.org/shop](http://www.fpmt.org/shop)).

The book concludes with inspiring stories from FPMT students about their experiences doing these practices and actualizing Rinpoche's advice on benefiting animals.

By following the precious advice included in this book, may countless beings be liberated from the lower realms, always find precious human rebirths, generate bodhichitta in their mindstreams and quickly attain enlightenment for the benefit of all.

Gyalten Mindrol  
Portland, Oregon  
February 9, 2007

# Introduction

## *About the practice of liberating animals*



Liberating animals is a practical, powerful method to prolong life when an untimely death is threatening to end someone's life. The practice of White Tara, Namgyälma, or another enlightened being who helps to grant long life can also be done. The person would receive the initiation of a long-life deity from a qualified lama and then do the meditations and recitation of mantras associated with that deity. To help ensure a long life, the purification practice of making tsa-tsas is also commonly done.

Liberating animals is one of the important ways in which people who have cancer, AIDS, or other life-threatening diseases can heal themselves and have a long life. With any disease that shortens life, there is a need to create the cause for a long life, and prolonging the life of others is one way to prolong your own life. Generally, if we wish to be healthy and to live a long life in this and in future lives, we should take vows not to kill other sentient beings. Other practices to prolong life include taking the Eight Mahayana Precepts and reciting certain powerful mantras. The practice of liberating animals is primarily for prolonging life and the recitation of mantras is more for healing sickness or providing protection from the harmful beings that become conditions for certain diseases. Liberating animals is like eating a specific diet to build up your health and reciting mantras is like taking medicine to destroy germs.

It is best to liberate an animal that you are able to look after yourself. By feeding them every day, you perform the Dharma practice

of giving charity and create much good karma, the cause of happiness. You not only bring happiness to the animal, but also constantly create the cause of your own future happiness. Also, if the animal is carnivorous, you save it from killing other animals.

Animal liberation does not have to be done only for yourself. You can also dedicate the practice to members of your family or to other people. You can actually dedicate it to all living beings.

**Colophon:**

Excerpted from *Ultimate Healing*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Wisdom Publications, 2001.



# Liberating Animals



## Motivation

First reflect that all these creatures have been human beings, just like you. But because they did not practice Dharma and subdue their minds, they have been reborn as animals. Their present suffering bodies are the result of their unsubdued minds. We would not want their body for even a second. We get upset when we see some small sign of aging in our body, such as one more wrinkle on our face. So how could we stand to have the body of one of these animals? There is no way we could stand it.

It is vital that we feel some connection with the animals. We should not look at them and think that their bodies have nothing to do with us. We should not think that the bodies of these animals are permanent or truly existent and have no relationship with their mind. And, most important, we should not think that our own minds could not create such bodies.

Reflect on the fact that every one of these animals has been your own mother. When they were human beings, they were extremely kind in giving you your body and in saving you from danger hundreds of times each day. Later, they bore many hardships to educate you in the ways of the world; they taught you how to speak, how to walk, and how to behave. They also created much negative karma to ensure your happiness.

Not only have they been kind to you numberless times as a human mother, but they have also been kind to you numberless times

as an animal mother. As a mother dog they gave you milk and food. As a mother bird they fed you with many worms every day. Each time they have been your mother they have taken care of you selflessly, sacrificing their comfort – and even their lives – numberless times to protect you and bring you happiness. As animals, they have guarded and protected you numberless times from the attacks of other animals. They have been unbelievably kind like this many times.

Not only has each of these animals been your mother, they have been your father, brother, and sister numberless times. We are all the same; we are all one family – it's just that we have different bodies at the moment. We should feel as close to these animals as we do to our present family. We should hold them in our hearts.

Think, "I must free all the hell beings from all their suffering and its causes and lead them to enlightenment. I must free all the hungry ghosts from all their suffering and its causes and lead them to enlightenment. I must free all the animal beings from all their suffering and its causes and lead them to enlightenment."

Reflect a little more on the specific sufferings of animals. They are ignorant, cannot communicate, live in fear of being attacked by other animals, and are tortured and killed by human beings.

Then think, "I must free all the human beings from all their suffering and its causes and lead them to enlightenment." In addition to experiencing suffering as a result of their past negative karma, human beings create further causes of suffering, such as rebirth in the lower realms, by still being under the control of delusions.

Next think, "I must free all the deva beings, the asuras and suras, from all their suffering and its causes and lead them to enlightenment." Because they are under the control of karma and delusions, the devas are also not free from suffering. "To free all sentient beings from their obscurations and lead them to enlightenment, I myself must achieve enlightenment. There is no other way. To do that I must practice the six perfections; therefore, I am going to liberate these animals and work for sentient beings by giving Dharma and food to them." Generate bodhichitta in this way.

## *Dedicating the merits of the motivation*

I dedicate the liberation of these animals to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Buddha of Compassion in human form, sole refuge and source of happiness of all living beings. May His Holiness have a long life and may all his holy wishes be fulfilled.

I dedicate this practice to the long and healthy lives of all other holy beings, those who work for the happiness of living beings. May all their holy wishes be accomplished immediately.

May all the members of the Sangha have long and healthy lives. May all their wishes to practice Dharma be accomplished immediately. May they be able to listen, reflect, and meditate; may they be able to live in pure morality; and may they complete the scriptural understanding and actualization of the teachings in this life.

May the benefactors who support the Dharma and take care of the Sangha have long lives, and may all their wishes succeed in accordance with the holy Dharma.

This practice of liberating animals is also dedicated to the long lives of all the people who are creating good karma and making their lives meaningful by having refuge in their minds and living in morality.

May this practice also be the medicine that frees everyone from the sufferings of disease, especially AIDS and cancer, and from the suffering of death.

This practice is also dedicated to all evil beings to meet and practice Dharma and, after they find faith in refuge and karma, to have long lives. (If they don't practice Dharma, it will be harmful for them to have long lives, as they will continue to live evil lives.)

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Dedicate also for the long lives of specific people who are sick, such as family members and friends.

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## *Preliminary Prayers*

### *Taking Refuge and Generating Bodhichitta*

SANG GYÄ CHHÖ DANG TSHOG KYI CHHOG NAM LA

**I go for refuge until I am enlightened**

JANG CHHUB BAR DU DAG NI KYAB SU CHHI

**To the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Supreme Assembly.**

DAG GI JIN SOG GYI PÄ SÖ NAM KYI

**By this practice of giving and other perfections**

DRO LA PHÄN CHHIR SANG GYÄ DRUB PAR SHOG (3x)

**May I become a buddha to benefit all sentient beings. (3x)**

### *Generating the Four Immeasurable Thoughts*

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were to abide in equanimity, free from attachment and hatred, not holding some close and others distant.

May they abide in equanimity.

I myself will cause them to abide in equanimity.

Please, Guru-Deity, bless me to be able to do this.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings had happiness and the cause of happiness.

May they have happiness and its cause.

I myself will bring them happiness and its cause.

Please, Guru-Deity, bless me to be able to do this.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were free from suffering and the cause of suffering.

May they be free from suffering and its cause.

I myself will free them from suffering and its cause.

Please, Guru-Deity, bless me to be able to do this.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were never separated from the happiness of higher rebirth and liberation.

May they never be separated from this happiness.  
I myself will cause them never to be separated from this happiness.  
Please, Guru-Deity, bless me to be able to do this. (*Recite these verses once or three times.*)

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If you have time, you may also do the following prayers:

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### *Purifying the Place*

THAM CHÄ DU NI SA ZHI DAG

**Everywhere may the ground be pure,**

SEG MA LA SOG ME PA DANG

**Free of the roughness of pebbles and so forth.**

LAG THIL TAR NYAM BÄIDURYÄI

**May it be in the nature of lapis lazuli**

RANG ZHIN JAM POR NÄ GYUR CHIG

**And as smooth as the palm of one's hand.**

### *Offering Prayer*

LHA DANG MI YI CHHÖ PÄI DZÄ

**May human and divine offerings,**

NGÖ SU SHAM DANG YI KYI TRÜL

**Actually arranged and mentally created,**

KÜN ZANG CHHÖ TRIN LA NA ME

**Clouds of finest Samantabhadra offerings,**

NAM KHÄI KHAM KÜN KHYAB GYUR CHIG

**Fill the entire space.**

### *Offering Cloud Mantra*

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE VAJRA SARA PRAMARDANE /  
TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE SAMYAKSAM BUDDHAYA / TADYATHA  
OM VAJRE VAJRE / MAHA VAJRE / MAHA TEJA VAJRE /  
MAHA VIDYA VAJRE / MAHA BODHICHITTA VAJRE / MAHA  
BODHI MÄNDO PASAM KRAMANA VAJRE / SARVA KARMA  
AVARANA VISHO DHANA VAJRE SVAHA (3x)

## *Extensive Power of Truth*

By the power of truth of the Three Rare Sublime Ones,  
The blessings of all the buddhas and bodhisattvas,  
The great wealth of the completed two collections,  
And the sphere of phenomena being pure and inconceivable;  
May these piles of clouds of offerings arising through transformation by the bodhisattvas Arya Samantabhadra, Manjushri, and so forth – unimaginable and inexhaustible, equaling the sky – arise and in the eyes of the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions be received.

### *Invocation (with burning incense)*

MA LÜ SEM CHÄN KÜN GYI GÖN GYUR CHING

**Savior of all beings without exception;**

DÜ DE PUNG CHÄ MI ZÄ JOM DZÄ LHA

**Divine destroyer of the intractable legions of Mara;**

NGÖ NAM MA LÜ YANG DAG KHYEN GYUR PÄI

**Perfect knower of all things:**

CHOM DÄN KHOR CHÄ NÄ DIR SHEG SU SÖL

**Bhagavan and retinue, please come here.**

### *Seven-Limb Prayer*

GO SUM GÜ PÄI GO NÄ CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**Reverently, I prostrate with my body, speech, and mind;**

NGÖ SHAM YI TRÜL CHHÖ TRIN MA LÜ BÜL

**I present clouds of every type of offering, actual and imagined;**

THOG ME NÄ SAG DIG TUNG THAM CHÄ SHAG

**I declare all my negative actions accumulated since beginningless time**

KYE PHAG GE WA NAM LA JE YI RANG

**And rejoice in the merit of all holy and ordinary beings.**

KHOR WA MA TONG BAR DU LEG ZHUG NÄ

**Please, remain until the end of cyclic existence**

DRO LA CHHÖ KYI KHOR LO KOR WA DANG

**And turn the wheel of Dharma for living beings.**

DAG ZHÄN GE NAM JANG CHHUB CHHEN POR NGO

**I dedicate my own merits and those of all others to the great enlightenment.**

### *Brief Mandala Offering*

SA ZHI PÖ KYI JUG SHING ME TOG TRAM

**This ground, anointed with perfume, strewn with flowers,**

RI RAB LING ZHI NYI DÄ GYÄN PA DI

**Adorned with Mount Meru, four continents, the sun and the moon:**

SANG GYÄ ZHING DU MIG TE ÜL WA YI

**I imagine this as a buddha-field and offer it.**

DRO KÜN NAM DAG ZHING LA CHÖ PAR SHOG

**May all living beings enjoy this pure land!**

DAG GI CHHAG DANG MONG SUM KYE WÄI YÜL

**The objects of my attachment, aversion and ignorance –**

DRA NYEN BAR SUM LÜ DANG LONG CHÖ CHÄ

**Friends, enemies, strangers – and my body, wealth, and enjoyments;**

PHANG PA ME PAR BÜL GYI LEG ZHE NÄ

**Without any sense of loss I offer this collection.**

DUG SUM RANG SAR DRÖL WAR JIN GYI LOB

**Please accept it with pleasure and bless me with freedom from the three poisons.**



Due to the merits of having offered this mandala, may all the beings of the six realms, and especially these animals, be immediately reborn in a pure realm and attain enlightenment.

IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM NIRYATAYAMI

## ***The Foundation of All Good Qualities*** *(optional)*

The foundation of all good qualities is the kind and perfect,  
pure Guru;

Correct devotion to him is the root of the path.

By clearly seeing this and applying great effort,

Please bless me to rely upon him with great respect.

Understanding that the precious freedom of this rebirth is  
found only once,

Is greatly meaningful, and is difficult to find again,

Please bless me to generate the mind that unceasingly,

Day and night, takes its essence.

This life is as impermanent as a water bubble;

Remember how quickly it decays and death comes.

After death, just as a shadow follows the body,

The results of black and white karma follow.

Finding firm and definite conviction in this,

Please bless me always to be careful

To abandon even the slightest negativities

And accomplish all virtuous deeds.

Seeking samsaric pleasures is the door to all suffering:

They are uncertain and cannot be relied upon.

Recognizing these shortcomings,

Please bless me to generate the strong wish for the bliss  
of liberation.

Led by this pure thought,

Mindfulness, alertness, and great caution arise.

The root of the teachings is keeping the pratimoksha vows;

Please bless me to accomplish this essential practice.

Just as I have fallen into the sea of samsara,  
So have all mother migratory beings.  
Please bless me to see this, train in supreme bodhichitta,  
And bear the responsibility of freeing migratory beings.

Even if I develop only bodhichitta, but I don't practice the  
three types of morality,  
I will not achieve enlightenment.  
With my clear recognition of this,  
Please bless me to practice the bodhisattva vows with great  
energy.

Once I have pacified distractions to wrong objects  
And correctly analyzed the meaning of reality,  
Please bless me to generate quickly within my mindstream  
The unified path of calm abiding and special insight.

Having become a pure vessel by training in the general path,  
Please bless me to enter  
The holy gateway of the fortunate ones:  
The supreme vajra vehicle.

At that time, the basis of accomplishing the two attainments  
Is keeping pure vows and samaya.  
As I have become firmly convinced of this,  
Please bless me to protect these vows and pledges like my life.

Then, having realized the importance of the two stages,  
The essence of the Vajrayana,  
By practicing with great energy, never giving up the four sessions,  
Please bless me to realize the teachings of the holy Guru.

Like that, may the gurus who show the noble path  
And the spiritual friends who practice it have long lives.  
Please bless me to pacify completely  
All outer and inner hindrances.

In all my lives, never separated from perfect gurus,  
May I enjoy the magnificent Dharma.

By completing the qualities of the stages and paths,  
May I quickly attain the state of Vajradhara.

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Next, recite the names of the Thirty-five Confession Buddhas and the Seven Medicine Buddhas. In this case, it is not necessary to prostrate while doing this practice; the purpose is to plant imprints in the minds of the animals. If you like, you may visualize the Thirty-five Confession Buddhas over the animals. They send streams of purifying nectar to all of them.

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## *Reciting the Names of the Thirty-five Confession Buddhas*

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First, recite the mantras for multiplying the merit of making prostrations

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CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG  
PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ RINCHHEN GYÄLTSHÄN LA CHHAG  
TSHÄL LO (7x)



OM NAMO BHAGAVATE RATNA KETU RAJAYA /  
TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE SAMYAK SAMBUDDHAYA /  
TADYATHA / OM RATNE RATNE MAHA RATNE RATNA BIJA YE  
SVAHA (7x)

OM NAMO MANJUSHRIYE / NAMAH SUSHRIYE / NAMA  
UTTAMA SHRIYE SVAHA (3x)

NA MO JANG CHHUB SEM PÄI TUNG WA SHAG PA

**Homage to the Confession of the Bodhisattva's Downfalls!**

DAG [MING] DI ZHE GYI WA / DÜ TAG TU LA MA LA KYAB SU CHHI WO  
**I, (say your name) throughout all times, take refuge in the  
Guru;**

SANG GYÄ LA KYAB SU CHHI WO

**I take refuge in the Buddha;**

CHHÖ LA KYAB SU CHHI WO

**I take refuge in the Dharma;**

GE DÜN LA KYAB SU CHHI WO (3x)

**I take refuge in the Sangha. (3x)**

TÖN PA CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR  
DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ PÄL GYÄL WA SHA KYA THUB PA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To the founder, bhagavan, tathagata, arhat, perfectly completed  
buddha, glorious conqueror Shakyamuni Buddha, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA DOR JE NYING PÖ RAB TU JOM PA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Thoroughly Destroying with Vajra Essence,  
I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA RIN CHHEN Ö THRÖ LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Radiant Jewel, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA LU WANG GI GYÄL PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata King, Lord of the Nagas, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA PA WÖI DE LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Army of Heroes, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA PÄL GYE LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Delighted Hero, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA RIN CHHEN ME LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Jewel Fire, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA RIN CHHEN DA Ö LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Jewel Moonlight, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA TONG WA DÖN YÖ LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Meaningful to See, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA RIN CHHEN DA WA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Jewel Moon, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRI MA ME PA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Stainless One, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA PÄ JIN LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Bestowed with Courage, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA TSHANG PA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Pure One, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA TSHANG PÄ JIN LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Bestowed with Purity, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA CHHU LHA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Water God, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA CHHU LHÄI LHA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Deity of the Water God, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA PÄL ZANG LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Glorious Goodness, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA TSÄN DÄN PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Glorious Sandalwood, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA ZI JI THA YÄ LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Infinite Splendor, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA Ö PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Glorious Light, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA NYA NGÄN ME PÄI PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Sorrowless Glory, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA SE ME KYI BU LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Son of Non-craving, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA ME TOG PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Glorious Flower, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA TSHANG PÄI Ö ZER NAM PAR RÖL PÄ NGÖN PAR KHYEN  
PA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Pure Light Rays Clearly Knowing by Play,  
I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA PÄ MÄI Ö ZER NAM PAR RÖL PÄ NGÖN PAR KHYEN PA  
LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Lotus Light Rays Clearly Knowing by Play,  
I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA NOR PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Glorious Wealth, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRÄN PÄI PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Glorious Mindfulness, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA TSHÄN PÄL SHIN TU YONG DRAG LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Glorious Name Widely Renowned, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA WANG PÖI TOG GI GYÄL TSHÄN GYI GYÄL PO LA CHHAG  
TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata King Holding the Victory Banner of Foremost  
Power, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA SHIN TU NAM PAR NÖN PÄI PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Glorious One Totally Subduing, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA YÜL LÄ SHIN TU NAM PAR GYÄL WA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Utterly Victorious in Battle, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA NAM PAR NÖN PÄ SHEG PÄI PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Glorious Transcendence Through Subduing,  
I prostrate.**



DE ZHIN SHEG PA KÜN NÄ NANG WA KÖ PÄI PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Glorious Manifestations Illuminating All,  
 I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA RIN CHHEN PÄ MÄI NAM PAR NÖN PA LA CHAG  
 TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata All-Subduing Jewel Lotus, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ  
 RIN PO CHHE DANG PÄ MA LA RAB TU ZHUG PA RI WANG GI GYÄL PO  
 LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO *(Recite each name 3x)*  
**To Tathagata, arhat, perfectly completed buddha, King of the  
 Lord of Mountains Firmly Seated on Jewel and Lotus, I prostrate.** *(Recite each name 3x)*

### *Prostrations to the Seven Medicine Buddhas*

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG  
 PÄI SANG GYÄ TSEN LEG PA YONG DRAG PÄL GYI GYÄL PO LA CHHAG  
 TSHÄL LO  
**To the bhagavan, tathagata, arhat, perfectly completed bud-  
 dha, Renowned Glorious King of Excellent Signs, I prostrate.**

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG  
 PÄI SANG GYÄ RIN PO CHHE DANG DA WA DANG PÄ MÄ RAB TU GYÄN  
 PA KHÄ PA ZI JI DRA YANG KYI GYÄL PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To the bhagavan, tathagata, arhat, perfectly completed bud-  
 dha, King of Melodious Sound, Brilliant Radiance of Skill,  
 Adorned with Jewels, Moon, and Lotus, I prostrate.**

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG  
 PÄI SANG GYÄ SER ZANG DRI ME RIN CHHEN NANG TUL ZHUG DRUB PA  
 LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To the bhagavan, tathagata, arhat, perfectly completed bud-  
 dha, Stainless Excellent Gold, Illuminating Jewel Who Accom-  
 plishes All Conduct, I prostrate.**

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG  
PÄI SANG GYÄ NYA NGÄN ME CHHOG PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To the bhagavan, tathagata, arhat, perfectly completed bud-  
dha, Glorious Supreme One Free from Sorrow, I prostrate.**

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG  
PÄI SANG GYÄ CHHÖ DRAG GYA TSHÖ YANG LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To the bhagavan, tathagata, arhat, perfectly completed bud-  
dha, Melodious Ocean of Proclaimed Dharma, I prostrate.**

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG  
PÄI SANG GYÄ CHHÖ GYA TSHO CHHOG GI LÖ NAM PAR RÖL PÄ NGÖN  
PAR KHYÄN PA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To the bhagavan, tathagata, arhat, perfectly completed bud-  
dha, Clearly Knowing by the Play of Supreme Wisdom of an  
Ocean of Dharma, I prostrate.**

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG  
PÄI SANG GYÄ MEN GYI LHA BÄI DUR YÄ Ö KYI GYÄL PO LA CHHAG  
TSHÄL LO

**To the bhagavan, tathagata, arhat, perfectly completed bud-  
dha, Medicine Guru, King of Lapis Lazuli Light, I prostrate.**

## *Confession Prayer*

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For English, see page 25.

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DE DAG LA SOG PA CHHOG CHÜI JIG TEN GYI KHAM THAM CHÄ NA  
DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ  
CHOM DÄN DÄ GANG JI NYE CHIG ZHUG TE TSHO ZHING ZHE PÄI SANG  
GYÄ CHOM DÄN DÄ DE DAG THAM CHÄ DAG LA GONG SU SÖL

DAG GI KYE WA DI DANG / KYE WA TOG MÄI THA MA MA CHHI PA  
NÄ KHOR WA NA KHOR WÄI KYE NÄ THAM CHÄ DU DIG PÄI LÄ GYI PA  
DANG GYI DU TSÄL WA DANG / GYI PA LA JE SU YI RANG PA AM /  
CHHÖ TEN GYI KOR RAM / GE DÜN GYI KOR RAM / CHHOG CHÜI GE

DÜN GYI KOR THROG PA DANG / THROG TU CHUG PA DANG / THROG  
 PA LA JE SU YI RANG PA AM / TSHAM MA CHHI PA NGÄI LÄ GYI PA  
 DANG / GYI DU TSÄL WA DANG / GYI PA LA JE SU YI RANG PA AM / MI  
 GE WA CHÜI LÄ KYI LAM YANG DAG PAR LANG WA LA ZHUG PA DANG  
 JUG TU TSÄL WA DANG / JUG PA LA JE SU YI RANG PA AM / LÄ KYI  
 DRIB PA GANG GI DRIB NÄ DAG SEM CHÄN NYÄL WAR CHHI PA AM /  
 DÜ DRÖI KYE NÄ SU CHHI PA AM / YI DVAG KYI YÜL DU CHHI PA AM  
 YÜL THA KHOB TU KYE PA AM / LA LOR KYE PA AM / LHA TSHE RING PO  
 NAM SU KYE PA AM WANG PO MA TSHANG WAR GYUR PA AM / TA WA  
 LOG PA DZIN PAR GYUR PA AM / SANG GYÄ JUNG WA LA NYE PAR MI  
 GYI PAR GYUR WÄI LÄ KYI DRIB PA GANG LAG PA DE DAG THAM CHÄ  
 SANG GYÄ CHOM DÄN DÄ YE SHE SU GYUR PA / CHÄN DU GYUR PA /  
 PANG DU GYUR PA / TSHÄ MAR GYUR PA / KHYEN PÄ ZIG PA DE DAG GI  
 CHÄN NGAR THÖL LO CHHAG SO / MI CHHAB BO / MI BE DO / LÄN  
 CHHÄ KYANG CHÖ CHING DOM PAR GYI LAG SO

SANG GYÄ CHOM DÄN DÄ DE DAG THAM CHÄ DAG LA GONG SU SÖL  
 DAG GI KYE WA DI DANG / KYE WA THOG MÄI THA MA MA CHHI PA  
 NÄ KHOR WA NA KHOR WÄI KYE NÄ ZHÄN DAG TU JIN PA THA NA DÜ  
 DRÖI KYE NÄ SU KYE PA LA ZÄ KHAM CHIG TSAM TSÄL WÄI GE WÄI TSA  
 WA GANG LAG PA DANG / DAG GI TSHÜL THRIM SUNG PÄI GE WÄI TSA  
 WA GANG LAG PA DANG / DAG GI TSHANG PAR CHÖ PÄI GE WÄI TSA  
 WA GANG LAG PA DANG / DAG GI SEM CHÄN YONG SU MIN PAR GYI  
 PÄI GE WÄI TSA WA GANG LAG PA DANG / DAG GI JANG CHHUB CH-  
 HOG TU SEM KYE PÄI GE WÄI TSA WA GANG LAG PA DANG / DAG GI  
 LA NA ME PÄI YE SHE KYI GE WÄI TSA WA GANG LAG PA DE DAG THAM  
 CHÄ CHIG TU DÜ SHING DUM TE DOM NÄ LA NA MA CHHI PA DANG /  
 GONG NA MA CHHI PA DANG / GONG MÄI YANG GONG MA / LA MÄI  
 YANG LA MAR YONG SU NGO WÄ LA NA ME PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG  
 PÄI JANG CHHUB TU YONG SU NGO WAR GYI O

JI TAR DÄ PÄI SANG GYÄ CHOM DÄN DÄ NAM KYI YONG SU NGÖ PA  
 DANG / JI TAR MA JÖN PÄI SANG GYÄ CHOM DÄN DÄ NAM KYI YONG  
 SU NGO WAR GYUR WA DANG / JI TAR DA TAR ZHUG PÄI SANG GYÄ

CHOM DÄN DÄ NAM KYI YONG SU NGO WAR DZÄ PA DE ZHIN DU DAG  
GI KYANG YONG SU NGO WAR GYI O

DIG PA THAM CHÄ NI SO SOR SHAG SO / SÖ NAM THAM CHÄ LA NI  
JE SU YI RANG NGO / SANG GYÄ THAM CHÄ LA NI KÜL ZHING SÖL WA  
DEB SO / DAG GI LA NA ME PÄI YE SHE KYI CHHOG DAM PA THOB PAR  
GYUR CHIG

MI CHHOG GYÄL WA GANG DAG DA TAR ZHUG PA DANG / GANG DAG  
DÄ PA DAG DANG DE ZHIN GANG MA JÖN / YÖN TÄN NGAG PA THA  
YÄ GYA TSHO DRA KÜN LA / THÄL MO JAR WAR GYI TE KYAB SU NYE  
WAR CHHI WO

**All those [you thirty-five buddhas] and others, as many tathagatas, arhats, perfectly completed buddhas as there are existing, sustaining, and residing in all the world systems of the ten directions; all you buddha-bhagavans, please pay attention to me.**

**In this life and in all the states of rebirth in which I have circled in samsara throughout beginningless lives, whatever negative actions I have created, made others create, or rejoiced in the creation of; whatever possessions of stupas, possessions of the Sangha, or possessions of the Sangha of the ten directions that I have appropriated, made others appropriate, or rejoiced in the appropriation of; whichever among the five actions of immediate (retribution) I have done, caused to be done, or rejoiced in the doing of; whichever paths of the ten non-virtuous actions I have engaged in, caused others to engage in, or rejoiced in the engaging in: whatever I have created, being obscured by these karmas causes me and sentient beings to be born in the hell realms, in the animal realm, and in the preta realm; in irreligious countries, as barbarians, or as long-life gods; with imperfect faculties, holding wrong views, or not being pleased with Buddha's descent. In the presence of the buddha-bhagavans, who are transcendental wisdom, who are eyes, who are witnesses, who are valid, and who see**

**with omniscient consciousness, I am admitting and confessing all these negativities. I will not conceal them nor hide them, and from now on in the future I will abstain and refrain from committing them again.**

**All buddha-bhagavans, please pay attention to me. In this life and in all other states of rebirth in which I have circled in samsara throughout beginningless lives, whatever roots of virtue I have created by generosity, even as little as giving just one mouthful of food to a being born in the animal realm; whatever roots of virtue I have created by guarding morality; whatever roots of virtue I have created by following pure conduct; whatever roots of virtue I have created by fully ripening sentient beings; whatever roots of virtue I have created by generating bodhichitta; and whatever roots of virtue I have created by my unsurpassed transcendental wisdom: all these assembled and gathered, combined together, I fully dedicate to the unsurpassed, the unexcelled, that higher than the high, that superior to the superior. Thus, I completely dedicate to the highest, perfectly complete enlightenment.**

**Just as the previous buddha-bhagavans have fully dedicated, just as the future buddha-bhagavans will fully dedicate, and just as the presently abiding buddha-bhagavans are fully dedicating, like that I too dedicate fully.**

**I confess all negativities individually. I rejoice in all the merits. I urge and implore all buddhas to grant my request: may I receive the highest, most sublime transcendental wisdom.**

**To the conquerors, the best of humans — those who are living in the present time, those who have lived in the past, and those who will likewise come — to all those who have qualities as vast as an infinite ocean, with hands folded, I approach for refuge.**

## Mantra Recitations

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As you recite the mantras below, visualize each deity above the animals. As you recite the mantras, nectar beams emitted from the heart of each enlightened being purify the animals. While reciting the mantras, one can also circumambulate the altar and the holy objects with the animals.

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### *Mantra to increase the power of circumambulations*

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG  
 PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ RINCHHEN GYÄLTSHÄN LA CHAG  
 TSHÄL LO (7x)

### Chenrezig

#### Long mantra

NAMO RATNA TRAYAYA / NAMA ARYA JÑANA SAGARA /  
 VAIROCHANA VYUHA RAJAYA / TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE  
 SAMYAK SAMBUDDHAYA / NAMA SARVA TATHAGATABHYA /  
 ARHATEBHYA / SAMYAK SAM BUDDHEBHYA/ NAMA ARYA  
 AVALOKITESHVARAYA / BODHI SATTVAYA / MAHA SATTVAYA  
 MAHA KARUNI KAYA / TADYATHA / OM DARA DARA / DIRI  
 DIRI / DURU DURU / ITTI VATE / CHALE CHALE / PRACHALE  
 PRACHALE / KUSUME KUSUME VARE / ILI MILI CHITI JVALA  
 APANAYE SVAHA

ན་མོ་ར་རྒྱ་ལྷ་ཡ། ན་མེ་ལྷུ་རྫོ་ན་ས་ག་ར། བོ་རོ་ཙ་ན་ལྷ་  
 ཉ་རྫོ་ལ། ཉ་ཐུ་ག་ལྷ་ཡ། ཨ་རྟ་ཉི་ས་ལྷ་ག་སི་བུ་རྫོ་ལ།  
 ན་མེ་ས་ཐ་ཉ་ཐུ་ག་ཉི་རྩུ་ཨ་རྟ་ཉི་རྩུ་ས་ལྷ་ག་སི་བུ་རྫོ་རྩུ་ན་མེ་  
 ལྷུ་ཨ་ཐ་ལོ་གི་ཉི་ལྷ་ར་ཡ། བོ་རྟོ་ས་ལྷ་ཡ། མ་རྩ་ས་ལྷ་ཡ།

མཇུ་གཟུ་ཅི་གྲུ་ཡ། ཏུ་ཐྱ། ཨོྫ་རྣ་རྣ་ར། ལྷི་རྣི་རྣི་  
 ལྷུ་རྣུ་རྣུ། ཨི་ལྷི་མྷ་ལྷི། ཅ་ལེ་ཅ་ལེ། བྲ་ཅ་ལེ་བྲ་ཅ་ལེ།  
 གུ་སུ་མི་གུ་སུ་མི་མྷ་རེ། ཨི་ལི་མི་ལི། ཅོ་ཏི་རྣུ་ལ་ཨ།  
 པ་ན་ལེ་སྐྱུ་རྣ།

Short mantra:

OM MANI PÄDME HUM

ཨོྫ་མ་ཅི་པ་རྣེ་ཨོྫ།



### Namgyälma Mantras

Long mantra:

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE / SARVA TRAILOKYA  
 PRATIVISHISHTAYA / BUDDHAYA TE NAMA TADYATHA /  
 OM BHRUM BHRUM BHRUM SHODHAYA SHODHAYA /  
 VISHODHAYA VISHODHAYA / ASAMA SAMANTA / AVABHASA  
 SPHARANA GATI / GAGANA SVABHAVA VISHUDDHE /  
 ABHISHINCHANTU MAM / SARVA TATHAGATA SUGATA / VARA  
 VACHANA AMRITA ABHISHEKAIRA / MAHAMUDRA / MANTRA  
 PADE / AHARA AHARA / MAMA AYUR SAMDHARANI /  
 SHODHAYA SHODHAYA / VISHODHAYA VISHODHAYA /  
 GAGANA SVABHAVA / VISHUDDHE USHNISHA VIJAYA /  
 PARISHUDDHE SAHASRA RASMI SANCHO DITE / SARVA  
 TATHAGATA AVALOKINI / SHAT PARAMITA PARIPURANI /  
 SARVA TATHAGATA MATE DASHA BHUMI PRATISHTHITE /  
 SARVA TATHAGATA HRIDAYA / ADHISHTHANA ADHISHTHITE /









### Medicine Buddha Mantra

TADYATHA / OM BHAISHAJYE  
BHAISHAJYE MAHA BHAISHAJYE  
[BHAISHAJYE] RAJA SAMUDGATE  
SVAHA



ॐ རྩམ་པ་རྩམ་པ་རྩམ་པ་  
མཁའ་རྩམ་པ་རྩམ་པ་རྩམ་པ་  
རྩམ་པ་རྩམ་པ་རྩམ་པ་



### Zung of the Exalted Completely Pure Stainless Light (I)

NAMA SAPTANAM / SAMYAKSAM BUDDHA KOTINÄN  
PARISHUDDHE MANASI / ABHYA CHITA PATISHTHA TUNÄN /  
NAMO BHAGAVATE / AMRITA AYU SHASYA / TATHAGATASYA /  
OM SARVA TATHAGATA SHUDDHI / AYUR VISHODHANI /  
SAMHARA SAMHARA / SARVA TATHAGATA VIRYA BALENA  
PRATI SAMHARA AYU SARA SARA / SARVA TATHAGATA  
SAMAYA / BODHI BODHI / BUDDHA BUDDHYA / BODHAYA /  
BODHAYA / MAMA SARVA PAPAM AVARANA VISHUDDHE /  
VIGATA MALAM / CHHARA SU BUDDHYA BUDDHE HURU  
HURU SVAHA

འུམ། རྩམ་པ་རྩམ་པ་རྩམ་པ་  
མཁའ་རྩམ་པ་རྩམ་པ་རྩམ་པ་  
མཁའ་རྩམ་པ་རྩམ་པ་རྩམ་པ་  
འུམ། རྩམ་པ་རྩམ་པ་རྩམ་པ་

ག་ཏ་བློ་རྩ་བ་ལེན་སྤྲི་ཏི་སི་ཏ་ར་ཨ་ཡུ་སྐྱ་ར་སྐྱ་ར།  
 སཀ་ཏ་སྐྱ་ག་ཏ་ས་མ་ཡ། བོ་རྩི་བོ་རྩི། བློ་རྩི། བློ་རྩི།  
 བོ་རྩི་ཡ། བོ་རྩི་ཡ། མ་མ་སཀ་སྐྱ་པོ་ལྷུ་ཤར་ར་ན་བོ་ཤྲོ།  
 བློ་ག་ཏ་མ་ལོ། ཚ་ར་སྐྱ་བློ་རྩི་ཏུ་ཏུ་ཏུ་ཏུ་སྐྱ་རྩ།

**Zung of the Exalted Completely Pure Stainless Light (2)**

NAMA NAWA NAWA TEENAN THATHAAGATA GANGA NAM  
 DIVA LUKAA NAN /KOTINI YUTA SHATA SAHA SRAA NAN / OM  
 VOVORI / TSARI NI\* TSARI / MORI GOLI TSALA WAARI SVAHA

*\*indicates a higher tone*

ཨྲ། །ན་མཆེན་བ་ན་བ་རྩི་རྩི། ཏ་སྐྱ་ག་ཏ་གོ་གྲུ་ཚི་རྩི་སྐྱ་ཡུ་  
 གྲུ་ཚི། ཀའི་ནི་ཡུ་ཏ་ཤ་ཏ་ས་ཏ་སྐྱ་རྩི། ཨོ་བོ་བོ་རི།  
 ཅ་རི་ཚི་ཅ་རི། མེ་རི་གོ་ལི་ཅ་ལ་བྲུ་རི་སྐྱ་རྩ།

**Stainless Pinnacle Mantra**

OM NAMA STRAIYA DHVIKANAM / SARVA TATHAGATA HRI  
 DAYA GARBHE JVALA JVALA / DHARMADHATU GARBHE /  
 SAMBHARA MAMA AYU SAMSHODHAYA MAMA SARVA  
 PAPAM / SARVA TATHAGATA SAMANTOSHNI SHA VIMALE  
 VISHUDDHE / HUM HUM HUM HUM / AM VAM SAM JA SVAHA

ཨྲ། ཨོ་ན་མ་རྩི་ཡ་རྩི་གྲུ་རྩི། སཀ་ཏ་སྐྱ་ག་ཏ་ཅི་ད་ཡ་



## *Dedication*

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Dedicate the merits in a similar way to the motivation generated earlier.

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I dedicate the liberation of these animals to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Buddha of Compassion in human form, sole refuge and source of happiness of all living beings. May His Holiness have a long life and may all his holy wishes be fulfilled.

I dedicate this practice to the long and healthy lives of all other holy beings, those who work for the happiness of living beings. May all their holy wishes be accomplished immediately.

May all the members of the Sangha have long and healthy lives. May all their wishes to practice Dharma be accomplished immediately. May they be able to listen, reflect, and meditate; may they be able to live in pure morality; and may they complete the scriptural understanding and actualization of the teachings in this life.

May the benefactors who support the Dharma and take care of the Sangha have long lives, and may all their wishes succeed in accordance with the holy Dharma.

This practice of liberating animals is also dedicated to the long lives of all the people who are creating good karma and making their lives meaningful by having refuge in their minds and living in morality.

May this practice also be the medicine that frees everyone from the sufferings of disease, especially AIDS and cancer, and from the suffering of death.

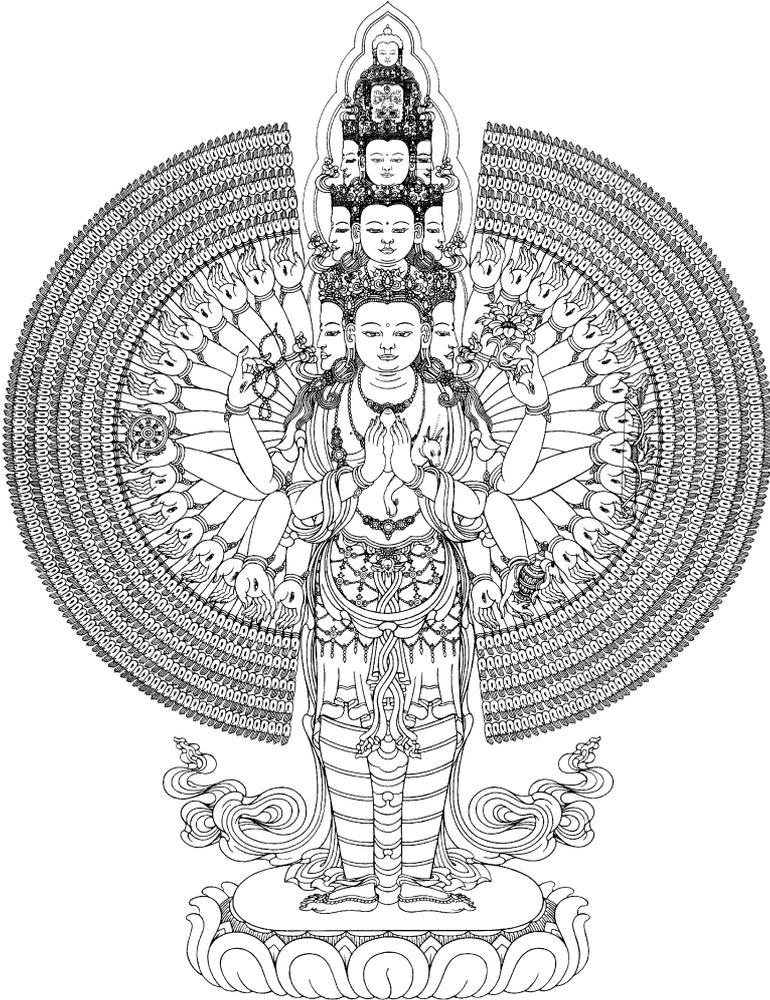
This practice is also dedicated to all evil beings to meet and practice Dharma and, after they find faith in refuge and karma, to have long lives.

---

Dedicate also for the long lives of specific people who are sick, such as family members and friends.

Once you have finished the practice and the dedication prayers, take the animals to a safe place and release them.

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## Notes Regarding This Practice

### *Altar Set-up*

Arrange an altar that can be easily circumambulated with the animals. See pp. 69 and 70 for a basic idea for the altar. You may adjust the design. Place vases with flowers on the bottom corners.

Fill the altar with as many holy objects as possible, in any combination you wish according to what you have of: stupas, statues, tsa-tsas, and stacks of paper images of deities or holy objects. On the top level, place representations of the Buddha's body, speech, and mind. Place sets of offering bowls around the altar, with additional flowers and candles, if you wish. In addition, tables can be placed around the altar with more food offerings.

### *Practice Tips*

Common animals that one can liberate are: worms, small fish, mice, or crickets from pet stores, sea creatures at restaurants such as lobsters, crabs, and other live fish, or anything else that is endangered according to your culture. Make sure that the animals are given whatever they need to sustain their lives during the practice, i.e., air, water, food, and so forth. Think that the offerings on the altar are being made on behalf of the animals to be liberated. If possible, one can circumambulate not only the altar with the animals, but also a prayer wheel, stupa, or even an entire gompa.

### **Colophon:**

The practice of liberating animals has been compiled according to the instructions of Lama Zopa Rinpoche. The introductory material has been reprinted by permission from *Ultimate Healing*, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Wisdom Publications, Cambridge, 2001. We would like to especially thank Venerable Sangye Khadro, the students of Amitabha Buddhist Centre in Singapore, Venerable Ailsa Cameron, and Nick Ribush for their invaluable help in assembling this practice in its entirety. Updated according to instructions from Sangha at Lama Zopa Rinpoche's house in January 2007 by Venerable Gyalten Mindrol, FPMT Education Department. Updated according to instructions from Lama Zopa Rinpoche in January 2010 by Kendall Magnussen and Heather Drollinger, FPMT Education Services.

*The Foundation of All Good Qualities* – Translator, Jampäl Lhundrup, edited by Venerable Ailsa Cameron, 1988. Lightly edited by Venerable Constance Miller and Nick Ribush, April 1999. Translation of first line changed per Lama Zopa Rinpoche's instructions, June 2005.

# *Special FPMT Dedication Prayers*

Due to these merits may all the obstacles to Kyabje Zopa Rinpoche's health and long life be instantly removed. May Rinpoche remain and teach us until samsara ends, and may all his and Lama Yeshe's holy wishes be instantly fulfilled.

May Lama Osel Rinpoche have a long and healthy life. May he be able to complete all his studies without hindrance and become a great holder and teacher of sutra and tantra in this life. May he be of greatest benefit to all sentient beings.

May all the obstacles to the quick success of the building of the Maitreya statue be instantly destroyed. May this great statue of Maitreya be accomplished exactly according to the wishes of Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche.

May all the centers and projects of the FPMT be free of obstacles to spread the holy Dharma of Buddha Shakyamuni, in particular the teachings of Lama Tsongkhapa.

May all sentient beings be free from suffering and achieve every happiness and the highest state of enlightenment.

May all the students and friends who work so hard (for FPMT) in the service of the Dharma and who sacrifice their lives for Buddha's teachings and to relieve the suffering of sentient beings have long

and healthy lives. May they realize the path to enlightenment in their own minds as quickly as possible.

May all those who rely on and have made specific requests to Kyabje Zopa Rinpoche be free of all obstacles to having long and healthy lives. May they be able to achieve all the realizations of the path in this lifetime.

May all the students' activities please the virtuous friend. In all their lives may they be guided by perfectly qualified Mahayana virtuous friends, and may all their wishes succeed immediately according to the Dharma.

## ***Multiplying Mantras***

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To increase by 100,000 times the merit created, recite these special mantras at the end of the session:

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CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG  
PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ NAM PAR NANG DZÄ Ö KYI GYÄL  
PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO (1x)

JANG CHHUB SEM PA SEM PA CHHEN PO KÜN TU ZANG PO  
LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO (1x)

TADYATHA PÄNCHA GRIYA AVA BODHANI SVAHA  
OM DHURU DHURU JAYA MUKHE SVAHA (7x)

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG  
PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ MÄN GYI LHA BAIDURYA Ö KYI  
GYÄL PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO (1x)

---

To actualize all our prayers as well as to multiply the benefits by 100,000:

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CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG  
PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ MÄN GYI LHA BAIDURYA Ö KYI  
GYÄL PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO (1x)

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG  
PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ NGO WA DANG MÖN LAM [THAM  
CHÄ RAB TU] DRUB PÄ GYÄL PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO (1x)

Due to the power of the blessings of the eminent buddhas and bodhisattvas, the power of infallible dependent arising, and the power of my pure special attitude, may all my pure prayers succeed immediately.

**Colophon:**

These prayers were compiled in 1997 for FPMT students and centers by Ven. Roger Kunsang according to various instructions from Ven. Ribur Rinpoche and others for the health and long life of Lama Zopa Rinpoche. They have been lightly edited by Ven. Constance Miller, FPMT Education Department, January 1999. Revised edition, June 1999. Multiplying mantras according to the instructions of Lama Zopa Rinpoche. Medicine Buddha mantra added as per Lama Zopa Rinpoche's advice after the Mani Retreat, Institut Vajra Yogini, May 2009.



# Teachings and Advice on Benefiting Animals



*Siddhartha and the injured swan*



# The Practice of Liberating Animals: A Commentary

*by Lama Zopa Rinpoche*



The prayers are in the liberating animals practice, but *how* to do the practice is the most important part. I will explain how we usually do the practice, so that if you want to save the lives of animals, you will know how to do it in the most effective way — not just for yourself or for somebody who is sick or has life obstacles, but for the practice to be really beneficial for the animals.

A very attractive feature of this practice is that it can become a social occasion where many people create merit together. Benefiting other sentient beings is something that makes everybody feel good. People bring their children and their friends. The children love carrying the animals. It's also a good practice and an excellent education for the children. It can be combined with a group outing to a restaurant, or a picnic at the beach or in the country. And by the way, it becomes a cause for the liberation of the humans as well, since people carry the animals around the altar, collect a lot of merit, purify much negative karma and create many, many causes not to be born in the lower realms. This practice also gives people who don't come to teachings at the center an opportunity to create merit in an

easy, social atmosphere. That's what happens in those Eastern countries where this is done regularly.

## *Choosing animals to liberate*

Take care to not buy animals which are enemies to each other and liberate in the same place. The animals can be big or small. Big ones have more suffering when killed. In Washington, we usually buy \$60, \$70, or \$100 of worms, and in Aptos<sup>1</sup> we buy \$30 worth. We tried to buy all the worms at Wal-Mart in Washington. The second time we went there the man said, "I am going to send the fishermen to buy from you." The fishermen got upset; probably they went there to buy worms. But after that they had discussions and the next time it seemed it was okay. The worms come in small boxes.

I guess sometimes there is the question: If you buy many worms regularly, won't the people who breed them produce more? In my view that is not a problem at all; it helps those people earn a living. Buying these worms is not only to give them long lives and protect them from the fisherman and becoming bait for fish. There is no problem if they raise more. They're not just growing from the earth as they probably think in the West. There are numberless sentient beings in the intermediate stage who have karma to be born as a worm. When the conditions are there, they are reborn; those numberless beings that have no karma to be born as any other being, only karma to be reborn as a worm. As that karma ripens, the conditions can happen. The conditions happen when the karma is strong, powerful.

So here we are not just rescuing them from the fishermen putting them on a hook and using them to attract the fish, not just for them to have a long life. Here we purify their negative karma and defilements and cause them to collect merit, to achieve immediate higher rebirth and liberation from samsara and enlightenment. Every single circumambulation becomes cause for their good rebirth in the next life, for them to meet the Dharma, to actualize the path and achieve liberation and, sooner or later, to achieve full enlightenment.

This is the incredible special benefit they receive. Therefore, even if people raise more worms, there is no problem. Sentient beings are born as worms not because people make them in a field, but because there is karma for them to be born as worms. So here, what we are doing is purifying their negative karma. We purify so many sentient beings of the karma to be born as worms, to reincarnate in the lower realms and reincarnate in samsara and experience suffering on and on without end, dying and being reborn, dying and being reborn, and experiencing all the sufferings in between. We are trying to help them end their suffering. Otherwise, these sentient beings would be born as worms numberless times, as well as hell beings, hungry ghosts, etc., experiencing those sufferings over and over again.

### *Engaging in the practice*

Start as usual with refuge and bodhichitta and then do the four immeasurables. After that, if there's time, you can generate the elaborate motivation. Usually, I try to explain the four ways in which the mother is kind and then go through the development of bodhichitta in order to liberate the animals more extensively, according to the deeds of the bodhisattva. When you do the elaborate motivation, dedicate your practice to the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and for all his holy wishes to be successful; for the lives of all other virtuous friends to be stable and for all their holy wishes to be successful; to the long lives of the Sangha and for them to complete their realizations and scriptural understanding; to the long lives and well-being of all benefactors who offer service to the teachings of the Buddha and for all their Dharma wishes to be successful; for all the people who have cancer, AIDS or other life obstacles to be free of these hindrances, to have long lives, and for the rest of their lives to be most meaningful; to the long lives of those people who do more good than harm, those for whom it is more beneficial to live than to die; and for evil beings to meet the Dharma and to change their minds and, by finding faith in refuge and karma, have long lives.

You can also dedicate the practice for specific people who are sick.

Then start the actual practice. Again, depending on how much time you have, this can be brief or extensive. If you have time, after refuge, bodhichitta, and the four immeasurables, do the other prayers that we do when we take precepts—purifying the place, blessing the offerings that are set up around the table, Invocation, the seven-limb prayer and the short mandala offering. Then recite a direct lam-rim meditation for the animals. In this way you are doing puja on behalf of the animals. After that, recite the mantras.

The different mantras to be recited include several malas of OM MANI PÄDME HUM, and you can also do some of the long Avalokiteshvara mantra, NAMO RATNA TRAYAYA.... Then you can do the Medicine Buddha mantra and also the five powerful purification deities' mantras: Mitrugpa, Kunrig, Zung of the Exalted Completely Pure Stainless Light, Stainless Pinnacle, and Wish-Granting Wheel. There are also many other mantras you can recite, but these are the main ones I suggest be recited. All this has unbelievable benefit.

Recite the mantras and blow upon the bodies of the animals, or blow onto water, which you then pour onto the animals. If there is a big pile of shellfish, pour the mantra-blessed water over them so that it touches them all. You can also put them in a big container and fill it with blessed water so that they are all touched by it. You can also recite the mantras onto sand or talcum powder and then sprinkle the sand or powder onto the animals. The main thing is to try to use something that does not give the animals harm.

After all the prayers are finished, everybody chants the mantras, then the water is passed around and everybody blesses it. One of the best ways to benefit the animals, to liberate them, is to bless water with powerful mantras, then purify the animals by sprinkling or pouring the water on them. These mantras have a lot of power, even if you don't have any realization of bodhichitta, emptiness and so forth. Buddha explained the power and benefit of these mantras. You recite the mantras with strong faith and think that you have purified all the negative karmas of these animals. This is a very practical way of helping to liberate the animals. How? By purifying their

negative karmas. What do you liberate them from? From the sufferings of the lower realms. If they purify their negative karmas, they won't have to reincarnate again and again in the lower realms.

The water can be blessed before the animals come, or everybody can gather together the day before animal liberation. Recite many times the mantras prescribed in the practice, and then everybody can blow on the water to bless it (many, many pails of water, depending on the number of animals). In this way, it saves the time the animals have to wait for the water blessing. Also, many more mantras are done; the water has more mantra this way. When the water is poured onto the animals, even the ones on the bottom are blessed.

You should be aware of the animals in the containers. For those that may be in a difficult situation where they cannot survive long, the best thing to do is, before going to the place where you are to liberate the animals, bless a vessel of water by visualizing the deity above the vessel with nectar-beams coming from the deity's heart as you recite many mantras and blow on the water, which gives the water great power to purify all their negative karma and obscurations. Then visualize the deity absorbing into the water. Then, those animals that are having a difficult time should be quickly released. The other animals that are not in such a poor condition can remain longer, while you recite more mantras and prayers before liberating them. This is important. Otherwise, the weak ones may die before they can be freed. Be sure to make the containers as comfortable as possible so that the animals do not die in them.

Depending on how many animals and people there are, you have one, two, three or more buckets of water. After everybody has chanted each mantra together, you all bless the water by blowing on it. Then sprinkle that blessed water on the birds or pour it over the sea animals that you have. Then again, everybody takes them around the altar as many times as possible. In this way, not only do the animals receive the benefit of as many circumambulations as are done, but the people who take them around also receive this benefit. Each circumambulation creates the causes of liberation

and enlightenment and many hundreds of thousands of good rebirths for both the animals and, by the way, the people who circumambulate. When you chant the mantras, it's good to do so loudly, so that the animals can hear them, especially those that don't pay attention, like frogs, fish and so forth.

Each person carrying the animals around the altar should think, depending on how many sentient beings are in the bag or the packet, "I'm giving enlightenment to these one hundred, one thousand, mother sentient beings. I'm giving them enlightenment. I'm also giving them liberation. I'm also giving them many hundreds of thousands of good rebirths." And this is what is actually happening.

As many holy objects as are on the altar, for example, one hundred statues or stupas, then you are giving *each* of the insects or other sentient beings that you are carrying one hundred enlightenments and so forth – as many as there are holy objects on the altar. The more holy objects, the more enlightenments, liberations from samsara and good rebirths you are giving them. Therefore, the more holy objects you can put there, the better.

That is how to do the practice. At the end, dedicate the merits to the same results that you mentioned in the motivation – the long lives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, all the other gurus, and the Sangha, for all their wishes to be fulfilled and success in their Dharma activities, as well as the long life of the benefactors who serve the Sangha, helping to spread the Dharma. Then we include also anyone who does good things for others to have a long life, and any particular people who have cancer or life-threatening diseases like AIDS. They need long life, so we dedicate for that.

### *The benefits of circumambulating holy objects*

Now, as we have the stupa [at Lama Zopa Rinpoche's house], we also have three or four animal liberation practices every month, on the Tibetan eighth, fifteenth, and thirtieth and on all wheel-turning days. We buy worms, insect, etc., and circumambulate them around the stupa as many times as possible. We chant mantras and

blow on water which we then sprinkle on them and then we liberate them – those from the water into water, those from the ground into the ground.

As we have many, many copies of the four dharmakaya relic mantras inside the stupa, just one circumambulation purifies the negative karma to be reincarnated in the eight hot hells – reviving hell, black line hell, crushing hell, howling hell, loud howling hell, hot hell, extremely hot hell, hell of unceasing torment (Avici hell). In each successive hell the suffering is heavier. With one circumambulation all the heavy, negative karma is completely purified and their lives are directed towards enlightenment.

If you have a thousand insects and worms in bags and you circumambulate them around the stupa three times, not only will you liberate them from the lower realms, but also they will create the cause of enlightenment. Those circumambulations become the cause of their enlightenment, for them to achieve liberation from samsara, to have a good rebirth in their next life. Each time you circumambulate them, you are giving all those thousands of insects and worms enlightenment, liberation and good rebirth. Also there is not just one stupa, but many, and each stupa has very many of the four dharmakaya relic mantras inside, so however many mantras and many stupas there are, with each circumambulation you are giving that many causes of enlightenment, liberation from samsara, happiness of future lives to however many insects you have. You are creating the cause for their unbelievably, unbelievable purification and for them to collect merit and by the way also for yourself, no question.

In the same way, when you bring people around the stupa you are liberating human beings. When you educate people about the benefits of the four dharmakaya relic mantras and of holy objects, you are causing that sentient being to be inspired to build a stupa or to make circumambulations, prostrations and offerings. You are inspiring people to purify and to collect unimaginable merits.

Going around one time directs one's life towards enlightenment, by the power of that mantra. Without talking about all the

benefits of the secret relic and the other mantras, just these benefits are unbelievable. It means one doesn't go down, one goes up. Not just human beings, even the insects and worms; anything that goes around, flies around or is carried around receives those benefits.

By having the Stainless Pinnacle mantra, anyone who does one prostration, one offering or one circumambulation purifies the five uninterrupted negative karmas — killing the father or mother, harming a buddha, killing an arhat (one who has completed the five paths, removed delusion and karma, and is free from the sufferings of samsara), causing disunity among the Sangha — which cause rebirth in the lowest hot hell where one has to experience the heaviest suffering in samsara, the heaviest suffering of the hot hells.<sup>2</sup> Also one will have a long life and will be born in a pure land.

Having offered one Stainless Beam mantra inside the stupa, there is no question about circumambulating, making offerings or prostrating. Even the sound of a bell hanging on top of the stupa or on a wire connected to the stupa, if it is heard by any human or animal in the forest, birds, deer, tigers, elephants, zebras, rabbits, and mice, their five uninterrupted negative karmas are purified.

## *How to circumambulate*

Before you circumambulate, first generate the motivation. Think that you are leading all sentient beings in the circumambulations. Visualize that beams emitted by the holy objects purify you and all sentient beings. Then think you all receive all good qualities.

When you do circumambulations, you can dedicate the first circumambulation to all sentient beings, but especially the hell beings. When you finish the circumambulation, think that you have purified all sentient beings and give all the merit to them. They all become enlightened, especially the hell beings. Dedicate the second round to all sentient beings, but especially the pretas. When you have finished the circumambulation, dedicate all the merits to all sentient beings, but especially to the pretas. They all become enlightened. Do the same for all the animals, humans, asuras, suras and intermediate state beings.

You can then circumambulate for your gurus, dedicating for them to have long lives and for all their wishes to be fulfilled. You can do another circumambulation and dedicate it for the teachings to exist a long time. In this way you can dedicate nine circumambulations, the first seven being for the beings in the six realms plus those in the intermediate state, the eighth being for the gurus and the ninth for the teachings. This is just one idea of how you can make circumambulation very effective, very beneficial.

When we circumambulate, our mouth should be reciting holy prayers or powerful mantras and our mind should be feeling devotion. As well as prostration of body, there is prostration of speech (praising Buddha) and prostration of mind (generating devotion). In a similar way, there are circumambulations of body, speech, and mind. While your body is walking around the holy objects, your speech is reciting praises or mantras and your mind is feeling devotion.

Generate the motivation for the circumambulations by thinking, “The purpose of my life is to free all sentient beings from all their sufferings and bring them to enlightenment; therefore, I must achieve enlightenment. It is for this reason, for the benefit of all sentient beings, that I am going to do these circumambulations. Each circumambulation is for every single sentient being.”

## *The power of the object*

If you carry a container with a hundred worms around a stupa or another holy object, each time you go around you are giving the cause of enlightenment to one hundred animals. You are giving the greatest gift to those one hundred animals. If there are one thousand worms in this small packet, each time you take them around you are giving the cause of enlightenment to one thousand mother sentient beings. You are giving the cause of enlightenment to one thousand of your mother sentient beings. You are also giving them the cause of liberation from samsara; you are ending their samsaric suffering, the continuity of which has no beginning. The most terrifying aspect

of samsaric suffering is that it has no beginning — you are giving the cause of liberation from this beginningless samsara to one thousand of your mother sentient beings. You are also giving them good rebirths; you are giving good rebirths for hundreds or thousands of lifetimes to one thousand of your mother sentient beings.

If there are one thousand tsa-tsas or pictures of Buddha on the altar, each time you take the animals around the altar you are giving one thousand causes of enlightenment to each one of those mother sentient beings. In the same way, if there are one thousand pictures or statues of Buddha or stupas, you are giving one thousand causes of liberation from samsara to each of those mother sentient beings. The same applies to good rebirths in future lives. It is good to purify the animals with blessed water, but it is also very good to bring them to circumambulate holy objects. You do not just liberate them from the lower realms, but bring them to enlightenment, by enabling them to create the cause of enlightenment. It's really fantastic.

I once stayed in Big Sur, that very famous place in America, which to some Westerners, and perhaps some Easterners as well, is like a pure land. Ants were coming into the kitchen to eat food. The idea came to me at that time to make worthwhile their coming into the house, so I told the people staying there to collect the ants and put them in a plastic bag. We then held three tsa-tsas in one hand and moved the plastic bag with the ants around the tsa-tsas, so that they performed circumambulations. After doing this a few times, we put them outside with some food. By doing this, you make the ants coming into your house worthwhile for them. They purify negative karma and create many causes of enlightenment, liberation and good rebirths in future lives. Many human beings on this earth, no matter how long they live, never have any opportunity to see a statue of Buddha or a stupa; they don't even have the karma to see a holy object of Buddha, let alone create the cause of enlightenment by circumambulating or doing prostrations to such an object. Even if they live for a hundred years, they have no karma to collect merit through the power of holy objects.

## *Worms and crickets*

We have here hundreds of worms and crickets. The worms come from a sewer, from a fragrant blissful sewer into which all the toilet water runs. These worms and crickets were also human beings, just like us, before, but because they didn't practice Dharma, their delusions and negative karmas caused their consciousness to migrate to their present suffering body. It looks as if there is no connection between us and them, between our body and life and their body and life. There seems to be as little connection as there is between us and the rocks and trees around us. However, we have also collected so many times the negative karma – through sexual misconduct, for example – to be born in dirty places. That these worms have been born in a sewer or septic tank is the result of attachment. Worms are also born in the feces of the gut as a result of attachment. This is specifically mentioned in the texts. It is also mentioned that attachment to sex causes rebirth in the womb.

We have also created similar karma as these crickets numberless times in our past lives. It is just that at the moment, our good karma has ripened and we have this human body, while they have the body of a cricket; we are humans and they are animals. But we cannot be sure about our next life. At any time we could be like them. After our breath stops, at any time we could be reborn as one of those tiny worms that live in a sewer. If we had to live in a sewer, in a septic tank, we couldn't stand it for even one minute. We might talk about our body being that of a tiny worm like this, but we don't talk about being in such a dirty place. It is similar with the crickets. We could be born like this at any time because we have created the same negative karmas numberless times and have not purified them.

## *A mother's kindness*

All these hundreds and hundreds of worms and crickets, all other sentient beings in the lower realms and all sentient beings elsewhere have been our own mother numberless times, just as our present life mother has been our mother numberless times. Our present mother gave us this precious human body, which allows us to practice Dharma,

Buddha's unmistakable path to happiness, to liberation and to enlightenment. This precious human body gives us all these opportunities. This is not the first time that our present life mother has been kind in giving us a precious human body with which to practice Dharma. She has been kind in this way numberless times during beginningless rebirths.

In the same way, all these worms and crickets, all other sentient beings in the lower realms and all sentient beings elsewhere have also been our mother numberless times. And besides having been our own mother, numberless times they have been kind in giving us a precious human body, which allows us to practice Dharma.

Think, "I could never finish repaying this first kindness of the mother in giving me numberless times a human body with which to practice Dharma. Even if I were to sacrifice my life over and over, equal in number to the atoms of this earth, for my present mother, for each of these worms and crickets and for each of the other sentient beings, I could never finish repaying their kindness.

"My present life's mother was also kind in saving my life from danger hundreds of times every day. If she had not looked after me when I was a baby or hired someone else to look after me, I wouldn't have lasted five minutes. As a baby, I knew nothing. I had a human body but I was no different from a worm. Within five minutes of being left alone my life would have been in danger. I would have fallen down or swallowed something harmful or been attacked by animals. So many things could have endangered my life. My present mother was kind in protecting my life from hundreds of dangers every day, and she has done the same thing numberless times during my beginningless rebirths. In the same way, these worms and crickets, all other sentient beings in the lower realms and all other sentient beings elsewhere have also been my mother and protected my life from hundreds of dangers every day.

"Even if I were to sacrifice my life over and over, equal in number to the atoms of this earth, for my present mother, for each of these worms and crickets, for each of the other sentient beings in the lower realms and for each of the other sentient beings, I could never finish repaying even their kindness in protecting me from dangers to my life.

“If all the medicines my present life’s mother gave me during beginningless rebirths when I was sick were piled up, they would fill the whole sky; there wouldn’t be any empty space left. And if all the clothing my present mother gave me in this and past lives to protect my body from heat and cold was collected together, there wouldn’t be any space left. Each of the worms and crickets here, each of the other beings in the three lower realms and each of the other sentient beings have also given me clothing to protect me from suffering. If all the clothing that each of these beings has given me during beginningless rebirths was collected together, there wouldn’t be any empty space left.

“My present life’s mother has also given me food. Not only in this life but during beginningless rebirths, she has been my mother and fed me with milk from her breast. If just the milk that my present life’s mother has fed me in past lives was collected together, it would fill the whole sky; there wouldn’t be any empty space left. Numberless times in my past lives she has given me food and drink. And each of these worms and crickets has done the same thing. Numberless times they have protected me from hunger and thirst by giving me food and drink. If all that food and drink were collected, there wouldn’t be any space left.

“I can never finish repaying this kindness. Even if I were to sacrifice my own life over and over, equal in number to the atoms of this earth, for my present mother, for each of these worms and crickets, for each of the other sentient beings in the lower realms and for each of the other sentient beings, I could never finish repaying even their kindness in giving me food and drink.

“My present life mother also gave me an education and taught me the ways of the world. She gave me the opportunity to learn to read and write, which is why I can now read Dharma books. This is not the first time she gave me an education for the sake of my own happiness; she has done this numberless times during beginningless past lives. And it is the same with all these worms and the crickets, the other beings of the lower realms and all other sentient beings. Every one of them has been kind to me in giving me an education

numberless times in past lives.

“Even if I were to sacrifice my life again and again, equal in number to the atoms of this earth, to repay this kindness, I could never finish repaying it.

“My present life mother has also borne many hardships to ensure my well-being and happiness. Starting with the nine months I was in her womb, my mother has borne so many hardships. She then had to go through great pain when I was born, and endured many hardships after that. Day and night, she had to bear so many hardships to take care of me. Because of my crying, she could not even have one good night’s sleep.

“For my happiness and well-being, she also created much negative karma through generating discriminating thoughts of anger and attachment, and as a result she will have to experience much suffering. Because of me, she was obliged to generate all these delusions, which caused her to engage in much negative karma, because of which she will again have to experience all those sufferings. She has borne many hardships for me numberless times in my past lives. In the same way, these worms and crickets, all other beings in the lower realms and all other sentient beings elsewhere have also borne many hardships for me, for my happiness, numberless times. They have all suffered greatly for my happiness. When they were my parents, they totally sacrificed their lives for me, cherishing me more than their own life. They worked hard for many years to earn the money they needed to take care of me, to give me food and everything else I needed. All these sentient beings suffered greatly for me, and I allowed them to suffer like this.

“Even if I were to sacrifice my life again and again, equal in number to the atoms of this earth, for each of these sentient beings, including my present life’s mother and each of these worms and crickets, I could never finish repaying their kindness in bearing hardships for my happiness and well-being. I could never finish repaying them for this kindness.

“At this time, I have received a perfect human body and have met the Buddhadharmā. I know enough Dharma to understand what is

right and to be practiced and what is wrong and to be abandoned. I have met the leader of the blind, the virtuous friend. Therefore, if I want to repay their kindness, I have every opportunity to do so. Because they want happiness and do not want suffering, they need to be liberated from all their suffering and its causes, karma and delusion. Therefore, the best way to repay their kindness is to liberate them from all their suffering and its causes. At this time, I have the opportunity to repay their kindness in this way.

“Sentient beings lack a leader of the blind, a virtuous friend, and are completely possessed by the mara of the delusions – ignorance, anger and attachment. They are tormented by the three types of sickness, or suffering, of samsara – the suffering of pain, the suffering of change and pervasive compounding suffering. It’s as if every movement they make is a step towards the lower realms. It’s as if every action of their body, speech and mind is non-virtuous. Because their mind is completely controlled by delusions, such as attachment and so forth, every action they do becomes a cause to be born in the lower realms. They are like a blind person whose every step is leading them towards a cliff.

“It is now my turn to repay their kindness. To do that I need to practice Dharma – to listen to, reflect and meditate on the path to enlightenment. How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were to have happiness, including enlightenment, and the causes of happiness. I must cause them to have happiness and its cause.” Think of your present life’s mother, of these worms and crickets, of all other beings in the lower realms and of all the rest of the sentient beings.

“How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were to be free from all suffering and its causes. I will free them from all their suffering and its causes.” Think of your present life’s mother, of all these worms and crickets, who have been your mother and been most kind, of all the other beings in the lower realms; and of all other sentient beings elsewhere.

“And I must do all this work of freeing them from all their suffering and bringing them all happiness, including enlightenment, by

myself alone. I must do it by myself *alone*.” Again, think of your present life’s mother, of all these worms and crickets, of all the other beings in the lower realms and of all other sentient beings elsewhere.

“At the moment, I cannot even guide myself, let alone others. Who can guide them? Who has all the qualities and power necessary to guide sentient beings perfectly? Only the Omniscient One, only Buddha. The only one who can work perfectly for sentient beings, liberating them from all their suffering and bringing them to enlightenment, is Buddha. Therefore, first I myself must achieve full enlightenment.”

Think, “For the same reason, to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings, I am also going to make the light offering.”

## *Means of prolonging life*

Liberating animals is one method for curing sickness, especially cancer. One should save the lives of a hundred animals (or as many as possible) every week or, if that is not possible, every month. If you have cancer, this is extremely important, because it is one way of prolonging your life. Causing others to have longer lives affects your own life; it prolongs your life.

Another way to cure cancer is through reciting the mantras of specific deities with which you have a karmic connection. This is like taking specific medicines to kill germs. Certain deities have manifested to protect sentient beings from the harms of nagas — beings who can become conditions for sicknesses, including cancer. Harm from nagas — *nyen* in Tibetan — is one condition in the development of cancer. In other words, besides the cause of cancer, karma, there are harmful beings that can become conditions for cancer. There is an association between cancer and harm from nagas. The Vajrapani-Hayagriva-Garuda deity, for example, specifically manifests to protect sentient beings from naga harm, as well as harmful spirits such as landlords [*shi-dag*] and so forth. The reason why meditating on these particular deities or reciting their mantras is able to heal cancer, even terminal cancer, is that the sickness is associated with harm from nagas. This is why these particular aspects are able to be effective.

Pujas and many other practices can be done to prolong life, but liberating animals and serving other sentient beings are especially effective. Helping sick people by giving them food, drink, clothing, shelter, or medicine is also a cause of long life. One way of prolonging life is by creating good karma, which is the cause of long life. Another way is by reciting the mantras of the particular deities that protect against naga harm and so forth.

I have personal experience of about six people who completely recovered from cancer through practicing meditation. Every one of them had terminal cancer and had been told by their doctors that they had only two or three months to live.

My very first experience was with a Canadian woman called Ann, a very successful fashion consultant. She made a thousand dollars an hour selling her ideas to people in the fashion business. When I was in Australia many years ago, I received a message from Karuna about Ann, and I advised her to recite Vajrapani mantras and to liberate animals. I didn't send any blessed pills or anything like that. I simply advised her to visualize Vajrapani above her crown and nectar beams being emitted by Vajrapani to purify her, and to liberate a hundred animals or the number of animals equal to her years of age. Basically, she did just these two practices and after some time completely recovered from the cancer.

Ann was in the hospital when she received my message, and the doctors advised her to stay there. However, she said, "I want to go. I have to do these things." After two or three months, when she returned to the hospital for a checkup, the doctors could not find any sign of the cancer. They were very surprised. This was the first time they had seen anyone cured of cancer by meditation. The doctors said that they wanted to write a book about her case, but she replied, "No, you don't need to write a book. I will write the book."

Many TV reporters wanted to interview her, but she didn't know how to explain how meditation could cure cancer. At that time she had not actually met the Dharma; she had just started to take an interest and hang around a Dharma center because of a friend. Anyway, that's all that she did, and so far, after many years, the cancer

has not come back. She was the first person in my experience to completely recover from cancer through meditation.

She came to Kopan to thank me for giving her the rest of her life. When she came to see me, I made a deal with her. I told her to go to Bodhgaya to take the Kalachakra initiation from His Holiness the Dalai Lama. I'm not sure whether that happened, but later, in Delhi, she did introduce His Holiness when His Holiness gave a teaching there.

Experience has shown that liberating animals is one of the important ways in which people who have cancer or other life-threatening diseases can heal themselves and have a long life. It has been proven by many people who have done this practice and recovered totally from terminal cancer. This practice is one of the causes of this; others include taking the Eight Mahayana Precepts and engaging in other activities such as recitation of certain mantras. The practice of liberating animals is principally for long life, and recitation of mantras is more for healing sickness or protection from those harmful beings who become a condition for certain diseases to be experienced. Through these practices, all these problems can be purified, as can the karma that causes them.

Animal liberation doesn't have to be done for only yourself. You can also dedicate the practice to others – family members or anyone else. You can dedicate it to everyone. In that way, however much money is spent, whether it's on one animal or many, there are a great many benefits.

Purifying negative karma by reciting mantras is like taking antibiotics to destroy bacteria. Liberating animals is like building up your health by following a certain diet. In other words, reciting mantras purifies the various harms and diseases and liberating animals prolongs your life.

Also, these days it is especially important to dedicate for people who are ill, as there are so many who are dying of cancer and AIDS – diseases for which there is no cure. Even surgery, chemotherapy and radiation are limited in their ability to help, and often the disease recurs again and again. Therefore, it is very important to dedicate your merit to the long life of others, especially since many of them

have not met the Dharma and have no knowledge of these methods. If, voluntarily, you dedicate for them, they will receive great benefit.

## *The six perfections*

The practice of liberating animals from the danger of death is included within the pledges (*samaya*) of the Tathagata Lord of the Family Vairochana, which contain the practices of three types of morality:

- (a) the morality of abstaining from vice
- (b) the morality of gathering virtue
- (c) the morality of abandoning giving harm to others

The morality of abstaining from vice refers to keeping vows, such as those of individual liberation, which include the five lay vows, and also includes living within the morality of abandoning the ten non-virtues.

The morality of gathering virtue is collecting merit by the virtuous practice of Dharma. If the practice of liberating animals is done perfectly, it will involve all six perfections:

1. The perfection of generosity (charity) includes:

- (a) the generosity of giving loving-kindness
- (b) the generosity of liberating from fear
- (c) the generosity of giving Dharma
- (d) the generosity of giving material (miscellaneous charity)

You are practicing the generosity of loving-kindness because not only are you *wishing* the animals happiness, but you are also *causing* them to have happiness by liberating them from the dangers of death, harm and a short life. The practice of liberating animals includes the generosity of liberating from fear because you save them from fear and danger. It becomes charity of Dharma because you recite powerful mantras and blow the mantras upon the animals to benefit them by puri-

fying their negative karmas and giving them a good rebirth in the deva, human or pure realms. If you give food to the animals when you liberate them – for example, if you put food in the water for the fish or on the ground for the forest animals – this is the practice of the fourth generosity, giving material (miscellaneous) objects.

2. Abandoning giving harm to other beings and not hurting them is the perfection of morality. (*See the three types of morality above.*)
3. Bearing the hardships of doing this practice, such as buying the animals and transporting them to the place where they will be set free, becomes the perfection of patience. The perfection of patience has three types:
  - (a) definitely thinking about Dharma
  - (b) voluntarily bearing the hardships and suffering
  - (c) the patience of not becoming angry with the humans or animals at the time of liberation. This also includes the fourth perfection:
4. The practice of the perfection of enthusiastic perseverance.
5. The practice of concentration is maintaining continuous awareness, concentrating on virtuous motivation, and keeping your mind constantly positive.
6. The practice of wisdom is seeing yourself and the action of liberating animals as nothing other than being merely imputed by the mind.

The third morality included in the pledge of Vairochana, that of working for sentient beings, is also covered by this practice. Those who have taken tantric vows can practice the three types of morality here. Those who have taken bodhisattva vows have eleven parts

in the morality of working for sentient beings, which can also be practiced here.

The third of the three practices of morality is working for sentient beings, so include that – liberating animals as a practice of the paramita of morality. And from the tantric vows, in the samayas of the Tathagata Ratnasambhava is the practice of the four types of charity, especially the charity of loving-kindness, as mentioned in the *Six-Session Yoga*. If you feed the animals, that is the practice of miscellaneous charity. By reciting the mantra for them, you are practicing Dharma charity. By blessing the water by blowing on it after you have recited the mantra and sprinkling it on their bodies and by circumambulating them you are practicing the charity of fearlessness, because all this purifies their negative karma, liberates them from the lower realms, and gives them good rebirths.

### *The importance of Dharma charity for animals*

This practice of the generosity of Dharma is extremely important because even if you buy the animals from the shops and places where they are to be killed and put them in a place where there is no danger to their lives, so what? They have no opportunity to listen to Dharma to change their minds and will again have to experience much negative karma. When they do eventually die, they will again be reborn as animals. Most will go back to the lower realms.

Of course, since you are prolonging the animals' lives and as long as no enemies immediately attack them in the place where you liberate them, your actions have some benefit. But the best benefit comes from reciting mantras and teachings of the Buddha.

According to my own experience, it seems that frogs are able to hear – when you recite mantras they look at you. There are also stories of pigeons being able to hear. So animals that can hear benefit from the sound of the mantras and those that cannot hear are purified by having mantras blown or blessed water poured onto them. Thus, according to the various animals' capacity, there are many different ways in which you can benefit them. So you can see

how deep is the benefit you can offer to others: total liberation from samsara and full enlightenment.

**Notes:**

1. Aptos and Washington refer to the locations of Lama Zopa Rinpoche's main residences in the United States.
2. Lama Zopa Rinpoche says if you have committed any of these five uninterrupted negative karmas, it means without interruption at the end of the life you will be born immediately in the lowest hell realm and experience suffering for an eon – the heaviest suffering for the longest time.

**Colophon:**

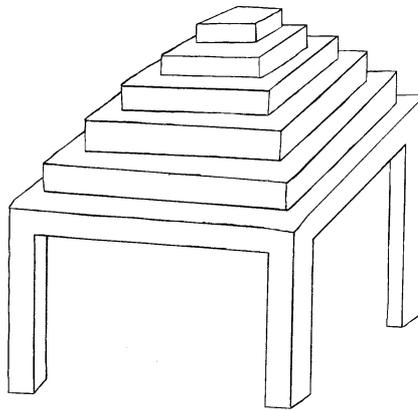
Teachings by Lama Zopa Rinpoche given in New York and Boston in 1991, Taiwan in 1995, and from *Teachings from the Vajrasattva Retreat* (Vajrasattva Retreat at Land of Medicine Buddha, 1999). Compiled and edited by Ven. Ailsa Cameron, Ven. Sarah Thresher, Ven. Yeshe Gyatso, and Ven. Thubten Labdron. Compiled in this present form by Thubten Mindrol, FPMT Education Department, June 2005. Lightly edited by Kendall Magnussen and Heather Drollinger, FPMT Education Services, January 2010.





# The Altar

Quite a number of years ago, I described how to set up the altar for an animal liberation. The idea is to have five levels, one on top of another, with a large table as the bottom level. On the very top there should be a statue of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, a lam-rim or prajnaparamita text, and a stupa, as normally advised in lam-rim teachings for setting up an altar. Place as many tsa-tsas and statues as possible on the other levels. You can use pictures of buddhas if you don't have tsa-tsas or statues. On the bottom level, set up sets of eight offerings, with flowers in vases at the corners. You arrange the offerings to the Guru, Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha for the benefit of the animals. In addition, tables can be placed around the altar with more food offerings. It's like a puja for the animals! This is how you can arrange an altar at the beach or near the water where you are going to liberate the animals.



*A sketch of an animal liberation altar before holy objects and offerings have been placed on it.*



*The animal liberation altar, filled with offerings and holy objects.*

# How to Benefit Animals

## *Advice from Lama Zopa Rinpoche*

If you love your animal very much, then this is what you must do for them, for their good rebirth and quick liberation from samsara. It's not enough that you keep the animals and they give you comfort. You must do something of practical benefit for them. This is what you can do everyday.

### *Circumambulating holy objects*

Take them around holy objects, circumambulate. Everyday you can put many tsa-tsas and statues on a table in your house or in the garden and take the animal around, chanting mantras at the same time.

There's a story about an eighty-year-old man. After he entered into the Mahayana path, when the time ripened he became enlightened, did perfect works for sentient beings, and brought sentient being to enlightenment. So that means all that perfect work – enlightening all sentient beings – came from himself being enlightened, and that came from having entered into the Mahayana path. Before that, he was an arhat and actualized the path to liberation, which started from being a monk. He was able to be a monk because inconceivable eons ago, he was a fly following some cow dung around a stupa, so it became circumambulation, one circumambulation. So all these benefits – being an arhat, being enlightened, and enlightening all sentient beings – all these depended on the small merit of following the smell of cow dung which became circumambulation. So therefore, we should always keep in the mind how precious

even one circumambulation is, how precious it is to take the animals around, and there's no question about us human beings intentionally going around, how that has incredible benefit. So therefore, one circumambulation of a holy object — a statue or a stupa, one must do it. Since karma is expandable, we shouldn't be careless even with small merit. Each holy object is so powerful and can liberate so many sentient beings from suffering and bring them to enlightenment, and it causes one to actualize the path. Therefore, even if one can't build a big stupa, even to have a small stupa is unbelievably precious; it brings benefit to you and other sentient beings.

These holy objects help other sentient beings easily purify inconceivable negative karma and create the causes of happiness, merit and extensive happiness, which definitely brings them to enlightenment quickly. Because it makes them create extensive merit, allowing them quickly to realize the path, it also helps them to improve their life very soon; from a very difficult life with many problems to an easy life, having perfect enjoyments, external and inner prosperity at the same time, realizations of the path and a very happy, peaceful, inspiring death.

Even if you teach Dharma to sentient beings, not everyone comes to listen; some are not interested, some are children and some are old people and so cannot come. If you make holy objects, not only inside but especially outside in public places then everyone can see, believers and non-believers, everybody gets so much benefit as has Buddha explained in the sutras. Because of the power of the holy object it doesn't require deep devotion or faith to gain all these benefits.

If you find it hard to understand this, think how the atom has the power to destroy the world and yet can benefit so many people. For example, by creating power for electricity millions of people in a city can have comfort, enjoyments and easy living from the atom. In all the different countries in this world so many people benefit from electricity, so many houses use it. A seed has power in a similar way, its own purpose and function. If you plant a juniper seed, from it

comes this huge tree with many branches and leaves, intricate designs and shapes, every tiny detail comes from that seed; you can see how the seed has power.

There was one leaf that had seven insects on it. It was blown by the wind and circumambulated three times a Vairochana statue that was near the ocean. Then the insects died. They were reborn as seven lower caste girls then, in their next life, they were reborn as seven daughters of King Titi. They made offerings to Kashyapa Buddha and received prediction of their enlightenment. This shows how karma works.

A pig was being chased by a dog. Somehow they ran around a stupa, so that became a circumambulation. Then the pig died and was reborn in Tushita Pure Land. After the dog died it was also born in Tushita, in the deva realm of the Thirty-three. Many animals cannot hear mantras, but all they have to do to liberate themselves is circumambulate a holy object, even without the motivation. That is all. There are inconceivable benefits of stupas and specifically of the four dharmakaya relic mantras. The benefits of these mantras are unbelievable. Just by seeing, hearing, touching or thinking about any holy object that has the four dharmakaya relic mantras inside, one can be liberated from all the negative karma and suffering.

We have many insects inside the retreat house in Washington (Buddha Amitabha Pure Land) so every day we catch as many as possible in large jars that have ventilation and space. We separate the various kinds of insects into different jars so they do not fight or frighten each other. We have a large altar that is full of holy objects, the relics of Buddha and many other relics, many photos and images of buddhas, as many tsa-tsas as possible, as well as many stupas filled with the four dharmakaya relic mantras. We circumambulate, running as fast as possible so that we are able to do as many circumambulations as we can, with the jars full of insects. Then we release them outside.

What is happening to those insects is exactly like the stories above. It is incredible how fast it will purify them; even their present

life will get better and better. This is what happens when you take insects around holy objects: it directs their life towards enlightenment. You can see this from the stories. As we circumambulate with them we give them the body of a happy transmigrator in their next life, a happy rebirth. Not only that, but we give them the opportunity to practice Dharma in their next life, which is the most important thing, to have a better rebirth to be able to accomplish the path, cease the defilements and achieve enlightenment. This is an incredible gift to them from us. It repays their kindness. They have been our mother numberless times and because of their kindness we have been able to practice Dharma. As our mothers, they protected our lives from hardships and dangers every day. They bore so many hardships for us. All our present happiness, as well as all our previous and future happiness, all the realizations of the path up to enlightenment, these insects are the source of that.

For these reasons I asked for a stupa to be built at my house in California (Kachoe Dechen Ling). Now there is an extremely beautiful stupa that is filled and covered with so many tsa-tsas. The stupa is filled with the four dharmakaya relic mantras. These give the most power to purify and collect the most extensive merit.

## *Giving Dharma names*

The idea to build the stupa came because Venerable Roger wanted to have a dog at Aptos house. The word went around and I guess it might have been that a Mexican lady took a dog from the animal shelter; then she had to go to Mexico so she was looking for somebody to keep the dog. I am not sure how it happened, but Vajrapani Institute heard about it and rang us. We accepted, the lady brought the dog and I gave the name OM MANI PÄDME HUM, because rather than leaving a negative imprint, this leaves a positive imprint of the whole path to enlightenment. If you have a pet, it is very good to give it a Dharma name rather than giving it a useless name that has no benefit for the animal. If you give your pet a Dharma name, such as names of the path to enlightenment (renunciation, bodhichitta,

emptiness. They can be in English, Tibetan, or Sanskrit), it leaves a positive imprint on the mind of the animal.

So we called the dog in Kachoe Dechen Ling OM MANI PÄDME HUM. MANI is method; PÄDME is wisdom. The whole path to liberation from samsara comes into these two – method and wisdom. The whole Mahayana path to achieve enlightenment, the whole paramita path to achieve enlightenment, comes into method and wisdom, as does the whole secret mantra Vajrayana path to achieve enlightenment quickly. So that is the whole entire path that Buddha has revealed: the Lesser Vehicle Paramitayana, Mahayana Paramitayana, Mahayana secret mantra Vajrayana. Vajrayana has four classes of tantra, the fourth of which is maha-anuttara yoga tantra, the quickest path to achieve enlightenment, which makes it possible to achieve enlightenment in a very brief lifetime in the degenerated time. All of the paths are contained in OM MANI.

HUM is like saying “Hi, mum,” calling to mother “Hi.” When you say “Hi,” it makes her pay attention. OM MANI is Chenrezig’s name. HUM calls Chenrezig and makes Chenrezig pay attention, pursuing the Compassionate Buddha’s holy mind.

Also HUM establishes the root of the blessing in one’s heart. What is that? It is from guru devotion up to enlightenment. Faith in karma and refuge, guru devotion and all that, which makes one start to practice; to listen to teachings, reflect and meditation practice and to actualize the path to liberation and enlightenment.

OM is made of three syllables, three sounds: A, U, MA: OM. That signifies by actualizing the path of method and wisdom, OM MANI, you purify your ordinary body, speech, and mind and transform them into Chenrezig’s vajra holy body, vajra holy speech, and vajra holy mind. Then one is able to do perfect work for sentient beings by revealing teachings and various other means with body, speech and mind, exactly according to their karma, characteristics and level of mind. For example, bring the lower realms into higher realms, like the deva realm; bring the human beings and devas, those who have temporary happiness, into liberation from samsara, ultimate happiness; bring those who are in lower nirvana, the blissful state

of one's own peace, into full enlightenment; bring each and every of the numberless sentient beings into full enlightenment, peerless happiness.

So the whole entire teachings of Buddha, 84,000 teachings, are contained in OM MANI PÄDME HUM, the hundred volumes of Kangyur and the approximately two hundred volumes of Tengyur, are contained in OM MANI PÄDME HUM. This is the mantra most cherished by all the past, present, and future buddhas, like their hearts. It is wish fulfilling. By reciting it, all your wishes are gradually fulfilled, you achieve all happiness up to enlightenment, and then you are able to cause all sentient beings to achieve all happiness. So by reciting this mantra, you fulfill all your own wishes and all the wishes of the other sentient beings, who are numberless.

Each time OM MANI PÄDME HUM hears her name it plants the seed for the whole path to enlightenment; it leaves a positive imprint on her mind. Also, it creates the cause for her to understand all the 84,000 teachings of Buddha because they are contained in OM MANI PÄDME HUM: the two truths, the path of method and wisdom, and the goal, dharmakaya and rupakaya. Each time we call her name it leaves a positive imprint for her to be able to hear the whole sutra and tantra, the complete extensive teachings of Buddha. This is incredible. Definitely, each time she hears her name it brings her closer to enlightenment, to achieve the limitless skies of qualities of Buddha's holy body, holy speech, and holy mind. This is such an easy way to benefit animals and to bring them closer to enlightenment, so we must do it. We must attempt every single way to benefit them. We must do it for others, to quickly liberate them from samsara, which is only in the nature of suffering and which has no beginning, which is continuous.

Understanding the incredible benefits just of naming your pets, it is very silly and foolish if you don't do even this. It's such an easy way to benefit them, even if you don't do bigger things like building a stupa to benefit the sentient beings living with you. What you can easily do is take them around holy objects, chant mantras, read lam-

rim prayers that contain the whole path – the *Heart Sutra*, *Diamond Cutter Sutra*, *Sutra of Golden Light*, *Arya Sanghata-sutra* – and chant powerful mantras as much as possible. There are so many practices you can recite next to them as well as many other things you can do, but if you can't do these then an easy one is giving them a Dharma name that will benefit them very much.

During Choden Rinpoche's teachings at Vajrapani a few years ago, Rinpoche said that Lama Atisha called animals *sangpo*, which means "good hearted." Probably he is not saying, "I am good hearted," but as Lama Atisha has bodhichitta maybe he is saying that his bodhichitta came from them. Lama Atisha gave teachings to numberless sentient beings, liberating them from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bringing them to enlightenment. As all this was received from these animals, from their kind hearts, the reason Lama Atisha calls them *sangpo* is that he is naming the result on the cause. Sometimes he may have called them *triche*, which means "kind one." This is maybe to benefit one's own mind, referring to all animals as "kind one," remembering how all one's happiness comes from them.

I was thinking how to make a dog's life meaningful and the thought came to build a stupa. So a stupa was built behind the house, Kachoe Dechen Ling. I thought if we have a dog, then we need a stupa so that the dog can circumambulate it every day. I asked Brian Halterman to build the stupa. I gave a rough design and he did it very beautifully.

My idea was for each person to take OM MANI PÄDME HUM around every day. In the beginning, I tried and the Sangha living in the house also did that, but it didn't continue. I have to exercise for the diabetes, so when I went around, we went together.

By actually building a stupa or statue, without words you are continually liberating so many sentient beings. Every day, anybody who sees, touches (including insects that touch the stupa), remembers, talks or dreams about the stupa plants the seed of enlightenment and purifies. The stupa is meaningful to behold, so it liberates many sentient beings, insects and humans every day. When the wind

touches a stupa (especially if the stupa has the four dharmakaya relic mantras inside), the wind becomes blessed and then wherever it goes and whoever it touches it liberates from the lower realms, by purifying their negative karma. When the rain falls on the stupa, that running water liberates any being it touches, all the worms in the ground etc., from the lower realms. It is similar with dust.

If you build stupas or statues to inspire people, without even teaching Dharma, for however many hundreds and billions of years the holy object lasts, it continues to liberate many sentient beings every day, freeing them from the lower realms, causing them to actualize the path liberating them from samsara and bringing them to enlightenment. Even after you die, if you are in another universe, in the hell realms or a pure land, wherever you are the stupa or statue that you built is continually benefiting sentient beings. It is incredible how you can continually benefit sentient beings by having built a stupa. One student said that even to be an insect that gets carried around a stupa would depend on having previously created good karma. I replied that even a virtuous action depends on having created the karma before; it is a virtuous imprint ripened.

## *Reciting prayers and powerful mantras*

Recite prayers in their ears, verbally, to plant the seed of all the realizations of the path to enlightenment. This makes a huge difference. It has inconceivable, unbelievable results. It causes them to have a good rebirth next life, to be born as a human being, and to meet the Dharma.

When the Buddha gave teachings to 500 swans in a field, in their next life they were born as human beings. They became monks and all became arya beings, able to achieve the cessation of suffering and the true path. So the result is unbelievable, just by hearing Dharma words. Vasubandhu (Lopön Yignyen) was reciting one text called the *Abhidharmakosha* and a pigeon on the roof heard this everyday. When the pigeon died, Lopön Yignyen checked to see where the pigeon had been reborn. It was in a family who lived down be-

low in the valley. He went down and saw the child and asked if he could have him and the family gave him to Lopön Yignyen. The child became a monk named Lopön Loden. He became an expert on the text which he had heard when he was a pigeon. He wrote four commentaries on that text. Therefore, it's extremely important to recite lam-rim prayers and mantras to animals.

It's also extremely good to bless their food before you give it to them. If you can't do it at every meal, then you can bless it all at once. Recite the five powerful mantras if you know them, or recite OM MANI PÄDME HUM, Medicine Buddha, and Milarepa mantras. All this has power; it helps anyone who eats the food not to be reborn in the lower realms. It blesses their minds and purifies negative karma. If you can, do it every time you feed them – recite the mantras and blow on the food. This is the biggest present you can give them; it causes good rebirth, so they can end samsara and achieve liberation. The positive imprint of the Mahayana teachings and mantras lead to enlightenment.

That is why I asked the people who take care of our dogs at Tushita in Dharamsala – at that time it was Tseyang-la and Maureen – to recite the Maitreya Buddha prayer and mantra, the Lama Tsongkhapa praise to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha (*Dependent Arising*, see p. 140) and other prayers and mantras to the dogs, while holding a biscuit in the hand, so all the dogs wait. It looks like they were listening to the teachings, eyes looking at the biscuit and everyone is humbly sitting, respectfully listening to teachings, all their eyes looking at the biscuit! Before they went to bed, even at midnight, Tseyang-la and Maureen used to chant prayers and mantra to the dogs, who were all in bed. They would chant very loudly.

We gave some of the dogs away, and along with the dogs was the commitment to recite a lam-rim prayer or mantras. Some people did it for years. One lady wasn't a Buddhist, but she did the lam-rim prayer, the *Foundation of All Good Qualities*, every day for years. Then one day, her maid left the gate open and the dog got lost. She was very upset. She must be a very kind person; even though she's not Buddhist, she did that prayer. She must be very sincere.

At one time, we had thirteen Pekingese dogs at Tushita in Dharamsala. When I asked Lama Yeshe, who was kinder than all the buddhas of the three times, to give a dog away, Lama said: “I love my dogs!” and didn’t want to give one. So they multiplied and at one time there were thirteen. I thought being in the hands of Buddhists should make a difference to a dog’s life, so from time to time I used to recite prayers to them. Sometimes the *Three Principles of the Path, Foundation of All Good Qualities, Lam-rim*, the complete path to enlightenment, maybe also sometimes the praise to Buddha by Lama Tsongkhapa, *Dependent Arising*. I would hold a biscuit in my hand and while they were waiting for the biscuit, I would chant a prayer or recite mantras. Hopefully, while they were waiting for a biscuit, by the way they would hear the mantra.

We found this small Lhasa Apso dog in the local Wal-Mart parking lot; we rang all the pounds, dog shelters, radio station and even the police to let the owner know that we had found a lost dog. A week later the owner contacted us. The day Jangsem was due to leave we took him around the stupas, Buddha relics and other great lamas’ relics, as well as the *Kangyur, Tengyur, and Prajnaparamita* texts. We circumambulated with Jangsem many, many times and I said Jangsem is probably the luckiest dog in the whole of Washington.

When Jangsem first arrived in the house, I recited many mantras and practices for Jangsem to meet Lama Tsongkhapa’s teachings; also I recited Maitreya Buddha mantra, which has the power to cause one not to be reborn in the lower realms and to receive a perfect rebirth.

There was a story in Tibet of three or four monks reciting prayers every day. The dog who stayed with them heard the daily prayers and because of that, when the dog died, just by hearing the teaching, even though it couldn’t understand the meaning, it was reborn in either the human realm or Tushita, the deva realm. Just hearing the words of the Buddha has that incredible benefit, a big change from this life to the next.

This is how I think their lives should be different, better, meaningful, by being in the hands of Buddhists – purifying their nega-

tive karma and leaving as many imprints as possible so that next life they will receive a human rebirth, meet the Dharma, meet the guru. Then, sooner or later, they will actualize the path and achieve enlightenment.

*Colophon:*

Transcribed by Ven. Holly Ansett, compiled from various teachings from Lama Zopa Rinpoche given mostly in 2004. Lightly edited by Ven. Thubten Labdron, Ven. Holly Ansett, and Ven. Constance Miller. Compiled in this form and lightly edited by Thubten Mindrol, FPMT Education Department, May 2005.



# How to Benefit Insects

## *Advice from Lama Zopa Rinpoche*



“Having ants in your house is your only opportunity to help them create the causes of enlightenment. If there are many ants, put them in a plastic bag or container and then carry them around holy objects, keeping the bag the same level as the holy objects.

“If there are twenty holy objects (statues, stupas, or scriptures of Buddha) then it means you are giving them twenty times the causes of enlightenment, twenty times the causes of liberation and higher rebirth. And this is only by taking the ant or any sentient being around one time.”

— *Note found in a plastic bag from Lama Zopa Rinpoche*

### ***Benefiting ants and other insects***

If you have many ants in your house, if you are careless, you kill them. Otherwise, with a soft tissue paper or soft cotton or broom or feather, pick them up and put them in a plastic bag and put some food in it. Put something they like, something they're excited about or fascinated by, and then close the bag and take it around the stupa or holy objects as many times as you can. This liberates them from lower rebirth and helps them achieve liberation and enlightenment.

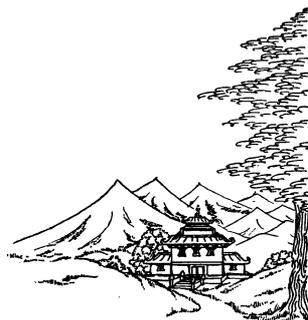
Then you put them outside, releasing them by opening the plastic bag, or shake it on the ground with the food. The only way you can help ants and other insects is if they come into your house, in your kitchen, in your room. Otherwise, there's no way to benefit them in this way. So this is a very good way, an excellent opportunity, to benefit the ants in addition to making charity by giving them food. If you take them around the stupa or holy objects, then that is Dharma charity and charity of fearlessness. By purifying their minds, you are saving them from suffering. Also for dogs and cats, blessing the food with mantras is not only miscellaneous charity, but also becomes Dharma charity, charity of fearlessness, and charity of loving-kindness because you have the intention to cause them happiness. In this way, you can practice all the four types of charity.

## *Benefiting insects during construction*

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How to collect so much merit when you build a center, gumpa, and guest rooms, even your own house, and how to benefit so many insects that get killed during construction, so they are not reborn in the lower realms and instead, they receive higher rebirth.

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Building a gumpa is no problem at all.

There is unbelievable benefit for the sentient beings that are killed during construction. They never will be reborn in the lower realms and will receive a good rebirth. This is due to the power of the holy objects, because Buddha is free from all defilements and has completed all qualities, including inconceivable powers, which are inspired and achieved through compassion for all sentient beings. The gumpa or monastery is the whole merit field for the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Even when we build rooms, we should build with the idea that we are building for the Triple Gem. Whether it is a new house or knocking down an old one, when you are finished,

put a picture of the Buddha there and then it becomes a temple. The motivation should be the same in the beginning, so it doesn't become telling a lie. This is the same for the meditators who use the room and for the sentient beings killed by vehicles or by being walking on during the construction; they won't be born in the lower realms. The Indian pandit Matisara says when you build a monastery, any insect that dies during construction never is reborn in the lower realms. Even when you make food for the workers who are building the monastery, whoever touches the smoke from the fire is liberated from the lower realms. This is due to the relationship of the workers building the temple, monastery, or meditation hall; they are connected with the power of the Buddha and Triple Gem. After the building is finished, put an altar in each room, so each one becomes a gumpa. This is the idea.

### *The “vajra vehicle”*

Several years ago, in California, Roger [Kunsang, Rinpoche's attendant] bought a car for us to use, a red van. I think he got it from a student's husband's friend, something related, for quite a reasonable price. It had a small TV inside the van. The car was also fairly noisy. Roger was very excited and brought the car up to the Jacksons' house, up above Vajrapani Institute, where I was staying at the time. But I didn't go to look at the car right away; I went out late the next morning. When I saw it I tried to think, “This is all sentient beings' car,” but of course, it lasted only a few seconds. I tried to think that the car belonged to all sentient beings, but the thought lasted only a few seconds. After that it disappeared!

Later on we were at Geshe Sopa's center in Madison, Deer Park, taking teachings from Geshe Sopa. We painted some messages on the car. On one side it said that cherishing others is the source of happiness, something like that. On the other, we amended His Holiness's quote “My religion is kindness” to “My religion is kindness to all,” just to make it a little more clear. Then we also stuck decals of

the Buddha, White Tara, Maitreya Buddha, the Thirty-five Buddhas – many deity pictures – around the car. All this was done at a shop in Madison while we at Geshe Sopa’s course.

The thing is that when you drive a car, many insects are crushed on the windshield. Sometimes the entire windshield is completely covered by their splattered bodies. When we were driving from California to Madison, I’d occasionally try to imagine the wind coming from above the car pushing the insects out of the way. Sometimes it seemed to help, but I didn’t do it that much, so I’m not sure. However, we tried.

So, what to do? We tried putting a plastic screen on the front of the car to deflect the insects but it didn’t help much. Then we got the idea came of putting mantras all over the front of the car – the five powerful mantras of Mitrugpa and so forth. Not only these five but several others as well. They weren’t painted on; the shop made kind of computerized stick-on transfers.

The idea is that any wind, rain or whatever else touches those mantras and then touches insects or other beings, those beings are purified; their negative karma is purified. And even if the insects get struck by the car and die, at least they touched the mantras and purified their negative karma. So that’s what we did.

Then on the back of the car, on the spare wheel, we put the Chen-zig mantra, OM MANI PÄDME HUM, so that anybody who sees it purifies their defilements, their negative karma, and plants the seed of enlightenment.

Then, down below that, we wrote “May anybody who sees, touches or remembers this car never ever be reborn in the lower realms; may they be free from suffering and achieve enlightenment soon.” Something like that. I don’t remember exactly.

Later on I got a decal of a mandala of the long Namgyälma mantra. Usually, if you have a banner of this mantra, whoever even the shadow of the banner touches – people or animals, any sentient being – is purified of their negative karma and doesn’t get reborn in the lower realms. If that mantra is inside a house, those who live in

that house are always getting purified. If that mantra is on the top of the mountain, then insects, people, animals – whoever passes over that mountain, touches that mountain, also is purified and doesn't get reborn in the lower realms. Lord Buddha explained the extensive benefits of the Namgyälma mantra in the certain scriptural texts.

Similarly, if you have just the mantra or the mandala of it in your car, whoever enters the car is also constantly purified.

Just as the Namgyälma mantra on a banner on a mountain has the benefit I mentioned, just as the shadow of a banner bearing the mantra that touches sentient beings purifies their negative karma such that they don't get reborn in the lower realms and so forth, similarly, when you drive, by having the mantra in your car, the many insects that you can and can't see that get killed, even though they die against the car or under the wheel, at least their negative karma is purified. Even if the shadow of your car touches or passes over them, their negative karma is purified.

I'm talking about the car as part of the topic of making life meaningful. Since even when we walk we kill insects that we don't see, there's no question that when we drive our cars many insects are killed. So how can we make their being killed meaningful? Having the Namgyälma or other powerful mantras in the car purifies the negative karma of the beings we harm when we drive and is a way of benefiting them.

There's a mantra for blessing the feet so that any insects that get killed when we walk receive at least some benefit. You recite it seven times and then spit on the bottom of your feet or the soles of your shoes. Due to the blessings of the mantra, any insect that is then crushed underfoot is born in the deva realm of the Gods of the Thirty-three. The mantra is OM KHRECHA RAGHANA HUM HRI SVAHA.\*

I think you could do the same with your car tires: recite the mantra seven times then blow or spit all around each tire where the rubber hits the road. Then any insects or other creatures you run over will be benefited as with the blessing of the feet.

What all this is saying is that whenever there's a way in which you can benefit others, you must do it. If these methods were not beneficial, Lord Buddha wouldn't have taught them. These mantras can be found in the *Kangyur* [the canonical collection of the Buddha's spoken word], so there's obviously a definite purpose to their having been given.

However, this doesn't mean you think, "Oh, I've blessed my feet, I should tread on all the insects that I can in order to benefit them." It only benefits those you kill inadvertently.



\* Ven. Holly Ansett reports: If you recite this mantra and blow on tire wheels, bug shields, and windows, that will benefit the bugs. On the road, Rinpoche will recite that mantra over a bucket of water. Then we fill up the washer fluid and pour on the hood, windshield, and bug guards and on all four wheels.

## Letters to Lama Zopa Rinpoche

Dear Lama Zopa,

I killed fifty small ants on my balcony, and regretted the act immediately afterward. I am writing to confess what I have done, and to say I plan to take the Eight Mahayana Precepts,<sup>1</sup> one day for each ant I have killed. Please let me know your advice.

Love,  
Jeanie

My very dear Jeanie,

Thank you very much for your kind letter. It is amazing what you want to offer back to those ants. It is incredible! The thought to take precepts for each ant would not have come into my head. I am sure all the ants will jump up and down and clap their hands and have a party for you when you finish, wishing for you to receive all happiness. I put my hands together at my heart thanking you very, very much on behalf of all the ants.

Big love and prayers,  
Lama Zopa



Dear Lama Zopa,

I live on the border between Singapore and Malaysia and am constantly bitten by many mosquitoes. I have been killing them. I don't know what else to do. What do you advise?

Love,  
Ming-Na

My dear Ming-Na,

You should not kill mosquitoes at all. Your body is so big, and they are so tiny. What if their body were big and yours was tiny, and you came to bite them and drink a little of their blood, because you were so hungry, but then they killed you? How does this look to you? This is exactly the same situation.

If you don't purify yourself of these acts, you will have to suffer the result in future lives, and also in this life, especially as you have taken vows to live in pure ethics, and one of your vows is to abstain from killing. This is a very basic practice. Therefore, you need to perform these practices that I am sending you. *[A list of practices was attached.]* You should do these practices gradually, to purify and to collect merit. You should also read the Lam-rim, the gradual path to enlightenment, not only for your own happiness, but also for the peace and happiness of all sentient beings, especially the mosquitoes.

I am requesting you on behalf of all mosquitoes, please don't kill. I will be the voice for all the mosquitoes.

With much love and prayer,  
Lama Zopa



**Notes:**

1. The Eight Mahayana Precepts are a set of vows taken for twenty-four hours. Taking these vows purifies negative karma and accumulates much merit. Please refer to The *Direct and Unmistaken Method: Practice and Benefits of the Eight Mahayana Precepts*, available from from The Foundation Store at [www.fpmt.org/shop](http://www.fpmt.org/shop).

**Colophon:**

Teachings given by Lama Zopa Rinpoche. *The vajra vehicle* was originally published by Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive in their April 2005 newsletter and is reprinted here with permission. The names of those who wrote letters to Lama Zopa Rinpoche and received his advice have been changed to protect their privacy. Compiled and lightly edited by Thubten Mindrol, FPMT Education Department, June 2005.



# On Hunting and Fishing

## Advice from Lama Zopa Rinpoche



Please don't hunt the animals; they also want happiness and do not want suffering. Like yourself, they do not want to be hunted.

*— Lama Zopa Rinpoche's suggestion for a sign to be placed alongside traditional "No Hunting" signs at Milarepa Center and Land of Calm Abiding.*

### ***Avoid killing animals***

Animals have feelings. They have the same type of minds as we do and also want to be happy, like we do. For example, if you suddenly touch an animal, it is immediately frightened. We get frightened if somebody beats or hits us with a stick. If somebody throws cold water on us, we feel shocked. Can you bear to put your finger in boiling hot water? You can't. It is the same for animals.

Even though they can't speak, animals show their fear through their bodies. Human beings can talk, complain, bring court cases, go to the police. Human beings can do so much; they can express their fears, but animals can't. They can do nothing. Whether other people accept your suffering or not, at least you can explain it and people can listen. Animals can't do this, but you can see how they feel

from their movements. When someone tries to attack them, they run away. They are afraid, which means they want to be happy and not to suffer. This is a very important point, that they have the same mind as us. If you kill them, then you create the negative karma to be like them. For one hundred thousand lifetimes, you will suffer the consequences. It is said in the teachings that if you kill one animal, because of that karma, you will stay in the very hot hell realm for one thousand eons.

## *On eating meat*

It's best to avoid meat, but of course, sometimes there's no choice. If before eating the meat you think of where the meat came from, by cutting the neck of the animal without its choice, and how much suffering the animal experiences, then you *can't* eat that meat! It's nice for the mouth but not for the animal who suffered so much and didn't die naturally. You can say prayers for the animal, but you're still a small part of the killing of the animal. If everyone stopped, then there'd be no more killing.

## *On fishing*

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A Malaysian woman persuaded her mother to stop fishing. After the mother stopped fishing, the daughter would not let her mother even hurt an insect. Lama Zopa Rinpoche wrote the following letter to this woman:

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My very dear XXXX,

How are you? I am sure you are enjoying well there, in bliss and emptiness. Ha Ha Ha! I hope one day you come to United States, stay some days at the house, and do some meditation and enjoy. I think what a great daughter you are. You saved your mum from numberless negative karmas, the cause of hell, hungry ghost and animal rebirth. Otherwise, not only would she be born there, but she

would suffer, be killed and hooked and chopped by others, eaten by others numberless times!

You gave so much peace and happiness. Usually that kind of spiritual education and ethics has to be taught by mum, but here, you as a child taught her who is the grown up one. I thank you equaling numbers of atoms of this earth. Please continue to be a holy daughter.

By not killing, you will experience the result of happiness on and on and in your future lives, including a good rebirth as a deva or human being, where you experience more happiness and have more opportunity to have comfort, which then gives you more opportunity to practice dharma. You will be born in a place where there is no danger to your life; things do not become conditions for death like the house being burnt down or other disasters that become conditions of death, so you won't experience these things. Medicines won't have side effects and you will have the causes of health. You won't get digestion problems and the food is healthy. Other people and animals won't harm you and you won't commit these negative actions again in your future lives. You will live in morality and abstain from killing and you will have the desire to stop others from killing.

Abstaining from killing brings four results of happiness and it goes on and on; you receive happiness continually and in your future lives. Of course by living an ethical life of morality, not harming others and living in morality, this is the basis to achieve liberation from samsara for yourself and also it becomes the foundation for protecting karma. This practice becomes the basis to achieve bodhichitta and to actualize all the realizations of the Mahayana path and the result, full enlightenment. Then you can do perfect works for sentient beings and bring them from happiness to happiness to full enlightenment.

So here the daughter helps the mother to achieve peace and happiness, success in this life as well as future lives, happiness, liberation and enlightenment. You are able to offer such benefit to others and you are able to give happiness to each and every sentient being.

Also your husband, because of you he has had to stop the action of killing insects and harming other sentient beings. So again same thing: you bring so much peace and happiness to his life and good health because he is not harming others. You bring all the happiness of each of his future lives continuously. The result is his happiness, good rebirth, success, long life, happiness in future lives, and full enlightenment. He changes his life of creating negative karma by harming insects and because of this, he receives happiness. If he continued to harm insects, he would actually ultimately be harming himself. By creating the negative karma of harming others it actually harms yourself, because you create the cause to experience the result, which is suffering.

So this is the real purpose of your relationship, of living together; wife made husband's life more meaningful, more beneficial for himself and for others, so that fulfills the purpose of living together.

With much love and prayers,  
Lama Zopa



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Earlier in his life, a student had worked as a commercial fisherman. The student had the idea to return to all the places he had fished with his father as a boy and throw some Mani, Mitrukpa and Namgyalma mantras into the water. Lama Zopa Rinpoche replied:

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That is great. You can carve or write the mantras on a board or in copper, and then tow it behind the boat. Or you can go to a bridge and let it drop into the water while reciting the mantras. Do the same with prayer wheels.

The mantra can be written in Sanskrit on one side of the board, and in Tibetan on the other side. If the boards are thrown into the water they should be made of materials that last as long as possible. If you make prayer wheels to put into the water, you shouldn't allow any water to get inside of them.

There is a family in Taiwan who make a living fishing. They built a circular wall out into the water, across from mainland China, with mantras written above and below the water, with underwater stupas.

## ***Letter to a student who fed live mice to a pet snake***

My very dear XXXX,

I have something to talk to you heart to heart. That is dealing with the suffering of the animals. I heard that you have a pet snake, and that you have to feed the snake with mice. Here, as you love the snake, of course you have to also love the mouse. The mouse is also looking for happiness and doesn't want to suffer. The mouse needs love from you and wants help from you.

It is mentioned in the teaching of the Buddha about the karma of killing. If one kills one sentient being, then for 500 lifetimes one will be killed by others. This is the result of one negative karma of killing. This is explained by the fact that karma is expandable. Just as

if you plant one corn, from that comes a lot of corn as the result of that. If you plant one bodhi tree seed the size of the tip of the finger, then from that one seed comes many, many thousands of branches; all that comes from one seed. Extremely big results come from one small cause.

For inner evolution, the effect is so much more than for external phenomena. Not only does one suffer for many lifetimes, but the negative karma of killing obscures the mind. It becomes an obstacle to developing loving-kindness and compassion for living beings. It becomes an obstacle to developing the altruistic mind to attain enlightenment to liberate sentient beings. It becomes an obstacle to achieving liberation by removing the gross and subtle obscurations and to enlightenment. You can't do perfect work for sentient beings by freeing them from the suffering and bringing them to enlightenment.

All this comes from negative acts such as killing; this action done with the delusion of ignorance, anger and attachment. Because the motivation is non-virtuous, the action becomes non-virtuous, negative karma. That obscures the mind and then it is difficult to see the reality, the ultimate nature of the "I" and the very nature of one's own mind. One is unable to realize this. Without the wisdom realizing the very nature, there is no other realization that can illuminate all the root of the sufferings of samsara, and of delusion and karma, that which is ignorance not knowing the very nature of the self and mind. That means without that wisdom, you can't cut the very root of the samsaric suffering, the cause. Without having that wisdom, there is no way to remove the delusion and karma to liberate yourself from the delusion and karma; there is no end to samsara. You have to suffer endlessly and you can't liberate others from oceans of samsaric suffering and its cause.

If you have to take care of the snake and the snake doesn't eat vegetarian food, you have to engage in killing, so that is discriminating. You give love to the snake but not to the mouse. They all want happiness and do not want to suffer, and they all want you to give

love. If you let the snake go, it will kill other animals. The solution either way is problematic.

So the solution is to as quickly as possible develop your mind on the path, to liberate yourself from karma and delusion, enter the Mahayana path and cease the subtle defilements so you have omniscient mind and are able to read all sentient being's minds. You are able to see the karma, wishes, characteristics, level of intelligence [of all sentient beings], and are able to see directly all the methods [to help others]. You have perfect power, and have compassion for all living beings without discriminating. You can do perfect work for all sentient beings; you can liberate them by having all the means, especially bringing them happiness to happiness, up to full enlightenment. Even when you yourself are not enlightened, you can liberate others from samsaric suffering.

Every happiness depends on so many sentient beings. For example, when a house is built, so many worms have to be killed. For the comfort and protection of a house, so many worms and ants have to be killed; so many hardships are experienced by those beings. Again, for food and clothing, so many beings have to be killed. For one plate of rice from the field, so many beings have to be killed; one grain of rice comes from another grain of rice, and so like that there is the evolution. The same with clothing; silk or animal skins. That when we think of the evolution; so many beings have to suffer for your comfort and survival. If you liberate yourself and don't have to reincarnate, then there is so much relief for sentient beings. Numberless sentient beings don't have to suffer. You yourself are liberated from samsara, but you are freeing them from suffering. By revealing the methods, especially by revealing Dharma, you are able to liberate many beings. You are able to bring them to enlightenment.

The conclusion is that we can do practices now to liberate these animals, to release them from the realms of suffering. It is the same for hell beings and hungry ghosts. This is the solution so that they don't have to suffer for a long time because of killing each other. We should focus on this method to liberate these beings as much

as possible so they don't have to suffer. And this is [possible] only by practicing Dharma.

This is my advice to you. There are methods that Buddha, the omniscient one, has revealed. Otherwise, they continuously suffer the result of the karma of killing each other. This means that the suffering has no end.

Probably the best thing is to let them go and pray for their higher rebirth. You can do meditation practice, purify negative karma and pray for higher rebirth. You can chant the five powerful mantras and dedicate for their higher rebirth and that they meet with the Dharma. This is one small example of how to benefit.

Another fundamental idea that oneself practices is to not harm others and to benefit as much as one can by revealing the wisdom of Dharma and educating other human beings in this way. That brings peace and happiness to oneself and others. Not only oneself, but others don't have to be born in the lower realms, even if they don't get liberated from suffering and its causes in this life. Even if they don't get enlightened in this life, still they can achieve all the causes for and achieve enlightenment in the future.

So practice compassion and feeling compassion for others. From that comes the action of not harming others and the thought to benefit others. So, since you are a good-hearted, good-natured person, so this is my humble advice or chat to you.

It is good to know more how to benefit, to fully liberate them, to do something for their good rebirth next life, liberation from samsara and full enlightenment. One thing is to recite prayers and mantras so that they can hear. One mantra that comes out good in my observation is the mantra of Maitreya Buddha. By doing these practices, we help other beings achieve good rebirths, to meet with the teachings, achieve liberation, and then enlightenment. They can purify every trace of negativity, the seeds and their imprints. They are able to complete all the realizations of love, wisdom and power, and to do perfect work for others.

You should recite verbally, aloud, prayers and mantras so that it leaves positive imprints on their minds for them to achieve enlight-

enment, which is the cessation of all stains of the mind, gross and subtle, and completion all the realizations, the fully perfected state of mind, the peerless happiness.

It would be much better to buy meat from the shop. If it is wrapped up in disguise, maybe even the snake would think it is a mouse, and although the snake might accumulate some karma of killing, it would not be complete. If he eats this meat, then keep him; then he doesn't have to kill outside. Alternatively, if a toy mouse is offered to the snake, he might learn that mice are no longer edible, and so maybe he would not want to eat mice anymore.

I hope you don't collapse or faint, overwhelmed with all this advice!

With much love and prayer,  
Lama Zopa Rinpoche

## *How to practice even if you kill animals*

Even if you farm and kill animals, you can take refuge without taking any of the five lay vows.<sup>1</sup> Because Buddha is compassionate, even if you're unable to stop major harming such as killing, you can abandon the smaller harms (a vast subject), for example a second of anger. It's not saying that you have to stop all harming; otherwise you'd have to take the whole vow to abandon killing.

The purpose of the vow is to protect your mind and others' minds from suffering, and to bring peace and happiness to yourself and others. Even if the person can't keep the five vows, there are many other smaller harms the person can stop, such as harsh speech.

Whatever forms of causing harm the person can stop protects everyone and is the root of happiness and peace. You don't create the result of negative karma and you have happiness in this and future lives. Buddha is so compassionate.

You can still take refuge in Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Even Tibetan soldiers used to take refuge and then go out and do their job.

In our case, besides taking the tantric and bodhisattva vows, we still harm others every day here and there in daily life with anger, bad words, etc.

Help others by protecting life; saving the lives of animals, helping sick and dying people and homeless people causes you to have a long and healthy life now and in the future. How your future lives turn out depends on how much you create positive karma. Life isn't just this one.

Just because you have a farmer's life doesn't mean you have to kill. You don't have to kill, but there's a fixed idea that other people have, that you have to kill if you're a farmer. You have to feed animals, but you don't have to kill them. If you're worried their numbers will increase too much, there are injections they can get to control their numbers. If you sell them, then other people will kill them, so it's best to control them from multiplying too much. But being a farmer is your choice; you can change your lifestyle for the good and happiness of others. There's no rule saying you have to be a farmer. It's your own free will.

If you can't stop killing but still want to meditate, you can still develop compassion for others; for example practicing patience, etc., keeping in mind virtue, visualizing Buddha, and purifying with Shakyamuni Buddha yoga meditation. These basic things are the only way to bring happiness.

Buddha made so many different practices because sentient beings have different minds. You should still practice Dharma and meditate; there is always something you can do, other things you can practice. You should especially do purification practices. If you purify, then there's less negative karma and suffering, so it makes a big difference.

**Notes:**

1. The five lay vows that one takes in a formal refuge ceremony are to avoid killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and taking intoxicants. For more information on these vows, please see *Refuge in the Three Jewels*, FPMT Education Department, 2005, which is available online at [www.fpmt.org/shop](http://www.fpmt.org/shop).

**Colophon:**

Scribed by Ven. Holly Ansett, Ven. Thubten Wongmo, and Ven. Losang Tenzin at Buddha Amitabha Pure Land, November 2003 through February 2005. Compiled and lightly edited by Thubten Mindrol, FPMT Education Department, June 2005.



# How to Benefit Sick and Dying Animals



Recite mantras: OM MANI PÄDME HUM, Heruka mantra and Heruka root mantra, and other mantras such as Milarepa and Namgyälma mantras. Recite the mantras and blow over the body. You can recite the long mantras twenty-one times or more and the short mantras one mala or more. Blow strongly on the body after each time or you can blow on water, visualizing each deity absorbed into the water; each drop has the power to purify negative karmas. Then pour the water on the animal; all negative karmas are purified.

When the animal is dying, you can do the Medicine Buddha practice as outlined in the small book,\* visualizing the Seven Medicine Buddhas on the crown of the animal. Then you can also do the Thirty-five Confession Buddhas practice, with nectar coming and purifying the negative karma, taking strong refuge in the Thirty-five Confession Buddhas to protect and guide the animal.

There is a mantra paper to put on dead bodies to purify. This is written especially to put right on the body. Put it right on the skin, on the forehead or the chest. [See p. 132.]

When the animal is in the process of dying or even after the breath has stopped, if you have some sand from a Kalachakra sand mandala, you can mix it with butter and put it on the crown. Each sand grain has numberless buddhas abiding in it. It is especially good

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\* *Medicine Buddha Sadhana*, available from The Foundation Store ([www.fpmt.org/shop](http://www.fpmt.org/shop) or [materials@fpmt.org](mailto:materials@fpmt.org)).

if it is blessed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Then burn the body. If there is a good practitioner or a lama available to do the *Jangwa* puja, then do that when the body is being burned. After the body is burned, keep some pieces of bones, and if possible, do *Jangwa* again on the bones. Crush the bones and make powder. Mix with other material and make a stupa, or more than one stupa. Put the stupa in a garden if you have one and then flowers can be offered to the stupa. Dedicate for your animal, for their good rebirth and enlightenment.

## ***Animal Euthanasia***

Leah Richards, a veterinary nurse, has a deep love, compassion, and respect for all animals and hopes to be a veterinarian one day. While at last year's Kopan course she asked Lama Zopa Rinpoche for guidance on what to do when asked to perform euthanasia on sick and suffering animals.

She wanted to know about the karma of the animal being “put to sleep”; the karma of the person performing the action; and the effect of these actions on one who has committed to the five lay vows – in particular, the vow of abstaining from killing. After all, animal euthanasia means one is deliberately killing another sentient being.

“Rinpoche reiterated several times during the meeting that his advice may differ from that of other lamas,” said Leah. “But he was confident that it is concordant with the views of His Holiness the Dalai Lama at this time.”

Rinpoche told Leah that bodhisattvas have incredibly powerful bodhichitta and strong compassion deeply ingrained in their hearts. With such, they are willing to be born in the hell realms for the sake of another sentient being – that is, to sacrifice themselves in that way for another being. Therefore, when one kills with a true bodhichitta intention, with a heart filled with Dharma wisdom and compassion, the act actually becomes one in which it is “beneficial to kill.” “This pure motivation behind the altruistic decision to end an-

other sentient being's suffering – putting them out of their misery by ending their present life while knowing absolutely that one could at that very moment be creating the karmic causes for one to be born in the hell realm – makes such a killing beneficial.” Rinpoche went on to explain that the vow of non-killing refers to abstaining from killing that is associated with and backed by ignorance and negative attachment. It is that kind of killing that creates negative karma. Only killing with a motivation that is “totally pure” becomes a virtue. Of course, one in such a position must do everything within their capacity to prevent such a compromising decision, to ascertain that there is no alternative treatment or other method at all possible – and even then, the decision is not an easy one.

“The decision depends on many factors – for instance, what lies ahead in future rebirths for this being, which cannot be known to a ‘non-clairvoyant.’ A sentient being’s consciousness does not stop after this life ends,” Rinpoche said. If you were to kill a suffering animal whose karma at that moment might be such that it would be reborn into a lower realm, the pain that the animal is currently experiencing in that life (and that you are jeopardizing your own karma for) is actually worth maintaining for even just a few minutes longer, as this pain is nothing compared to what Rinpoche continued to describe as “the incomparable, unfathomable pain and severity of torture to be faced in the lower realms.” Again, we can see it makes for a very difficult decision! Now that the practitioner has met the Dharma, he/she must do two things:

“First, pray to Green Tara, reciting both the long and short versions of the Green Tara mantras [*see p. 131*], depending on the time available. This is a strong prayer most beneficial for the happiness of the animal. If you the practitioner do not have clairvoyance, as I don’t, you must rely on and make requests to a higher being to help you through *their* clairvoyance. This prayer to a higher being should be directed to your deity.”

Lama Zopa recommended that Leah ask Green Tara to empower her with the right decision by performing the following ritual:

- Cut out small pieces of paper, all precisely the same size.
- On each, write one possible option (alternative possible treatments). Ensure that every possibility and alternative is included in order to obtain the most accurate outcome.
- Tightly roll each piece of paper up (long-ways and filament-like) and then into a ball. Take particular care that they are identical in shape and size. One can even surround each ball of paper in dough or plasticine.
- Hold all paper options loosely in a cupped hand.
- Make a strong request to the deity for a prediction as to what is the best outcome to ensure the upmost happiness of this being. Visualize light emanating from the deity out to all paper options. Have full faith in the practice and one's own ability.
- While making the strong prayer, circle the hand holding the paper options clockwise, accompanied with light shaking, tossing movements back and forth as the arm moves the hand around in a circle.
- Whichever ball of paper is the first to fall out of the hand – act on that exact option or treatment!

Secondly, recite out loud the *Sutra for Entering the City of Vaishali* [see p. 148]. This will help to relieve the suffering animal, or any sentient being for that matter, from pain.

It is also “extremely profitable” if one chants any or all of these mantras to the suffering, dying animal:

- Maitreya Buddha mantra. This is the best and most beneficial of mantras in such a circumstance.
- Medicine Buddha mantra.
- The five powerful purifying mantras (Kunrig, Buddha Mitrugpa, Namgyälma, Stainless Pinnacle, and Lotus Pinnacle of Amogapasha [see p. 119]).

Reciting these mantras to the animal causes many great benefits: It purifies negative karma, keeps the sentient being from ever being reborn in a lower realm, facilitates their rebirth into a higher realm; and helps them to meet and encounter the Dharma in future lives. Just hearing the mantras will lead them to the path of enlightenment. Please note that when reciting the mantras and sutras, one can choose the long or short version of each, depending on the situation at hand and time available at that moment. You do not have to do all of them.

Rinpoche recommends that, prior to administering the euthanasia injection and just after death, one should perform the following:

- With Medicine Buddha and Chenrezig generated in your heart and while touching the animal, send out healing light and visualize purifying the sentient being before you.
- Chant the Chenrezig mantra and the Medicine Buddha mantra into the ear of the animal. Doing this provides the causes to purify any spirit harm and negative karma.
- While picturing Chenrezig hovering just above the animal's body and visualizing light emanating out to purify all the surroundings, blow over the animal's body.
- Make a strong prayer for the animal to be reborn in one of the four pure lands and to receive a perfect human body.

Reciting these mantras and blowing over the body of the animal purifies the sentient being's karma and leads the animal to a good rebirth – “the most incredible gift!”

“In the week following this meeting,” says Leah, “I received an email from Ven. Roger Kunsang with a postscript from Rinpoche reminding me “not to forget the mantras to recite in the ears of animals ... any animal you come across ... just loudly enough so they can hear (that is, those small animals commonly encountered on the side of the road). Rinpoche thanks all who do this!”

**Colophon:**

This article originally appeared in *Mandala Magazine*, October/November 2004 and was edited by Ven. Constance Miller.

# *Practices, Mantras, and Texts to Benefit Animals*





# Water Blessing Practices



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The following practices can be used to bless all the animals that live in a body of water, and also to bless water to give to beings who are sick or dying.

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## *Blessing and Offering Water for the Benefit of Pretas and All Sentient Beings*

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This practice is very important to do. It can be done on any large expanse of water, e.g., ocean, lake, waterfall, or river. It is very good, especially while you are at the beach, to make one's actions meaningful.

When doing this practice to benefit pretas, different mantras are recited for the different pretas, but this mantra covers all of them.

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### *The actual practice*

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Fill a bucket or jug (supported underneath with the right hand, at the top with the left) with water from that source and recite one of the five powerful mantras of the path of purification while visualizing the deity, as huge as Mount Meru, in the space above the water. You can also recite OM MANI PÄDME HUM and Medicine Buddha mantra. Usually you fill seven jugs and recite a different mantra on each. Blow on the water before breaking the mantra with speech.

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Then recite the heart mantra of Yeshe Khanda:

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I prostrate to the Three Sublime Ones.

OM JĀNANA AVALOKITE SAMANTA SPARANA RASMIN BHAVA  
SAMAYA MAHAMANI DURU DURU SHODAYA JALAM HUM  
PHAT (7X)

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Blow on the water; then throw it back into the ocean. Meditate that the whole ocean is transformed into nectar, all the water in the world is transformed into nectar. Every preta that can be perceived by the omniscient eye sees the water and drinks it. All their terrible hunger and thirst is satiated. First it appears to them as nectar — sublime, divine tasting food and drink. Everyone who drinks that water will go on the path to happiness. Each preta gets fully satisfied while receiving seven *Magadhi tai*<sup>1</sup> of food and drink. All their negative karma and defilements are completely purified. They are liberated from the preta realm; their next rebirth will be in the upper realms.

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### *The benefits of this practice*

The essence of the benefits is: it stops hunger and thirst, purifies negative karma, and gives good rebirth. Merely by drinking, every single preta is liberated from the preta realm and will be reborn as a happy transmigrator being. Not only that, any man, woman, boy or girl, animal, preta, bird — any sentient being — who enters into or drinks that water will be purified of all their negative karma and defilements. They will go in the path of the happy transmigrator being.

The pretas see and drink the water by the power of the mantra. This practice was given by Buddha and the benefits were explained by Buddha. Of course it works, because Buddha gave the mantra and so it has power.

This practice includes the four different kinds of charity:

1. Charity of loving-kindness: wishing others to have happiness.
2. Charity of fearlessness: saving beings from the suffering of hunger and thirst, and from the suffering of the lower realms (by the power of the mantra.)
3. Miscellaneous (material) charity: giving nectar.
4. Charity of Dharma: reciting mantra for them.

## *Simple Water Blessing Practice*

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Either visualize oneself as the deity or visualize the deity Chenrezig above a jar of water. Recite Chenrezig's mantra many thousands of times and after each mala, blow on the water again and again. While reciting the mantra, visualize nectar flowing from the HUM at the heart of the deity into the water, transforming it into nectar. Finally, the deity absorbs into the water, whereby it increases and becomes extremely powerful, so powerful that whoever drinks it is purified of their disease and its cause, and also of their negative karma and obscurations.

All this should be done with the motivation of one-pointedly cherishing other sentient beings, with unbearable compassion for their suffering. Even with an impure motivation, the power of this mantra will benefit, will still cure the disease, so there is no question of the result if it is done with the good heart that only cherishes others. Especially if one does retreat or recites many thousands of this mantra every day, it is extremely beneficial for very dangerous diseases that cannot be cured by medicine. One can thus help many others.

Also, anyone who recites thousands of Chenrezig mantra every day, and especially those who have recited six million Chenrezig mantra, can help bring all the success for others through the various activities of pacifying, controlling, wrathful and peaceful actions. Especially, they can cure diseases without the need of surgery.

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**Short mantra:**

OM MANI PÄDME HUM

**Long mantra:**

NAMO RATNA TRAYAYA / NAMA ARYA JÑANA SAGARA /  
VAIROCHANA VYUHA RAJAYA / TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE  
SAMYAK SAMBUDDHAYA / NAMA SARVA TATHAGATABHYA /  
ARHATEBHYA / SAMYAK SAM BUDDHEBHYA/ NAMA ARYA  
AVALOKITESHVARAYA / BODHI SATTVAYA / MAHA SATTVAYA /  
MAHA KARUNI KAYA / TADYATHA / OM DARA DARA / DIRI  
DIRI / DURU DURU / ITTI VATE / CHALE CHALE / PRACHALE  
PRACHALE / KUSUME KUSUME VARE / ILI MILI CHITI JVALA  
APANAYE SVAHA

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[If one is reciting these mantras to bless water for someone who is ill, and] there are no quick results by reciting the long Chenrezig mantra, you can recite the mantra written here:

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OM PADMA SHVARIPHE NANPAR SHIG NAGANAN SARVA  
VIRITA HANA HANA VAJRA NA RAKSHA RAKSHA SVAHA

## ***Blessing Water by Touching***

When a person who has recited ten malas of OM MANI PÄDME HUM a day goes into a river or an ocean, the water that touches the person's body gets blessed, and this blessed water then purifies all the billions and billions of sentient beings in the water. So it's unbelievably beneficial; this person saves the animals in that water from the most unbelievable suffering of the lower realms.

When such a person walks down a road and the wind touches his or her body and then goes on to touch insects, their negative karma gets purified and causes them to have a good rebirth. Similarly, when such a person does massage or otherwise touches others' bodies, those people's negative karma also gets purified.

Such a person becomes meaningful to behold; being seen and touched becomes a means of liberating other sentient beings. This means that even the person's breath touching the bodies of other sentient beings purifies their negative karma. Anybody who drinks the water in which such a person has swum gets purified.

**Notes:**

1. *Tai* is the measure used in India to measure out rice or grains; *Magadha* is the area around Bodhgaya; the measure of a Magadhi tai is larger than tai measures in the rest of India. One tai equals twenty handfuls.

**Colophon:**

The above practices were dictated by Lama Zopa Rinpoche. *Blessing and Offering Water for the Benefit of Pretas and All Sentient Beings* scribed by Ven. Thubten Labdron, Kachoe Dechen Ling, November 2004. *Blessing Water by Touching* extracted from Lama Zopa Rinpoche's teaching, *The Benefits of Chanting OM MANI PÄDME HUM*, which can be viewed in full at <http://www.fpmt.org/teachings/lzr/ommanibenefits.asp>. These practices were put together in this current form and lightly edited by Thubten Mindrol, FPMT Education Department, June 2005. The mantras on pp. 114 and 116 have not been checked against the Tibetan.





# Mantras to Benefit Animals



## *The Five Powerful Mantras*

### *Mít rugpa Mantra*

Anyone who hears this mantra will not be born in the lower realms. If one recites this mantra 100,000 times and blows on water, sand, or mustard seeds, and then sprinkles this blessed substance on the body of anyone who has died, that being will immediately be liberated from the lower realms and be reborn in the higher realms. This mantra purifies the five uninterrupted negative karmas,<sup>1</sup> and the heavy negative karma of avoiding the Dharma. Simply seeing this mantra purifies all negative karma.

NAMO RATNA TRAYAYA OM KAMKANI KAMKANI ROCHANI  
ROCHANI TROTANI TROTANI TRASANI TRASANI PRATIHANA  
PRATIHANA SARVA KARMA PARAM PARA NI ME SARVA  
SATTVA NANCHA SVAHA

### *Namgyälma Mantra*

If animals hear this mantra, they will not be reborn in the lower realms. Hearing this mantra will ensure that this is their last animal rebirth. For humans, it makes this present life the last rebirth from a womb.

If one recites this mantra twenty-one times, then blows on yellow mustard seeds and throws them on the bones of anyone who

has accumulated much negative karma and has died, even if that being has been born in the lower realms, that being will be liberated from those unfortunate realms and reborn in the higher realms.

If one washes the body, wears clean clothes, and while living in the Eight Precepts,<sup>2</sup> recites this mantra 1,000 times, even if one is in danger of death due to the lifespan accorded by past karma finishing, the lifespan can be prolonged, the obscurations purified, and one is freed from disease. If somebody has a very heavy disease that cannot be diagnosed, doing this practice will liberate this person from the disease and will bring an end to all rebirth in the lower realms. After death, one will be reborn in a pure land.

If one puts this mantra in a stupa or on a banner inside a house or above the roof, the negative karma of insects or people who are touched by the shadow of the banner, stupa or house are purified and they are liberated from the lower realms. Wind that touches the stupa, banner, or statues that contain this mantra and then touches other beings purifies the karma of those beings and they will not be born in the lower realms. If this mantra is on a mountain, the negative karma of all insects or people who walk on that mountain is purified. If you have the Namgyälma mantra in your house, the house becomes purified and blessed, and the same applies to your car. Any insects or people who touch the car are purified. So there is no question about how much purification there is when sentient beings recite this mantra, touch this mantra, or keep it on their bodies.

### ***The Long Mantra:***

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE / SARVA TRAILOKYA  
 PRATIVISHISHTAYA / BUDDHAYA TE NAMA TADYATHA /  
 OM BHRUM BHRUM BHRUM SHODHAYA SHODHAYA /  
 VISHODHAYA VISHODHAYA / ASAMA SAMANTA / AVABHASA  
 SPHARANA GATI / GAGANA SVABHAVA VISHUDDHE /  
 ABHISHINCHANTU MAM / SARVA TATHAGATA SUGATA / VARA  
 VACHANA AMRITA ABHISHEKAIRA / MAHAMUDRA / MANTRA  
 PADE / AHARA AHARA / MAMA AYUR SAMDHARANI /

SHODHAYA SHODHAYA / VISHODHAYA VISHODHAYA /  
GAGANA SVABHAVA / VISHUDDHE USHNISHA VIJAYA /  
PARISHUDDHE SAHASRA RASMI SANCHO DITE / SARVA  
TATHAGATA AVALOKINI / SHAT PARAMITA PARIPURANI /  
SARVA TATHAGATA MATE DASHA BHUMI PRATISHTHITE /  
SARVA TATHAGATA HRIDAYA / ADHISHTHANA ADHISHTHITE /  
MUDRE MUDRE / MAHA MUDRE / VAJRA KAYA / SAMHATANA  
PARISHUDDHE / SARVA KARMA AVARANA VISHUDDHE  
PRATINI VARTAYA / MAMA AYUR VISHUDDHE / SARVA  
TATHAGATA SAMAYA / ADHISHTHANA ADHISHTHITE / OM  
MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNI / VIMUNI VIMUNI MAHA VIMUNI /  
MATI MATI MAHA MATI / MAMATI / SUMATI / TATHATA BHU  
DHA KOTI PARISHUDDHE / VISPHUTA BUDDHE SHUDDHE /  
HE HE JAYA JAYA VIJAYA VIJAYA / SMARA SMARA /  
SPHARA SPHARA / SPHARAYA SPHARAYA / SARVA BUDDHA  
ADHISHTHANA ADHISHTHITE / SHUDDHE SHUDDHE / BUDDHE  
BUDDHE / VAJRE VAJRE / MAHA VAJRE / SUVAJRE / VAJRA  
GARBHE / JAYA GARBHE / VIJAYA GARBHE / VAJRA JVALA  
GARBHE / VAJROD BHAVE / VAJRA SAMBHAVE / VAJRE  
VAJRINI / VAJRAMA BHAVATU MAMA SHARIRAM /  
SARVA SATTVA NANCHI KAYA PARISHUDDHIR BHAVATU  
ME SADA SARVA GATI / PARISHUDDHISHCHA / SARVA  
TATHAGATASHCHA MAM SAMASHVA SAYANTU BUDDHE  
BUDDHE / SIDDHYA SIDDHYA / BODHAYA BODHAYA /  
VIBODHAYA VIBODHAYA / MOCHAYA MOCHAYA /  
VIMOCCHAYA VIMOCCHAYA / SHODHAYA SHODHAYA /  
VISHODHAYA VISHODHAYA / SAMANTA RASMI PARISHUDDHE  
SARVA TATHAGATA HRIDAYA / ADHISHTHANA ADHISHTHITE /  
MUDRE MUDRE MAHA MUDRE / MANTRA PADAI SVAHA

OM BHRUM SVAHA / OM AMRITA AYUR DADAI SVAHA

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After reciting this, say a few times:

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OM AMITE / AMITODA BHAVE / AMITA VIKRANTE / AMITA GATRE /  
AMITA GAMINI / AMITA AYUR DADAI GAGANA KIRTI KARE /  
SARVA KLESHA KSHAYAM KARI YE SVAHA

## ***Zung of the Exalted Completely Pure Stainless Light<sup>3</sup>***

If you recite this mantra, anyone who hears your voice, touches your body, or touches your shadow is purified of the five negative karmas and the ten non-virtuous actions. You won't be harmed by spirit possession, poisons, elements, or black magic. All the buddhas will protect you, guide you, and nourish you.

Anyone who enters a car or house where this mantra is kept is purified of negative karma. By wearing the mantra, either carved or in a container, you constantly purify negative karma. Lama Zopa Rinpoche advises it is very good to put this mantra on the body of someone, animal or human, who is dead or dying.

NAMA NAWA NAWA TEENAN THATHAAGATA GANGA  
 NAM DIVA LUKAA NAN / KOTINI YUTA SHATA SAHA SRAA  
 NAN / OM VOVORI / TSARI NI\* TSARI / MORI GOLI TSALA  
 WAARI SVAHA

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\* Indicates higher tone on this syllable.

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## ***Lotus Pinnacle of Amogapasha (Tong gyu ye paí shag pa)***

Recalling this mantra just once has the power to pacify even the five uninterrupted negative karmas. It prevents rebirth in Avici, the heaviest of all the hell realms.

Reciting this mantra seven times each day creates the cause to be reborn in a pure realm and achieve hundreds of concentrations. If you recite this mantra and blow upon clothing, it purifies yourself and any other sentient being who touches it. If that clothing is made of silk, wool, or the skin of an animal, reciting this mantra helps that animal, no matter where it has been reborn, by purifying that animal's negative karma. If you recite this mantra and blow upon perfume or incense, whoever smells that perfume or incense will be purified of negative karma and cured of even contagious diseases.

If you recite this mantra, blow upon sand and throw that sand

onto a dead body, even if that being had broken vows and was reborn in a lower realm, they will be reborn in a higher realm.

If you put this mantra above doorways, beings who pass underneath it will purify one thousand eons of negative karma and not be reborn in the lower realms.

OM PÄDMO USHNISHA VIMALE HUM PHAT

### ***Kunrig Mantra***

Even if someone has already been born in the lower realms, if you do Kunrig practice or puja, they will be liberated from the lower realms.

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE / SARVA DURGATE PARI SHODHANI  
RAJAYA / TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE SAMYAKSAM BUDDHAYA /  
TADYATHA / OM SHODHANI / SHODHANI / SARVA PAPAM  
VISHODHANI / SHUDHE VISHUDHE / SARVA KARMA  
AVARANA VISHODHANI SVAHA



# Other Powerful Mantras to Recite to Animals

## *Chenrezig Mantras:*

### *Long mantra:*

NAMO RATNA TRAYAYA / NAMA ARYA JÑANA SAGARA /  
VAIROCHANA VYUHA RAJAYA / TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE  
SAMYAK SAMBUDDHAYA / NAMA SARVA TATHAGATABHYA /  
ARHATEBHYA / SAMYAK SAM BUDDHEBHYA/ NAMA ARYA  
AVALOKITESHVARAYA / BODHI SATTVAYA / MAHA SATTVAYA /  
MAHA KARUNI KAYA / TADYATHA / OM DARA DARA / DIRI  
DIRI / DURU DURU / ITTI VATE / CHALE CHALE / PRACHALE  
PRACHALE / KUSUME KUSUME VARE / ILI MILI CHITI JVALA  
APANAYE SVAHA

### *Short mantra:*

OM MANI PÄDME HUM

Reciting this mantra one time completely purifies the four defeats of breaking the four root vows of liberation for self [pratimoksha vows] and purifies the five uninterrupted negative karmas. All negative karma without exception is purified.

By reciting this mantra, one achieves the four qualities of being born in the Amitabha Buddha pure land and other pure lands. At the time of death, one will see Buddha and one never goes to the lower realms. One will be reborn in the pure land of Buddha or as a happy

migratory being. You will not experience suffering of body, speech and mind. You will be free from fears of vicious animals, cannibals, human beings, nonhuman beings and sickness.

If you recite ten malas a day and go into water to swim – it can be a river or ocean – the water that touches your body is blessed; then this blessed water purifies all sentient beings, however many billions of billions there are in the water. So it's unbelievably beneficial. If the wind touches your body and then goes on to touch insects, their negative karma gets purified and they have a good rebirth. Similarly, when that person does massage and touches others' bodies, the negative karma of those people gets purified. Such a person becomes meaningful to behold; being seen and touched by others all becomes a means to liberate other sentient beings.



## ***Maitreya Mantra***

If you recite this mantra, you will never be born in the lower realms. You will have continuous mental and material prosperity, will be born as a wheel-turning king in future lives for thousands of eons. You will abide in the ten virtuous actions.<sup>4</sup> Even if you are not enlightened during Buddha Shakymuni's time, you will be born as one of the first disciples at the time of Maitreya Buddha. You will receive a prediction of your enlightenment from Maitreya Buddha.

### ***Root Mantra (Mantra of Buddha Maitreya's Promise):***

NAMO RATNA TRAYAYA / NAMO BHAGAVATE  
SHAKYAMUNIYE/ TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE SAMYAKSAM  
BUDDHAYA / TADYATHA/ OM AJITE AJITE APARAJITE /  
AJITAÑCHAYA HARA HARA MAITRI AVALOKITE KARA KARA  
MAHA SAMAYA SIDDHI BHARA BHARA MAHA BODHI MĀNDA  
VIJA SMARA SMARA AHSMA KAM SAMAYA BODHI BODHI  
MAHA BODHI SVAHA

### ***Heart Mantra:***

OM MOHI MOHI MAHA MOHI SVAHA

### ***Near Heart Mantra:***

OM MUNI MUNI SMARA SVAHA

## ***Medicine Buddha Mantra***

Buddha Shakymuni told Ananda that anyone who hears the Medicine Buddha mantra would not be born in the lower realms. Reciting this mantra every day brings success in life, eliminates all suffering and brings every benefit up to enlightenment.

### **Long mantra:**

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE BHAISHAJYE / GURU BAIDURYA /  
PRABHA RAJAYA / TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE SAMYAKSAM  
BUDDHAYA / TADYATHA / OM BHAISHAJYE BHAISHAJYE  
MAHA BHAISHAJYE [BHAISHAJYE ] / RAJA SAMUDGATE  
SVAHA

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### **Common pronunciation:**

OM NAMO BAGAWATAY BEKANDZAY / GURU BAIDURYA/  
PRABA RADZAYA / TATAGATAYA / ARHATAY SAMYAKSAM  
BUDDHAYA / TA YA TA / OM BEKANDZAY BEKANDZAY MAHA  
BEKANDZAY [BEKANDZAY] / RADZA SAMUGATAY SOHA

### **Short mantra:**

TADYATHA / OM BHAISHAJYE BHAISHAJYE MAHA  
BHAISHAJYE [BHAISHAJYE] / RAJA SAMUDGATE SVAHA

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### **Common pronunciation:**

TA YA TA / OM BEKANDZAY BEKANDZAY MAHA BEKANDZAY  
[BEKANDZAY] / RADZA SAMUGATAY SOHA

## ***Stainless Pinnacle Mantra (Amoghapasha)***

The Stainless Pinnacle mantra is extremely powerful and also a great healing mantra. Even if a fully ordained monk broke his root vows and goes to the lower realms, this mantra would release him from the lower realms.

OM NAMA STRAIYA DHVIKANAM / SARVA TATHAGATA HRI  
DAYA GARBHE JVALA JVALA / DHARMADHATU GARBHE/  
SAMBHARA MAMA AYU SAMSHODHAYA MAMA SARVA  
PAPAM / SARVA TATHAGATA SAMANTOSHNI SHA VIMALE  
VISHUDDHE / HUM HUM HUM HUM / AM VAM SAM JA SVAHA

## Padmasambhava's Mantra

OM AH HUM VAJRA GURU PADMA SIDDHI HUM

“The vajra guru mantra is not just my single essence mantra; it is the very essence or life force of all the deities of the four classes of tantra, of all the nine yantras, and all of the 84,000 collections of Dharma teachings.”

— Padmasambhava

From the text *The Syllable by Syllable Commentary Explaining the Benefits of the Vajra Guru Mantra* dictated by Padmasambhava to Yeshe Tsogyal and revealed by Karma Lingpa in the fourteenth century:

If this mantra is repeated as much as possible, it will avert all the negative forces of disease, famine, unrest, bad harvests and all bad omens and indications in all the countries of the world, such that the rain will fall in a timely manner for the crops so there will always be a plentiful supply of water for agriculture and for human and animal life, and all regions and areas will experience prosperity and auspicious conditions.

In this life, in future lives, and in the intermediate state between death and rebirth, these individuals who practice in this way will meet with me again and again. Have no doubt of this.

If this mantra is recited merely a hundred times a day without interruption, one will become attractive to others and will effortlessly come by food and wealth and the necessities of life. If one recites it 1,000 or 10,000 times on a daily basis, one is able to literally overwhelm others with one's brilliance, in the sense of becoming very charismatic and influential in exerting a positive influence over others, and one will gain unhindered force of blessings and spiritual power. If one recites the man-

tra 3 million or 7 million times, one is never separate from the buddhas of the three times, and one becomes inseparable from me.

In the most excellent cases, individuals will attain the final level of attainment in this lifetime. On a more middling level, at the moment of death, the mother and child aspects of radiant luminosity will meet. At the very least, individuals will behold my face in the bardo state and all the appearances of the bardo state will be free in their own ground such that these individuals will be reborn on the continent of Ngayab and from that vantage point, be able to accomplish an immeasurable amount of benefit to beings.

All sentient beings who see, hear, or remember this mantra will definitely be established in the ranks of the masculine and feminine awareness-holders.

Even if you are not able to recite the mantra for whatever reasons, you should mount it on the top of a victory banner. Even when the wind touches it, and that wind touches sentient beings, it will free them without a doubt. Alternately, you may inscribe it in clay or carve it in stone. This will also guard the path upon which these syllables are placed and guard that region from malevolent effects. You may also write this mantra out in gold ink on dark blue paper and wear it as an amulet. When you die, if this amulet is burned with your corpse, your consciousness will be transferred to the realms of supreme bliss. The benefits of writing out or reading or reciting this mantra defy any accurate measure or defy any standard measurement that could be applied.



## **Green Tara Mantras**

### **Short mantra:**

OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SVAHA

### **Long mantra:**

NAMO RATNA TRAYAYA / NAMA ARYA AVALOKITESHVARAYA/  
BODHISATTVAYA / MAHA SATTVAYA / MAHA KARUNIKAYA /  
TADYATHA / OM TARE TUTTARE SARVA DUSHTAM / PRA  
DUSHTAM / MAMA KRITHE / JAMBHAYA / STAMBHAYA /  
MOHAYA / BHANDHAYA / HUM HUM HUM / PHAT PHAT PHAT/  
SARVA DUSHTAM STAMBHANI TARE SVAHA

## Prayer to Buddha Rinchen Tsugtorchen

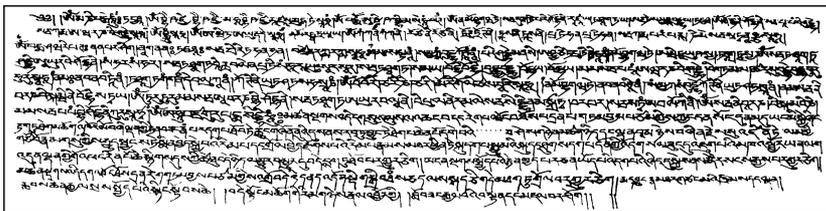
If you recite the prostration prayer to Buddha Rinchen Tsugtorchen, humans or animals who hear it will not be reborn in the lower realms. This is the particular purpose of this buddha.

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG  
DAG PAR DZOG PAI SANG GYÄ RINCHHEN TSUG TOR CHEN  
CHHAG TSHÄL LO

## Powerful mantras for the time of death

The powerful mantras below can be laid on the body of someone who is dying or has died. These should be placed with the mantra side down on the body. This will help that person or animal have a peaceful death and find a beneficial rebirth in the next life.

You may photocopy this page and cut out the mantra sheet, or email FPMT Education Department for a sheet containing ten of these mantras ([materials@fpmt.org](mailto:materials@fpmt.org)).



**Notes:**

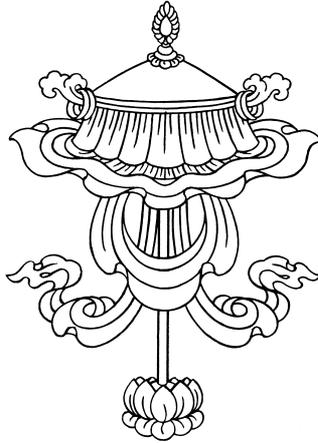
1. The five uninterrupted negative actions are killing one's mother, killing one's father, killing an arhat, intentionally wounding a buddha, and causing disunity among the Sangha. These actions are called "uninterrupted" because committing even one of them causes rebirth in the Hell Without Respite — the hell realm with the greatest suffering, immediately upon death, without spending time in the intermediate state.
2. The Eight Mahayana Precepts are a set of vows taken for twenty-four hours. Taking these vows purifies negative karma and accumulates much merit. Please refer to *The Direct and Unmistaken Method of Purifying and Protecting Yourself*, available from Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive at [www.lamayeshe.com/acatalog/dum.html](http://www.lamayeshe.com/acatalog/dum.html).
3. This mantra was formerly called Stainless Beam. The title has been changed at the request of Lama Zopa Rinpoche.
4. The ten virtuous actions (opposite of the ten non-virtuous actions) are maintaining or saving life, giving, abstaining from sexual misconduct, telling the truth, unifying speech, kind speech, meaningful speech, generosity, good will and correct view.

**Colophon:**

The mantras and benefits of these mantras appear here as taught by Lama Zopa Rinpoche. The benefits of the Padmasambhava mantra are from a treasure text dictated by Padmasambhava to Yeshe Tsogyal; translator unknown. The powerful mantras for the time of death were first given by Lama Zopa Rinpoche to Cham Tse Ling center in Hong Kong to be printed for students. The mantras on the sheet are as follows: Chenrezig—short (1x), Medicine Buddha (2x), Wish-Granting Wheel (Amoghapasha) (3x), Kunrig (4x), Mitrugpa (5x), Parnashawari (6x), Zung of the Exalted Completely Pure Stainless Light 1 (7x), Zung of the Exalted Completely Pure Light 2 (8x), Vishkambini (9x), Guru Rinpoche (10x).



# Texts to Recite for the Benefit of Animals



The essence of the Buddha's 84, 000 teachings are the teachings of the *Prajñāparamita*. With the *Prajñāparamita* sutras, there are different volumes, the elaborate version which has twelve volumes, the middle version which has three volumes, and the short version which has 80,000 stanzas. The very heart of that is called the *Heart of Wisdom*. This is the teaching that Buddha cherishes the most because it is the method to release sentient beings from the suffering of samsara, and its root, ignorance. When there is time, it is good to recite the whole prayer. If not, recite just the mantra.

## *The Heart of the Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*

*Ārya-bhagavati-prajñāpāramitā-hṛidaya-sūtra*

Thus did I hear at one time. The Bhagavan was dwelling on Mass of Vultures Mountain in Rajagriha together with a great community of monks and a great community of bodhisattvas. At that time, the Bhagavan was absorbed in the concentration on the categories of phenomena called “Profound Perception.”

Also, at that time, the bodhisattva mahasattva arya Avalokiteshvara looked upon the very practice of the profound perfection of wisdom and beheld those five aggregates also as empty of inherent nature.

Then, through the power of Buddha, the venerable Shariputra said this to the bodhisattva mahasattva arya Avalokiteshvara: “How should any son of the lineage train who wishes to practice the activity of the profound perfection of wisdom?”

He said that and the bodhisattva mahasattva arya Avalokiteshvara said this to the venerable Sharadvatiputra. “Shariputra, any son of the lineage or daughter of the lineage who wishes to practice the activity of the profound perfection of wisdom should look upon it like this, correctly and repeatedly beholding those five aggregates also as empty of inherent nature.

“Form is empty. Emptiness is form. Emptiness is not other than form; form is also not other than emptiness. In the same way, feeling, discrimination, compositional factors, and consciousness are empty.

“Shariputra, likewise, all phenomena are emptiness; without characteristic; unproduced, unceased; stainless, not without stain; not deficient, not fulfilled.

“Shariputra, therefore, in emptiness there is no form, no feeling, no discrimination, no compositional factors, no consciousness; no eye, no ear, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind; no visual form, no sound, no odor, no taste, no object of touch, and no phenomenon.

"There is no eye element and so on up to and including no mind element and no mental consciousness element. There is no ignorance, no extinction of ignorance, and so on up to and including no aging and death and no extinction of aging and death. Similarly, there is no suffering, origination, cessation, and path; there is no exalted wisdom, no attainment, and also no non-attainment.

"Shariputra, therefore, because there is no attainment, bodhisattvas rely on and dwell in the perfection of wisdom, the mind without obscuration and without fear. Having completely passed beyond error, they reach the end-point of nirvana. All the buddhas who dwell in the three times also manifestly, completely awaken to unsurpassable, perfect, complete enlightenment in reliance on the perfection of wisdom.

"Therefore, the mantra of the perfection of wisdom, the mantra of great knowledge, the unsurpassed mantra, the mantra equal to the unequaled, the mantra that thoroughly pacifies all suffering, should be known as truth since it is not false. The mantra of the perfection of wisdom is declared:

TADYATHA [OM] GATE GATE PARAGATE PARASAMGATE  
BODHI SVAHA

"Shariputra, the bodhisattva mahasattva should train in the profound perfection of wisdom like that."

Then the Bhagavan arose from that concentration and commended the bodhisattva mahasattva arya Avalokiteshvara saying: "Well said, well said, son of the lineage, it is like that. It is like that; one should practice the profound perfection of wisdom just as you have indicated; even the tathagatas rejoice."

The Bhagavan having thus spoken, the venerable Sharadvatiputra, the bodhisattva mahasattva arya Avalokiteshvara, those surrounding in their entirety along with the world of gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas were overjoyed and highly praised that spoken by the Bhagavan.

**Colophon:**

*The Heart of the Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* has been translated from the Tibetan, consulting the Indian and Tibetan commentaries and previous good translations, by Gelong Thubten Tsultrim (George Churinoff), the first day of Saka Dawa, 1999, at Tushita Meditation Centre, Dharamsala, India. Amended March 8, 2001, in the New Mexico desert.

# Lam-Rím Prayers



To help guide [animals] on the foundation of the path to liberation and enlightenment, it is beneficial to recite any of the short lam-rim prayers to plant the seed of the whole path – for example, the *Foundation of All Good Qualities*, found on p. 16. (See *Essential Buddhist Prayers*, Vol. 1, for an additional collection of alternative lam-rim prayers for recitation.)

# *Dependent Arising*

## *A Praise of the Buddha*

*by Lama Tsongkhapa*

Homage to my guru, the youthful Manjushri!

Seeing and speaking of dependent arising,  
He was wisdom supreme, teacher supreme.  
I bow to him who knew and taught  
the all-conquering dependent arising.

Of the suffering existing in the world,  
its root is none other than ignorance.  
The understanding to kill this root  
you said is none other than dependent arising.

How could those of intelligence not see  
dependent arising as the heart of your doctrine.  
Where is greater praise of you, therefore,  
than in praise of dependent arising?

“Whatever depends on circumstance is empty of nature.”  
What greater teaching is there than this!  
The foolish, however, seize on it  
and only tighten chains of extreme views,  
while for the wise it cuts entangled nets of fabrication.

This teaching is not seen in the works of others,  
the title of Teacher, therefore, is yours alone.

Given to others it is but the hollow flattery  
of a fox being hailed a lion.

Greatest of teachers! Greatest protector!  
Speaker supreme! Guide supreme!  
I bow to the teacher of dependent arising!

Benevolent teacher, you taught to help all living beings.  
Emptiness is the essence of those teachings,  
its highest proof dependent arising.

Those claiming it proves the opposite,  
those denying its very existence,  
how will they grasp your teachings?

For you, emptiness seen as dependent arising  
does not render as contradictory  
emptiness of self-nature and ability to function.

To hold to the opposite, however —  
that with emptiness there can be no function  
and with function, no emptiness —  
is to fall into a dangerous trap.

In your teachings, therefore,  
knowledge of dependent arising is highly praised,  
but it will not be known  
to views of self or nonexistence.

Nondependence, you have said, is like the sky flower.  
Nondependence, therefore, does not exist.  
Anything existent by its own nature  
contradicts existence by cause and circumstance.

Nothing is not dependently arising;  
nothing, therefore, is not empty of self-nature.

Self-nature, you said, cannot be destroyed.  
Phenomena, therefore, possessed of nature,  
would render nirvana impossible.  
Samsara likewise would have no end.

You spoke, therefore, with the roar of a lion  
again and again on this absence of nature,  
and amid the assemblies of the wise,  
who dared to challenge you?

The absence of self-nature anywhere,  
this arising because of that,  
both presentations are true,  
and what need to say that both come together  
without contradiction.

Moreover, by reason of dependent arising,  
one will not depend on extreme views.  
This is the excellent teaching, my protector,  
that renders you orator supreme.

All this by nature is empty, and this arises from that.  
Such realizations do not hinder but mutually complement.  
What is more wonderful, more astonishing than that?  
Praising you this way is praise indeed;  
all other praise is lesser.

That some, hostile to you,  
held as the slaves of ignorance,  
are unable to bear the sounds of no self-nature  
comes as no surprise.

That others, accepting dependent arising,  
the crown jewel of your teaching,  
are unable to tolerate the roar of emptiness  
does surprise me.

If by the very name of dependent arising,  
gateway supreme to no self-nature,  
self-nature is asserted, how will they be led  
to that noble path that pleases you,  
that incomparable highway well-traveled by exalted beings?

Self-nature — real and nondependent;  
dependent arising — unreal and of dependent nature;  
how, without contradiction, could these two ever  
come together?

Consequently, that which dependently arises  
has forever been empty and void of nature.  
Things, however, do not appear that way.  
All this, you have said, is therefore like an illusion.

“Others may attack your teaching  
but they will never be any match.”  
Such claims are validated by dependent arising.  
How? Because its explanation casts away all possibility  
of flawed assertion and faulty denial  
of all phenomena evident or hidden.

This very path of dependent arising,  
the reason for seeing your words as unparalleled,  
generates conviction in the validity of other teachings.

Having seen the truth, you taught it.  
Those following you will leave all troubles far behind,  
for they will cut to the root of every fault.

Those, however, outside your teachings,  
though they practice long and hard,  
are those who beckon back faults,  
for they are welded to views of self.

Ah! When the wise see the difference,  
how could they not revere you  
from the very depths of their hearts!

What need to talk of many teachings!  
The simplest conviction in just a single part  
brings on the greatest of joy!

Alas! My mind is ruined by ignorance!  
For so long have I gone for refuge  
to this great store of meritorious qualities,  
yet not a single one do I possess.

As yet, however, my life has not slipped  
between the jaws of the Lord of Death  
and, having a modicum of faith in you,  
I do consider myself fortunate.

Among teachers, the teacher of dependent arising,  
among knowledge, knowledge of dependent arising.  
These two, like a mighty conqueror in the world,  
you know to be supreme, where others do not.

All that you have taught  
proceeds from dependent arising;  
its purpose, the transcending of suffering.  
Nothing you do, therefore, is not for peace.

Ah! Your teachings!  
Those whose ears they fall upon will all find peace.  
Who, therefore, would not hold them dear?

Across their breadth, no contradiction;  
opponents' arguments all destroyed—

fulfilling the two aims of living beings.  
My joy in these teachings grows and grows.

For this knowledge you gave away—  
over countless eons again and again—  
your loved ones, your possessions,  
sometimes your body, other times your life.

Seeing such qualities  
I am drawn by your mind  
like a fish on the hook.  
Not hearing your Dharma from you in person,  
such misfortune!

By the pain of such sorrow,  
my mind will never give you up,  
like the mind of a mother for her precious child.

And yet as I think on your words,  
hearing you talk of this and that,  
teacher with a voice melodic as Brahma,  
resplendent with features of perfection  
encircled by garlands of light,  
your enlightened form reflects in my mind,  
like the cool light of the moon,  
medicine for my feverish torment.  
Those unwise in this wonderful doctrine  
were confused and entangled like plaited grass.

Seeing this, I followed with diligence the great scholars,  
seeking again and again your thoughts,  
poring over many works of our and others' tradition,  
yet still my mind was torn by doubts.

When, with the kindness of my lamas, I saw  
this unsurpassed vehicle of yours leaving behind  
extremes of existence and nonexistence,  
elucidated by the prophesized Nagarjuna,  
his lotus grove illuminated by the moonlight  
of the glorious Chandrakirti's teachings,  
whose globe of stainless wisdom moved  
freely through the sky of your words,  
dispelling the darkness that holds to extremes,  
outshining the stars of false speakers —  
it was then that my mind found its peace.

Of all Buddha's deeds his words were the greatest,  
and they were words of dependent arising.  
Let the wise, therefore, remember him this way.

Becoming ordained into the way of the Buddha  
by not being lax in study of his words,  
and by yoga practice of great resolve,  
this monk devotes himself to that great purveyor of truth.

Due to the kindness of my lamas,  
I have met the teachings of the greatest of teachers.  
I dedicate this virtue, therefore, for every living being  
to be nourished by true spiritual friends.

I pray that the teachings of he who is solely benevolent  
remain unscattered by the winds of false views until the  
end of time,  
and with faith in the Buddha gained from understanding  
their essential nature, may they pervade forever.

In all my births, even at the cost of my life,  
may I never falter nor shrink from working

for the wonderful doctrine of the mighty Buddha,  
who showed clearly the nature of dependent arising.

I pray that I pass my days and nights  
in thinking how I might spread this Dharma,  
born from the heroic perseverance  
in the face of countless hardships  
of this supreme guide.

When I pursue these endeavors wholeheartedly and sincerely,  
may I be supported constantly by Brahma, Indra, Mahakala,  
the four guardians of the world, and all other protectors.

**Colophon:**

Reprinted with permission from *The Splendor of an Autumn Moon: The Devotional Verse of Tsongkhapa*, translated and introduced by Gavin Kilty, Wisdom Publications, 2001. Used with permission. *The Splendor of an Autumn Moon: The Devotional Verse of Tsongkhapa* can be ordered directly from Wisdom Publications at: [www.wisdompubs.org/products/0861711920.cfm](http://www.wisdompubs.org/products/0861711920.cfm).

## *The Noble Sutra on Entering the Great City of Vaishali*

*Aryavipulepravesh Mahasutrana*

Homage to all the buddhas and bodhisattvas!

Thus have I heard. At one time the Bhagavan was residing in a boat-house in the middle of a swamp. Then the Bhagavan spoke to the venerable Ananda: “Ananda, let’s proceed to where the city of Vaishali is.” “Let’s do accordingly, Venerable Sir.” Thus replying, Ananda followed the instructions of the Bhagavan.

Then the Bhagavan traveled through the country of Libriza, arrived at its city of Vaishali, and was sojourning at the Mango Grove of the city of Vaishali.

Then, at that time the Bhagavan spoke to Ananda: “Ananda, go into the city of Vaishali. Place your feet on the doorsills of homes and recite these secret mantras and these verses:

BISARATA / BISARATA / BISARATA / BISARATA<sup>1</sup>

“The Buddha who has loving-kindness towards the world spoke thus! It is the noble intent of all the buddhas, the intent of all the pratyekabuddhas, the intent of all the arhats and the intent of all those on the path of training. It is the intent of all hearers, the intent of all those who abide by truthful speech, the intent of Dharma teachings, the intent of Brahma kings, the intent of individual Brahmas, the intent of Shiva of the desire realm, the intent of Indra, the

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<sup>1</sup> BISARATA means to pacify thoroughly, in this case to pacify epidemics.

intent of the king of demigods, the intent of individual demigods, the intent of messengers of demi-gods and the intent of host of spirits!

BISARATA / BISARATA / BISARATA / BISARATA

“The Buddha who has loving-kindness towards the world spoke thus!

MUNCHATA / MUNCHATA<sup>2</sup>

“Go away! May all epidemics be thoroughly pacified!

NIRGACCHATA / NIRGACCHATA / NIRGACCHATA /  
NIRGACCHATA<sup>3</sup>

“The Buddha, the Great God, the God of gods, the teacher of gods has arrived! Therefore, gods together with Indra, gods together with Brahma, gods together with Wangdak and people together with their kings will also come. The kings of the four quarters will also come. Hundreds and thousands of gods, the kings of demigods and hundreds and thousands of demigods will also come. Hundreds and thousands of evil spirits who have great devotion to the Bhagavan Buddha will also come for the benefit of all sentient beings. These [gods and spirits] may bring about great harm to you. As such:

NIRGACCHATA / NIRGACCHATA / NIRGACCHATA /  
NIRGACCHATA

“Leave immediately! Among them, may those who harbor hatred be vanquished! May those who possess loving minds and who do not want to harm but rather want to engage in protecting others stay and also assume physical forms!

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<sup>2</sup> MUNCHATA means depart, commanding spirits carrying epidemics to depart or go away.

<sup>3</sup> NIRGACCHATA also means to depart.

“The Buddha who has loving-kindness towards the world spoke:

SUMU SUMU SUMU SUMU / SUMURU SUMURU SUMURU  
SUMURU SUMURU SUMURU SUMURU SUMURU / MURU MURU  
MURU MURU MURU MURU MURU MURU MURU / MIRI MIRI  
MIRI MIRI MIRI MIRI MIRI MIRI MIRI / MURU MIRI MURU RIMI  
MURU RIMI MURU RIMI MURU RIMI / MURU MIRI MURU RIMI  
MURU RIMI MURU RIMI / MURU MIRI MURU / MIRI MURU MIRI  
MURU MIRI / MIRU RI TI / /RI RI RI RI RI RI / RII RII RII RII RII  
RII/ TIMIRI/ MIRI MIRI MIRI MIRI MIRI MIRI / MIRITI HASIMIRITI  
MIIRITI MITI SISII SIMII / KAMKARA KAMKARATA KAMKARA  
KAMKARATSA/ KAMKARAA KAMKARAA KAMKARAA  
KAMKARAA KAMKARAA KAMKARAA KAMKARAA  
KAMKARAA KAMKARAA KAMKARAA KAMKARAA  
KAMKARAA KAMKARAA / KAMKA ROTIITI KURI SHO KAM  
KARAA / KAMKARISHI / RI RI RI RI RI RI / TIRI TEPHU SVA /  
RIPHU RIPHU RIPHU RIPHU RIPHU RIPHU RIPHU RIPHU / NAA  
THAA NAA NAA THAA THAA RIPHU RIPHU / NIRGACHATA  
RIPHU RIPHU NIRGACHATA PAALAYATA RIPHU RIPHU  
PAALAYATA

“The Buddha who has a compassionate mind towards the world, who possesses exceptional intent to benefit all beings, who abides in love, who abides in compassion, who abides in joy, and who abides in equanimity will be coming.

KSHI TRAM NA NIRGA CHHATA SVAHA

“The intents of these mantras and verses the Buddha taught through his supreme enlightened wisdom and through the power of truth, to the gods and spirits have been realized!

He who has thoroughly eliminated jealousy,  
Without any stains,

And whose mind is subdued without any harmful intent:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

The guide who leads sentient beings  
On the path of liberation  
And who teaches all aspects of the Dharma:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

The teacher on whom all migratory beings rely,  
And who, for the sake of all sentient beings,  
Attained the state of bliss:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

The Protector who, with a loving mind,  
Looks after all these sentient beings eternally  
Like His only son:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

Who, for those sentient beings circling in samsara,  
Has become an object that can be relied upon,  
And who has become an island, a shoulder, and a friend:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

For whom all phenomena have become objects of direct cognition,  
Who is pure and does not mislead,  
And maintains the purity of his stainless speech:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

The Great Hero whose birth  
Brought auspiciousness and meaning,  
Accomplishing many purposes:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

Who, when He was born,  
The earth together with its forests mightily shook,

Bringing joy and happiness to all beings:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

When he attained the essence of Buddhahood,  
Six times the earth mightily shook,  
Making the demonic forces fearful:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

When turning the wheel of Dharma,  
His teachings on the noble truths  
Were powerful and melodious:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

The stunner who defeated all heretics  
With Dharma teachings  
And conquered all crowds:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

May the Buddha bring you happiness and benefit!  
May the happiness and well-being of Indra together with gods  
And the happiness and well-being of all classes of spirits  
Eternally be bestowed upon you!

By the merit and power of the buddhas,  
And because of the intents of gods,  
May whatever aspirations you have  
Be fulfilled today!

May you, the two-legged ones, have happiness and well-being!  
May you, the four-legged ones, have happiness and well-being!  
May those of you who are traveling have happiness and well-being!  
May those of you who are returning also have happiness and  
well-being!

May you enjoy happiness and well-being during the day and during  
the night!

May you enjoy happiness and well-being at noon!

May you enjoy happiness and well-being at all times!

May you not engage in negative actions!

The Buddha has come,

Completely surrounded by thousands of gods.

As such, may those with intent to harm depart!

May those with compassion remain!

By the power of the truth of the words of the Buddha,  
Of pratyekabuddhas, arhats, and those on the path of learning,  
May those who destroy the well-being of this world  
Disappear in this very city!

May all beings and insects,

All spirits and all of you

Enjoy only happiness!

May everyone be pacified of all diseases!

May everyone see goodness

And may none engage in negativities!

Those spirits who have arrived here

Dwelling on the land and in the space,

May you have loving compassion towards the humans!

May you also practice Dharma day and night!"

Thus the Buddha spoke. The Venerable Ananda responded, "I will do accordingly." Thus, in accordance with the instructions of the Bhagavan, he went to the city of Vaishali. Placing his feet on the doorills of homes, he uttered these mantras and these verses:

BISARATA / BISARATA / BISARATA / BISARATA

"The Buddha who has loving-kindness towards the world spoke thus! It is the noble intent of all the buddhas, the intent of all the pratyek-abuddhas, the intent of all the arhats, and the intent of all those on the path of training. It is the intent of all hearers, the intent of all those who abide by truthful speech, the intent of Dharma teachings, the intent of Brahma kings, the intent of individual Brahmas, the intent of Shiva of the desire realm, the intent of Indra, the intent of the king of demigods, the intent of individual demigods, the intent of messengers of demigods, and the intent of host of spirits!

BISARATA / BISARATA / BISARATA / BISARATA

"The Buddha who has loving-kindness towards the world spoke thus!

MUNCHATA / MUNCHATA

"Go away! May all epidemics be thoroughly pacified!

NIRGACCHATA / NIRGACCHATA / NIRGACCHATA /  
NIRGACCHATA

"The Buddha, the Great God, the God of gods, the teacher of gods has arrived! Therefore, gods together with Indra, gods together with Brahma, gods together with Wangdak, and people together with their kings will also come. The kings of the four quarters will also come. Hundreds and thousands of gods, the kings of demigods and hundreds and thousands of demigods will also come. Hundreds and thousands of evil spirits who have great devotion to the Bhagavan Buddha will also come for the benefit of all sentient beings. These [gods and spirits] may bring about great harm to you. As such:

NIRGACCHATA / NIRGACCHATA / NIRGACCHATA /  
NIRGACCHATA

"Leave immediately! Among them, may those who harbor hatred be vanquished! May those who possess loving minds and who do not want to harm, but rather want to engage in protecting others stay and also assume physical forms!

"The Buddha who has loving-kindness towards the world spoke:

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SUMURU SUMURU SUMURU SUMURU SUMURU / MURU MURU  
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RII/ TIMIRI/ MIRI MIRI MIRI MIRI MIRI MIRI / MIRITI HASIMIRITI  
MIIRITI MITI SISII SIMIII / KAMKARA KAMKARATA KAMKARA  
KAMKARATSA/ KAMKARAA KAMKARAA KAMKARAA  
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KAMKARAA KAMKARAA / KAMKA ROTIITI KURI SHO KAM  
KARAA / KAMKARISHI / RI RI RI RI RI RI / TIRI TEPHU SVA /  
RIPHU RIPHU RIPHU RIPHU RIPHU RIPHU RIPHU / NAA  
THAA NAA NAA THAA THAA RIPHU RIPHU / NIRGACHATA  
RIPHU RIPHU NIRGACHATA PAALAYATA RIPHU RIPHU  
PAALAYATA

"The Buddha who has compassionate mind towards the world, who possesses exceptional intent to benefit all beings, who abides in love, who abides in compassion, who abides in joy, and who abides in equanimity will be coming.

KSHI TRAM NA NIRGA CHHATA SVAHA

"The intents of these mantras and verses the Buddha taught through his supreme enlightened wisdom and through the power of truth to

the gods and spirits have been realized!

He who has thoroughly eliminated jealousy,  
Without any stains,  
And whose mind is subdued without any harmful intent:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

The guide who leads sentient beings  
On the path of liberation  
And who teaches all aspects of the Dharma:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

The teacher on whom all migratory beings rely,  
And who, for the sake of all sentient beings,  
Attained the state of bliss:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

The Protector who, with a loving mind,  
Looks after all these sentient beings eternally  
Like His only son:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

Who, for those sentient beings circling in samsara,  
Has become an object that can be relied upon,  
And who has become an island, a shoulder, and a friend:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

For whom all phenomena have become objects of direct cognition,  
Who is pure and does not mislead,  
And maintains the purity of his stainless speech:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

The Great Hero whose birth  
Brought auspiciousness and meaning,

Accomplishing many purposes:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

Who, when He was born,  
The earth together with its forests mightily shook,  
Bringing joy and happiness to all beings:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

When he attained the essence of Buddhahood,  
Six times the earth mightily shook,  
Making the demonic forces fearful:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

When turning the wheel of Dharma,  
His teachings on the noble truths  
Were powerful and melodious:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

The stunner who defeated all heretics  
With Dharma teachings  
And conquered all crowds:  
May He bring happiness and benefit to you!

May the Buddha bring you happiness and benefit!  
May the happiness and well-being of Indra together with gods  
And the happiness and well-being of all classes of spirits  
Eternally be bestowed upon you!

By the merit and power of the buddhas,  
And because of the intents of gods,  
May whatever aspirations you have  
Be fulfilled today!

May you, the two-legged ones, have happiness and well-being!  
May you, the four-legged ones, have happiness and well-being!

May those of you who are traveling have happiness and well-being!

May those of you who are returning also have happiness and well-being!

May you enjoy happiness and well-being during the day and during the night!

May you enjoy happiness and well-being at noon!

May you enjoy happiness and well-being at all times!

May you not engage in negative actions!

The Buddha has come,

Completely surrounded by thousands of gods.

As such, may those with intent to harm depart!

May those with compassion remain!

By the power of the truth of the words of the Buddha,

Of pratyekabuddhas, arhats, and those on the path of learning,

May those who destroy the well-being of this world

Disappear in this very city!

May all beings and insects,

All spirits and all of you

Enjoy only happiness!

May everyone be pacified of all diseases!

May everyone see goodness

And may none engage in negativities!

Those spirits who have arrived here

Dwelling on the land and in the space,

May you have loving compassion towards the humans!

May you also practice Dharma day and night!

*Thus ends Aryavipulepravesh Mahasutrana: The Noble Sutra on  
On Entering the Great City of Vaishali.*

**Original Colophon:**

This was translated, edited, and finalized by the Indian abbot Surendra Bodhi and Bandhe Yeshe De, the Tibetan translator from Zhuchen.

**Colophon:**

Translated into English from the Tibetan original by Tenzin Bhuchung Shastri, June 2008, Guhyasamaja Center, Virginia, USA. Lightly edited, with mantras checked and corrected according to the original Tibetan text, by Ven. Gyalten Mindrol, FPMT Education Department, July 2008. All mistakes are the fault of the editor.



# Dedication Prayers from Lama Zopa Rinpoche

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Make prayers to achieve bodhichitta towards [these animals] and all sentient beings. Make a prayer to realize emptiness.

Pray that all beings, when they die are immediately, as quickly as possible, born in a pure land or obtain a precious human re-birth, meet a perfectly qualified Mahayana guru and practice the path and obtain all the realizations.

Then dedicate in the following way:

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Due to the merits of the three times created by me, all the buddhas and bodhisattvas, and all other sentient beings, wherever I am — whatever universe, world, country, area, or place, just by my presence in that universe, world, country, area, or place, may all beings living there purify their negative karma and never be born in the evil gone realms.

May my presence cause them to have faith in refuge and karma and to generate loving-kindness, compassion, and bodhichitta immediately in their hearts, to immediately heal all their sicknesses, and free them from spirit harm. May my presence cause great bliss in the hearts of those affected by depression and people suffering from relationship problems. May it fill their hearts with incredible joy, all peace and happiness.

May my presence cause their suffering to be pacified and for those needing money to find wealth. May my presence cause them to realize that the purpose of their lives is to actualize the path to enlightenment and to have a most meaningful life by actualizing the path.

May those looking for a guru find a most qualified guru. May those wanting teachings receive perfect teachings and achieve realizations in that time. May those wishing to do retreat find a meditation place and achieve all realizations. May beings never experience war, disease, torture, poverty, dangers of fire, water, earthquakes, or any natural disasters. May I become wish fulfilling for all sentient beings.

In all our lives, never separated from the victorious one, Lama Tsongkhapa, acting in person as the actual Mahayana guru, may I, my family, friends, all other sentient beings never turn aside even for an instant from the excellent path praised by the victorious ones.

May nothing become negative karma, and everything become Dharma. May all beings achieve enlightenment quickly by actualizing the path.

Due to the merits of the three times created by me, all the buddhas and bodhisattvas, and all sentient beings (who exist but do not exist from their own side), may I (who exists but do not exist from my own side) achieve Guru Shakymuni Buddha's enlightenment (which exists but does not exist from its own side) and lead all sentient beings (who exist but do not exist from their own side) to that enlightenment by myself alone.

Just as the brave Manjushri and Samantabhadra too,  
Realized things as they are,  
I, too, dedicate all these merits in the best way,  
That I may follow their perfect example.

# Student Stories



## *Saving Lives and Liberating Minds*

In 1988, my mother was diagnosed with cancer and given only two months to live. One thing Rinpoche recommended was that she save the lives of animals equal to the number of years of her life.

My mother had been a cleanliness fanatic all her life and had no qualms about chasing a fly or cockroach about the house with a swat, taking great satisfaction at squashing it and sending it to its next life. So when Rinpoche suggested this method of purification I was a little concerned, but motivated by her own wish to live longer, a change came about in my mother. A few weeks later, I was visiting her, sitting in the kitchen, when a draft came in through the sliding door. I worried she would catch cold. As I leaned back and slid the door shut, my mother shrieked. I was about to squash a little moth in the door jamb, and she had become so accustomed to looking for small creatures to save that she was conscious of all little creatures – constantly keeping watch.

This experience (as well as many experiences over the ensuing years as she fought the disease with such faith in our precious teachers) really blew my mind. It made me see not just the power of even a little purification, but also the incredible wisdom of our dear Rinpoche who could find the perfect method for each and every being.

My mother lived for another six-and-a-half years. They were great years and she was honestly able to say that getting cancer may have been the best thing that ever happened to her.

Kathy Vichta  
Chenrezig Institute,  
Australia

### *Rinpoche's advice for a cat*

Two years ago, my fifteen-year-old cat was diagnosed with a rare cancer. I asked Lama Zopa Rinpoche what I could do. He told me to recite powerful mantras to the cat, give her blessed water, and be sure she could see pictures of holy beings. I did this and the cancer completely disappeared within two months. It was still gone when the cat passed away from kidney disease just before her eighteenth birthday. Her death was rapid and completely peaceful.

Amy Cayton  
Land of Medicine Buddha  
Vajrapani Institute  
USA



### *'Miracle' cure*

When my sister was thirty-two, she had seven heart attacks in one morning. The doctors and nurses thought she was beyond hope. Lama Zopa Rinpoche had been to Adelaide a few months earlier and explained that an enormous amount of positive potential could be gained by liberating earth worms because they were cheap to buy. This meant that even if we were poor, we could liberate many lives. They had no predators once they were in the ground, meaning that they had the potential to have long lives (unlike fish who can be eaten by other fish as soon as they are released). I liberated 10,000

worms and, with the help of the prayers of everyone at Buddha House, my sister recovered. The nurses called her their ‘miracle’.

Carolyn Hocking  
Buddha House  
Australia

## *Changing karma through kindness*

I lived in an old house and the house next door was equally old and also abandoned, giving rise to a fast-breeding rat colony. They would creep over to my house and wreak total havoc in the store room, eating everything — even wood and wires! Understanding the karmic significance of this and thinking of what Rinpoche would want me to do, I trapped the rats in cages, recited mantras into their ears and then drove them away and released them. I did this for about a year. One day, the rats just stopped coming to the house, even though the rat community was visibly thriving in the abandoned house. The karma to experience rats finished!



Living in the tropics means sharing one’s home with mosquitoes. Being reasonably light skinned, I would get flushed easily in the humid climate and this attracted mosquitoes to feed on me with wild abandon. I was totally adverse to their sound and had nasty reactions to their bites. One day, I just decided to feed them as the great prayers advise. When they landed on me, instead of smashing them, I would blow them off with a quick prayer, sparing their lives. After a couple of years, two changes occurred: I developed a second nature of not killing so easily and I was no longer bitten by mosquitoes. The acid test came when I went into our country retreat land, which was teeming with mosquitoes. One could see them buzzing in swarms, but none landed on me to bite me. I still can’t say I like them, but I don’t harm them and they return the kindness.

My friend is a wholesale importer of organic foods and grains. She once noticed a variety of bugs gnawing at her grains in the warehouse. Restraining herself from the obvious remedy of trapping/killing the pests, she recited prayers at the warehouse and dedicated the prayers for the insects to be subdued and gain an optimum human rebirth. After several months, without introducing any pest-control measures, the bugs stopped attacking the stockpiles!

Yeo Puay Huei  
Losang Dragpa Center  
Malaysia



## *The mind of a fisherman*

From the time I was a child I romanticized about the life of a fisherman and felt the call of the sea. So when an old friend became captain of the most profitable and respected lobster fishing boat operated out of Gloucester, Massachusetts, and offered me a deck-hand position, I jumped at the chance. A dream had come true: I was as an offshore lobster fisherman receiving a full share of the catch.

The owner of the boat was a legend in the business because he was the one of the first to venture beyond the inshore fishing grounds and explore the deep gorges of Georges Bank in search of the elusive lobster. A population of lobsters never before imagined was waiting for them. For many months he and his crew tried to keep the amounts and location a secret. But word soon got out and the offshore lobster industry was off and running. This meant the influx of larger boats and "super traps" that caught lobsters sometimes the size of coffee tables.

It was very hard work. All year long, week after week of working in brutal weather and hauling traps eighteen hours a day meant total exhaustion and a questioning of one's motives. Of course, we did it for the money as there were times when we would catch between

8,000 to 12,000 pounds of lobster on one trip. Beyond the money though, was a sense of pride and uniqueness at doing something most of the population only read about but would never experience. Through the suffering, a bond of the trust and brotherhood was forged among the crew as we all experienced how suddenly the sea could revolt and threaten our lives. So, as offering and a gesture of gratitude at the end of each trip, we chose one ceremonial lobster and let it go. I thought I had found my true work. That was over twenty years ago.



Years later, my friend the captain confessed to me that often he would go out on deck when the crew was asleep and toss over the biggest lobster he could find. He called them the elders, they were ancient creatures and deserved better. That really made an impression on me. Recently, with the help of new technology, scientists are now able to study and gain insight into lobsters' wonderful and mysterious lives. Now, I only have reverence for them. I think about all that marine life we hauled in and brought to market and feel sadness and regret for my actions. Thankfully, Buddhism offers a practice and something I can do with my body, speech and mind to make amends. Often, when I'm in a supermarket close to the sea, I purchase a lobster (connect and chant the Mani prayer over the other ones) and release her back to the ocean. My skeptical mind says that she's just going to get caught again because I'm only releasing her back to waters filled with lobster buoys. Ultimately though, I think it's a very powerful and transforming practice for purifying my past karma and generating merit. I will continue the practice.

Demetrios Veliskakis  
Kurukulla Center  
USA

## *Teaching children*

My three-year-old son, Kyle, always enjoys looking at the insects we have caught in our clear plastic bug catcher. After he has sufficiently “Ooo’d” and “Ahhh’d” his excitement over the way the bugs look or move, we release our little friends and wish them well in their new abodes. We call it our Insect Relocation Program.

The main enjoyment I get is to model compassion, kindness, and non-violence for my son. I grew up in New York with parents who would roll up a section of the New York Times and act like pro tennis players, smashing an overhead volley whenever a spider was spotted crawling around on the ceiling. It always felt violent and harsh to me. It is incredibly rewarding now to see my son’s gentle and kind behavior towards animals and insects. He loves exploring outside and has a healthy reverence for the natural world. He especially loves roly-polly bugs and lovingly refers to them as his roly-polly friends.

Forbes Ellis

Land of Medicine Buddha

USA

## *The bodhisattva ideal*

Four years ago a puppy, too young to be away from its mother, was found in the bush on the South Pacific island of Tahiti. From his first trusting acceptance of and gratitude toward his rescuers, this friendly dog has shown by his behavior and actions what compassion and wisdom of non-violence really mean. The moment he entered his new household, he met several cats; he promptly and awkwardly (fat and small as he was) ran up and kissed them. The household dogs accepted him quickly because he was naturally respectful of the laws of hierarchy that regulate all dog clans.

On his second day, the puppy saw a hen with her newly hatched babies. Thrilled to meet new friends, he ran heavily toward them

and scared the whole feathery family off. One chick was left behind. The puppy very carefully took the terrified, crying creature in his mouth and clumsily ran after the mother to give her baby back to her. When he realized the hen would never let him approach her, he carefully dropped the baby on the ground, and it successfully rushed back to its mother.

That was the day he earned the name Godzilla, because of his characteristic heavy, clumsy way of running after the hysterical hen.

Since the beginning, Godzilla has been very good company for the cats, playing with them, sleeping with them, letting them eat from his dish while he's eating, and even sharing his bones with them, letting them gnaw one end while he's gnawing the other. When the cats are injured or sick, he takes good care of them, conscientiously cleaning their wounds and removing the pus covering their injuries with his tongue. Godzilla has come to be the cats' favorite friend and protector. Now whenever they are injured or sick, they spontaneously go to him and even meow to him for help.



Godzilla has always been especially concerned for the cats who suffer from leukemia and who produce a lot of blood and pus from their wounds, skin, nose, and mouth. The good-hearted dog, every day, two or three times a day, patiently and thoroughly cleans them, to their great obvious comfort.

He shows deep care and concern for the suffering of anyone he meets (human or animal) and is very patient and considerate to every member of the family. This special love is also apparent in the way he protects those he cares for. Whenever the cats and dogs of the family have conflicts, which degenerate into fights, he puts himself between the opponents and, using his muzzle, pushes away the one that caused the fight. Sometimes, when the cats fight, he even blocks the aggressor between his front legs, bending down and covering him or her in order to stop a fight.

When stray dogs and cats threaten the family animals, he stands up to them, but he never resorts to violence to solve the problem. He always tries to negotiate, handling the situation with diplomacy. Even when he was severely bitten by offensive stray dogs, he never fought back in a violent way.

As he grew older, Godzilla never tried to claim his right to be clan leader as most male dogs would. Yet, he is the leader of the clan because his behavior has brought about positive changes; he has somehow influenced the dogs, who were jealous of the cats and hostile toward them, to be softer with them.

Godzilla didn't have the fortunate karma this lifetime to be born as a human being and to have the chance to benefit from the teachings of Dharma. Yet, his behavior and actions often reflect the essence of Dharma. When he learned about Godzilla, Lama Zopa said that sometimes bodhisattvas incarnate in the form of animals in order to benefit sentient beings. Who knows if Godzilla is the incarnation of one of these enlightened beings? When visiting Tahiti, Lama Zopa was so deeply touched by the dog's compassionate acts that he made special prayers and offerings on Godzilla's behalf in order to purify any negative karma. Furthermore, Lama Zopa instructed Godzilla's closest human friend to recite the *Arya Sanghata-sutra* and some special mantras each day to plant a strong imprint of Dharma on all the animals' minds, so that in the future they will all be reborn as Sangha in Tushita.

Bernard King Kong  
Naropa Meditation Center  
French Polynesia

## *Liberating Animals*

### *Liberating lobsters*

We've done quite a few lobster liberations here in New England. For this one, several center members piled into a car with a lot of generous donations and headed to the North Shore. Nosing around for a good place to buy lobsters, we saw the shack of a seafood vendor. The sign on the door said they were closed for the season, but directed us to a nearby clam shack, where they had lobsters for sale. When they heard we wanted \$200 worth, they directed us to the owner's house. "Bob Lobster," as he calls himself, let us in with our coolers and prayer water. He was typically puzzled by our request and plans, but let us have most of the lobsters prowling around in his spacious tanks. He asked us questions about what we do and what we believe; I answered pretty vaguely, because I don't like to evangelize. Then he said, "We all believe in the same God, right?" I said, "We all believe in love and kindness." "And that's what you say prayers for?" he asked hopefully. "Yes," I said, "we pray for love and kindness to grow and spread throughout the world."

He took me over to a tank in the corner against the wall and pointed out the biggest lobster I had ever seen. "That lobster there is probably fifty years old," he said. "You can tell by the size of it. You want to take that lobster?" Although we're not supposed to discriminate, the prospect of saving the life of a fifty-year-old lobster was for some reason particularly touching. Bob continued: "My brother died last year. Brain tumor. I'll give you that lobster. You just say a prayer for him, all right?" Deeply moved, I thanked him and promised. He lifted that immense lobster out of its watery cave and gently placed it on the top of our biggest cooler, already alive with restless crustaceans. Still shaking his head, still not entirely sure why people would want to pay so much money and not even get a good meal out of it, Bob smiled as he sent us on our way, and even let us remain parked in his driveway while we meandered out onto the sand with our sentient treasure. We set up our altar, said our

prayers, sprinkled the blessing water and circumambulated the lobsters around the altar, then, one by one, with great joy and many OM MANI PÄDME HUMs, we returned the blessed creatures to their ocean home. In our dedication prayers we included a long and heartfelt line for Bob's brother, and for Bob too.

The next winter we did another lobster liberation under insane conditions of extreme cold; Bob let us do the prayers and circumambulation in his basement, use his bathroom, and buy all his stock. Two brave center members practically got frostbitten toes, but we saved a lot of lobsters that day and perhaps planted a virtuous seed in the heart of "Bob Lobster," too.

Amy Kittlestrom  
Kurukulla Center  
USA

### *A monk and some mice*

We have had many mice living at the retreat house in Washington over the past year. Although it is nice to be able to offer them a home and some food, because of hygiene we catch them in live traps and take them away from the house.

At night we set the traps with peanut butter, and then first thing in the morning we collect the traps and place them next to a stereo where they hear Rinpoche reciting the *Arya Sanghata-sutra*. While I do the water bowls, they listen to the entire sutra. Then I take them in the car a few miles up the road to release them. On the way I try to play them some verses of *Lama Chöpa*. There is just time for the refuge verses, mandala offering and taking the bodhisattva vows. While I release them, I play the dedication verses.

I found a spot where there is running water all year, and in the winter I bought a bale of straw and placed it there so that they could have somewhere to sleep at least for the first night. Also by putting them in the same spot, hopefully the family members can reunite. This is just my idea.

If the mice go into the traps on the night before animal liberation day here at the house (eighth, fifteenth, and thirtieth of the Tibetan calendar, and one other day in the month), they join the 800 worms for the group animal liberation practice. We do this around the base of the Medicine Buddha statue, which contains many texts, tsa-tsas, statues, and other holy objects blessed by Rinpoche.

Ven. Tenzin  
Buddha Amitabha Pure Land Retreat House  
USA



### *Transforming the holidays*

In the Czech Republic, people buy a “Christmas carp” during Advent. They keep it in their bathtub and then kill it for Christmas dinner. My father used to buy one every year and set it free on Christmas morning. He felt that made a happier Christmas for all.

He said it is important that the water in which you release them is suitable for carp, who are bottom feeders in ponds or slow streams. Otherwise, you release them only to a slow and painful death by poisoning or choking.

Mary Kohak  
Kurukulla Center  
USA

### *Lama Zopa Rinpoche Benefiting Animals*

While Rinpoche was in Washington doing retreat, we would gather up even the tiniest insect from the floor and walls in Rinpoche’s upstairs gumpa. We’d put them in jars and keep them on a table near Rinpoche’s seat. Then, suddenly Rinpoche would jump up and start running around the large table that had many photos, statues, tsa-tsas and relics on it, holding the jar while yelling mantras to the tiny insects. Then, either Tenzin or Rinpoche would gently remove the

insects from the jars, often with Kleenex, and release them outside, where they could hear the *Sanghata-sutra* being played loudly on the tape player.

If we were downstairs while Rinpoche was meditating upstairs, suddenly we'd hear the sounds of loud running and shouting of mantras coming from upstairs. We knew it was Rinpoche with the insect jar again!



Once, many years ago at Kopan Monastery, I went upstairs where Lama Yeshe, Rinpoche and Lama Lhundrup had their small rooms. I looked for Rinpoche and finally found him in Lama's room. He was leaning halfway out the upstairs window, holding onto the window frame by only one hand. When he finally pulled himself back into the room, he was holding a Kleenex with as much care as a precious bag of jewels. Rinpoche told me that there was a nest of tiny insects on the window ledge that was in danger of falling to the ground, and he had been rescuing them. After this, the insects heard many mantras before being released to safety.

Ven. Thubten Wongmo  
Buddha Amitabha Pure Land Retreat House  
USA

### *The power of compassion*

We were driving through the middle of Texas at night, many bugs were flying into the windscreen. I was driving. Thousands of bugs were smashing up against the window. Suddenly, I noticed all the bugs were flying on either side of the car. Not one bug was hitting the car at all and this happened for the rest of the drive. When we stopped, Rinpoche said to me that he was visualizing Chenrezig on the roof of the car, blowing all the bugs away from the car, and he

was reciting MANI's (even though to me it appeared Rinpoche was resting). Rinpoche commented on how it seemed to work.

Ven. Holly Ansett  
Kachoe Dechen Ling  
USA



# Additional Resources to Benefit Animals



The following are available from The Foundation Store at [www.fpmt.org/shop](http://www.fpmt.org/shop).

## Texts

*The Noble Mahayana Sanghata-sutra.* Imbued with the blessings of the power of prayer invoked by Shakyamuni Buddha himself, recitation of this sutra produces a great mass of positive karma that can quickly ripen, even in this life. Even hearing a four-line verse from this sutra has immeasurable benefits.

*The Exalted Mahayana Sutra on the Wisdom Gone Beyond called the "Vajra Cutter."* Reciting this sutra purifies mountains of negative karma, clears away obstacles to the success of virtuous activities, and plants seeds to realize emptiness directly. Hard copy has cream-colored cover with gold embossed lettering. This booklet is by donation only.

## CDs

*Recitations for Animals.* These practices are especially recommended by Lama Zopa Rinpoche for animals to hear, to plant the seeds of enlightenment and ensure a good rebirth. Also included on this CD are practices beneficial for animals who are sick, in pain, or dying. Chanted by Lama Zopa Rinpoche.

*Praises to the Twenty-one Taras.* This is an especially good prayer for animals to hear. This recording by Lama Zopa Rinpoche is ripe with blessings!

*Sanghata-sutra (English).* Recitation in English by Thubten Mindrol with music by Philip Blackburn, Peter Warren, and Matt Samolis.

*Sanghata-sutra (Tibetan) – Chanted by Lama Zopa Rinpoche.* Just by hearing this sutra we accumulate inconceivable merit. It's that easy. We take care of the wishes of this and of future lives, and become closer to liberation and enlightenment.

*Prayers for the Time of Death.* In Tibetan philosophy, death is not an ending, but a transformation: the physical body is finished and the mind takes on a new form. To facilitate this transformation, death should take place in an atmosphere of calm and lightness, free of fear, with loving thoughts for our fellow beings. These beautifully chanted prayers have been chosen for their power to invoke peace and compassion in the mind of the dying person and those nearby.

*Vajra Cutter Sutra – Chanted by Lama Zopa Rinpoche.* This sutra is known as the “*Vajra Cutter*” for its ability to cut off the afflicted obstructions and the subtle obstructions to omniscience, which are as difficult to destroy as the vajra. Thus, listening to this blessed sutra recited in Tibetan by Lama Zopa Rinpoche is an opportunity to cut these afflictions that obstruct one's own enlightenment.

## ***Practice texts***

*Medicine Buddha Sadhana.* This meditation practice was translated by Lama Zopa Rinpoche for the benefit of his students and all sentient beings wishing to be healed of their ills, mental and physical. It is especially beneficial for sick and dying animals.

*Medicine Buddha Puja; The Wish Fulfilling Jewel.* According to Lama Zopa Rinpoche, this puja is also something that can be done for beings who are dying, or who have already passed away, and also for individual success in all kinds of activities. This Medicine Buddha practice is extremely powerful and beneficial especially when done with extensive offerings beautifully arranged.

*Heart Practices for Death and Dying.* This book contains advice from Lama Zopa Rinpoche on preparing for death and assisting others through this time, and provides a plethora of heart practices to do at the time of death. This book also contains the most powerful mantras to say for those who are dying or who have died, teachings on their precise benefits, as well as a sheet of mantras to place upon the body of one who has died. It contains precious sutra texts to benefit the minds of those who are dying, to relieve pain, and to purify negative karma.

*Heart Advice for Death and Dying.* This book contains Lama Zopa Rinpoche's essential advice for the time of death and for finding the deepest fulfillment in life. The MP3 disc that accompanies the book contains an audio course consisting of eleven hours of exquisite teachings and meditations on death and dying led by Venerable Sangye Khadro – a senior American teacher of Tibetan Buddhism well known for her gentle yet profound teaching style.

### ***Vajra Vehicle Sticker***

Place this sticker of mantras on the front of your car for the benefit of bugs who die while you drive.

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We invite you to join us in our work to develop compassion around the world! Visit our web site at [www.fpmt.org](http://www.fpmt.org) to find a center near you, a study program suited to your needs, practice materials, meditation supplies, sacred art, and online teachings. We offer a membership program with benefits such as Mandala magazine and discounts at the online Foundation Store. And check out some of the vast projects Lama Zopa Rinpoche has developed to preserve the Mahayana tradition and help end suffering in the world today. Lastly, never hesitate to contact us if we can be of service to you.

Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition  
1632 SE 11th Avenue  
Portland, OR 97214 USA  
(503) 808-1588

**[www.fpmt.org](http://www.fpmt.org)**

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Education Services  
FPMT International Office  
1632 SE 11th Avenue  
Portland OR 97214  
(503) 808-1588  
education@fpmt.org

**[www.fpmt.org](http://www.fpmt.org)**