

## ***The Essential Points of Creation and Completion That Will Benefit the Beginner Who Has Entered the Path***

[1] I bow to Pema Nyinje Wangpo  
inseparable from the Lake-born Vajra, who manifests  
the infallible absorption of bliss-emptiness, steady and everlasting,  
emanating and resolving in a hundred ways.

[2] In the face of these disturbing times,  
an ordinary stupid person like myself becomes exhausted  
trying to explain the deep and vast meaning!  
Nevertheless, my *vajra*-friend has implored me,  
and maybe it would help a few fools like me.  
So I rely only on the blessings of the glorious guru  
and speak freely without reservation.

[3] You now have the precious opportunity of human life, so difficult to find;  
not just as an ordinary person, but one who has encountered the Dharma  
and been accepted by a teacher, the personal appearance of the Buddha,  
you can seek the most profound quintessence of Dharma  
and choose the finest from among the gurus.  
While you have this chance, and all conditions conducive to Dharma  
have accrued, even if you do not achieve others' welfare,  
at least practice for your own sake.  
Otherwise, at the time of death, and that time is uncertain,  
there is nothing whatsoever that can help other than Dharma.  
Even the wealth of a universal monarch just gets left behind on the death bed.  
Positive and negative actions adhere to the consciousness,  
and not knowing what to do, even regret won't help.  
From this very moment on, without delay,  
you must strive to practice virtue with body, speech, and mind.

[4] The only foundation stone of practice is renunciation.  
The only gateway of practice is faith.  
The only approach to practice is compassion.  
The life-tree of practice is single-minded application.  
Constant practice is conscientious mindfulness.  
The removal of obstacles to practice is to rely on the Three Jewels.  
The enhancement of practice is devotion to the guru.

Unmistakable practice is the guru's instruction.

The one essential point of practice is that the Three Roots combined and all of the peaceful and wrathful mandalas arise as the guru's display-this one thing is sufficient.

[5] The most gifted individuals are those who have developed in previous lives, have already reached the full capacity of devotion, and are born as great, superior beings.

For them, even without following the stages of practice, it is still possible to perceive the truth of reality.

For all others, it is as the noble Nagarjuna said:

Listening to Dharma engenders contemplation, and contemplation gives rise to the meditation experience-this is the sequence.

So if you abandon distraction and continuously apply effort,

first the intelligence that comes from listening

will result in comprehension of the general characteristics of the phenomena of cyclic existence and its transcendence.

Then, contemplation will pacify blatant grasping to the reality of illusory appearances, meditation develops the definitive direct experience of mind, and so on.

Thus the previous stages act as causes for the arising of the latter.

When this is not the case, it is like desiring results without any cause.

You may claim that your accumulation, purification, and practice are most excellent, bemoaning the hardships of a practice that is merely conjectural.

This kind of experience will not lead to conviction.

Without conviction, you are stranded in doubt, and doubt is the only supreme obstacle.

When conviction arises through listening, contemplating, and meditating, even if someone says "this meditation will send you to hell," rather than being frightened, you will be supremely confident.

[6] The essential point of all the modes of Dharma taught by the Buddha can be epitomized as a method to subdue one's mind.

The entryway into the initial mind practice

is surely renunciation, without which there is no way.

If authentic renunciation arises, compulsive activities will be few;

if activities are few, the significance of non-action will be near.

When non-action is realized, it is the true nature.

There is no other buddha outside of that.

[7] There are many categories of view, meditation, and action, but when applied to one's own mind,

the view is absolute conviction in the true nature;  
 meditation is assimilating that meaning in one's being;  
 and action is recognizing anything that happens as that view and meditation.  
 It follows that the fruition will be the actualization of things as they are.

[8] The root of delusion is one's own mind grasping  
 external appearances as being truly existent.  
 Whatever creation or completion stage meditations are employed,  
 all are intended as methods to reverse this attachment to the reality of deluded  
 appearance.

If stubborn habits of attachment and aversion are not reversed,  
 then meditation is as meaningless as a gopher hibernating in a hole.  
 Creation stage is the vast imaginary nature of contrivance  
 and completion stage is the profound perfectly existent nature of genuine condition.  
 These are the names and definitions that have been taught.  
 They are also described as with and without elaboration, respectively.  
 Since they are both exclusively the infallible intention of the victorious ones  
 who recognize the different capacities of individuals,  
 there is no question of division into good and bad.  
 The point is to do practice appropriate to one's own intellect.

[9] In the mantra approach, with its many methods and few austerities,  
 a person of sharp faculties and high intelligence  
 may gather the two accumulations during all activities  
 and never do even a trace of anything meaningless.  
 This is not, however, the sphere of activity for a fool with mistaken views.  
 With little attachment to the reality of whatever arises,  
 deeply rooted devotion and belief in the path of methods,  
 and tenacity in pursuing the significance of the goal,  
 ordinary and supreme mastery will come quicker than a summoned guest!

[10] All phenomena are subsumed under the two truths:  
 the relative truth is true with respect to delusion,  
 and the absolute truth is true with respect to true nature.  
 The definition of "truth" is that it is without deception.  
 If you know that the two truths are inseparable, like the moon in water,  
 then the extinction of deluded appearance is close at hand.

[11] There is no doubt that both the provisional and definitive paths lead to  
 buddhahood,  
 but there are shorter and longer paths.

For instance, the destination may be a single place, such as Lhasa, but you could either go on foot or by flying through the air. Even on the short path, a person with meager intelligence will not discover the distinctive wisdom, but will be left among the ordinary. Disdaining the lower and unable to grasp the higher, talking of emptiness, such a person will neglect cause and effect, mouthing on about the view while in a state of self-deception. It would be better to concentrate on the gradual path.

[12] In entering the path, there is both the sutra approach and the mantra approach, and there are a vast number of methods for following them.

The omniscient one taught that to do no unvirtuous deeds whatsoever, to practice virtue, and to control one's own mind summarizes sutra practice, and meditation on the two stages of creation and completion summarizes mantra practice.

Since the mind is the root of all phenomena, it is crucial to control it right from the start.

Doing recitation and visualization practices without mental control could go on for lifetimes without resulting in enlightenment.

What is called "mental control" means controlling afflictive emotions.

Methods of controlling afflictive emotions can be subsumed into three: rejection, transformation, and recognition.

Rejecting these emotions is the ordinary approach of the sutras.

Desire is renounced through contemplation on repulsiveness, hatred through contemplation on love, and stupidity through meditation on interdependent relationship.

[13] The uncommon approach of mantra is to transform afflictive emotions.

When desire arises, you meditate on Amitabha or a deity such as Heruka in union.

The desirous thought is transformed into the deity.

The other deluded emotions are treated in the same way.

[14] The exceptional approach is to recognize the true nature of afflictive emotions.

When desirous thoughts arise vividly,

looking directly at their essence, they subside in themselves.

This is the dawning of *mahamudra*, bliss and emptiness inseparable.

It is also called the pristine wisdom of discernment.

There has never been anything to reject, nor to accept, nor to transform; everything is contained within mind.

Know that there is no other intention of a buddha

than simply the uncontrived mind itself.

[15] There is a method for practicing all three of these approaches in one sitting, according to Gyalwa Yangon.

With thoughts of desire, for example,

as soon as they arise think: "From now on until enlightenment I will do away with these ordinary thoughts of desire."

In this way establish an attitude of rejection.

Then imagine that whatever ordinary disturbing thoughts of desire in the minds of all beings throughout space,

causing unbearable experiences of suffering,

as well as the thoughts of desire causing obstacles to

the minds of spiritual guides who are practicing Dharma,

are all gathered into your own desire,

and the minds of all beings become free of desire.

Then, thinking that by using these very thoughts of desire,

you will practice the two stages

in order to place all beings in the state of Vajradhara,

meditate that you instantly become a *heruka* such as Chakrasamvara,

masculine and feminine in union, with all the adornments.

When you identify your awareness with the masculine

and visualize the form of the feminine too intimately,

there is still the danger that the toxic effect of desire will resurface,

resulting initially in loss of vital energy and

ultimately in coming under the power of desire.

In general, it is inappropriate to pursue mundane thoughts

and affective emotions while meditating on a deity.

Imagine that your root guru, magnificent and powerful,

is in your heart on a lotus and moon seat.

Pray sincerely again and again for the blessing that

the thoughts of desire that occur in your mind

arise as the pristine wisdom of discernment.

Then look directly at your own mind

as the inseparability of the deity, the guru, and the emotion.

The meditation should be maintained from the time

the emotion arises just until it is resolved.

Afterward, do a prayer to perfectly dedicate the merit, such as

"By this virtue may the thoughts of desire of

all deluded sentient beings

and obstacles to the stages and paths of Dharma practitioners be eliminated,

and the bliss-emptiness of mahamudra be actualized."

Apply this kind of meditation to hatred and stupidity as well.  
For pacifying hatred, it is especially effective to meditate on a deity.

[16] Creation stage is mainly for undermining the deluded appearance of ordinary reality,  
and completion stage for undermining attachment to the reality of that creation stage itself.

The actualization of Vajradhara in a single lifetime will not be achieved if creation and completion are separated. Even though the unity of creation and completion is the profound approach, until the movement of thoughts arises *as* meditation, it is not the real practice of unity, so you should alternate their practice. Contrived unity is a mental fabrication and should be abandoned.

[17] In the meditation of creation stage, there are four aspects of which you should gain at least some understanding: the basis of purification, that which is to be purified, that which purifies, and the result of purification.

The basis of purification is the eternal, noncomposite realm of reality that fully permeates all beings as the buddha nature.

Sentient beings thus also possess the qualities of the body of reality, such as the marks and signs,

that exist as an integral aspect of awareness: this is the basis for purification.

That which is to be purified is the incidental blemish of delusion arising from ignorance without beginning, which obscures this buddha nature.

An example would be the sun obscured by clouds.

The sunshine is the capacity to manifest inherent qualities.

The clouds are incidental blemishes that could clear away.

Emotional and cognitive obscurations and those of meditative absorption are what is to be purified.

That which purifies are the many different form yogas, such as the creation of the five actual enlightening factors, the four vajras, and the three rituals, which purify, respectively, womb birth, egg birth, and moisture-warmth birth.

Miraculous birth is purified by the instantaneously complete creation.

Although scholars have applied many conflicting explanations, we could summarize in the knowledge that there is nothing really contradictory.

From the initial meditation on the deity visualization up to the dissolution,

each ritual has its own sequence, but to generalize:

the basis on which purification takes place is the buddha nature itself;

that which is purified is the delusion of the infant consciousness from the time it enters and is born

through the time of the intermediate state of death.

There are different ritual sequences in the old and new traditions, but with respect to purifying the blemishes of deluded emotion they are the same.

For instance, for disease of the eyes one primarily uses a scalpel, or orally administers cooling or warming substances for imbalances in heat or cold, the particular remedy depending on the kind of disease.

There are as many methods of purification as there are problems to be purified. For the eyes, whether they are restored with instruments or healed with medicine, for relieving the pain and suffering, it is the same.

Similarly, there are various ritual sequences in the new and old traditions, but insofar as they all purify the thoughts of afflictive emotions, there is no difference.

Briefly, the way in which the rituals purify is as follows:

Meditation on the absorption of suchness purifies the previous death experience.

All-arising absorption purifies the mental body of the intermediate existence.

Absorption of the cause, meditation on the lotus, sun and moon seat, purifies the physical base, the parents' sperm and ovum, white and red.

Meditation on the seed syllable purifies the entering consciousness.

The transformation into implements and again the meditation on the seed syllables purifies the fetal stages of round, oval, oblong, and so on.

The fully complete form purifies the birth of the developed body.

The blessing of the three places purifies the habitual patterns of the body, speech, and mind.

This manner of the five enlightening factors purifying womb birth can be applied in a similar way to the others.

In some of the highest yogatantras of secret mantra, the "cause vajra holder" corresponds to the clear light of the death experience, the "result vajra holder" to achieving the intermediate existence, and the emanation from the organs in union corresponds to the habitual pattern of sperm, ovum, and vital wind combining, and purifies the physical basis of existence.

The sequential absorption of the three letters purifies the three stages of experience: appearance, increase, and attainment;

and the vital drops purify the white and red appearances, and so on – there is much more, but just knowing this much illuminates the rest.

The entrance of the wisdom beings purifies skilled activities and trainings.

Sealing with the empowerments purifies the inheritance of one's birthright.

Homage, confession, offerings, and praise purify the enjoyment of sense objects.

Recitation of the mantra purifies irrelevant speech.

The dissolution phase purifies the death experience of that life,

and the reappearance in the deity's form purifies the intermediate existence.

Without going further, this summarizes it.

The initial going for refuge and generation of the intention of enlightenment, and the concluding dedication and aspiration

are indispensable in the Great Vehicle approach.

Consecration of offerings, feast gatherings, and so on

are additional ways through which you can effortlessly complete the two accumulations.

[18] The basis of purification, which is this very buddha nature, abides as the body, with its clear and complete *vajra* signs and marks.

A similar form is used as the path and leads to

the fruition of purification: that very divine form that existed as the basis.

At the time of ultimate fruition of actual freedom,

this is called "obtaining the state of *Vajradhara*."

[19] Whether one meditates on an elaborate or concise version of creation stage, there are three main points:

Clarity of form purifies attachment to the appearing object, recollecting the purity frees one from clinging to corporeality, and maintaining pride vanquishes clinging to ordinary self.

As to the first, initially visualize each individual part, such as the head, hands, feet, and so on,

and when somewhat used to that, meditate clearly on the entire form.

When meditation is not stable, and thoughts come and go,

focus your awareness on an implement, such as the vajra in the hand.

If you are languishing, focus on the crossed legs, and if sinking,

focus on something like a jewel in the deity's crown.

Then if there aren't so many active thoughts, but

the form is unclear and murky,

set before you a picture or statue

that is well made and appropriately painted,

and, without thinking, look at it for a long time.

Then immediately generate your own body in that image.

This will enhance the former meditation.

[20] You may recollect the appropriate purities,

but this mental exercise might just add to discursive thoughts.

For the beginner it will become the cause of unclear, scattered meditation.

It is better to meditate on the deity's form as empty and light, like a rainbow,

and to know that the one who is doing that is one's own mind.



Mind itself, intrinsically free of a basis, is emptiness,  
and the demonstration of its special qualities  
is the arising of forms of faces, hands, and ornaments.

[21] Do not meditate on pride; cut through the root of ego-clinging.

When ego-clinging is destroyed, wherever one's mind focuses,  
its essence arises vividly.

In this way, by meditation on the creation stage with effort,  
while actually meditating, the impact of "real" appearances will be diminished,  
and without meditating, the deity arises.

This is the lesser experience of luminous appearance.

When all deluded appearances, regardless of meditating or not,  
arise as the deity and divine palace, it is intermediate luminous appearance.

When you meditate on the deity and form and formless beings see you as that deity,  
it is the great luminous appearance, called a maturation knowledge-holder in the  
Ancient tradition.

[22] The clear form of the deity is the luminous appearance of your own mind,  
and the unclear, dissatisfying experience is also your mind!

So also, mind is the one who desires clarity and tries again,  
and mind is the wisdom deity and guru.

Everything is mind's appearance, and yet mind itself is uncontrived.

The beauty of this ultimate essential point of the approach of the two stages  
is that no matter which of the many creation stages you do,  
if you apply clear awareness and mindfulness that is merely undistracted,  
when the meditation is clear, it arises as clarity-emptiness and when obscure, as  
obscurity-emptiness!

[23] In general, creation stage is a contrivance,  
but the path of contrivance leads to the authentic natural state.

With the mental conviction of the lack of reality in the root or ground  
of deluded grasping to deluded appearance,  
resting in a pristine state is completion stage itself, the actual natural state.

The first stage is the provisional meaning and the latter the definitive meaning.

[24] It is said that if you understand mind, knowing this one thing illuminates  
everything,

but if you don't understand mind, knowing everything obscures the one thing.

The great master Noble Nagarjuna said it this way:

"Where there is appropriate understanding of emptiness, all things are appropriate,  
and if there is no appropriate understanding of emptiness, nothing is."

All of the various designations, such as mahamudra, dzogchen, middle path, unembellished, ultimate, enlightened intention of the victorious ones, intrinsic nature, perfection of wisdom, view, meditation, and action, and so on, indicate that mind itself and the true nature of objects have no true reality whatsoever and are beyond intellect and inexpressible. This one point could well be the synopsis of all teachings.

[25] In bringing about meditation on the nature of mind in this way, the power of devotion causes it to arise from within, and more is really unnecessary. However, most ordinary people know very little about the meditation subject – the nature of mind – and their meditation could prove ineffectual.

[26] Deluded mind consists of the eight impure groups of consciousness. The essence of that abides as the pure foundation. In order to indicate the suchness of that, the term "mind itself" is used. The All-knowing Rangjung held that the eight groups are the five sense consciousnesses, the mental consciousness, afflictive mind, and the foundation consciousness. Since the "instantaneous mind" conditions all of those, when counted together, there are also held to be nine groups. The sutras mention many terms such as "appropriating consciousness," "deluded mind," "cognitive obscuration," and "foundation consciousness." Since it is taught that the intrinsic nature of the foundation is virtue, it is essentially self-liberated buddha nature. It is not the foundation itself that is removed, but it abides as the foundation of what is removed.

[27] So, for instance, the eight consciousness groups are like a variegated rope that is perceived as a snake, though that is not its true character: From the very first moment of this delusion, it was itself essentially empty. It is from beginningless time that co-emergent ignorance has obscured true nature. For example, the clear and limpid aspect of a mirror is the buddha nature, and the tarnish on it is the foundation consciousness, also called cognitive obscuration or co-emergent ignorance. Like the coat of tarnish, the foundation consciousness wears the collection of habitual patterns, the obscuration of afflictive emotions. The essentially empty nature of consciousness

is identified as the self, and objective reality is projected onto its luminous aspect. The instantaneous mind moves the six consciousness groups and causes the meeting of object and organ. Though nothing other than mind itself, the appearance of duality predominates. For example, when the eye perceives a form, although there is no form outside of the eye consciousness, the luminous aspect is mistaken for form and the empty aspect for the organ. The instantaneous mind function coalesces the process: eye consciousness initially arises undeluded, free of concept, but instantaneously it is suppressed and the feeling of duality arises, and with it the mental sixth consciousness. Experiencing happiness, suffering, or neutrality, the discriminations of attachment, aversion, and ignorance arise, and this is the afflictive mind.

Then through rejection or acceptance, the foundation consciousness is imprinted with the accumulation of karmic action, also called formation. When the sixth mind is counted together with the instantaneous mind, perceiving externally with the five senses, it is the object; when the afflictive mind functions with the instantaneous mind, directed inward, it leaves habitual patterns in the foundation. Left there, the karma abides without effect as unavoidable potential until it ripens.

[28] Habitual patterns of totally pure virtue cannot be accumulated as imprints on the foundation consciousness. In this case, the afflictive mind becomes the fully purified mind, and since that is the remedy, virtue is imprinted on pristine wisdom. Virtuous thoughts arise from the intrinsic radiance of foundation wisdom. This accumulation of the roots of virtue becomes the condition of freedom and cause of complete fruition and also cannot be interrupted or lost. With the foundation functioning as the cause of the outer objects, inner sense faculties, and all the consciousnesses in between, the afflictive mind is like the clouds, the six groups like rain, the karmic actions are the rivers, and habitual patterns of the foundation are the ocean. In this example, the agent that connects all of this in some kind of continuity is the instantaneous mind.

[29] For the practitioner, this means that just as soon as the instantaneous mind barely arises from the foundation consciousness,

without any extension of duration, you should place the attention directly upon it.

This is called liberation in the first moment, or vanquished at first sight, in certain doctrinal terms.

When the sixth mind consciousness and afflictive mind have just arisen, and are recognized through mindfulness and liberated in their own place, it is called liberation in the second or third moment.

[30] However, since that discursive thought is the dynamic energy of mind, it is impossible for thoughts of attachment and aversion not to arise.

However, if you rely on mindful awareness, discursive thoughts cannot accumulate karma.

It is like pouring water into a vase with a hole in the bottom.

The deluded thought and the aspect of awareness that distinguishes it are equal, for the discriminating thought itself measures the thought of attachment.

It is like fire alighting on fine grass husks:

although the fire and the husks appeared as two things, they instantly become just fire.

So it could be called simply fire.

[31] In short, our present state of neutrality,

the darkness of total lack of awareness,

is the cognitive obscuration of foundation consciousness.

It is also called co-emergent ignorance.

When an object and the sense organ meet, such as seeing a conch shell on the road, in the first instant of seeing the form, the eye consciousness is said to be without concept.

But due to that contact, what is called "feeling" occurs, and then, if it is a nice white conch, mental pleasure, and so on.

At this point, with the arising of attachment or aversion, afflictive mind has arrived.

From what is called "perception" comes "formation," and so on:

through the twelve interdependent links the wheel of existence turns.

Even if you tried to block eye consciousness and mental consciousness, they wouldn't cease,

but they don't have the power to accumulate karmic habitual patterns.

But when finally afflictive mind has taken over,

for an ordinary person without recourse to view, meditation, and action, habitual patterns imprinted on the foundation will accumulate.

For that reason you should try not to fall under its power.

The instantaneous mind is the one that connects this whole process, like the force of water.

If you understand the significance of the eight groups in this way,

and are skilled in applying it directly to practice,  
 you can cut through the dualistic relationship of the six groups and their objects,  
 and then the six sense objects will not have the power to disturb meditation.

[32] This is the beginning of turning the sense organs and their consciousnesses inward.  
 At that time, the signs that the ten vital winds have matured  
 are experiences of smoke, mirages, eclipses, and so on.  
 The power of "real" appearances is diminished; and without obscurity,  
 countless deities, spheres, and so on appear wherever you focus,  
 outwardly and inwardly, in your body and your mind,  
 automatically arising without effort, expectation, or anxiety.  
 As a sign of attaining warmth, you are no longer interested in  
 useless communication and associations,  
 and you desire only to remain in solitude without distraction.  
 The flow of thoughts is cut off and, like the clear sky,  
 boundless experiences of bliss, clarity, and nonthought arise in body, speech, and mind.  
 However, these are only signs on the path, a few approximations of confidence,  
 and have nothing whatsoever to do with attainment of higher stages.  
 When these experiences are objectified, they are subject to arising, ceasing, and  
 changing,  
 and cannot be permanent, according to all adepts.  
 True actualization of the open spaciousness of inherent wisdom without object  
 is termed "the pristine wisdom of realization."  
 At that time, the desires and aversions of view, meditation, and action are exhausted,  
 and one simply falls directly upon ordinary mind.  
 With the absolute conviction of recognizing what has been there all along,  
 like a contented person who has finished all work,  
 all effort is dropped: it is the ultimate fruition.

[33] Deceiving appearances appear in variety as non-appearance.  
 Though appearing to appear, being essentially without reality, they are empty.  
 Of mind itself, luminous awareness without foundation, free of basis,  
 you cannot say anything in regard to existence or non-existence.

[34] In the levels higher than mahayoga, the sublime view is that total purity  
 is inseparable from the truth of suffering.  
 When the absolute is actualized through meditation on the two stages,  
 it follows that the relative, which is without foundation and basis, automatically  
 disappears.  
 Therefore, all phenomena of cyclic existence or transcendence, included within both  
 appearance and mind,

have no reality whatsoever but arise in any way whatsoever.  
When this is realized, it is proof that listening and contemplating have hit the mark.

[35] The many techniques of creation and completion, both with and without visualization, such as rejecting or transforming or resting in deceiving appearances, are purificatory methods, and that is where the value of all practice lies. Thoughts of past, present, and future are like ripples on water, never ending. Without pursuing them, whatever the subject of concentration is, upon that itself, like a master craftsperson spinning yarn, not too tight or too loose, but just right for the material, the wise direct their watchguard of mindfulness again and again. When somewhat used to that, mindfulness will grow stronger, and the progressive experiences, such as one-pointedness, will arise. Don't fall into the so-called residue of mind or awareness, the ordinary mental undercurrent, but rather intensify the clarity. The undercurrent can be more harmful than both sinking and scattering.

[36] When you establish for certain the true nature of mind, many things arise, yet they are not other than the one. That one thing also cannot even be grasped by objective clinging. Looking at it, it is not seen, being without color or shape. This is a sign of its being without foundation, free of basis, and beyond intellect. Its essence is empty, its nature clarity, and its dynamic play of compassion arises without inhibition. Indeed, it is the three bodies that have been spontaneously present all along.

[37] You try to block thoughts and yet they are not blocked – first one unblocked thought arises, then a second – let them arise. When they arise, send them wherever they go and stand guard. Since there is no place for them to go, they have returned, like a crow who has taken off from a ship. Rest like the movement of swells at sea.

[38] Undistracted mindfulness and continuous mental abiding may be difficult, and you must proceed by small steps. Nevertheless, it is crucial to maintain the effort without becoming discouraged.

[39] If abiding is stabilized but attachment to it is not released, you will not be able to surpass the three realms, and the facade of realization will be whisked away by the movement of thoughts.

One cannot see the moon's reflection in disturbed water.  
Therefore, first develop the experiences of calm abiding,  
and then meditate on superior insight; this is the normal approach.

[40] Generally, everything up to the mahamudra is termed "mind path."  
Common dzogchen is also included in this.  
The class of exceptional esoteric instructions  
is said to be the "awareness path," and as such,  
it is not definite that one must begin with calm abiding.  
When the nature of naked awareness itself, without exaggeration or denial, is revealed,  
it is sufficient just to become accustomed to that.  
However, if the true nature is not unerringly revealed,  
then even the profound esoteric instructions will be difficult to assimilate.  
In that case, it is better to tread the gradual path.

[41] "Nonmeditation," "nondistraction," "abandoning mental doings,"  
"maintaining whatever arises," "ordinary mind,"  
and "free of intellect" all mean uncontrived.

[42] Whatever abiding or moving is perceived, it is unnecessary to fabricate anything.  
Again minding and again concentrating is certainly adding deluded thought onto itself.  
Focusing directly upon bare awareness,  
called "maintaining whatever arises," is the path of all the adepts.

[43] In the ways of applying practice to one's being, such as the middle way,  
pacification and severance, mahamudra, and common dzogchen,  
whatever thoughts arise, without making anything out of them,  
you look nakedly right at them, and they become the path of liberation.  
In the path of the heart-drop esoteric instruction of dzogchen,  
you look inwardly right at the one who perceives whatever thoughts arise,  
and you encounter the essence of reality.  
Deluded appearance and thoughts disappear in their own ground without your paying  
attention to them.

I have heard several learned and accomplished gurus say  
that the former is focusing outward with dualistic clinging,  
while the latter is focusing inward and is truly nondualism.  
Even if that is so, the methods of liberating thoughts  
must include definite experiences in the three stages.  
Thus, according to Vimalamitra,  
liberation without an initial and subsequent thought  
is like a child looking around in wonderment in a temple:

there is no mental construct of good or bad made from the initial perception.  
 Liberation in its own ground of whatever thought arises  
 is like the snake's knot disappearing in space:  
 as soon as it appears, it disappears without need of a remedy.  
 Liberation in thoughts, being neither helpful nor harmful,  
 is like a burglar raiding an empty house:  
 whether it occurs or not, there is neither loss nor gain.

[44] In short, the essential meaning is this: understand the essential points of meditation;  
 do not fall under the power of mediocrity in external manners;  
 and inwardly, exert effort tempered just right.  
 These should be understood as the signs of obtaining stability.  
 Nonmeditation is the exhaustion of effort.  
 Although there is nothing to meditate on, there is something to get used to.  
 For the sake of habituation, while eating, resting, going, or staying,  
 in all activities, it is crucial not to give in to distraction.

[45] When alone, you can relax and maintain true nature.  
 When in a crowd, the powers of mindfulness, awareness, and clarity need to be carefully guarded.  
 Since mindful awareness in essence has no true existence,  
 there is nothing to attend to, but there is something to establish.  
 Since it is awareness-emptiness, it is somewhat difficult to establish,  
 but once you are used to it, it will be like meeting an old acquaintance.  
 Whatever appearances, sounds, or thoughts occur,  
 there is not one iota that is not an aspect of awareness itself.

[46] The esoteric instructions of exceptional atiyoga speak of the distinction between mind and intrinsic awareness.  
 Mindfulness cannot grasp the nature of clear light —  
 this abstruse aspect, with movement and memory, that is difficult to cut through, is mind.  
 With no object of cognizance, the nature of clear light is seen —  
 this radiant aspect that abides like a candle is the latter.  
 It is like a sudden fright without a known object,  
 but when it is recognized, confidence is established.  
 It is said that awareness is empty of movement, unborn, and liberated.  
 These are not just the words of emptiness seen in books.  
 They are the direct oral precepts of the lineage gurus that are like the heart's blood.  
 They are not revealed to those of broken commitment, sophists, and so on —



the protectors of mantra keep a sharp watch!

[47] Uncontrived reality does not need to be sustained continuously:

the initial incident recalled is sufficient.

It was taught by the previous Kagyu masters

that by meditating on the essence, the karmic obscurations of many eons are purified, and furthermore, the vital wind enters the central channel automatically.

There are other benefits too great to speak of.

If you know your own nature, it is the knowledge of the one thing that liberates all.

When your mental powers are weak, and maintaining without focusing on something is difficult,

practice developing mindfulness in creation stage and other techniques that are in keeping with your condition.

[48] In sustaining nonfocusing, the mixing of basic space and intrinsic awareness

is enhanced by mixing the source, mind, with the center of space

or the midst of the ocean to illuminate mindfulness.

At that time, awareness-emptiness without center or circumference arises.

[49] Three things are said to pose the danger of misunderstanding:

emptiness, calm abiding, and neutrality.

Emptiness means freedom from the extremes of existence and nonexistence, birth and cessation, eternalism and nihilism.

It is called an experience in awareness, unimaginable, inconceivable, and ineffable.

[50] Calm abiding is thoroughly pacifying the churning of thoughts

and resting the mind evenly, without center or circumference,

abiding like the ocean without waves.

[51] Neutrality is when the power of mindful awareness weakens,

and you pursue the subtle mental movements.

When mindful awareness arrives, it is more like hindsight.

It is like water flowing through grass:

you see it only when it comes out the other side.

[52] During meditation, if a state of neutrality occurs,

single it out, that is, tighten up the mindful awareness.

When dark torpor sets in, clear out the stale breath

and wake up by chanting, shouting, swaying, and so on.

[53] When angry thoughts arise vividly,

if you look at them nakedly and rest without fabrication,  
they will vanish in their own ground without harm or benefit.

Self-arising wisdom is none other than that.

That vivid arising within a state of nonfabrication  
takes the form of anger but is essentially pristine wisdom.

In the wake of the vanishing anger, the radiance of emptiness need not be pursued.

That emptiness without frame of reference is what's called "unity,"  
as are Vajrasattva and the others.

Apply this also to the afflictive emotions, such as desire and so on.

[54] In the completely perfect sense, there is no meditation and nothing to meditate  
on.

When mindfulness alone is enough, it is the peak of practice.

In the ultimate sense, even mindfulness itself does not exist.

When the basis of mindfulness is absolved in basic space, we speak of wisdom.

As when fuel is used up the fire is also extinguished,  
when delusion is used up the remedy itself is eliminated.

This is the sphere of activity of all noble ones.

[55] It is not meditation, nor is it nonmeditation.

Not being meditation, there is nothing at all to focus on,  
and not being nonmeditation, there can be no distraction.

Simply place the mind on the bare apprehension of the nature of reality.

This is not a thought-object of the rational mind,  
because the absolute is beyond intellect and without reference point.

If the intimate connection between thought and object is not severed,  
although you call it "uncontrived," it cannot reverse delusion.

Severing the inner perceiver and the external object  
may be called self-arising self-liberating, but it is still duality.

When there is no antidote, it is self-arising self-liberating.

[56] One's very own mind is the child appearing to the mother.

Like bubbles rising out of water, appearances arise out of attachment,  
and yet if you know that it is the play of nonduality,

then this is what is meant by appearance and mind being the meeting of mother and  
child.

You won't find acceptance or rejection of cyclic existence and transcendence, good  
and bad, realized and unrealized –

emptiness and completion were always present.

All view, meditation, and action is included in that,

and since all the commitments to preserve are also included in that,

the dzogchen atiyoga teaches  
 four commitments to preserve that are kept by not preserving.  
 Being without interruption in preservation is the commitment of "nonexistence,"  
 being free of duality is "evenness,"  
 everything being perfect in mind is "singularity,"  
 and this completion in itself without anything else is "spontaneously perfect."  
 This is the ultimate intention of the victorious ones of the three times.

[57] Don't bother with examination of dreams when awakening at dawn  
 and all the other methods of welcoming discursive thinking.  
 Resting within mindfulness during illuminated practice,  
 the brilliance and murkiness of today's awareness will separate out.

[58] Not understanding rejection and acceptance; lack of devotion in Dharma,  
 careless, compulsive behavior, and excessive afflictive emotion –  
 if these four are present, faults and downfalls will fall like rain.  
 It is as if the four trapdoors to downfalls are wide open.  
 But if you maintain cautious mindful awareness,  
 even the afflictive emotions will turn into great wisdom;  
 what need to mention that all else becomes virtue?  
 All the essential points of daily-life applications are held by mindfulness.  
 Without mindfulness, you won't even remember these applications,  
 and their mere existence is of no benefit whatsoever.  
 You must proceed directly with a direct attitude.  
 Relying on cautious attention in all activities  
 is like having Shakyamuni himself as your constant companion.

[59] Consecrate food and drink as nectar with OM AH HUNG,  
 and before lunch recite the brief or extensive verses of  
*The Sutra of Recalling the Jewels*.  
 Imagine your own body as a deity, and in the crown, throat, and heart centers,  
 the hundred wrathful deities, knowledge-holders, and peaceful deities,  
 and meditate mainly on inseparability with your source guru.  
 Imagining your pores filled with knowledge-holders, dakinis, and so on,  
 like a bursting bag of sesame seeds;  
 in a state of deliberate mindfulness, partake without attachment.  
 It doesn't matter if you see it as ordinary food and drink;  
 whatever you eat will become a sacred feast.

[60] Other applications for daily living are guru yoga,  
 bodhisattva activities, creation and completion stage practices, and so on.

You can receive whatever meditation you desire from your guru.

[61] All that is composite is impermanent, all that is corrupt is suffering, transcending misery, all phenomena are peace and emptiness – these are the four seals that distinguish the genuine Buddhist view. Offering food cakes to Jambhala, a pinch of food to the Plunderer, and water to the Constricted Throat and Blazing Mouth spirits – these are the four seals that distinguish genuine Buddhist activity. If you uphold these eight seals of view and action, you are a follower of the victorious ones, but if not, you are not a disciple – this was taught by Shakyamuni.

[62] The lord of refuge in Tibet and Kham is Orgyen. Remembering his kindness and life example, supplicate him. Tibet's deity of good fortune is the Great Compassionate One. Diligently recite the six-syllable mantra.

[63] The profound essential points for wisdom to arise naturally are these: Since the vital winds of duality are naturally pure, effortlessly hold the intermediate wind. Since whatever appears is the door to the arising of wisdom, open the great crystal kati channel to the sky. Since whatever arises is liberated without focusing on it, focus on the letter HUNG as the essence of one's mind. If you possess these three special essential points, you will easily arrive at the primordial place of the victorious ones.

[64] Additionally, in the morning as soon as you rise, having cleared away the stale breath, apply HUNG AH OM to the exhaling, pausing, and inhaling, counting twenty-one or a hundred times. Imagine that all your breathing during the day is like that. When going to sleep, apply the three letters to exhaling, inhaling, and pausing, and imagine that all your breathing during the night is like that. By doing this, your daily 21,600 breaths become mantra and the deity's recitation requirement is fulfilled without hardship.

[65] The king of Dharma, the unsurpassable Dagpo, said that there is no more profound approach than looking at the essence and holding a few "gentle" breaths while doing profound mental recitation, thus incorporating it with human life, and occasionally praying to the guru and blending your minds.

[66] When retiring to sleep, draw the guru from above your head into the center of your heart,  
 abandon the coming and going of thoughts, memories, and all mental activity,  
 and relax into a state of undistracted devotion and prayer.  
 Then the clear light will gradually arise out of deep sleep.

[67] If you want to do the meditation of recognizing, changing, expanding, and purifying dreams,  
 you must maintain an attitude during the day that all appearances are dreams,  
 and then it will be easy to deal with dreams.  
 If you tend to solidify appearances during the day,  
 then at night, even if you recognize dreams, the practice will be difficult.  
 Also, to cut through the intermediate existence  
 you need to have cut through the dream experience.  
 If you don't realize that all waking appearances are like dreams or illusions,  
 then one vast mass of delusion will obscure another.

[68] In general, impermanence, love and compassion,  
 devotion, creation stage, dream yoga, illusory body yoga,  
 intermediate existence yoga, and so on; all those practices that require habituation,  
 should be conscientiously applied during the four daily activities.  
 Quickly assimilating them, they will become part of your being.  
 Someone like me who cannot remember to practice Dharma sincerely  
 has not mixed the Dharma with his being.  
 However, due to the good influence of previously accumulated virtuous karma,  
 I do have sincere faith in the teachings of the Buddha,  
 and with just this I have the intention to benefit others.  
 This is the primary cause [for this composition], and the secondary cause was the  
 encouragement of the spiritual friend Shrimen, who perfectly possesses the  
 three trainings.  
 I wrote it not through my own gifts, but rather like a parrot mimicking Dharma talk.  
 May the roots of this virtue render service to the glorious Karmapa  
 and the lineage of gurus and disciples.  
 May the expansion of their enlightened activities bring all beings throughout space  
 to the mastery of the state of Vajradhara in a single lifetime.

## COLOPHON

At the request of the spiritual friend Karma Palden, an attendant of the fourteenth Omniscient Lord of the Victorious Ones (Karmapa), and whose mind is totally devoted to the definitive meaning, I, Karma Ngawang Yonten Gyamtso, bearing merely the signs of a Buddhist monk, at the age of twenty-seven, gradually dictated this text, and he transcribed it. May it send forth glorious healing qualities for the doctrine and for beings. In all times and directions may glory prevail. May the glorious blaze of good fortune adorn the world. Virtue! Virtue!