

THE TREASURY OF KNOWLEDGE

Shes bya mDzod

by

Jamgön Kongtrul

Chapter Eight

The Progressive Classification of the Training
in Superior Samadhi

Part One

The Stages of Meditation of Shamatha and
Vipashyana, the General Basis of All Samadhis

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Translator's Note

This text has been translated under the guidance of Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, a scholar and accomplished meditator. The notes are given by him in order to clarify this very condensed text.

The first draft of the translation was done by Kiki Ekselius. Robert Lowman did a word by word translation, based on this first draft. A revised version of the part dealing with shamatha has been used for this present translation.

We would like to thank all our friends in Brussels and Dhagpo Kagyu Ling whose help and encouragement made this work possible.

It is hoped that this translation will be of some help for those striving to accomplish shamatha and vipashyana.

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Jamgön Kongtrul I (1813-1899)

Jamgön Kongtrul ('*Jam dgon Kong sprul*) [1813-1899] was also known as Lodrö Thaye (*bLo sgro mTha' yas*) and Ngawang Yönten Gyamtso (*nGag dbang Yon ten rGyam tsho*). He was born into a family of the Bön tradition on the 10th day of the 10th month of the Female Water Bird year. He received teachings from approximately fifty great teachers of the Unbiased (*Ris med*) tradition such as the great pandit Gyurme Thutob Namgyal (*Pan chen 'Gyur med mThu stobs rNam rgyal*) of Shechen monastery, Situ Pema Nyinche Wongpo (*Si tu Padma Nyin byed dBang po*) of Palpung monastery, Jamyang Kyentse Wongpo ('*Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse'i dBang po*) etc.

The teachings he received can be divided into three types: the external, which are the sciences and their branches; the internal, which are commentaries on the Sutras and Tantras of both the old and new traditions; and the secret, which are detailed oral instructions based on the guru's own experience. By his studies he gained decisive understanding, by reflection he reached certainty and by meditation he actualised the wisdom which fully knows the varieties of phenomena and their mode of being.

He composed many treatises and compiled teachings that otherwise would have been lost. His main writings and collections of teachings are known as The Five Treasures: She Ja Dzö (*Shes bya mDzod*), Kagyu Ngag Dzö (*bKa brgyud sNgags mDzod*), Rinchen Ter Dzö (*Rin chen gTer mDzod*), Dam Ngag Dzö (*gDams ngag mDzod*) and Sangway Dzö (*gSang ba'i mDzod*).

He had innumerable disciples among which were the 15th Karmapa (*Karma pa*), Mipam Jamyang Namgyal (*Mi pham 'Jam dbyangs rNam rgyal*) and others. Having accomplished immeasurable benefit for beings, he passed away on the 28th day of the 11th month of the Female Earth Pig year.



Manjushri

Through the superior knowledge arising from reflection, one eliminates misconceptions and finds certainty regarding the deep view and the general and specific character of phenomena¹; this understanding should then be applied to one's own being through meditation. Thus, the eighth chapter deals with the progressive classification of the training in superior samadhi².

*The stages of meditation
of shamatha and vipashyana,
the general basis of all samadhis*

THE NECESSITY OF PRACTISING SAMADHI

One needs to practise by meditating on the meaning of what one has listened to and reflected upon, just as a farmer needs to make use of a good crop.

One needs to practise, focusing inwardly on what one has understood through the superior knowledge arising from listening and reflecting. No matter how deeply one listens and reflects, if one does not also meditate, one will not be freed from bondage, just as a farmer needs to make use of his crop, since no matter how good it is, if it is not used for food, it will not dispel hunger. Similarly, no matter how skillful one may be in reading and understanding medical treatises, one cannot dispel the pain of a sick person unless one actually applies one's knowledge.

IDENTIFYING THE SAMADHI TO BE PRACTISED

One should gain certainty in both shamatha and vipashyana, which comprise the ocean of samadhis of both the greater and lesser vehicles.

The *Sutra Unravelling the Thought* states: « As the Bhagavan has said, one should know that the many types of samadhi of the Sravakas, Bodhisattvas and Tathagatas are all included in shamatha and vipashyana³. » Thus, since it is said that shamatha and vipashyana comprise all the samadhis of both the greater and lesser vehicles, and since it is impossible for anyone striving for samadhi to fathom the great number of divisions, this ocean of samadhis is classified into just shamatha and vipashyana. Therefore, one should first gain certainty in these two. This is necessary because, as stated in the same Sutra, all the qualities ensuing from the practice of the greater and lesser vehicles, whether mundane or supramundane, are the fruit of shamatha and vipashyana. Also Maitreya has said: « One should know all mundane and supramundane virtues of the Sravakas, Bodhisattvas or Tathagatas to be the fruit of shamatha and vipashyana. »

THE DETAILED EXPLANATION

The essential nature of shamatha and vipashyana

The essential nature of these is: one-pointedness and individual analysis which fully discriminates phenomena.

Shamatha is to rest the mind one-pointedly, using a correct object of observation, and vipashyana is to completely analyse suchness by means of superior knowledge that fully discriminates and individually analyses phenomena. The *Cloud of Jewels Sutra* says: «Shamatha is one-pointedness, vipashyana is individual analysis.» Also, Vasubandhu's Commentary on this says: «One should know shamatha and vipashyana respectively as resting the mind in mind and fully discriminating phenomena on the basis of perfect samadhi; without samadhi there is neither. These are the defining characteristics of shamatha and vipashyana.» Kamalashila's *Stages of Meditation II* says: «Having calmed distraction towards external objects, one abides in a state of mind which is supple and delights in focusing inwards continuously and naturally; this is called shamatha. While focused on this calm, abiding mind, one thoroughly analyses its suchness; that is called vipashyana.»

Etymology

Having calmed distraction, one completely abides, and the superior nature is seen with the eyes of wisdom.

The etymological definition of shamatha and vipashyana is as follows: «shama» means «calm» and «-thā» is «abiding»; so «shamathā» means «calm abiding». It is thus called since distraction towards objects such as form etc. has been calmed, and the mind abides one-pointedly in whichever concentration one is practising. In the word «vi(śheṣa)paśyanā», «viśheṣa» means «special» or «superior», and «paśyanā» means «seeing» or «observing»; so «vi(śheṣa)paśyanā» means «superior seeing». It is thus called since one sees «the superior», i.e. the nature of phenomena, with the eyes of wisdom.

The necessity of both

Just as in the example of the bright oil lamp not blown by the wind, one realises the true nature by bringing both together.

In order to understand the necessity of both shamatha and vipashyana, consider the example of an oil lamp: if the flame is bright and there is no wind, one will see clearly; however, if the flame is bright but it is being blown by the wind, one will not see by it. Similarly, if one has both the superior knowledge which is certain and unmistakable concerning suchness, and the concentration which stays at will on the object of observation, one will see suchness clearly.

However, if one has undistracted concentration but lacks the superior knowledge that realises the true nature, it will not be possible to realise the nature of mind. Also, if one has the view which comprehends selflessness but lacks the samadhi in which the mind rests one-pointedly, it will not be possible to see the true nature clearly. Therefore, since it is considered that by bringing both shamatha and vipashyana together one will be able to realise suchness, it is advised in all the Sutras and Tantras to combine these two.

The progressive order

The progression is from the support to that which is supported.

The progression from shamatha to vipashyana is such that one depends on the other, like the oil and the flame of an oil lamp. In *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* it is said: « Having understood that the afflictions are completely overcome by vipashyana which fully incorporates shamatha, one begins by practising shamatha. » Thus, having first accomplished shamatha, one proceeds to practise vipashyana. The reason for this is that vipashyana is seeing the nature of the mind as it is by observing it through discriminating knowledge; and in order to see it, one must start with shamatha, since it is absolutely necessary to have control over the mind to be observed, by making it workable.

The training in each particular practice

Shamatha

The prerequisites for shamatha

To rely on the conditions for shamatha is to reject everything unfavourable, to stay in a favourable area, to have few desires, to be content, to adopt pure ethics, and to give up distraction and discursive thoughts.

Since one wishes to accomplish shamatha, it is very important to rely on the causes or prerequisites for it. In the *Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*, Atisha says: « If the conditions for shamatha deteriorate, even if one meditates with great effort for a thousand years, one will not accomplish samadhi. » Therefore, it is also said in the chapter dealing with the prerequisites for samadhi: « Keep well the previously mentioned conditions and settle the mind in virtue, by means of any correct object of observation. If a yogi thus accomplishes shamatha, he will also gain the supersensible cognitions. »

What are these prerequisites? According to Kamalashila's *Stages of Meditation II*, they are: « To stay in a favourable area, to have few desires, to be content, to forsake excessive activity, to adopt pure ethics, to give up distraction due to desire as well as discursive thoughts. » Further, in the *Ornament for the Mahayana Sūtras*, it is said: « The wise person practises wherever he can have good facilities, a wholesome environment, a healthy place, good friends and the requisites for yogic happiness. »

- Staying in a favourable area means: to have good facilities, i.e. to easily obtain food and clothing; a wholesome environment, with no danger from robbers, thieves, etc.; a healthy place, free from disease; good friends of like view and conduct; and the requisites for happiness, i.e. freedom from commotion and disturbing noises.
- Having few desires refers to food and clothing.
- Being content is being satisfied with just the bare essentials.
- Forsaking excessive activity refers to buying and selling etc.
- Adopting pure ethics means not transgressing one's vows of personal liberation or bodhicitta.
- Giving up discursive thoughts refers to that mental activity which, arising out of desire, results in many shortcomings in both this and future lives.

Furthermore, one should also rely on the conditions and prerequisites for shamatha mentioned by Atisha in the chapter dealing with the prerequisites for samadhi, and avoid their opposites.

The progressive classification.

When classified, it comprises the mind of the desire realm, the concentrations, the formless absorptions and the absorption of cessation.

When shamatha is classified according to individuals or categories, there are four types: the shamatha which corresponds to the mind of the desire realm, to the levels of the concentrations, to the formless absorptions and to the absorption of cessation. These are explained in the previous and following chapters.

The way to meditate

POSTURE

During meditation one should be seated comfortably in the eightfold posture.

When meditating on shamatha, at the beginning, one's posture is very important. Therefore, one should be seated comfortably and adopt the eightfold posture, described here according to the *Stages of Meditation*:

- 1 The legs should be in vajra posture or half-crossed.
- 2 The eyes should be half-closed.
- 3 The body should be held straight.
- 4 The shoulders should be level.
- 5 The gaze should be in the direction of the nose.
- 6 There should be a slight gap between the teeth and between the lips.
- 7 The tongue should be touching the palate.
- 8 The breathing should be natural and effortless.

THE METHODS FOR SETTING THE MIND

THE OBJECTS OF OBSERVATION

There are generally four types of objects of observation, in accordance with the individual: pervasive objects, objects for purifying deeds, objects that render skilful and objects for purifying afflictions.

Generally, the Bhagavan taught four types of objects of observation for the yogi:

The *persuasive objects* refer to

- non-analytical setting,
- analytical focusing,
- observing the « limits of phenomena », i.e. their varieties and their mode of being,⁴ and
- achievement of the purpose, which is the transformation obtained by meditating on the two aspects of phenomena mentioned above.⁵

The *objects for purifying deeds* are the remedies to whichever is greatest of the tendencies coming from deeds committed in former lives out of desire, hatred, obscuration, pride, and discursiveness. Respectively these remedies are: meditation on repulsiveness, love, dependent arising, the division of the (6) elements⁶, and the rising and falling of the breath.

The *objects that render skilful* are of five types, namely the aggregates,⁷ the (18) elements,⁸ the entrances,⁹ the twelve links of dependent arising,¹⁰ and the appropriate and the inappropriate¹¹.

The *objects for purifying afflictions* are of two kinds: the levels, of which the higher are more peaceful and the lower more coarse¹²; and the four truths, together with their sixteen attributes such as impermanence etc.¹³

The object of observation chosen should be in accordance with the individual: depending on whichever affliction is strongest, from desire to discursiveness, the object of observation should be the corresponding remedy, from repulsiveness to the rising and falling of the breath. If the tendencies are of equal strength or the afflictions are weak, it is permissible to use any of the above objects of observation, according to one's faculties.

THE PROGRESSION OF THE ACTUAL MEDITATION

Setting the mind with a concrete support

The particular method for setting the mind is to focus on an impure and a pure support.

In the beginning, it is important to train using a support. An impure support refers to any small object such as a piece of wood or a pebble, which one uses as an object of concentration. A pure support refers to a statue or relief of the Buddha, a seed syllable or the attributes of a deity etc. The manner of concentrating should be similar to the way a Brahmin twines his cord, i.e. neither too tight nor too loose.

Setting the mind without concrete support

« Without concrete support » refers to setting the mind on individual parts; on the complete form; outwardly; and inwardly on the body and on that which depends on the body.

Once one is able to rest even slightly on a concrete support, one can proceed to meditate without concrete support, i.e. using a mental image of a statue of a deity etc. . First one concentrates on the individual parts such as the face, hands, etc.; this is known as *meditation with a partial support*. Then, having become familiar with that, one concentrates on the complete form; this is known as *meditation with a complete support*. The former and latter are summarised as follows by the master Jangchub Zangpo in *The Prerequisites for Samadhi*: «Shamatha is classified into *observation*, which is directed outwards, and *attainment*, which is directed inwards. Observation is of two kinds: *special*, which refers to statues and seed syllables, and *ordinary*. Attainment can be either *directed towards the body* or *towards something dependent on the body*. The former is of three types: visualising the body as a deity, as an attribute of a deity or as a skeleton etc. The latter is of five types: concentrating on the breath, on subtle parts, on bindu,¹⁴ on light and on joyful bliss». Although there are indeed many ways of enumerating objects of observation in other texts, they are all included in the two categories of *with concrete support* and *without concrete support*.

Setting the mind in the essential nature

Strive to remain absorbed in the essential nature, waves of thought having dissolved into the ocean of the all-basis.

Having familiarised oneself with the methods mentioned above, one settles into the state in which all notions of subject and object are completely pacified, with no concept of a support. By this, the endless flow of thought waves

is completely dissolved into the ocean of the all-basis, and one arrives at a state of absorption in the essential nature. This is ultimate shamatha, therefore, strive for it!

IDENTIFYING THE EXPERIENCES ARISING FROM MEDITATION

BRIEF EXPLANATION

There are two ways of identifying the experiences arising from these.

There are two ways of identifying the experiences arising from meditating on the three kinds of shamatha, with a concrete support, without concrete support and in the essential nature.

DETAILED EXPLANATION

The tradition of the great treatises

The eight antidotes to the five faults

According to the treatises, there are five faults: three types of laziness, forgetting the instructions, laxity and agitation (each with two aspects), non-application, and over-application. The eight antidotes to these are: aspiration, exertion, faith and suppleness which counteract the first; the samadhi of not forgetting with three particularities; examination; application; and equanimity when resting in a balanced state.

According to the tradition of the great treatises, one must rely on the eight antidotes in order to remove the five faults which hinder the arising of experiences. The *Discrimination of the Middle Way* and the *Extremes* says: «Abiding in that gives rise to workability and accomplishes all aims. This comes about through relying on the eight antidotes to the five faults which are laziness, forgetting the instructions, laxity and agitation, non-application and over-application. The basis, abiding in that, the cause, the effect, not to forget the object, to examine the mind for laxity and agitation, actual application which removes them, and resting naturally when calm are the eight antidotes.» Here, «abiding in that» means abiding in joyous effort in order to

dispel unfavourable conditions. From this, the samadhi of workability arises. This samadhi achieves all aims, since it is the foundation of miraculous powers, such as the supersensible cognitions etc.¹⁵ Such a samadhi results from the elimination of the five faults by means of the eight antidotes.

As for the *five faults*, they are as follows:

1. At the time of engaging in samadhi, *laziness* is a fault, since it prevents application to the practice. There are three types of laziness: the laziness of neutral activities such as sleep etc.; attachment to negative activities; and lack of self-confidence.
2. *Forgetting the instructions* when exerting oneself in samadhi is a fault, since if one forgets the object, one is unable to rest in equipoise.
3. When resting in equipoise, *laxity* and *agitation* are hindrances, since they make the mind unworkable. Each of these has two aspects, coarse and subtle. *Coarse laxity* refers to obscurity of mind, the object being unclear through loss of firmness in one's awareness of it; *subtle laxity* refers to weak apprehension of the object even though clarity is present. *Coarse agitation* cannot be suppressed even by remedies, due to very strong attachment to sense objects; *subtle agitation* refers to slight movement of thought, the mind being unable to rest undisturbed.
4. *Non-application* of remedies when laxity and agitation have arisen is a fault, since then one is unable to pacify them.
5. *Application* of remedies when one is free from laxity and agitation is a fault since then one is unable to rest in equanimity.

If, as here, laxity and agitation are counted as one, this makes five faults; if they are counted separately, as in the *Stages of Meditation* it makes six.

The remedy to these five faults is to rely on the *eight antidotes* which remove them. The first four, namely *aspiration*, *exertion*, *faith* (the cause), and *suppleness* (the effect) remove the first fault of laziness. The remedy to forgetting is the *samadhi of not forgetting the instructions*, which has three particularities: strong clarity of mind, non-discursiveness, i.e. resting one-pointedly on the object, and a resulting experience of bliss which is accompanied by a sensation of well-being. The sixth remedy is *introspection*, which examines whether laxity and agitation have arisen or not; if they have arisen, one counteracts them by means of appropriate visualisations, gazes, and physical activities.¹⁶ The antidote for non-application of the remedies to laxity and agitation is to exert oneself in their *application*. If when resting

undisturbed in a balanced state, one is still making effort in application, the remedy is to train in *equanimity*, without application.

The six powers, the four mental engagements and the nine mental abidings

The nine mental abidings such as setting the mind on the object etc. arise through the six powers of listening, reflecting, mindfulness, introspection, joyous effort and familiarity, To these mental abidings correspond four mental engagements: forcible, interrupted, uninterrupted and spontaneous.

The six powers, which are the means for developing shamatha, are: the power of listening, the power of reflecting, the power of recollection, the power of introspection, the power of joyous effort and the power of familiarity. Through relying on the first power, the first mental abiding is accomplished; through the second power, the second; through the third power, the third and fourth; through the fourth power, the fifth and sixth; through the fifth power, the seventh and eighth; and through the sixth, the ninth.

There are four mental engagements corresponding to the nine mental abidings: forcible engagement, which corresponds to the first and second mental abidings; interrupted engagement, which corresponds to the third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh mental abidings; uninterrupted engagement, corresponding to the eighth; and spontaneous engagement, corresponding to the ninth. These describe the manner in which the mind engages in samadhi.

The nine successive mental abidings arising from the six powers mentioned above are as follows:

- 1 *Setting the mind*: having withdrawn from outer objects, the mind is directed towards an inner object of observation.
- 2 *Continuous setting*: having turned inwards, the mind is able to remain continuously on its object without being distracted elsewhere.
- 3 *Re-setting*: having become aware of distraction towards outer objects, the mind is set once again on its object of observation.
- 4 *Close setting*: setting the mind on its object, having refined it by withdrawing it again and again from its natural coarseness¹⁷.
- 5 *Disciplining*: rejoicing in the qualities of samadhi, having reflected on them.

6 *Pacifying*: having seen distraction as a fault, one pacifies dislike of samadhi.

7 *Thorough pacifying*: here, attachment and mental discomfort are pacified.

8 *Making one-pointed*: making effort in order to be able to rest effortlessly.

9 *Setting in equipoise*: resting in equanimity when the mind is already balanced.

Thus the succession of the nine mental abidings reaches its perfection.

The nine mental abidings have been taught in the *Ornament for the Mahayana Suttas* while the six powers and four mental engagements are explained in the *Levels of Hearers*.

The tradition of oral instructions

In the oral tradition, the five experiences of agitation, attainment, familiarity, stability and perfection are illustrated by examples.

In the oral tradition, the experiences which accompany the development of shamatha are summarised into five. The first experience is that of *mental agitation*, which is compared to a waterfall; the second is that of *attainment*, compared to a river flowing through a gorge; the third is that of *familiarity*, compared to a large river flowing leisurely; the fourth is that of *stability*, compared to an ocean free from waves; and the fifth is that of *perfect stability*, compared to an oil lamp not blown by the wind, resting bright and clear, unmoved by anything. Thus the different experiences are illustrated by individual examples.

The measure of accomplishment of shamatha and its benefits

THE WAY SHAMATHA IS ACCOMPLISHED AND THE SIGNS OF CORRECT MENTAL ENGAGEMENT

Shamatha is accomplished when suppleness is brought to perfection. The signs are bliss, clarity and no concepts of designations, as if merged with space.

Even if one has accomplished the fourth mental engagement and the ninth mental abiding, if one has not also attained suppleness of body and mind, it is not perfect shamatha. The *Sutra Unravelling the Thought* says: « O Bhagavan, from the moment a Bodhisattva turns his mind inwardly, focusing on mind, until he attains suppleness of body and mind, what is this mental engagement called? Maitreya, this is not shamatha, but should be known to be the associated mental factor of belief, which is a similitude of shamatha. » And the *Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras* says: « From familiarity with shamatha comes non-application; from this comes the attainment of great physical and mental suppleness, which is known as 'having mental engagement'. » Mental engagement is, in this context, shamatha. In short, shamatha is explained as being suppleness, which is workability of body and mind. Therefore, until that is attained, the samadhi is not actual shamatha, but is included in the levels of the desire realm and is known as « the one-pointedness of a mind of the desire realm ».

Suppleness is referred to in the *Compendium of Knowledge* as follows: « What is suppleness? It is that which dispels all hindrances to workability of body and mind, since it breaks the continuity of physical and mental rigidity. »

« Physical and mental rigidity » refers to the inability to use body and mind for whatever virtuous purpose one wishes. The remedy to this is suppleness, where the body and mind, being free from rigidity, are completely workable when employed in virtue.

Furthermore, if one exerts oneself to remove the affliction of obstructing physical rigidity, one becomes free from unworkable states such as heaviness etc. and the body becomes light, as if made of cotton-wool. This is workability of body. Similarly, if one makes effort to remove the affliction of mental rigidity, one becomes free from the inability to take joy in correct meditation and one can concentrate without hindrance, which is workability of mind.

Mental suppleness arises first, and by its power, a particular prana¹⁸ flows throughout the body, causing the overcoming of physical rigidity and the attainment of physical suppleness. This is the explanation given in the *Levels of Hearers*. This physical suppleness is a particular and extremely pleasant inner physical tactile sensation,¹⁹ but not a mental factor.

As to the manner of development of suppleness, it is explained in the *Levels of Hearers* as follows: First a subtle experience of suppleness arises, which is difficult to recognise, and then a more obvious one, which is easier to recognise; after this, great bliss and joy pervade both body and mind. At that point, one feels very confident due to this joy and, by continuing to meditate

without attachment to it, eventually the « shadow-like suppleness »²⁰ will arise, by the power of which one attains shamatha.

Having perfected suppleness, the measure of accomplishment of shamatha is that one abides free from laxity and agitation, unhindered by inner or outer distraction, the concentration being naturally stable and clear. The attainment of this mental engagement results in the attainment of the lesser level of a mind of the form realm, as well as the physical and mental suppleness and the one-pointedness of that same realm; and by means of the path of the truths and their attributes²¹ or of the coarse and subtle levels of the concentrations,²² one is able to purify the afflictions. When resting in equipoise, suppleness of body and mind arises very quickly and the five obstructions such as longing for sense objects, sleep, etc. for the most part do not occur. Upon rising from meditation, one may occasionally experience suppleness of body and mind. This is explained in the *Levels of Hearers*.

The signs of correct mental engagement are: the bliss of physical and mental suppleness; extraordinarily clear appearances, such as visibility of subtle particles; and no concepts of the ten designations — the five sense objects such as form etc., the three times, male and female — as if mind had merged with space. Due to this experience, there is no feeling of the body during the absorption phase and mind is merged with space; upon rising from meditation, one feels as if the body had suddenly reappeared.

THE NECESSITY OF ACCOMPLISHING SHAMATHA

It is the foundation of all the concentrations taught in the Sutras and Tantras, and it suppresses all suffering and afflictions.

This ultimate shamatha, which is the attainment of suppleness, is the foundation of all the concentrations, whether with or without an object, taught in the Sutras and Tantras, just as a fertile field is the ground for the desired crop. This samadhi has also the power to suppress and pacify all evident suffering and afflictions. Furthermore, the realisation of the genuine suchness or *Selflessness just as it is depends solely on the phase of absorption*.

It is said in the *Stages of Meditation I*: « A mind not resting in equipoise will not know the genuine, just as it is. The Bhagavan also has said that by resting in equipoise, the genuine will be known just as it is. »

Vipashyana

The prerequisites for vipashyana.

The prerequisites for vipashyana are to rely on a wise person and to seek the view by listening extensively and reflecting accordingly.

In his *Stages of Meditation II*, Kamalashila says: « What are the prerequisites for vipashyana? To rely on a wise teacher, to spare no effort in listening extensively, and to reflect accordingly. » Relying on a scholar who has full knowledge of the meaning of the teachings, one listens to authentic treatises and develops the view, i.e. the understanding of suchness, through the superior knowledge arising from listening and reflecting: such are the indispensable prerequisites for vipashyana. This is because without an unmistakable view, it is impossible to give rise to the realisation of vipashyana. Moreover, it is necessary to rely on the *definitive* rather than on the *provisional* teachings²³ in order to develop such a view; thus, an understanding of the deep definitive teachings must be preceded by a knowledge of the differences between these two levels of teaching. Furthermore, one should seek the view, that is, the understanding of profound emptiness, by relying on the genuine traditions founded by Nagarjuna and Asanga.

The particular types of vipashyana

The types are the non-buddhists' contemplation of the peaceful and coarse levels, the Shravakas' and Pratyekabuddhas' contemplation of the noble truths and their attributes, and the Paramitayana's contemplation of emptiness, which in the Mantrayana is taught to be endowed with bliss. The common preparatory stages are similar to those of the mundane path; however, those who have entered the Mantrayana etc. do not strive for them.

The classification of vipashyana in terms of types is as follows: (i) mundane vipashyana, which suppresses evident afflictions, and consists in contemplating the higher and lower levels as peaceful and coarse respectively—this is common to both buddhist and non-buddhist systems²⁴; (ii) the Shravakas' and Pratyekabuddhas' practice of contemplating the four noble truths and their sixteen attributes such as impermanence etc.²⁵; (iii) the Paramitayana's contemplation of emptiness, and (iv) the Mantrayana teaching according to which emptiness is endowed with bliss. The latter three types are supramundane vipashyana, which completely eradicates afflictions.

The way to accomplish the actual concentrations, common to buddhist and non-buddhist systems, by means of the seven preparatory stages of which the first is shamatha, has been described in the chapter dealing with the mundane path.²⁶ However, those who have entered the Mantrayana and those who have realised the outstanding view of the Paramitayana do not particularly strive for these.

The classification according to the essential nature.

The classification is into the « four types of vipashyana investigating the essence »: discriminating, fully discriminating, examining, and analysing; the « three gateways »: designations, thorough investigation, and individual analysis; and the « six investigations »: meaning, things, character, direction, time and reasoning, the latter being of four kinds: the reasoning of dependence, of function, of logical proof, and of nature. Through these six, discrimination is applied to each and every phenomenon from form up to omniscience.

What is mainly taught here is not the vipashyana of the high levels and paths, but the vipashyana to be practised by ordinary persons. There are three main types of classification for this:

Firstly, according to the *Sutra Unravelling the Thought*, there is a classification known as the four types of vipashyana investigating the essence. These are discriminating and fully discriminating, each of which is divided into thoroughly examining and analysing. Discriminating involves focusing on the varieties of phenomena, distinguishing them into categories such as the aggregates,²⁷ the elements²⁸ and the entrances,²⁹ and proceeding to a detailed subdivision of each. Fully discriminating involves focusing on their mode of

being and realising the absence of a self of persons and of phenomena. Examining and analysing refer to the coarse and subtle aspects of discrimination respectively.

The way of examining is described in the *Sutra Unravelling the Thought* as «fully examining, definitely examining, fully understanding and closely understanding». This also applies to analysing. Thus, the extensive classification involves sixteen subdivisions. The detailed presentation of these can be found in the *Levels of Hearers*.

A classification similar to the one given in the *Sutra Unravelling the Thought* is given in the *Compendium of Knowledge*: «What is vipashyana? It is discriminating, fully discriminating, thoroughly examining and thoroughly analysing phenomena; it is the remedy to rigidity and conceptuality, draws the mind away from the erroneous and settles it in that which is not erroneous.»

Secondly, there is a three-fold classification of vipashyana known as *the three gateways*. The *Sutra Unravelling the Thought* says: «O Bhagavan, how many types of vipashyana are there? Maitreya, there are three: the one arising from *designations*, the one arising from *thorough investigation*, and the one arising from *individual analysis*.»

If one identifies those three in relation to meditation on selflessness, they are as follows: (i) one focuses on the recognition of selflessness, concentrating on its attributes, without making use of much logical argumentation; (ii) one uses reasoning in order to ascertain what one formerly could not understand; and (iii) one analyses repeatedly as before the meaning which has been ascertained.

Finally, there is a six-fold classification of vipashyana known as *the six investigations*. Here one thoroughly investigates the six aspects of phenomena which are meaning, things, character, direction, time and reasoning; this is also a case of vipashyana arising from individual analysis.

Investigation of meaning entails finding out the sense of a given word or phrase.³⁰

Investigation of things entails classifying them as either internal or external.³¹

Investigation of character entails identifying the general (or abstract) and the specific (or concrete) character of phenomena, referred to as common and uncommon investigation respectively.³²

Investigation of direction entails investigating what is unwholesome by considering its faults and shortcomings, and what is wholesome by considering its qualities and benefits.³³

Investigation of time entails considering what has happened in the past, what will happen in the future and what takes place in the present.³⁴

Investigation of reasoning is of four types: (i) *the reasoning of dependence* refers to the investigation of the dependence of an effect upon causes and conditions for its arising.³⁵ In this context one investigates the deceptive, the ultimate and their basis of imputation individually,³⁶ (ii) *the reasoning of function* refers to the performance by each phenomenon of its own particular function: for example, fire burns etc. Here one investigates by identifying the phenomenon, the function and their mutual relationship,³⁷ (iii) *the reasoning of logical proof* refers to establishing the validity of propositions in accordance with valid cognition. Here one investigates phenomena with respect to three types of valid cognition, namely, direct valid cognition, inferential valid cognition and the valid cognition of trustworthy scriptures,³⁸ (iv) *the reasoning of nature* refers to investigating phenomena in terms of their conventional nature, e.g. fire being hot, water wet etc.; their inconceivable nature; and their abiding nature. One accepts these natures as such and does not look for other reasons for their being so.³⁹

Thus, by means of the six investigations, one discriminates and comprehends each and every phenomenon, from form up to omniscience, whether afflicted or pure.⁴⁰

The six investigations should be known as three: the meaning, the mode of being and the varieties. Vipashyana can also be condensed into preparatory or «analytic» and actual or «unfluctuating».

This six-fold presentation of vipashyana can be condensed into three main categories which are what a yogi should know: the meaning of words, the varieties of phenomena and their mode of being. The first of these corresponds to the first investigation; the second corresponds to the investigation of things in general and of the specific character of phenomena; and the third corresponds to the last three investigations as well as to that of the general character of phenomena.

The *three gateways* are the entrances to the *four vipashyanas* explained at first, and the method of investigation was presented as six; therefore the *three gateways* and the *six investigations* are included in the *four vipashyanas*. There is also a twofold classification of vipashyana into preparatory phase and actual practice, the first being «analytic», i.e. conceptual vipashyana, and the second «unfluctuating», i.e. non-conceptual.

The way to meditate

The way to meditate is to analyse selflessness by means of superior knowledge, and then to rest in a state free from mental fabrications. Non-analytical images are the basis for analysis; having identified the particular object, one cuts through misconceptions regarding its qualities.

If one has no understanding of the view of selflessness, whichever type of meditation one may do will be mistaken with respect to suchness; therefore, it is necessary to establish the view. On the other hand, even though one may have an intellectual understanding of the view, if one does not rest within that understanding, suchness will not have been meditated upon. Therefore, one first analyses selflessness by means of superior knowledge and then rests within the sphere of complete freedom from mental fabrications.

Furthermore, if the ability to rest in equipoise decreases due to extensive analytical meditation, one should emphasize stabilising meditation, and thus restore the abiding aspect. If one loses interest in analysis due to too much stabilising meditation, one should go back to analytical meditation. Thus shamatha and vipashyana are said to be most effective when practised equally in this way.

The method explained here, namely to analyse the object of meditation by means of discriminating knowledge and finally to rest in a state free of mental fabrications, is common to all systems of tenets. Moreover, according to the Gelug tradition, during the actual phase of equipoise, the mode of apprehending the object is repeatedly brought to mind.

The actual meditation on vipashyana.

When meditating on shamatha, due to the concentration of mind, many images appear which may or may not be similar to what is found in the external world⁴¹. These are known as *non-analytical images*.

In the practice of vipashyana as well, such images arise due to the force of shamatha, and are then taken as the basis for individual analysis; thus the analysis is not actually directed towards the outside, since the mind is solely turned inwards.

When analysing these images arising out of samadhi, it is necessary to begin by focusing on each object individually with discriminating knowledge,

since without identifying a particular object, it is not possible to cut through misconceptions regarding its qualities. Therefore, one begins by clearly bringing to mind the object regarding which one wishes to eliminate misconceptions, and proceeds to examine it through perfect discriminating knowledge, thus ascertaining its lack of inherent existence. Then, grasping the object of samadhi (i.e. the non-analytical image) undistractedly, one should realise its being mere appearance, empty of inherent existence.

Thus, samadhi and superior knowledge are unified, being focused on the same object. As said in the *Compendium of Knowledge*: «Samadhi and superior knowledge have the same object of observation.»

The nature of the percept is understood to be empty like space; the perceiver is examined as to origin, abiding, shape, etc.; discriminating knowledge itself, like a fire produced by rubbing wood, vanishes in the expanse of «not finding»; thus one rests free of grasping.

While resting in equipoise on form etc., one also realises its empty nature by means of discriminating knowledge, and remains in that state without being attentive to the attributes of the object. One begins by familiarising oneself with this practice, and as a result one comes to cognise emptiness as if suspended in the midst of space, with no reference even to the nature of mere percept. This is the *yoga of non-referential percept* and is the external aspect of meditation, i.e. meditation on appearance and emptiness as inseparable.

The internal aspect refers to the perceiver. When for example anger arises in consciousness, one should identify it and examine it with discriminating knowledge. First, one looks for the cause of its arising, then whether it dwells within or without, and if it has any shape or colour; finding nothing whatsoever, one rests in equipoise within that understanding. This method is to be applied to whichever of the six root afflictions may arise, as well as to neutral thoughts etc. In short, whatever type of thought arises, one should be aware of it and meditate as described above. This is the *yoga of non-referential perceiver* and is the internal meditation on awareness and emptiness as inseparable.

Finally, the object examined and discriminating knowledge itself, just as a fire produced by rubbing wood together, vanish into the sphere of «not finding». At that point, one rests in a state free of grasping.

The main points regarding these two yogas are given by Atisha in his *Quintessential Instructions on the Middle Way* as follows:

«Thus, the mind of the past has ceased altogether; the mind of the future

has not yet arisen and the present mind is extremely difficult to examine; this is because, just like space, it has neither shape nor colour, and therefore cannot be established as truly existent. Alternatively, this lack of true existence can be proven by reasons such as «neither-one-nor-many» and «non-production», or because it is by nature luminosity etc. Thus, one investigates with the sharp weapon of reasoning and realises this absence of true existence of the present mind.

In this way, when neither percept nor perceiver can be established as anything whatsoever, discriminating knowledge as well is understood to lack inherent existence. For example, by rubbing together two pieces of wood, fire is produced, which in turn consumes that very wood; as a result, the fire itself subsides. Likewise, when all abstract and concrete phenomena are established as non-inherently existent, then discriminating knowledge itself is beyond duality, it cannot be established as anything whatsoever, it is luminosity beyond mental fabrications. Therefore all conditions such as laxity and agitation are cleared away. At that point, awareness is totally free of concepts, nothing is perceived, and all recollection and mental activity have been eliminated. For as long as the enemy or thief of conceptuality has not arisen, let awareness rest in this manner.»

The measure of accomplishment

When suppleness is obtained, vipashyana is said to be accomplished.

When practising analytical meditation by means of discriminating knowledge, until suppleness is attained, one only cultivates a similitude of vipashyana; when suppleness has arisen, one has achieved vipashyana proper.

The essential nature of suppleness and the way it arises are as previously explained in the section dealing with shamatha.

According to the *Sutra Unravelling the Thought* and the *Quintessential Instructions on the Prajñāpāramitā* by Shantipa, as well as other scriptures, vipashyana is said to be accomplished when suppleness can be induced by the power of analytical meditation itself. This applies to both kinds of vipashyana, namely the one focusing on the varieties of phenomena and the one focusing on their mode of being.

The training in shamatha and vipashyana conjoined

The actual method of training

Though Madhyamikas differ with respect to the method of development, they agree on what is to be developed, namely shamatha and vipashyana conjoined; these three are to be practised in succession and the main point is non-distraction.

With respect to achieving the non-dual wisdom resulting from the conjoined practice of shamatha and vipashyana, the various Madhyamika masters explain the method of development differently. However, they all agree regarding what is to be developed, namely the union of shamatha and vipashyana.

According to the master Bhāvaviveka, one first develops shamatha by contemplating ugliness, love etc., after which vipashyana is generated by the power of reasoning. However, according to the master Shāntideva, one begins with cultivating shamatha by means of meditation on bodhicitta, and then generates the superior knowledge of vipashyana by focusing on emptiness. According to the master Kamalashīla in his *Stages of Meditation II*, one begins with developing shamatha by using an object of observation such as an image of the Buddha etc. and then proceeds to accomplish vipashyana by analysing the nature of that very object. The master Chāndrakīrti considers that both shamatha and vipashyana are to be accomplished in dependence upon the view based on the analysis of suchness⁴².

All of these methods are correct, unerring paths; all explanations agree in that these three practices, i.e. shamatha, vipashyana and their conjunction should be definitely accomplished in succession since they are related as cause and effect; and in all of them, the main point is an undistracted, one-pointed mind.

The union of shamatha and vipashyana

When practising meditation with designations, the full discrimination of phenomena focuses on the images arising out of shamatha; this is union. When non-conceptual vipashyana is attained, they have become one essence: thus they are unified.

At which point can shamatha and vipashyana be said to be unified? When practising shamatha and vipashyana with designations, both the non-discursive mind that focuses on the images arising out of shamatha, and the realisation of the vipashyana which fully discriminates phenomena come together in a natural way: this itself is the union of shamatha and vipashyana.

Here, when both non-conceptual shamatha and non-conceptual vipashyana are attained, they have become one essence; therefore they are known as «unified». The *Stages of Meditation I* says: «When focusing on the essencelessness of all phenomena in a state free of laxity and agitation etc., where awareness rests without any conceptual effort, the path of unifying shamatha and vipashyana is completed.»

The fruition

This is the genuine samadhi, by the perfection of which non-abiding nirvana, freedom from the bondage of existence and peace, is attained.

Such a samadhi, which is the union of shamatha and vipashyana, is authentic samadhi. Maitripa's *Commentary on the Ten Suchnesses* says: «The phrase 'by correct, authentic samadhi' means that the conjoined practice of shamatha and vipashyana is correct, authentic samadhi; thus, this is what accomplishes the path.»

The perfection of this samadhi results in the attainment of non-abiding nirvana, freedom from the bondage of conditioned existence and peace. The *Sutra Unravelling the Thought* says: «If the practitioner familiarises himself with shamatha and vipashyana, he will be freed from the fetters of rigidity and conceptuality.»

In the post-meditative phase, with the understanding of the illusion-like nature of all phenomena, one should exert oneself in applying skilful means such as making offerings to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, practising compassion towards all sentient beings, dedicating all virtue etc.

A GENERAL SUMMARY OF THE CATEGORIES

Brief listing of the categories

The different categories of shamatha

In brief, the meditations on ugliness, love, the cycles of breath, pratyahara, nadis, prana, generating phase, mantra recitation, resting mind naturally: all are but methods for developing the concentration of shamatha.

In brief, in the common path, one meditates on the nine aspects of ugliness; one trains the mind in love and compassion, and concentrates on the breath by counting its cycles of rising, falling and resting. In the Vajrayana, there are many methods such as the instructions of pratyahara, by which the ordinary connection between the sense faculties and their object is individually cut through and distraction is eliminated; visualisation of the nadis⁴³ as hollow pathways; prana-yoga; concentration on the bliss arising through the melting of bindu; visualisation of deities, and mantra recitation. Finally (in the practices of Mahamudra and Maha-ati) one rests the mind in a natural, spacious and uncontrived state. All these are nothing but methods for developing shamatha and must begin with concentration on the object, in accordance with the faculties of each practitioner.

The different categories of vipashyana

Analysis of definiendum, definition and example, and of general and specific character; dependent arising; the five reasons; pointing out the nature of mind by means of scripture, reasoning, spiritual influence and symbols: all are methods for developing supreme discriminating knowledge in accordance with the faculties of individuals.

When practising vipashyana, one uses methods such as the analysis of definiendum, definition and supporting example⁴⁴, as in the study of valid cognition; analysis of the general and specific character of phenomena⁴⁵, as in the Abhidharma; investigation of the twelve links of dependent arising in the

order of production and in the reverse order⁴⁶; analysis of the cause, the effect, the combination of these and the essential nature of a given phenomenon, as well as interdependence, these being the five great reasons of the Madhyamika tradition by means of which mental fabrications are severed; and various ways of pointing out the nature of mind directly and nakedly, as for example scriptures, reasoning, spiritual influence and symbols⁴⁷. All these are gradual methods for developing supreme discriminating knowledge in accordance with the faculties of individual practitioners. Since one can accomplish the samadhi of shamatha and vipashyana by any of these methods, it is not necessary for a single practitioner to use all of them together.

The accomplishment of shamatha and vipashyana by means of analytical and stabilising meditation

Shamatha and vipashyana can be equally accomplished by either analytical or stabilising meditation.

The accomplishment of shamatha and vipashyana by conjoining analytical and stabilising meditation was described above. Moreover, if practised profoundly, either or these types of meditation will result in the achievement of both samadhis; therefore, with regard to their essential point, analytical and stabilising meditation are ultimately the same.

Supplementary explanation of the three stages of concentration

First by child-like concentration, one perceives signs such as smoke etc.; by the discrimination of phenomena, the sameness of pairs of opposites is realised and supreme concentration is accomplished; by focusing on suchness, all phenomena are seen to be emptiness, which in turn is realised to be peace by nature.

According to the scriptures, there are three stages to the development of concentration. First, by means of *child-like concentration*⁴⁸, the mind is slightly withdrawn from external distraction; at this stage one starts perceiving the « ten signs of empty form » such as smoke etc. Then, by means of the *concentration which discriminates phenomena*, the illusion-like interdepen-

dent manifestations and the total pacification of mental fabrications are realised as « one taste ». By this the mind acquires the ability to genuinely rest in the sameness of all pairs of opposites⁴⁹, so that the concentration has now become unmistakable and supreme. Finally, through the *concentration focusing on suchness*, one knows all dualistic phenomena to be emptiness, and realising this emptiness to be by nature, primordially, peace, the effortless nature is accomplished.

This completes the first part being the explanation of the stages of meditation of shamatha and vipashyana, the general basis of all samadhis.

Appendix I

THE TREASURY OF KNOWLEDGE

8 THE PROGRESSIVE CLASSIFICATION OF THE TRAINING IN SUPERIOR SAMADHI

8.1 THE STAGES OF MEDITATION OF SHAMATHA AND VIPASHYANA, THE GENERAL BASIS OF ALL SAMADHIS

- I The necessity of practising samadhi
- II Identifying the samadhi to be practised
- III The detailed explanation
 - A The essential nature of shamatha and vipashyana
 - B Etymology
 - C The necessity of both
 - D The progressive order
 - E The training in each particular practice
- I Detailed explanation of each practice
 - a Shamatha
 - (1) The prerequisites for shamatha
 - (2) The progressive classification
 - (3) The way to meditate
 - α Posture

- β The methods for setting the mind
 - (a) The objects of observation
 - (b) The progression of the actual meditation
 - (i) Setting the mind with a concrete support
 - (ii) Setting the mind without concrete support
 - (iii) Setting the mind in the essential nature
- γ Identifying the experiences arising from meditation
 - (a) Brief explanation
 - (b) Detailed explanation
 - (i) The tradition of the great treatises
 - (α) The eight antidotes to the five faults
 - (β) The six powers, the four mental engagements and the nine mental abidings
 - (ii) The tradition of oral instructions
- (4) The measure of accomplishment of shamatha and its benefits
 - α The way shamatha is accomplished and the signs of correct mental engagement

β The necessity of accomplishing shamatha Vipashyana

- (1) The prerequisites for vipashyana
- (2) The particular types of vipashyana
- (3) The classification according to the essential nature
- (4) The way to meditate
- (5) The measure of accomplishment
- c The training in shamatha and vipashyana conjoined
 - (1) The actual method of training
 - (2) The union of shamatha and vipashyana
 - (3) The fruition
- 2 A general summary of the categories
 - a Brief listing of the categories
 - (1) The different categories of shamatha
 - (2) The different categories of vipashyana
 - b The accomplishment of shamatha and vipashyana by means of analytical and stabilising meditation
 - c Supplementary explanation of the three stages of concentration

Appendix II

- 3 form arising from promises (*samādānika*, *yang dag par blangs pa las gyur ba*)
- 4 imaginary form (*parikalpita*, *kun biags pa*)
- 5 form for one with meditative power (*vaibhūvika*, *dbang 'byor ba*)

THE FIVES TYPES OF FEELING

- 1 pleasure (*sukha*, *bde ba*)
- 2 mental bliss (*saumanasya*, *yid bde*)
- 3 pain (*duḥkha*, *sdug bsngal*)
- 4 mental discomfort (*daurmanasya*, *yid mi bde*)
- 5 neutrality (*upekṣhā*, *btang snyoms*)

THE FIFTY-ONE MENTAL FACTORS (*chaitta*, *sams byung*)

five omnipresent mental factors (sarvatraga, kun 'gro) :

- 1 feeling (*vedanā*, *tshor ba*)
 - 2 discernment (*saṃjñā*, *'du shes*)
 - 3 intention (*chetanā*, *sams pa*)
 - 4 contact (*sparsa*, *reg pa*)
 - 5 mental engagement (*manaskāra*, *yid la byed pa*)
- five determining mental factors (viniyata, yul nges) :*
- 1 aspiration (*chanda*, *'dun pa*)
 - 2 belief (*adhimokṣha*, *mos pa*)
 - 3 recollection (*smṛti*, *dran pa*)
 - 4 stabilisation (*samādhi*, *ting nge 'dzin*)
 - 5 superior knowledge (*prajñā*, *shes rab*)
- eleven virtuous mental factors (kushala, dge ba)*

- 1 faith (*śraddhā*, *dad pa*)
- 2 shame (*hrī*, *ngo tsha shes pa*)
- 3 embarrassment (*apatrāpya*, *khrel yod pa*)
- 4 detachment (*alobha*, *ma chags pa*)
- 5 non-hatred (*adveṣha*, *zhe sdang med pa*)
- 6 non-bewilderment (*amoha*, *gti mug med pa*)
- 7 joyous effort (*vīrya*, *brtson 'grus*)
- 8 suppleness (*prasaṅgha*, *shin tu sbyangs pa*)

THE FIVE AGGREGATES

- 1 forms (*rūpa*, *gzugs*)
- 2 feelings (*vedanā*, *tshor ba*)
- 3 discernments (*saṃjñā*, *'du shes*)
- 4 mental formations (*samskāra*, *'du byed*)
- 5 consciousnesses (*vijñāna*, *rnam shes*)

THE ELEVEN TYPES OF FORM

- 1 eye sense faculty (*chakṣhurindriya*, *mig gi dbang po*)
- 2 ear sense faculty (*śrotrendriya*, *rna ba 'i dbang po*)
- 3 nose sense faculty (*ghrāṇendriya*, *sna 'i dbang po*)
- 4 tongue sense faculty (*jihvendriya*, *lce 'i dbang po*)
- 5 body sense faculty (*kāyendriya*, *lus kyī dbang po*)
- 6 visible form (*rūpa*, *gzugs*)
- 7 sound (*śabda*, *sgra*)
- 8 odour (*gandha*, *dri*)
- 9 taste (*rasa*, *ro*)
- 10 object of touch (*spraṣṭavya*, *reg bya*)
- 11 form for the mental consciousness (*dharmāyatana rūpa*, *chos kyī skye mched pa 'i gzugs*)

THE FIVE TYPES OF FORM FOR THE MENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS

- 1 form arising from aggregation (*abhisamkṣhepika*, *bsdu ba las gyur ba*)
- 2 space-form (*abhyavakāshika*, *mngon par skabs yod pa*)

- 9 conscientiousness (*apramāda, bag yod pa*)
 10 equanimity (*upekṣhā, btang snyoms*)
 11 non-harmfulness (*avihiṃsā, rnam par mi 'tshes ba*)

six root afflictions (mūlakleśa, rtsa nyon) :

- 1 desire (*rāga, 'dod chags*)
 2 anger (*pratigha, khong khro*)
 3 pride (*māna, nga rgyal*)
 4 ignorance (*avidyā, ma rig pa*)
 5 doubt (*vichikitsā, the tshom*)
 6 afflicted view (*dṛṣṭi, lta ba nyon mongs can*)

twenty secondary afflictions (upakleśa, nye nyon)

- 1 wrath (*krodha, khro ba*)
 2 resentment (*upanāha, 'khon 'dzin*)
 3 concealment (*mrakṣha, 'chab pa*)
 4 spite (*pradāsha, 'tshig pa*)
 5 jealousy (*irṣyā, phrag dog*)
 6 avarice (*mātsarya, ser sna*)
 7 deceit (*māyā, sgyu*)
 8 dishonesty (*śāṭhya, g.yo*)
 9 self-importance (*māda, rgyags pa*)
 10 harmfulness (*vihiṃsā, rnam par 'tshes ba*)
 11 non-shame (*āhrīkyā, ngo tsha med pa*)
 12 non-embarrassment (*anapatrāpya, khrel med pa*)
 13 lethargy (*styāna, rnuogs pa*)
 14 agitation (*auddhatya, rгод pa*)
 15 non-faith (*āśhraddhya, ma dad pa*)
 16 laziness (*kausīdya, le lo*)
 17 non-conscientiousness (*pramāda, bag med pa*)
 18 forgetfulness (*muṣhitasmr̥tīā, brjed nges pa*)
 19 distraction (*vikṣhepa, rnam par g.yeng ba*)
 20 non-introspection (*asaṃprajanya, shes bzhin ma yün pa*)

four changeable mental factors (aniyata, gzhan 'gyur)

- 1 contrition (*kaukr̥tya, 'gyod pa*)
 2 sleep (*middha, gnyid*)

- 3 examination (*vitarka, rtog pa*)
 4 analysis (*vichāra, dpyod pa*)

THE TWENTY THREE NON-ASSOCIATED MENTAL FORMATIONS (*viprayuktasamskāra, ldan min 'du byed*)

- 1 acquisition (*prāpti, 'thob pa*)
 2 absorption without discernments (*asaṃjñisamāpatti, 'du shes med pa'i snyoms 'jug*)
 3 absorption of cessation (*nirodhasamāpatti, 'gog pa'i snyoms 'jug*)
 4 having no discernments (*āsaṃjñika, 'du shes med pa*)
 5 life faculty (*jūitendriya, srog gi dbang po*)
 6 similarity of type (*nikāyasabhāgata, rigs 'thun pa*)
 7 birth (*jāti, skeye ba*)
 8 old age (*jarā, rga ba*)
 9 duration (*sthiti, gnas pa*)
 10 impermanence (*anityatā, mi rtag pa*)
 11 group of stems (*nāmakāya, ming gi tshogs*)
 12 group of words (*padakāya, tshig gi tshogs*)
 13 group of letters (*vyañjanakāya, yi ge'i tshogs*)
 14 state of an ordinary being (*pṛthagjanatva, so so skeye bo nyid*)
 15 continuity (*prāpti, 'jug pa*)

- 16 distinction (*pratītyama, so sor nges pa*)
 17 relatedness (*yoga, 'byor 'grel*)
 18 rapidity (*jāva, gyogs pa*)
 19 order (*anukrama, go rim*)
 20 time (*kāla, dus*)
 21 area (*deshā, yul*)
 22 number (*saṃkhyā, grangs*)
 23 collection (*sāmagrī, tshogs pa*)

THE EIGHTEEN ELEMENTS (*dhātu, khams*)

six objects :

- 1 forms (*rūpa, gzugs*)
 2 sounds (*śabda, sgra*)
 3 odours (*gandha, dri*)

- 4 tastes (*rasa, ro*)
- 5 objects of touch (*spraṣṭavya, reg bya*)
- 6 mental phenomena (*dharmā, chos*)

six senses faculties :

- 1 eye sense faculty (*chakṣhurindriya, mig gi dbang po*)
- 2 ear sense faculty (*śrotendriya, rna ba i dbang po*)
- 3 nose sense faculty (*ghrāṇendriya, sna i dbang po*)
- 4 tongue sense faculty (*jihvendriya, lce i dbang po*)
- 5 body sense faculty (*kāyendriya, lus kyi dban po*)
- 6 mind sense faculty (*manendriya, yid kyi dbang po*)

six consciousnesses :

- 1 eye consciousness (*chakṣhurvijñāna, mig gi nam par shes pa*)
- 2 ear consciousness (*śrotravijñāna, rna ba i nam par shes pa*)
- 3 nose consciousness (*ghrāṇavijñāna, sna i nam par shes pa*)
- 4 tongue consciousness (*jihvavijñāna, lce i nam par shes pa*)
- 5 body consciousness (*kāyavijñāna, lus kyi nam par shes pa*)
- 6 mental consciousness (*manovijñāna, yid kyi nam par shes pa*)

THE TWELVE LINKS OF DEPENDENT ARISING

(*prāṭhyasamutpāda, rten 'bjung*)

- 1 ignorance (*avidyā, ma rig pa*)
- 2 action (*saṃskāra karma, 'du byed kyi las*)
- 3 consciousness (*vijñāna, nam shes*)
- 4 name and form (*nāmarūpa, ming gzugs*)
- 5 six entrances (*ṣaḍāyatana, skye mched drug*)
- 6 contact (*sparśha, reg pa*)
- 7 feeling (*vedanā, tshor ba*)
- 8 attachment (*trṣṇā, sred pa*)
- 9 grasping (*upādāna, len pa*)
- 10 existence (*bhava, srid pa*)
- 11 birth (*ajāti, skye ba*)
- 12 old age and death (*jarāmaraṇa, rga shi*)

THE SIX ELEMENTS (*dhātu, kham*s)

- 1 earth (*pṛthivī, sa*)

- 2 water (*āp, chu*)
- 3 fire (*tejas, me*)
- 4 wind (*vāyu, rlung*)
- 5 space (*ākāśha, nam mkha'*)
- 6 consciousness (*vijñāna, nam par shes pa*)

THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS (*āryasatya, 'phags pa i bden pa*)
AND THEIR ATTRIBUTES (*ākāra, nam pa*)

- 1 the truth of suffering (*duḥkhasatya, sdug bsngal bden pa*)
 - impermanence (*anitya, mi rtag pa*)
 - misery (*duḥkha, sdug bsngal ba*)
 - emptiness (*śūnya, stong pa*)
 - selflessness (*anātmaka, 'bdag med*)
- 2 the truth of origin (*samudayasatya, kun 'byung bden pa*)
 - cause (*hetu, rgyu*)
 - origin (*samudaya, kun 'byung*)
 - strong production (*prabhava, rab skye*)
 - condition (*pratyaya, rkyen*)
- 3 the truth of cessation (*nirodhasatya, 'gog pa i bden pa*)
 - cessation (*nirodha, 'gog pa*)
 - pacification (*śānta, zhi ba*)
 - excellence (*prañīta, gya nom*)
 - definite emergence (*niḥsaraṇa, nges 'byung*)
- 4 the truth of the path (*mārgasatya, lam gyi bden pa*)
 - path (*mārga, lam*)
 - suitability (*nyāya, rigs pa*)
 - achievement (*pratipad, sgrub pa*)
 - deliverance (*nairyāṇika, nges 'byin*)

THE FOUR FORMLESS ABSORPTIONS

(*ārūpyasamāpatti, gzugs med kyi snyoms 'jug*)

- 1 limitless space (*ākāśhānantya, nam mkha' mtha' yas*)
- 2 limitless consciousness (*vijñānānantya, nam shes mtha' yas*)
- 3 nothingness (*ākīrcchānya, ci yang med*)
- 4 peak of existence (*bhavāgra, srid rtse*)

Notes

existence. They are forms, feelings, discernments, mental formations and consciousnesses. See Appendix II p. 40-43.

8. The eighteen elements are the six objects, the six faculties and the six consciousnesses. See Appendix II p. 43-44.

9. The twelve entrances are the six objects and the six faculties, which are the bases for the arising of the six consciousnesses.

10. The twelve links of dependent arising are: ignorance, action, consciousness, name and form, the six entrances, contact, feeling, attachment, grasping, existence, birth, old age and death. See Appendix II p. 44.

11. 'Appropriate' refers to a correct understanding of the fact that wholesome activity results in happiness and unwholesome activity results in suffering. 'Inappropriate' refers to a mistaken understanding namely the supposition that wholesome activity results in suffering and unwholesome activity in happiness.

12. See note 24.

13. Each of the four noble truths has four attributes: the truth of suffering has impermanence, misery, emptiness and selflessness; the truth of origin has cause, origin, strong production and condition; the truth of cessation has cessation, pacification, excellence and definite emergence; the truth of the path has path, suitability, achievement and deliverance. See Appendix II p. 45.

14. Bindu (*thig le*): the meaning ascribed to this term depends on the path it is related to.

15. Here, 'all aims' refers to accomplishing the benefit of beings extensively—in this respect, supersensible cognitions are needed, but they are never an end in themselves.

16. For example, to counteract laxity one visualises mind in the form of a white bindu that ascends into space; to counteract agitation, one visualises mind in the form of a black bindu that descends into the earth. Another remedy for laxity is to straighten up the body and look up into space; for agitation, one relaxes the posture and lowers the gaze. As for physical activi-

1. See note 32.

2. Samādhī (*ting nge 'dzin*): meditative stabilisation.

3. Shamathā (*zhi gnas*): calm abiding; vipashyanā (*lhag mthong*): superior insight (see p. 13).

4. Here one observes the subtlest aspect of both the conventional and the ultimate levels of phenomena.

5. In Tibetan, the word 'dmigs pa' can be either a noun or a verb. In the first case, it refers to the object of observation, and in the second to the act of focusing on that object. Here all four categories are grouped under the same heading, dmigs pa, although in the first one it is a verb whereas in the three latter ones it is a noun. According to Dagpo Tashi Namgyal in his *Light of the Mahamudra Moon*, the first category refers to the particular ways of focusing on the latter three. He calls the four pervasive 'focuses' *focusing on an analytical image, focusing on a non-analytical image, focusing on the limits of phenomena, and complete achievement of the purpose*.

6. Earth, water, fire, wind, space and consciousness. Pride is based on the notion of a unique and independent self; by this meditation, one breaks down this notion and therefore realises that there is no truly existent basis for pride. See Appendix II p. 44.

7. The five aggregates are the five components which make up an individual and his experience, covering both the physical and mental aspects of

ties, in the case of laxity one rises up, goes out into the fresh air, wears thin clothes etc.; in the case of agitation, one does the opposite i.e. wears heavy clothing etc.

17. This is done by gradually decreasing the size of the object of observation.

18. *Prāṇa (rūṅg)*: energy currents.

19. This sensation does not arise in dependence upon external conditions, but solely as a result of the flow of this particular prana.

20. 'Shadow-like' refers to its quality of lightness, weightlessness and flexibility.

21. See note 13.

22. See note 24.

23. The *definitive* teachings explain the ultimate truth, i.e. the final mode of existence of phenomena, whereas the *provisional* teachings are skilful means leading to the realisation of the ultimate truth.

24. Mundane vipashyana relates to the desire, form and formless realms. The form realm consists of the four concentrations: the first, the second, the third and the fourth; the formless realm consists of the four formless absorptions: limitless space, limitless consciousness, nothingness and the peak of existence. The means for attaining these are the seven preparatory stages consisting of mundane shamatha and vipashyana. Vipashyana is divided into six contemplations involving examination and analysis of the defects and qualities of each level: the samadhi of the lower level is understood to be coarse and faulty compared to that of the higher level which is seen as peaceful and without fault; this is done progressively, starting from the desire realm up to the fourth formless absorption. Thus the particular afflictions of each level are progressively suppressed.

25. See note 13.

26. See note 24.

27. See note 7.

28. See note 8.

29. See note 9.

30. For example, 'suffering' is a term, a means of expression; here one should find out what it refers to. The word suffering refers to an unpleasant experience which is in fact beyond verbal expression; however, in order to speak of it, one needs a name. This name has no actual connection with the essence of what it refers to, it is just a convention; but the identification of name and experience makes verbal expression and communication possible. Another example is the word 'sound', which refers to an uncommon object condition of the ear consciousness. In this way, one should investigate the meaning of all names of phenomena, from form up to omniscience.

31. Here, one could investigate whether a particular sound is external or internal; for example, the sounds of the four elements are external, whereas the sounds of one's heart, breathing, brain, as well as sounds experienced in dreams and samadhi are internal. One could also take the investigation further and examine how sounds arise and are perceived in the dream state and so on.

32. For example, the word 'hi-ma-la-ya' consists of distinct sound instances that have no connection between them; when the second syllable is pronounced, the first has already ceased and so on. Each of these separate sounds gives rise to an ear consciousness, which is the concrete or specific character of sound — this is non-conceptual. When these separate sounds are conceptually connected, one forms a general idea or concept which is the abstract or general character of sound. So the ear consciousness perceives the mere sound of each syllable distinctly, and the deceptive conceptual mind grasps them as one. Here the investigation entails separating these two aspects, abstract and concrete.

33. Considering sound, one can say that there are two main types: one which increases happiness and wholesome activity, and one which increases suffering and afflictions. For example, the sound of the teachings of Buddha and Bodhisattvas saying that one must protect life results in happiness and wholesome activity; and the sound of a teaching on how to take the lives of others results in suffering and afflictions. Taking the investigation further, one can relate it to the previous one, considering that, with respect to the specific cha-

acter of a sound, the bare perception of distinct sounds produces neither a positive nor a negative state of mind: on the concrete level, there is no difference between these two teachings; however, on the abstract, conceptual level, they will respectively give rise to positive and negative results.

34. One considers for example sound in relation to the three times. Future sounds are not yet existent, past sounds have ceased and therefore do not exist any more, and present sounds are momentary, distinct instances and therefore lack true existence. Such investigation can be carried out in a very subtle way leading to an understanding of the non-inherent existence of time.

35. For example sound is produced by the collective force of causes and conditions, e.g. the ear faculty, the immediately preceding moment of consciousness and many others. Each of these conditions is in turn produced by the aggregation of other causes and conditions. In this way, all effects depend on various causes and conditions for their arising. Investigating phenomena in this way will lead to an understanding of their emptiness. This emptiness as well is empty of inherent existence, it is beyond the four extremes of existence, non-existence, both as a combination and something other than these; it is beyond mental fabrications, i.e. sameness.

36. The deceptive or conventional or manifesting nature is dependent on various causes and conditions for its arising; the ultimate or true nature is presented in relation to the deceptive, and therefore dependent on it, though it is not the outcome of causes and conditions. For these reasons, neither of them is truly existent. Their basis of imputation is the mere appearance of a phenomenon. Considering a table for example, the term 'table' is a name imputed on a mere perception of a round or square piece of wood with four legs. One conceptually connects the name 'table' with this mere perception and so the concept of a table is created. Thus, the mere appearance of the table is the basis of imputation of the deceptive aspect, i.e. the composite, impermanent table in front of one, as well as of the ultimate aspect, i.e. its emptiness, since both these aspects are named in relation to this basis. Nagarjuna has said: «There is not a single phenomenon that is not dependently arising, therefore there is not a single phenomenon that is not emptiness». So if one understands dependent arising, one will understand emptiness. However, the explanation of these three notions varies according to the different systems of tenets.

37. For example, fire burrs, water cleans, sound generates an ear conscious-

ness etc.; each phenomenon has a function. What are the functions of form, smell, taste etc.? What is the function of space? How does a phenomenon function on the abstract and concrete levels? What is the function of suffering, happiness, a disturbed mind etc.? A phenomenon is a knowable entity; take a pen, for example: its function is to write. In order for this function to be performed, many causes and conditions must come together: the fingers, the intention to write, space, paper, ink, light and so on. One can also examine how this thought of writing appears, how one puts the letters together, etc. One can look at the action itself: where is it? Is it in the agent, in the object, in the paper? In fact it is in neither of them, but their aggregation produces it. As for space, although it has no function from its own side, it is the basis for all phenomena to perform their functions.

38. *Direct valid cognition* is non-conceptual, undeceived cognition; for example, a concrete sound is established by direct valid cognition. *Inferential valid cognition* is an undeceived, conceptual cognition which arises on the basis of correct reasoning; it is the means to establish things that are 'concealed', i.e. not ascertainable through direct valid cognition, such as impermanence, emptiness etc. This is done by the use of syllogism; a syllogism consists of three elements: the subject (*chos can*), the predicate (*sgrub bya*) and the reason (*gtan tshigs*). For example, «Sound is impermanent, because it is produced by causes and conditions.» Here 'sound' is the subject, 'impermanence' is the predicate and 'because it is produced by causes and conditions' is the reason. In order for the reason to be valid, three conditions must apply (*tshul gsum, lit. three modes*):

(i) the reason must be applicable to the subject (*phyogs chos*), i.e. sound must be produced by causes and conditions;

(ii) the reason must be congruent with the predicate (*rje khyab, lit. pervasion*), i.e. all that is produced by causes and conditions must be impermanent; and

(iii) the reason must be incongruent with opposite phenomena (*ldog khyab, lit. counterpervasion*), i.e. it must not be the case that permanent phenomena are produced by causes and conditions.

The valid cognition of trustworthy scriptures is based on the authority of the Buddha's words. For example, things such as the law of karma, there being a succession of lives, the fact that wealth is a karmic result of generosity etc. cannot be established by either direct valid cognition or inferential valid cognition.

39. The *conventional nature* refers to the commonly accepted nature of phenomena, e.g. fire blazes upwards, water flows downwards etc. . The *inconceivable nature* refers to the ultimate which is difficult to fathom by an ordinary person, because it cannot be grasped by the conceptual mind. It is perceived by Noble Ones in equipoise through the wisdom arising from meditation.

The *abiding nature* refers to the unchanging aspect of the ultimate; for example, the buddha-nature always remains the same whether a sentient being, a Bodhisattva or a Buddha. The Mahayanottaratantrastra says:

« It is the changeless True Nature,
The same after as it was before. »

(quoted from « *The Changeless Nature* » p. 25)

40. In the Prajnaparamita sutras, all phenomena of samsara and nirvana are summarised into one hundred and eight phenomena which are the bases for the explanation of emptiness. These are divided into two groups, afflicted and pure.

41. Examples of what is not found in the external world are the manifestations of deities and mandalas, and experiences such as those of Gampopa while he meditated under Milarepa's guidance.

42. First one establishes the view, i.e. emptiness free of mental fabrications, by means of reasoning. Once one has acquired a definite understanding, one realises shamatha by concentrating on this emptiness. Vipashyana is then accomplished through analysing the object of observation of shamatha by means of discriminating knowledge.

43. Nāḍī (*rtsa*): channel.

44. For example, the definition (*mtshon byed*, lit. that which characterises) of fire is that it is hot and burning; the definiendum (*mtshon bya*, lit. that which is characterised) is fire; and the supporting example (*mtshan gzhi*, lit. the basis of characterisation) is a sandalwood fire.

45. See note 32.

46. See note 10.

47. Here scriptures refer to teachings of Vajradhara as recorded in the Tantras; reasoning refers to the reasons establishing the view of universal purity and sameness in the Vajrayana. However, scriptures and reasoning alone are not sufficient, it is also necessary for the spiritual influence of the guru, the deity and the disciple to come together. The spiritual influence of the disciple refers to his or her buddha-nature. Symbols are ritual objects used during empowerment, such as a crystal ball, a mirror, a peacock feather etc.

48. This refers to the natural ability of a child to be totally absorbed by whatever arouses its interest.

49. For example samsara and nirvana, good and bad, self and other etc.

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