

# FOUNDATION TRAINING TEXT

## A TEACHING AID FOR THE NGON-DRO

### CONTENTS

Introduction .....	2
Notes and Conventions .....	3
THE FOUR PARTS OF NGON-DRO:	
Part one: a) THE FOUR THOUGHTS .....	4
Vow to Remember .....	5
b) REFUGE .....	5
Refuge Prayer .....	6
c) BODHICITTA PRAYER .....	7
Part two: VAJRASATTVA .....	8
100 Syllable Mantra Saying .....	II
Prayer of Confession and Aspiration .....	II
Part three: MANDALA OFFERING .....	12
Instructions for a Shrine Offering .....	13
Prayers of Thanksgiving and Offering .....	17
Prayer for Continuity of Practice .....	18
Part four: LAMA YOGA .....	19
Seven Branch Prayer .....	21
Closing Prayer .....	22
Practice Notes .....	24
Glossary .....	25

chimshore20@gmail.com

© "Coorain" Origins Centre (Incorporated Society) Inc. 2002 - 2013

## INTRODUCTION

This text is written as an expression of the Ngon-Dro, the foundation text of the Karma Kagyu School of Tibetan Buddhism, Mahamudra lineage. The foundation teachings are essential to further practice. They weave together many aspects of practice in the vehicle of the Karma Kagyu such as visualization, the spoken word, feeling, energy and thought. Coorain practitioners endeavour to express the universal principles within our inherited, traditional teachings and, in this way, help integrate these teachings with modern life.

The Ngon-Dro is an 'arising yoga', a vehicle for training the imagination in the service of practice.

This training text encourages imaginative thoughtful response to the key images and ideas involved in Ngon-Dro. A universalist approach to the Teaching is expressed throughout. It is offered as a teaching aid and practical support for those wanting to explore this important text of the Dharma.

It is due to the kind efforts of the late 16<sup>th</sup> Gyalwa Karmapa and the late Ven Namgyal Rinpoche that the Ngon-Dro have come to us. Ven Namgyal Rinpoche worked constantly to create bridges that carry the Teachings. This Foundation Training Text is respectfully offered in response to this, our lineage.

The central Teachings and structures of the Ngon-Dro remain, though they are expressed in the language of our times and culture. Every effort has been made to respect the original expression of Ngon-Dro; to keep key phrases, sayings and structures, and to clarify the stages of practice.

When chanted and read often, the text allows the meaning to emerge and fosters familiarity with the ideas and methods of these Teachings. Rhythm, pitch, tempo and harmony are all, of course, part of chanting. The music, however, always supports the spoken text and doesn't obscure it.

Broadly speaking, the text is a kind of plainsong.

The original translation of the Tibetan Ngon-Dro text, by Karma Pema Drongma, was done for His Holiness the 16<sup>th</sup> Gyalwa Karmapa in the early 1960's. It was revised by Sonam Gelong for Namgyal Rinpoche in 1974. This present expression was written in 1999 – 2002 by Karma Chimé presiding lama of "Coorain", the universalist dharma practice centre governed by Origins Centre (Incorporated Society) Inc., Balingup, Western Australia. It is based on the 1974 text.

Coorain continues its connections with traditional Buddhist teachings and friends, particularly the Karma Kagyu in Rumtek (Sikkim), Kalimpong and the Drikung in Dehradun, India.

SARVA MANGALAM - MAY THE BLESSINGS FLOW ON

## NOTES AND CONVENTIONS

∞ - Rolling mala beads together signifies both the union of all blessings and the sharing of blessings.

(x) - Means repeated. The number of repetitions is indicated, i.e. (x 3).

**Musical Values:** The use of musical form and convention can, of course, be embellished and changed. Instruments can be used; a drum might reinforce a regular tempo. The practitioners' involved set the pitch, tempo and volume. Generally speaking clarity of enunciation, and an energetic tempo help with memory and discipline. The ordinary voice or tonal speech is usual. The text, however, can be recited in a personal way with or without any instruments.

**Group Recitation:** The Foundation Training Text can be recited in unison by groups of people.

**Italics and Titles:** One can practice by chanting only the prayers. The titles, meditations and descriptions need not be chanted but treated as part of silent study. Alternatively, the complete text can be read and chanted.

**Punctuation and Phrasing:** Effort should be made to chant attentively, keeping a sense of tempo, throughout each prayer. Groups or individuals can develop personal styles. Rhythm is maintained and breathing integrated with that.

**Meditations:** In these meditations one imagines symbolic forms in order to catalyse understanding and form loci for memory. Each meditation focuses on a particular aspect of practice. Forms of liturgy are involved.

**Teaching Lama:** If you choose to explore this text as a vehicle for practice and meditation, then a dialogue with a teacher is needed to establish right understanding and intent with the practice. Nonetheless, one's own intelligence and integrity are also root causes that reveal meaning and understanding.

**Chant Leader:** In group work the chant leader governs the tempo and volume. They read the introductory title of each section as well as the brief description that immediately follows. The chant leader also reads titles with enough volume to be heard by the group. Once a group is established it can find a form that suits its purpose.

PART ONE (a)

FOUR THOUGHTS

*Four thoughts or contemplations that turn the mind to search for freedom and peace*

- 1. The blessing of life, of human birth.*
- 2. Impermanence and death.*
- 3. The truth of cause and effect (karma).*
- 4. Consideration of worldly ways.*

*Note: The Four Thoughts are also called the 'Four Preliminary Thoughts'. Preliminary thought, example and experience precede self-reliance; compassion can be cultivated, regulated and inspired. Personal meaningful question is the original vehicle that causes interest in the vehicle of Dharma.*

- 1. The Blessed Human Birth:**  
Evolution Time Natural Selection  
Marvellous Gift Vulnerable Aware  
Cultivate Celebrate Dedicate Renew
- 2. Death and Impermanence:**  
Creations Pass Change and Chance  
Accident Catastrophe  
Calm Abiding Skill and Means  
Dharma Practice Diligence and Peace
- 3. Karma: Cause and Effect**  
Individual Community Cumulative Actual  
Real Virtue Real Harm Real History  
Remember Practice Vow Wisdom Dharma Law
- 4. Samsara: Worldly Life Without Sufficient Wisdom**  
Ambivalence Entanglement  
Moral Lack Poor Governance  
On Guard! Take Refuge! Generate!  
Right Understanding Right Intent

## VOW TO REMEMBER

(Said slowly) I meditate on these four thoughts, and turn my mind to practice.

Common ground foundation wisdom meaningful support,

Whatever this life brings!

May wisdom grow in every way, bring love and strength and interest;

In our lives may we realize the truths of freedom for ourselves.

I will remember this, and practice with these Teachings

To better understand and

offer as I can.

I do go for refuge, I do go for refuge, I do go for refuge

## PART ONE (b)

### REFUGE

*Refuge means a safe, well-trying support for living Dharma and a secure basis for future practices.*

*Refuge is a foundation teaching of all the vehicles of Dharma.*

*The refuges are the truths of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha in all schools of Buddhist Teaching.*

*Lama, Yidam and Dharmapala are added in the Vajrayana.*

### TEACHINGS

*The Dharma Teachings are venerable, reliable and worthy of respect.*

*They have been developed and expressed coherently for many centuries.*

*Their purpose is always to illuminate and heal the hindrances to freedom and peace.*

*The Refuges express the basic intent and view of Dharma and convey the essential Teachings.*

*Refuge develops faith in the Teachings, respect for oneself and all life, and dedication to the path of healing wisdom.*

*Refuge in the Dharma can also support these qualities in other Teachings or in other forms; in individual, personal ways.*

## MEDITATION

*Imagine a beautiful, peaceful, natural setting. Imagine, in this place, clear pure water - perhaps a stream, pond, spring or lake. In the midst of this setting a strong and healthy tree is growing - a refuge tree.*

*In the centre of the tree's foliage a glow of sapphire blue light appears, a living radiant intelligence, symbolic source of all the Teachings and of our own inner wisdom capable of unfolding.*

*Other lights appear, symbolising the different expressions of wisdom such as individuality, generosity, clarity or fearless compassion. Many rainbow lights appear: the manifold presence of Dharma.*

*The entire tree is alive and illuminated with a living radiance and around the trunk is a ring of protective light*

*Imagine that other people, all your ancestors, are joining you in this sacred environment.*

## REFUGE PRAYER

BUDDHA, DHARMA, SANGHA,  
LAMA, YIDAM, DHARMAPALA (x 3)

Buddha — Living wisdom, heart of love, sacred nature of all life.

Dharma — Ways of healing, skilful means, laws of nature, manifest.

Sangha — Friends and family, environment, community.

Lama — Path friend, source of Teachings, living throughout history.

Yidam — Personal integrity, different teachings, different kinds.

Dharmapala — Care for self and others, living laws that guard us all.

## PRAYER

Accepting as a blessing the gift of the Dharma  
Understanding the true meanings realising for myself  
In order to develop aspiration and support

I do go for refuge

I do go for refuge

I do go for refuge

PART ONE (c)

**BODHICITTA PRAYERS**

*To strengthen and encourage the aspiration and commitment  
for living in peace: the 'Heart for Wisdom'.*

That I may reach the heart of wisdom's understanding,  
I trust and seek the Teachings and friends upon the Path.

As others before me, generated wisdom's heart,  
Stage by stage developing training their humanity,  
Just so will I, for all life's sake, generate this Bodhicitta,  
Growing as I can, as all before have done.

Today I am aware, remember gratefully,  
The family of peacemakers living throughout time,  
Vitally alive, loving and engaged.

Now, I say myself

That I will really undertake to live my life this way,  
To keep this noble family growing alive and well.  
May all of us take heart from this and live for world peace.  
In myself and all others too may freedom's aspiration grow;  
May what develops never fade but grow increasingly.

All that's wisely thought, may it come to be;  
May efforts that we make for peace bring happiness to all of us.  
May all come to live happily may all lives lived unhappily  
Be forever healed.

May the aspiration of all those who work for world peace  
Be actually accomplished  
Wherever they may be.

(Short silence)

May all beings have happiness and the causes too,  
May all be free from sorrow and the causes too,  
May no one be away from sacred happiness,  
Bringing freedom to us all throughout all our lives.  
Not loving just my dear ones while being unfriendly to another,  
May I live more peacefully and know each being is born unique.

ARAHUM ARAHUM ARAHUM  
E MA HO

SHARING THE BLESSINGS

By the great benefit of this practice,  
May I quickly attain to the state of Mahamudra, living freedom  
And as I do so, support all others in this way.



PART TWO

THE VAJRASATTVA PURIFICATION

*The ever-present purity of nature that allows healing to happen.*

TEACHINGS

*The practices and Teachings of Vajrasattva, visually imagined as a diamond-like, radiant being, symbolize and invoke healing through purification and clarity. An archetype, Vajrasattva is an adhibuddha, a primary healing principle, a powerful potential for healing in the world.*

*Practice includes the long mantra saying of Vajrasattva in order to enrich the aspiration and dedication to practice.*

*In imagination, Vajrasattva embodies the innate capacity for healing, both individually and collectively, the actual path of purification, and the result. Practice builds confidence and purifies hindrance. It seeks to recognize and foster the innate power of healing within nature*

*The Vajrasattva practice encourages the purification of unhelpful, unwholesome and harmful states through aspiration, stability, clarity, vitality and action. Imagination is a very important feature of Vajrasattva practice. This practice helps transform harm into healing, working directly on the clarity of memory and energy involved in healing. The meditation trains the imagination in the service of practice and personal understanding.*

## MEDITATION

*On the crown of one's own head, and crowning all others also, is a beautiful flower in the centre of which is a disc like the full moon.*

*On it is seated, cross-legged, a lama in the form of Vajrasattva, diamond-like and radiant. Vajrasattva is imagined pure white, opalescent or clear, like water.*

*Imagined beautiful and alive, Vajrasattva embodies the expression of both the wisdom and the skill needed to purify and completely transform the hindrances to healing body, speech and mind.*

*Vajrasattva is sitting, both poised and stable, a vajra in the right hand held to the heart; a bell in the left, held to the waist.*

*Vajrasattva is all the refuge made manifest. Imagine radiant light, shining forth from Vajrasattva's whole being. This is the light of understanding and the truth of healing. It invokes the Living Vajrasattva, our own vital capacity and the practice which purifies ignorance and harm.*

*While imagining Vajrasattva, say the Vajrasattva prayer with sincere aspiration.*

## PRAYER OF ASPIRATION AND SUPPLICATION

Lama Vajrasattva,  
Clarify misunderstanding  
Purify the cause of harm (x 3)

OM VAJRASATTVA HUM

*(Pause)*

I pray this for myself    and for all others too  
I pray this for myself    and for all others too  
I pray this for myself    and for all others too

## MEDITATION

*After praying, imagine Vajrasattva as before. A brilliant star-like white light, called a bija, shines in Vajrasattva's heart emitting the sound HUM, the heartfelt energy of compassionate mind.*

*Around this core, imagine smaller stars rotating like a galaxy or ribbon of light, turning counter-clockwise. These stars represent continual generation and development of healing and the manifold expressions of healing that are possible.*

*Light radiates and ripples from both the bija and galaxy of stars surrounding it, pulsing and growing in power.*

*Now, Vajrasattva dissolves into light, becoming a stream of nectar that falls down through the crown of one's head, down through the body, filling it entirely, from the bottom up. Vajrasattva embodies practice free from hindrance. All obstacles and hindrances, physical, emotional and mental are being cleared away, your own being and Vajrasattva merge and become one.*

*Now, in your own heart there appears the HUM bija and galaxy of stars. Imagine, also, this same process happening for others too.*

*Thus, oneself and all others are transformed into Vajrasattva, free of confusion and harm.  
Now, we are no longer divided.*

## VAJRA MU

*(Snap your fingers on 'MU' and sit quietly for a while.)*

*Practice is conducive to reflection and contemplation.*

THE ONE HUNDRED SYLLABLE  
MANTRA SAYING OF VAJRASATTVA

OM Vajrasattva guard intention purity of being remain now  
Vajrasattva be remembered steady, joyful and enriching,  
Loving vessel, wisdom's source in all life's deeds make my mind noble  
HUM HA HA HA HA HOH  
Blessed nature, diamond wisdom never disappear from view  
We pray remain continue strongly, heartfelt, healing present in our daily lives  
Oh source of freedom, living wisdom  
AH (HUM PHAT) (x 7)  
*(HUM PHAT is only said after 7 times)*

*The repetition of the mantras, or key sayings, of the Vajrasattva Teachings help the understanding symbolized in practice to develop in reality. Vajrasattva is the ever-present potential in us all to heal, purify, and to transform harm into healing.  
Personal prayers for the healing of self or others can be said during the mantra saying.*

*(Do the mantra slowly, in a quiet inward way.)*

OM VAJRASATTVA HUM (x 21)



PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASPIRATION

In ignorance and foolishness unwisely have I acted;  
The vows I make for peace have sometimes been forgotten.  
Now, I do invoke Vajrasattva's qualities which protect and purify,  
Helping wisdom grow revealing inner clarity protecting life from harm!  
Inner wisdom, living teachings, Vajrasattva, living refuge  
Great compassion, purifying wisdom Buddha-nature;  
To living inner clarity I do go in trust,  
I sincerely wish to heal all my broken aspirations,  
Body speech and mind.

Many blessings flow now.  
All unwholesome states blocks or vows forgotten  
Can completely clear away  
So that I and others may be purified and whole.  
As I am reassured, Vajrasattva turns to light,  
Flowing throughout all my being,  
Now we are undivided.

### SHARING THE BLESSINGS

By the great benefit of this practice,  
May I quickly attain to the state of Mahamudra, living freedom  
And as I do so, support all others in this way.



### PART THREE THE MANDALA OFFERING

*This is the Teaching on dana, the spirit of generosity and gratitude.  
It is a Teaching on the cycle of blessings, the union of giving and receiving.  
Mandala Offering integrates dana with the Teachings and daily living.*

### TEACHINGS

*A mandala is an integrated, balanced, symbolic form, often geometrical. It is luminous in that it has inner meaning.*

*Five central principles, living activities, are enshrined in Mandala Offering: Transmission, individuality, wisdom, meaningful practice and community.*

*In the language of traditional Dharma they are LAMA, YIDAM, BUDDHA, DHARMA and SANGHA: Five expressions of one Teaching, imagined as a mandala, a 'Dharma Palace', a shrine.*

*The mandala is seen as a palace of Dharma presence and activity, a great source of blessings given to us, and a powerful catalyst for our own development and for the continuing development of the Teachings.*

*In the spirit of thanksgiving we offer our gifts of interest, support and understanding in response. This is what is meant by the 'cycle of blessings'.*

*By generating thanksgiving and thoughtfulness for these central Teachings in the mandala, and considering our own gifts in response to the central principles, the mandala helps focus thought, understanding and a feeling for Dana and for the central principles of Ngon-Dro - Lama, Yidam, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha.*

*The 'Dharma Palace' can be considered as a single integrated source, or the different expressions of teaching in the mandala can be considered separately.*

*Blessings, the sources of blessings and the blessed are one.*

*The blessings we receive become the gifts we offer, each one is unique.*

*This Teaching and practice can illuminate, strengthen and maintain the energy of Mandala Offering.*

#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR A SHRINE OFFERING

*First, take the mandala base, a suitable plate or disc, symbolizing the aspiration for peace and generosity.*

*Now polish the base clean saying the one hundred-syllable Vajrasattva mantra.*

*Now sprinkle it with scented water, symbol of pure intent.*

*Now make five coloured heaps of rice or other food.*

*The **first** heap of rice, in the centre, represents transmission living through out time, called LAMA. This offering is larger than the other four, reflecting the central importance of our own inner wisdom; the communication of Dharma from person to person and the living path-friend or guide.*

*The **second** represents the **YIDAM**, the unique expression of practice for the different kinds of person or situation as well as one's own unique contributions, connections and understandings that are cultivated with practice.*

*The **third** represents the **BUDDHA**, the sacred nature of us all, the undying potential for love and wisdom, and its expression in living people, past, present and future.*

*The **fourth** represents the **DHARMA**, or Teachings. These Teachings may be methods of healing or the understandings that support healing and the path of peace.*

*The **fifth** is the **SANGHA**, the community of refuge and transmission, the web of nature, friends on the path, family, and all relationships that support a peaceful life.*

*Each heap represents an essential blessing, a living principle of the Dharma; an expression of the 'path of peace'.*

*The associated colour reflects the wisdom of each principle.*

*Each is worthy of interest and support, and a source of continuous blessing and inspiration.*

*Each living principle can be expressed in many ways.*

4 Dharma  
(red)

3 Buddha  
(yellow)

1 Lama  
(blue)

5 Sangha  
(green)

2 Yidam  
(white)

*(Now, sprinkle rice on the completed mandala, saying...)*

OM VAJRA BHUMI AH HUM

The foundation of generosity is pure and powerful, like solid gold.

*(Then sprinkle rice anti-clockwise around the perimeter of the plate, saying...)*

OM VAJRA REKHE AH HUM

Generosity protects ourselves and others, defeating harm everywhere.

*(Now offer the mandala and put it on the shrine, saying...)*

OM VAJRA BHUMI AH HUM

#### PRAYER

LAMA YIDAM BUDDHA DHARMA SANGHA MANDALA

All these sources, living blessings I now recognise;

Thanksgiving, and our offerings, help many blessings flow! (x 3)

#### TEACHING

*The mantra saying OM VAJRA BHUMI AH HUM means enlightened exchange; offering and receiving; the wisdom of dana. It conveys the spirit of the mandala and of one's own aspiration. Again the imagination is engaged.*

*Prayers of gratitude, offering and requesting can be expressed inwardly while saying the mantra.*

OM VAJRA BHUMI AH HUM (x 21)



## MEDITATION

*(After creating and offering the physical mandala, an inner or imagined mandala is created. Do the imagined exercise in a natural, relaxed way.)*

*Imagine your mind is like a clear blue sky, and in it a BIJA appears, a sparkling white embryo of living energy, accompanied by the sound DRUM.*

*This bija glows with light and transforms into a clear crystal bubble, a vessel of practice, called a Buddha Palace. It is alive with rainbow lights, translucent and very beautiful.*

*The entire palace is radiant, alive with energy, both coherent and powerful.*

*It symbolises the home of wisdom; the presence of clarity and understanding; source of blessings; integrity of practice: a Buddha Palace.*

*Now, inside this sphere, or palace, appear five coloured luminous stars, glowing lights or Buddha figures. (These lights or figures are the five central principles arranged and coloured as in the diagram. Seek teaching and explore in order to practice in a suitable and effective way.)*

*Smaller figures, or lights of many different colours, fill all the spaces left in the palace. Each of these is a particular expression or variation of the central blessings. They may relate to collective, historical experience as well as personal life experience and Dharma practice. History and culture are the means of expression and, of course, vary with different people.*

*The Buddha Palace, the living principles and associated figures of light, give us the expressions and lineages of the Teachings. We give respect, attention, gratitude and practice in response.*

*After imagining the mandala, reflect on the meanings for a while, and then recall the whole mandala.*

*Gradually, through practice and consideration, a richness of understanding, personal association and feeling pervades the mandala. Gradually, the practice integrates with daily life and suitable expressions emerge. Through repetition, the meditation clarifies and gains meaning; a universal relevance gradually unfolds.*

*Recognising this wonderful imagery as Dharma symbol, we give thanks and generate the heart that gives.*

*It is in the spirit of this practice that blessings become offerings and offerings become blessings.*

## VAJRA MU

*(Snap your fingers on 'MU')*

### PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND OFFERING

Heart-felt thanks and gratitude, for all blessings everywhere

Offering, renewal, so the blessings flow.

Love of life, self and others, boundless nature's realms,

Respect for life, wise governance, that all may live in peace.

Education, discipline, skills and all the work we do

Good medicine and care,

The heartfelt effort to transform the roots of ill and harm.

Families, communities, children, vessels of our future

Elders, Teachers, Parents, Friends,

All who guide and care.

Wealth and property we care for, all our aspirations.

Creativity, the arts, science, tested knowledge;

Love of learning, open minds, tolerance and freedom;

The senses marvellous, life's bright intelligence.

The warming sun, abundant earth, clear water and pure air,

The growing of the food we eat, the planet bountiful.

For all of these we give our thanks and offer what we can,

That harm may end and happiness be helped to grow.

(Short pause)

Thanksgiving and offering both become as one and so the blessings flow.

## PRAYER FOR CONTINUITY OF PRACTICE

This mandala expands and grows, continuously the blessings flow, each one is  
unique.

Benevolent compassion Generates a blessed gift,  
May this blessing be accepted and enjoyed.  
May all harm and hindrance Be wholly cleared away.  
May all come to realize the thinking of the free,  
Practice as all Buddhas throughout time have always done.  
Embrace the whole of life, Mahamudra teachings  
Generous compassion Body, Speech and Mind.

*(Now, holding both hands in a gesture of offering, say...)*

OM VAJRA BHUMI AH HUM  
OM VAJRA BHUMI AH HUM  
OM VAJRA BHUMI AH HUM

*(Lifting your hands up, say...)*

AH LA LA HOH

*(Now, three times throw a little rice over the shrine - this may be mimed - saying...)*

I offer to Buddha I offer to Dharma I offer to Sangha  
Every offering given in the spirit of DANA is a seed for further blessings.

## SHARING THE BLESSINGS

By the great benefit of this practice,  
May I quickly attain to the state of Mahamudra, living freedom  
And as I do so, support all others in this way.



PART FOUR  
LAMA YOGA

*With this practice the relationships of transmission, living and developing throughout time, are remembered and confirmed.*

TEACHINGS

*'Transmission' means the passage of wisdom from person to person. In this text, transmission refers to the transmission of Dharma teachings. It also means shared understanding, friendship, inspiration and knowledge. It can refer, as well, to understanding inspired by the archetypes and principles.*

*The history of living transmission is called 'Lineage', or transmission network. One vows to remember and cultivate these lineages and networks, the pathways of transmission.*

*A 'Lama' is a path-friend, source of Teaching and support. 'Lama' also means one's own inner wisdom and the historical relationship of transmission, person to person and collectively, that is from one group to another. The relationship of transmission is an expression of compassion.*

*The living transmission of wisdom, through all its cultural forms over time, is the lifeblood of these Teachings, the essential community.*

MEDITATION

*Be peaceful and relaxed, alert and aware. Let your mind be like a clear blue sky.*

*Now, in an instant, imagine you are the embodiment of liberated feminine energy: vitally alive, glowing with ruby red light and confidence in your capacity to explore and question. (This imagined female embodiment is called Dorje Phagmo in the Tibetan Teachings.)*

*Now, on the crown of one's head, in the midst of a beautiful rainbow coloured flower, a vibrant disc appears like the sun and moon in conjunction (union of application and aspiration).*

*Arising from this, LAMA appears as a radiant sapphire blue figure, the original source of living wisdom transmission. (This figure is called Dorje Chang.)*

*Lama represents the union of skill and wisdom; the embodiment of compassion in transmission.*

*Many different expressions of LAMA (Dorje Chang) are here in potential, arising in imagination, according to need and interest. Helpful people, communities or even particular places might come to mind.*

*Imagine deep space is all around, filled with countless galaxies, suns, moons and planets. These represent other networks and influences as well as the wonder of the universe.*

VAJRA MU

*(Snap your fingers on 'MU')*

OM AH HUM (x 3)

MIND OF WISDOM, SKILL AND MEANS

OM AH HUM, OM AH HUM SOHA

*While saying the following mantra think of your own historical lineage up to your present living connections. The word 'lama' can become the name of a person, a community, a particular teaching or a sacred place. In this practice there is room for personal reflection and aspiration – teachings are given to empower your own original thought and action.*

NAMO LAMA HUM HOH (x 21)



## THE SEVEN BRANCH PRAYER

*This prayer has seven parts. It is a prayer for the development of 'suitable vessels', capable of giving and receiving Dharma transmission.*

1. *Obeisance – commitment, service.*
2. *Offering – support, interest, involvement.*
3. *Open confession – acknowledging lacks of oneself and others.*
4. *Sympathetic joy – empathy, joy in the qualities and actions of others.*
5. *Dedication of merit, of power – sharing the benefit.*
6. *Turning of the Dharma Wheel – pray that the gift of the Teachings always survives and develops.*
7. *Long-life – prayer for lamas, for living transmission, to remain active in the world, both in oneself and in others.*

*(Obeisance)*

With faith and aspiration, thanksgiving, joy, determination  
Clearly we remember now the living lama lineage.

*(Offering)*

I offer praise and thanks, life's blessings and fine gifts,  
Both inwardly and outwardly so the Dharma lives.

*(Open confession)*

I remember and confess all my unwholesomeness  
My ignorance and harm, I will encourage them no more.

*(Sympathetic Joy)*

Whenever wisdom's benefits arise for others anywhere  
I will be happy and rejoice to see their welfare grow.

*(Dedication)*

I pray the blessings of the Teachings grow well throughout time,  
And dedicate all that I have to growing world peace.

*(Turning of the Dharma Wheel )*

We are many different people living in our place and time  
We need the different lama streams  
And pray for the continuing, turning of the Dharma Wheel.

*(Long-life)*

I wish long life and happiness to living wisdom everywhere,  
May this lineage of mine always work for world peace!

*Now, in the mantra below, imagine the first OM (white), AH (red) and HUM (blue) on the forehead, throat and heart of Dorje Chang, or any lineage figure, the second in yourself. With SOHA they flow together and you become one. Each individual has influence and so does each lineage network.*

OM AH HUM OM AH HUM SOHA (x 3)

#### PRAYER

My prayer is to remember  
To recognise and feel  
The living truths, both past and present  
That support us now. (x 3)

*The following mantra saying expresses the prayer for complete union with LAMA lineage, whether expressed physically, vocally, or mentally (body, speech and mind). Historically it often refers to Padma Sambhava, also known as Guru Rinpoche, who exemplified the wealth of skill and energy involved in cross-cultural transmission. It is a prayer for the realization of these skills and the enrichment of transmission.*

OM AH HUM VAJRA GURU PADME SIDDHI HUM (x 21)



#### CLOSING PRAYER

*These verses celebrate the different expressions of understanding that allow the 'lama lineage' to develop in all we do.*

All living beings my mothers boundless as the sky  
Supplicate the lama our Buddhas, Bodhisattvas.  
All living beings my mothers boundless as the sky  
Supplicate the lama all pervading wisdom thought.  
All living beings my mothers boundless as the sky  
Supplicate the lama transmission throughout time  
All living beings my mothers boundless as the sky

Supplicate the lama compassion manifest.

Remembering, remembering may I never lose  
Knowledge of the living truth however it appears.  
Living lamas anywhere natures wisdom, wonderful,  
May this be clearly known by me that all may live more happily.

OM AH HUM            AH LA LA HOH (x 21)

∞ KARMAPA CHAYNO ∞

∞ KARMAPA CHAYNO ∞

∞ KARMAPA CHAYNO ∞

*(The mantra expresses the wish to remember, and to be remembered by, the network of the Teachings. It particularly refers to the Karma Kagyu lineage of the Karmapas and the warm connectedness we have with these Teachings.)*

*(Brief, silent meditation)*

#### SHARING THE BLESSINGS

By the great benefit of this practice,  
May I quickly attain to the state of Mahamudra, living freedom  
And as I do so, support all others in this way.

MAY ALL THAT LIVE BE WELL AND HAPPY

SADDHU SADDHU SADDHU

GOOD GOOD GOOD

∞

## PRACTICE NOTES

The text can be practised as a continuous puja (service), or in parts. Even a single prayer or combination of prayers can be read alone, sung or chanted. Reading and re-reading aloud is a major method of practise. It fosters memory and establishes the Dharma in awareness, providing impetus for the Path and is most effective when done happily and with energy.

The musical elements give a further idea of the traditional mind-training method. Tone, tempo, percussion and all other instrumentation serve the purpose of the text, which is to convey the Teachings and bring energy and attention to practice. Quick clear speech is often an important element. The text can be simply spoken in one's natural speaking voice. People can do practice in a very personal way.

In terms of meditation, each section presents an introduction to the meditation practice. It is enough to read these meditation texts and do only a little inner yoga practice. To do more one should find an appropriate teacher. In general, study and informal practice dominate, with only one quarter or so of the total time involved in formal meditation. In this way, practice can integrate with the life stream. The practice is a support for a peaceful life and a foundation for peace activism. Reflection, contemplation and personal response matter. The text is both an instruction and a catalyst for thought and imagination. It is a gateway to the Vajrayana and depends on respect for tradition as well as personal response and interpretation.

In personal practice one should find a way of reading and chanting that suits you.

Mantra (or sayings) can be done with a mala (beads or rosary). Informal mala practice through the day is a main feature of this method of mind-training, helping to integrate practice with all we do and to ensure personal association, effort and understanding. This is also one of the oldest of all methods. It has a calming coherent effect and is helpful for memory and speech.

At Coorain we have a formal puja practice with instruments guided by a chorus leader. The puja can be scored by different groups and individuals according to their wishes.

## GLOSSARY

**Adhibuddha:** Essential archetype, primary idea, source of all Buddhas.

**Bhumi:** Ground of being; integrity; the earth, level of practice.

**Bija:** Embryo of energy; seed of understanding. 'Tig-le' in Tibetan.

**Bodhicitta:** The 'heart for wisdom'; aspiration; energy for the path of peace.

**Dharma:** Laws or truths; teaching that supports peaceful welfare and development; the Buddhist Teachings.

**Lama:** A person capable of fostering understanding of the Teachings; the energy of relationships and influences that do this; path-friend.

**Lineage:** The conscious, remembered history of deep friendships, connections and explorations that transmit and create the Teachings up to the present, including oneself. In traditional lineages, such as Karma Kagyu, they are formally traced. Each person and community, however, can have their own lineages.

**Mahamudra:** The complete union of Bodhicitta and daily life. Goodwill, interest in life and clear, open-minded awareness working together. Lit. 'The great seal or gesture'.

**Mala:** Tibetan prayer beads, usually 108 or 21 beads plus a 'lama' or universal bead.

**Mandala:** Coherent balanced diagram or picture, used in meditation and reflection. Lit. 'Mind illuminator'. Usually laid out geometrically, indicating integration and balance.

**Mantra:** Sayings; words and sounds of essential meaning and feeling. Lit. 'Mental device'.

**Meditation:** There are different kinds of meditation. Here we refer to the imaginative exercises from the 'Arising Yoga' method of Tibetan Dharma presented in Ngon-Dro, as well as quietude or calm abiding.

**Mudra:** Symbolic gesture, dance, action.

**Puja:** A particular teaching written as a chorus to be chanted, or simply read and studied,

individually or collectively. Done often, it is a useful, traditional method for the development of aspiration, commitment, understanding, refuge and community health generally. Puja is often a devotional practice. Here it includes devotion as well as prayers of principle, study and meditation. The text empowers bodhicitta.

**Symbol:** A graphic representation of a vast principle or mystery that speaks to depth consciousness.

**Teachings:** Within this chorus, sections titled 'Teachings' are aids for understanding the original Ngon-dro. Used otherwise 'Teachings' means Dharma as taught by the different schools of Buddhism.

**Vajra and Bell:** The Vajra is a symbol of compassionate action. The bell a symbol of knowledge and understanding, together they symbolise wisdom.

**Vajra Mu:** To let go of a meditation exercise; dissolve it and merge with ordinary mindfulness.

**Vajrayana:** The Dharma vehicle in Tibetan Buddhism. Lit. 'Diamond vehicle'.

**Yoga:** Bringing together, working together in harmony. Lit. 'Yoking the sun and moon'.

NOTE: Other terms are described in context.

## GOODWILL AND BLESSINGS