

Gar Quote: Daily Reminders of Kindness, Compassion, and Your Own True Nature
by Kyabje Garchen Rinpoche

Translated by Ina Bieler

"My dear friends: in my first message, I would like to extend a warm Tashi Delek to all of you in this mandala. From lifetime to lifetime, our minds have been connected and thus I see you like family. What has kept our minds connected from lifetime to lifetime is the spiritual bond of love. These 'reminders of loving kindness and compassion' should encourage us again and again to make an effort to cultivate love for one another. As all our minds are connected, we can help each other through cultivating love. Thus, if more people in this world are able to give rise to love, peace and happiness will increase. I have great love for all sentient beings; for this reason, I trust that spreading the word of love will contribute to the peace and happiness of this world.

My single prayer is: 'May all sentient beings have happiness, and love—the cause of happiness. May all sentient beings be free from suffering, and self-grasping—the cause of suffering.' In Tibetan, the word for 'kindness and love' is 'jamtse' (byams brtse). In Tibetan U-Me script, this can be written in a single line; for me, this is a sign of this word's preciousness. Today, I am offering to you all my kindness and love. I hope you will keep this dear to your heart, as this is the essence of all happiness in this and future lives. It is the essence of the Buddha's teachings. If you have love in your heart, even those who hate you will eventually be your friends. Your actual enemies are hatred and jealousy in particular. Outer enemies are a temporary illusion arising from a deluded thought. This thought is impermanent. Thoughts come and go. Thus if you do not let go of love, the anger in others will eventually diminish.

If you love others, you wish for their happiness. As our minds are one, if you love others, it will pervade their mind and they will thus feel happy. Love is the only cause of happiness. Its nature is all-pervasive like space. Love is the sunlight of the mind.

Furthermore, I am deeply sad to hear about the earthquake disaster in Japan, and also in New Zealand, Tibet, and other places last year. Although many beings have lost their lives, their minds really can never die. And as our minds are connected, we can benefit them by cultivating love and compassion and reciting the Mani mantra (OM MANI PADME HUNG). If we are able to pervade their minds with love, they will awaken from the dream of self-grasping and suffering."

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#2 This quote is taken from Rinpoche's teachings on 'How to Overcome Difficulties' on March 15 in San Jose, CA

The first step to eliminate suffering is to give up clinging to this life. From the day we are born to our mothers, until the day we die, this entire life is like last night's dream. After we have died, we

awaken in the Bardo—the intermediate state after death. Then this entire lifetime will seem just like a dream; the human world will become a fading memory. It is like waking up from a dream. At this point, if we have failed to eliminate self-grasping, frightening appearances will manifest— compared to which, this human world appears as a pure land. Milarepa knew what would happen if he failed to purify self-grasping, and thus he had the courage to dedicate his entire life to practice, undaunted by hardship. Thus, whenever you encounter difficulty, consider: "this life is like a dream, before too long it will come to an end, and when it comes to an end, I must be prepared."

In order to secure happiness beyond this life, it is important to understand the causes of happiness. In order to avoid causes of suffering, we must give up self-cherishing attitudes and cultivate an altruistic mind that seeks the benefit of others. The jewel of Bodhichitta is the only protection at the time of death. The essence of this is found in the 37 Bodhisattva Practices—it contains a remedy for any kind of suffering, an answer to all questions. Although the Buddha's teachings are vast, the Buddha himself summarized: "perfectly tame your own mind, this is the Buddha's teaching."

Although most of us live like kings and queens, still we are very skilled in finding a way to suffer—nothing is ever good enough. The rich suffer from their possessions, the poor suffer from a lack of possessions. Milarepa lived in a cave without food and drink and he was the happiest person in the world. The truth is that we can only find happiness in our mind. If the mind has a habit of grasping at suffering, it will create suffering and perceive everything as an enemy and a threat. If one does not grasp inside the mind, even an actual difficult circumstance, like an illness, is not perceived as suffering. Truly understanding karma will enable us to tolerate our present circumstances and will teach us how to abandon suffering in the future. Karma can be explained very easily—love is the cause of happiness; self-grasping is the cause of suffering. Therefore, in the 37 Bodhisattva Practices it says: "all suffering without exception comes from wishing for one's own happiness. The perfect Buddhas arise from the altruistic mind."

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#3 This quote is taken from a teaching on refuge that Rinpoche gave in Labchi in one of Milarepa's caves to a few retreatants.

"Gampopa said, "If we do not practice Dharma in accordance with the Dharma, then Dharma itself will become the cause for falling into the lower realms." What are the so-called Three Jewels? The outer Buddha refers to all the buddhas of the three times. The outer Dharma consists of the 84,000 heaps of Dharma teachings, yet they are included within loving kindness and compassion. Sangha refers to a person who has cultivated loving kindness and compassion, a good-hearted person. Having been liberated from one's own suffering, rooted in self-grasping, one is able to show the path of liberation to others. This is the Sangha. Having received the refuge vow, the Three Jewels are also contained within your own mindstream. These are called

the inner Three Jewels. The inner Buddha is your mindful awareness and alertness. The inner Dharma is to never let go of loving kindness and compassion, the altruistic mind. What is the benefit of an altruistic mind? It will destroy self-grasping. When self-grasping collapses, on their very ground, all sentient beings are buddhas. Lord Buddha said: “The Buddha is within all sentient beings. Yet they are obscured by adventitious stains.”

What are these adventitious stains? All thoughts and afflictive emotions are contained within a single turn of mind, the root of all sentient beings of the three realms is self-grasping. In reality self-grasping is a mental fixation, a thought grasping at a reality. Tilopa said, “Son! You are not fettered by the appearances, you are fettered by grasping at them.” Once all grasping is cleared away, there is nothing that can obscure the mind. Even if thoughts arise, they will not obscure the mind, if you do not grasp at them. If you grasp at them, you will be hurt like being pricked with a thorn, you will become obscured. This is called ‘fettered.’ We are not fettered by the extent of thoughts that arise, as long as we do not grasp at them. All you practitioners, retreatants, mountain hermits, know this, yet listen to the advice of me, a man with experience. I have gathered many experiences of suffering and difficulties in this lifetime. It is said, “an elder sick person is the best doctor.”

Compliments of H.E. Garchen Triptrül Rinpoche's Teaching Archive.

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#4 This quote was taken from a teaching Rinpoche gave to the yogis in Labchi in one of Milarepa's caves:

We must separate the inner mind from the outer conduct. The inner mind realizes that all phenomena of samsara and nirvana lack inherent existence. The outer universe and inner sentient beings lack inherent existence, as they are compounds. If we grasp at the truth of whatever arises within the mind—pleasure, suffering, thoughts and afflictive emotions—we will accumulate karma. If we recognize afflictive emotions and unwholesome thoughts as they arise, this mindful awareness is the Buddha. All buddhas abide within the mindstreams of sentient beings. The thoughts are delusions and lack inherent existence—they come and go—yet innate awareness always remains unchangingly. Thus do not pay attention to the thoughts, but see the awareness that recognizes them. When awareness holds its own with stability, afflictive emotions, pleasure, and suffering will disappear, and your mind will become very clear. If you grasp at the truth of thoughts, your mind will be obscured.

Obscurations come from grasping at the truth of thoughts. While understanding that things lack inherent existence and are like a dream, in your activities you should accomplish the benefit of others entirely and abandon harm toward others entirely. Be in harmony with everyone, accomplish the causes of benefit and happiness for all sentient beings, try to make them joyful and happy.

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#5

A spontaneous inspiration given by H.E. Garchen Rinpoche in Los Angeles on March 21, 2011

There are two major systems in this world, the mundane and spiritual. These two systems are like two eyes, thus it is important to know them both. It is important to know the essence of these systems. Some people in this world refuse all spirituality, they only believe in the improvement of science. This is slightly mistaken. We do need science but at the same time must not neglect our mind. And even within different belief systems there is disagreement. To me, all religions are necessary and good. I also am very fond of science. I like to have two eyes wide open.

A person who is only concerned with this lifetime is like someone roaming around aimlessly in a pathless desert not knowing where to go. A person that understands karma, cause and effect, is like someone walking on a road, knowing where to go and knowing where they are, but they still have to walk around mountains and face other difficulties. A person with bodhichitta is like someone going on a train. One goes straight through the mountain and is not obstructed by any obstacles on the way. One also reaches the destination faster. A person with love in their hearts can easily sever the flow of afflictions. If one has bodhichitta one becomes very powerful in accomplishing great activities that bring benefit to others. As love will destroy self-grasping, wisdom will naturally dawn and thus one will unmistakably know what to adopt and what to discard. Going with the train is like cultivating relative bodhichitta. When self-grasping has diminished and one sees the nature of mind, one realized ultimate bodhichitta, emptiness. This is like going in an airplane. The airplane moves above the clouds, the clouds are like thoughts and the space above is the expanse of dharmakaya. The airplane of clear knowing awareness moves through the dharmakaya space unobstructedly. It sees the entire world and also the clouds below, but as it overrides the clouds it is not bothered by the clouds, the rain, the storms.

Similarly, when one realizes the nature of mind, one is no longer affected in any way by the clouds of desire and hatred. Awareness is above these clouds. As the dharmakaya is like space, it is unchanging. Space does not come or go, space always is as it is. Realizing this there is no fear of death; space does not die nor is it born. The phenomena of samsara and nirvana are like clouds; they arise momentarily, but are as they are, compounds. They are impermanent, subject to disintegration, coming and going. Moving above these clouds one will not grasp at their substantial reality and thus will not cling to thoughts of desire or hatred. To see this nature even for just an instant is mahamudra. You will never gain anything new. Awareness is like fire--in the beginning it is like a spark, in the end a blazing fire. But fire is always fire. You are not creating a great mind that you do not yet possess. To see it for just a brief instant is still seeing it, but of course it must be habituated. Only when we preserve this nature continuously will we achieve the state of great happiness and peace where there is no more suffering.

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#6

Jealousy and pride can be tricky and are difficult to recognize; they sometimes manifest as a subtle feeling of dislike. For instance, when someone tells you how great you are, you feel good about it. But then the person continues, "You are great, but he is still better." Then a feeling of discomfort arises. When others are praised, we do not like to hear about it. When these subtle thoughts of jealousy and pride remain unrecognized, they grow into overwhelming emotions that cling to one's own happiness and to hostility toward others. The root of all this is the grasping at a self. Because we strongly believe in this self, we feel alarmed by everything that threatens it. When others criticize us, we get angry.

In fact, when others blame you, they cannot add a fault to you that you do not possess. When others praise you, you are not becoming a greater person because of that. Whatever others say about you does not affect your faults and qualities. Only you can see whether you have this fault or not. If you do not have the fault for which you have been accused, there is no need to be upset, since criticism does not make you have the fault. If you do have that fault for which you have been accused, then the person pointing it out to you becomes your kind teacher helping you to improve. Dzogchen Patrül Rinpoche said, "Never look at your own qualities, but never look at others' faults. Always look at your own faults, but never look at others' faults."

It is important to recognize each and every subtle arising of jealousy and pride. This requires a great deal of diligence in mindfulness, as these emotions in particular are very difficult to identify. Whenever such a thought arises you must apply a method to abandon it. Ideally you eliminate it through recognition: if you have trained your mind in mindful awareness you will see the thought the moment it arises and recognize its empty nature. If you recognize this, this thought is rendered powerless. It will not affect you in one or the other way. If your mindfulness is not yet strong enough you can apply the bodhisattva approach, considering that the other person is your mother, your best friend, your child, and therefore give rise to love and compassion for them.

And if this is too difficult in a certain circumstance, you can apply the pratimoksha approach, and that is to contemplate the faults of this emotion, understanding that as a result of acting on such an emotion you will fall into the lower realms. You should apply one of these three approaches according to your mental capacity in the moment of affliction. You have to practice according to your capacity, just like a child must wear children's clothes and an adult wears adult's clothes. A child in an adult's cloak would be troubled. In brief, Lord Buddha summarized, "Perfectly tame your own mind; this is the Buddha's teaching."

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#7

Effortful compassion arises due to cultivating the thought, "All sentient beings have been my parents in a past life." It is habituated through perceiving everyone that one encounters as family. For instance, you see an older person as your mother or father, a younger person as your child, a same-aged person as your brother or sister. You cultivate this until great love for all beings has taken birth. Effortful compassion requires an object of compassion.

Effortless compassion arises when you rest within the nature of mind. How? When you see your own true nature, it is very blissful, great joy. Then you understand from personal experience that such sublime happiness actually exists, yet limitless sentient beings have not seen this. Whoever has not experienced this nature suffers greatly. Ordinarily we think that some people have great happiness and not many problems--rich people, for example. Despite the fact that rich people sometimes suffer even more, everyone, to put it briefly, who has not seen the nature of mind suffers. When you realize that, by seeing true happiness immense compassion arises. Effortless compassion does not require an object of compassion. In order for such compassion to arise you must first experience the nature of mind--how thoughts and afflictions dissolve into the unmoving space of timeless awareness without rejecting or accepting.

This is a very happy nature. Seeing this, naturally, effortlessly compassion arises for all those who have not been able to see this before. If one has not seen the naturally blissful nature of mind, one is bound to suffer. I bow to the great treasure of unconditioned love, Chenrezig!

Spontaneous Inspiration given by Garchen Rinpoche on March 30, 2011, in Los Angeles.

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#8

A thought Rinpoche recorded during the Yamantaka Drubchen in Los Angeles a few days ago.

In prison Khenpo Münsel Rinpoche taught me this: "The extent of your realization will be known when you encounter difficult circumstances. You will not know the extent of your realization when things go well." When you find yourself in a troublesome situation, when you are in great pain, when an intense emotion arises, only then will you know where you are at with practice. He added: "Adverse circumstances will reveal your hidden faults." If you are able to hold awareness unwaveringly during such a time, and thus if you are not carried away by the force of the emotion, it is a sign that you have gained experience in practice.

If you were to practice mindful awareness with great diligence for just a month, if you were to recognize even the slightest thought and not allow your mind to wander off into delusion for that time, even in such a short time you would witness great changes. Fierce afflictions would not faze you so much any more, because you would have gained personal experience in observing

the illusory play. There is in fact just one remedy necessary--mindful awareness. It is the single sufficient remedy that transforms difficulties inside and out.

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April 11, 2011

To me in this world there are only two types of beings: my benefactors of love and my benefactors of patience. The majority are my benefactors of love; they are very kind and help me. Some try to cause harm and create obstacles; these are my benefactors of patience. The kindness of each benefactor is equal, and thus my love for them is equal. Maybe my benefactors of patience are even more kind to me, as they allow me to practice the perfection of patience. I am thus very grateful to all those who do not like me and make me tame my anger. At the same time I feel great compassion for their sorrow, but as they allow me to practice patience and my anger and jealousy to gradually diminish, they are my teachers. Thus, in the end, when I attain enlightenment and all my anger and jealousy are no more, it is due to their kindness. For this reason I love them greatly.

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A thought Rinpoche recorded during the journey to Ohio on April 12.

There is pure love and impure love. The difference lies in possessiveness or release. Pure love is the root of lasting happiness. Impure love creates only suffering. Impure love that is tainted by the ego and possessiveness leads to jealousy, then anger and finally separation. Pure love free from possessiveness leads to harmony and peace and may even transform a negative companion. A relationship then becomes a bodhisattva activity.

Someone who has understood the nature of mind will even take on a negative companion, as one has understood that negative emotions are temporary; they come and go. That disturbing person's mind and one's own mind essentially are the same. What stays throughout lifetimes as the seed for happiness is pure love. Thus when one truly understands the nature of mind, samaya-commitments cannot be broken. Even if it happens that one quarrels, this temporary occurrence never moves the ever-prevailing love. If one does not understand the nature of mind, one will cling and try to possess. We then are nice to those who are nice to us, but not nice to those who are not nice to us. This love is impermanent; it cannot last. Pure love will always last. And my love for you will always last.

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April 18, 2011

Excerpted from Rinpoche's teachings on the Samantabhadra Prayer, commentary on the verse of ignorance.

There are many thoughts of ignorance such as dullness, fogginess, discouragement, laziness, depression, or irritation without reason. In particular, if we are lazy we will not accomplish anything, neither in a worldly sense nor in dharma. The supreme antidote is mindful awareness, it will overcome all negativities. These thoughts are fleeting, they will not last, they come and go. Awareness always remains and recognizes them. If you maintain mindfulness you will know with certainty what to do and what not to do. Thus clear awareness is most important, it is your inner buddha. This awareness cannot be seen, it is empty, and yet it has great vividness. It doesn't come or go, it always is as it is, like space.

Remain free from distraction then nothing will obscure this awareness, thoughts have no essence as they will not last. They come and go like waves on water.

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April 20, 2011

It is said, "If you would like to know what you did in past lives, look at your present body," and "if you would like to know where you will go next, look at your present actions."

If you give rise to jealousy and hatred due to self-grasping, you will be a samsaric sentient being wandering down to the hell realm, hungry spirit realm, or animal realm. Where you go is up to you. It is your choice. It is up to you whether you will go up into the pure lands of the buddhas or down into samsaric states. When your own mind is purified, you will become a buddha. If you do not purify your mind, you will be a sentient being. Where you go will be determined by your present actions. In "The Thirty-Seven Bodhisattva Practices" it is said, "The Subduer said that all the unbearable suffering of the three lower realms is the fruition of wrongdoing. Therefore, never committing negative deeds, even at peril to one's life, is the Bodhisattvas' practice."

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Translated by Ina Bieler

April 24, 2011

One day each of us will die; there is no one in this world who does not have to die. There is no benefit in being attached to this lifetime, because it will be left behind. As it is said in "The Thirty-Seven Bodhisattva Practices," "Consciousness, the guest, will cast aside the guest-house of the body." So we can ask ourselves, "Does it really not matter whether I am prepared for death, or does it matter somewhat? Why would I want to receive Phowa instructions?" If you receive Phowa instructions you receive a method to attain freedom. The body has nine openings through which the consciousness can leave after death. Only one of them leads to freedom--the opening at the crown. When we receive Phowa instructions we learn how to transfer our consciousness through the crown.

If we do not know this, we will be tossed around by afflictions such as hatred, desire, ignorance, jealousy, etc., and thus we will lack independence, we will be overpowered by the afflictions. Being controlled by the afflictions will cause the consciousness to leave through one of the eight impure openings of the body, which will lead to birth in samsaric existence. The Buddha said, "Independence is happiness; dependency is suffering."

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Translated by Ina Bieler

April 28, 2011

Excerpted from Rinpoche's teachings on the Six Bardos in Virginia, April 27, 2011:

An ordinary person believes in the appearing world as real and the dream state as unreal, whereas the buddhas have seen this world to be illusory just like a dream. The Buddhas say that in the Bardo after death we will perceive delusive manifestations, that the three lower realms are an illusion, and so forth. So then one might think, "If it is just like an unreal dream, then it can't be that bad." That is a quite mistaken understanding. Although illusory by nature, a dream will be experienced as a reality for as long as the dream lasts. This lifetime is like a dream, but until the karma of this life comes to an end, we will perceive this lifetime as real; we will not awaken from the dream of this life. For instance, if you have a nightmare, you will experience it as a reality for as long as you dream; you will not just wake up at will. When we die we awaken from the dream of this life, and this life becomes a fading memory.

None of it is left behind, and soon we find ourselves grasping at a new reality, the bardo state. If you understand this life to be like a dream, you will understand that everything within it--happiness, wealth, and pleasure, pain, and suffering--is impermanent and will not last. You will thus not be so overwhelmed by different circumstances. You will stay focused and not be carried away by indulgence in pleasure, and you will not be much affected by difficult circumstances.

Our life is like an oil lamp. The oil is the karma and the fire is this life. As long as there is oil, there is fire. Our life lasts until the karma for this life comes to an end. Then we will move on, controlled by the karmic imprints stored in our mind continuum.

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May 1, 2011

Excerpted from Rinpoche's teachings on Dream Yoga in Virginia in April 2011:

Eat little food in the evening, and contemplate death and impermanence before you go to sleep. The dreams of an ordinary person are the manifestations of virtuous and non-virtuous imprints laid down within the mind. When the wind energies enter the impure channels of afflictions, we experience a nightmare. Nightmares are the self-light of negative emotions. Positive dreams are awakening of virtuous thoughts. In order to recognize the dream state you must first gain stability of awareness during the day. First you must be able to overcome all thoughts and emotions of the daytime; then eventually you will be able to recognize them when you dream. In the beginning you will be able to recognize coarse thoughts such as fear during the dream state, and later on also the thoughts in more subtle dreams. Through this, as ignorance diminishes, your sleep will at first become lighter.

Ordinary sleep is a state of deep ignorance; it is an affliction. Thus instead of asking, "Did you sleep well last night?" you should ask, "How much time did you waste sleeping last night?" Of course we must sleep enough to maintain a healthy body, but there should certainly be a limit. I suggest no more than five to six hours a night, since you all have to work. Try to fall asleep with great clarity, and eventually through habituation you will never fall into a state of ignorance, but rather will sustain clear awareness.

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May 4, 2011

Excerpted from Rinpoche's teachings in Virginia in April 2011.

How has samsara arisen? The illusory self clings to its own happiness. Ordinary beings are only concerned about their worldly affairs. In order to overcome this attachment we must first recognize the suffering nature of samsara. For this reason, the Buddha first taught, "Recognize

suffering and then abandon the origin of suffering." Even though we experience all sorts of pleasures as human beings, this samsaric happiness is like eating a delicious meal mixed with poison. Having recognized suffering we will yearn to become free from it. How do we do that? We practice the Dharma and liberate our mind from the causes of suffering. This is difficult because we are attached to worldly life; we think that one day it is going to make us happy. If this would be ultimately true, then there would be nothing wrong with being attached, but unfortunately clinging attachment can only lead to suffering.

When we pass from this life, we will not be able to bring with us even the slightest thing or person, no matter how much we want to. There is no other way than to leave this guest-house of the body. The only things that will follow us are the karmic traces stored within our mind-continuum. For this reason it is so important to recognize suffering and eliminate its causes before it is too late.

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May 13, 2011

The Om Ah Hung Vajra Recitation, Part 1:

What do the Om, Ah, and Hung syllables represent? Om represents the vajra of form, the union of appearance and emptiness. Ah represents the vajra of speech, the union of sound and emptiness. Hung represents the vajra of mind, the union of clear awareness and emptiness. These are called "the three secrets." When there is no grasping to perceived form, this is the union of appearance and emptiness. Forms continue to appear and are seen, yet there is no grasping at their reality. When there is no grasping at perceived sounds, this is the union of sound and emptiness. Sounds continue to be heard, yet there is no grasping at their reality. If the mind neither grasps at sights nor sounds, it will naturally rest within the union of awareness and emptiness and thus will not grasp at mental arisings either. The three vajras are contained within the vajra of the mind. Thus the Om, Ah, and Hung syllables mark the forehead, throat, and heart of all deities—while deities appear in myriad forms, the essence of their body, speech, and mind is the same.

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May 25, 2011

The Om Ah Hung Vajra Recitation, Part 2:

Sometimes people ask, "Are we 'one' or 'the same'?" Well, we are neither. Is there "one" space, or are different spaces "the same"? Space is neither "one" nor "the same," and so is the nature of mind. Trying to figure it out by labeling it "one" or "the same" is just another mental fixation. Likewise, there are neither one nor many Buddhas. You can't say there is only one, as there are limitless Buddhas, yet you can't say there are many, as their essence is a single ground--emptiness and compassion abiding like space. Thus, do not grasp at singularity or multiplicity. Whatever appear are empty of self nature, like a rainbow in the sky. They lack inherent existence, as they are compounds and thus impermanent. The nature of mind of all beings always remains like space; it is uncompounded. While their bodies appear diversely, the mind of all beings has the same essence.

There is only one such thing called "mind," just as there is only one such thing called "water," although water manifests in different ways--as oceans, rivers, rain, drops, etc. If everyone were to practice OM AH HUNG, their mindfulness would have the same essence without the slightest difference in quality or size.

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The actual practice of the OM AH HUNG Vajra Recitation:

As a formal meditation session it is best to do this practice in the morning at dawn, but you should actually do it throughout the day. You can do this practice whenever you breathe, and you always breathe, don't you? When you inhale the air think "OM." You do not have to visualize it or say it out loud; just think "OM." When the wind reaches the navel think "AH," and when you exhale the wind think "HUNG." The main focus is on the AH at the navel. AH has the nature of fire and is heat. When you inhale the wind think that the wind dissolves into the AH at the navel. The quintessence of the wind is kept, and the stale air is always exhaled. In formal meditation sessions, as you inhale think that you are pressing down the upper winds and simultaneously draw up the lower winds by gently contracting the anus. This "union of the upper and lower winds" forms an egg-shaped sphere at the navel center. Hold your breath for a short time and observe the nature of mind.

Do not retain the wind too long, only as much as is comfortable. Again exhale and think "HUNG." In your daily activities there is no need to hold the breath; you can just breathe naturally and think "OM AH HUNG." The main focus is always on the fire at the navel, and eventually warmth will arise. This warmth in fact is already there, but ordinary beings do not recognize it. This practice is an excellent method to sustain mindfulness; it is a method to unite the mind with the winds. If we lack mindfulness the winds and mind go separate ways. and we become deluded.

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by Kyabje Garchen Rinpoche

Translated by Ina Bieler

"The root of Vajrayana practice is the samaya. Many of my senior disciples know about that, but there may be some new disciples, and so the samaya, the root of samaya or the actual samaya, is love, and that love is... a bond that keeps us connected throughout many lifetimes. "That is a bond between disciples and disciples, and lamas and disciples, and so forth. If we do not let this bond pass, if we do not interrupt this bond of love, which is the samaya, then from lifetime to lifetime in the future we will meet again and benefit and help each other. "For others, if we cut that samaya, that bond of love with each other, then we can only harm each other in the future. "And so the samaya between disciple and disciple and disciple and lama is very precious and important. It is necessary that we observe this samaya and not allow it to be interrupted--also because throughout all time we have had this positive samaya.

That is why in this lifetime, sharing the connection of practicing the Vajrayana together, and in order to benefit each other again and again in the future, it is important that all of us observe our samaya, that we do not give rise to anger and jealousy toward each other. And, as it is taught in the tantras, if we observe our samaya, then we will obtain the highest siddhis within seven lifetimes."

Gar Quote: Daily Reminders of Kindness, Compassion, and Your Own True Nature
by Kyabje Garchen Rinpoche

Translated by Ina Bieler

OM AH HUNG Vajra Recitation:

Of all the chakras in the body, the navel is the most important one. Our human body first formed from the navel through which we were connected to our mothers. The navel chakra is the royal seat of all winds in the body, and in particular the wind pertaining to the fire element. The fire at the navel is Vajrayogini and everyone has it; beings only do not recognize it. The navel chakra is the most stabilizing, grounding chakra; therefore it is advisable to direct all visualizations to the navel chakra. By focusing on the navel chakra the winds move down, and thus the mind settles. Sometimes when focusing on visualizations at the heart center, as the winds enter the heart chakra it could lead to emotional imbalance and mental instability. Focusing on the navel center is thus more secure.

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When you meditate, just rest and watch the nature of your mind. There will be a space where past thoughts have ceased and future thoughts have not yet arisen, and that space is completely empty of all fixations. If you recognize this space, simply continue to remain within it. One cannot say this moment of emptiness has been seen, nor can one say it has not been seen. But the one who thinks, "I have seen it," this is the one to be recognized. And the one who thinks, "I have not seen it," is also the one to be recognized. It is the one who performs all the actions. This is the one that you must recognize as the nature of your mind. This nature is beyond coming and going, it always remains like space. Thoughts come and go, so do not hold on to them, but pay attention to what always remains, no matter what comes and goes around it.