



✧ Kyodrak Khenpo Ghawang ✧

THE BLAZING JEWEL

AN EXPLANATION OF THE FOUR-SESSION GURU YOGA OF THE
GLORIOUS AND GREAT KARMAPA

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BY KHENPO KYODRAK GHAWANG

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DHARMA EBOOKS

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THE FOUR-SESSION GURU YOGA

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

At the 2017 Kagyu Monlam in Bodhgaya, His Holiness the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa gave instructions on *The Four-Session Guru Yoga* by the Eighth Karmapa, Mikyö Dorje. In advance, His Holiness had asked that this prayer and a selection of commentaries on the practice be translated anew.¹ These commentaries offer important details on the visualizations and supplemental instructions for the practice and are indispensable for practitioners of this text. However, none of them precisely explain the meaning of each verse of Gyalwang Mikyö Dorje's compilation (compilation as many of the passages are not his own composition, but verses by previous lineage masters).

This arrangement by Kyodrak Khenpo Ghawang also presents detailed guidance for the practice of *The Four-Session Guru Yoga* yet combines that with a word-by-word explanation of the prayer.

1. *The Four-Session Guru Yoga* practice text is available through Kagyu Monlam, KTD Publications, and dharmaebooks.org. The commentaries, published as *A Collection of Commentaries on the Four-Session Guru Yoga*, are available through Kagyu Monlam and KTD Publications.

Nearly every word recited in *The Four Sessions Guru Yoga* appears in the commentary, woven into the prose of the explanation. This is especially helpful in the genre of Tibetan verse where words and phrases are often abbreviated to maintain meter and many grammatical particles are omitted all together. It is, therefore, a unique and deeply beneficial contribution to the literature on this quintessential practice of the Karma Kagyu. The reader is sure to appreciate the depth and breadth of Khenpo Ghawang's learning and his skill in lucid explication.

Regarding the translation, when words from the root text appear in the prose, they are indicated by bold italics. The vast majority of the words from *The Four-Session Guru Yoga* unfold in the order that they appear in the prayer itself, though there are a few instances where word order, case, or verb tense has been sacrificed for readability. For ready reference, a translation of *The Four-Session Guru Yoga* has been appended to the end of this work. It is based on the Kagyu Monlam version, however, it has been slightly modified where Khenpo Ghawang's explanations differ from the original's phrasing. Lines that contain alternative renderings are marked by an asterisk. Lastly, when Khenpo Ghawang indicates he is quoting from *A Collection of Commentaries*

on the *Four-Session Guru Yoga*, unless otherwise noted, I have used the translations as published in that compilation.

Many thanks to Kyodrak Khenpo Ghawang for spending many hours with me in Mirik answering my endless questions and to Acharya Lektong for his clarifications as well. Much appreciation to Lama Zopa Tharchin, Jo Gibson, and Cathy Neumann for their proofreading and helpful suggestions; the end result is much better for their assistance. And last but far from least, I would like to express deep gratitude to His Holiness the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa for teaching and encouraging the practice of this prayer. May this work, in some small way, contribute to his long life and to the flourishing of his activity.

Eric Trinle Thaye
Mirik, March 2018

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

In general, guru yoga is a critical component of the Secret Mantra Vajrayana tradition that spread throughout Tibet, the Land of Snow. Since *The Four-Session Guru Yoga* is considered to be essential within the practice lineage of the Karma Kamtsang, there is a long-standing tradition of doing it as a daily practice. In his *Lucid Notes on the Visualizations for the Four-Session Guru Yoga*, Karma Chakme says:

In meditation camps such as Yangri, Surri,
And Dratsang, there was a custom of reciting the verses
Of this prayer in three sessions, each day and each night.
Three times—in the evening, at midnight, and at
daybreak—
A gong would sound; the master of discipline
Would circle the camp, checking each one-man tent
And punishing those who slept and did not chant.
This is the principal practice of the Kamtsang.

These days also, many monastic and lay people living in various countries of the East and West where the activity of the practice lineage of the Karma Kamtsang has pervaded make this prayer an important part of their daily practice. About the root text for *The Four-Session Guru Yoga*, Karma Zhenpen Gyatso says: “Most of the words in the supplication are the secret words of Mikyö Dorje, the essence of all the victors. Passages were added to this that arose in the pure perceptions of his siddha-disciples.” And according to the explanation in *The Stainless Crystal Mirror: Life Stories of The Father and Sons of the Kamtsang, Six in All*, this prayer consists of verses from both Karmapa Mikyö Dorje and his students.

The commentaries on *The Four-Session Guru Yoga* that we reference these days are: Shamar Konchok Bang’s *Methods for Meditating on Mahamudra at the End of the Four-Session Practice*; Karmapa Wangchuk Dorje’s *An Adornment to the Four-Session Supplication*; the protector of beings Karma Chakme’s *Lucid Notes on the Visualizations for The Four-Session Guru Yoga*; Karmapa Khakyab Dorje’s *Granting the Great Relief of Fearlessness*; and Karma Khenpo Rinchen Dargye’s *Key Points and Main Topics of the Visualizations for the Four-Session Guru Yoga*.²

2. All of these commentaries are published in *A Collection of Commentaries on the Four-Session Guru Yoga*, compiled by Seventeenth

This arrangement of mine, *The Blazing Jewel: An Explanation of the Four-Session Guru Yoga*, is not merely my vain fabrication, but was composed to gather the clear points explained in the practice lineage of the Karma Kamtsang. From Mikyö Dorje’s *One Hundred Short Instructions*: “In general, I’ve practiced this Dharma. Signs have arisen, and I’ve gained stability. It is the tradition of the Kagyu to not teach a verse of Dharma to others that one has not experienced oneself. For that reason, in the Kagyu, the teachings are concise. To differentiate between dry and fresh teachings: fresh teachings arise from the tradition of mixing the meaning of each verse with one’s being through months of meditation. In other traditions, for each day of practice, they recite many pages of text. These are dry teachings.”

Since there is a difference between dry and fresh words, the basis for the majority of this commentary comes from Karmapa Mikyö Dorje’s *One Hundred Short Instructions*. Explanations for the various visualizations from the commentaries are inserted exactly where they would be performed. And quotes from Karma Chakme’s *Mountain Dharma: Advice for Retreat* have been added to clarify certain points.

Regarding one's qualifications for composing a commentary: best would be having seen the truth of the dharmata; middling would be having received permission from a yidam deity; and at least one should be learned in the five fields of knowledge. I have none of these qualifications, nor do I have experience born from personal practice. However, to address the hopes of those who have requested this and as a token of my recollection of the kindness of the Karma Kamtsang practice lineage that I have long enjoyed in terms of receiving Dharma and being afforded all my worldly needs, I have put all my ability into this.

This introduction to the purpose of composing The Blazing Jewel: An Explanation of the Four-Session Guru Yoga was written by Gawang of Kyodrak.



THE BLAZING JEWEL

AN EXPLANATION OF THE FOUR-SESSION GURU YOGA OF THE GLORIOUS AND GREAT KARMAPA

NAMO GURU BHYAH

Through your marvelous qualities of wisdom, compassion,
and power,

Your activity of liberating all beings is unrivaled.

Lord of the World, glorious Karmapa,

Remain upon smiling anthers in my heart.

Your attainment is the illustrious dharmakaya.

The path to quickly manifest that is

The vajra verses of *The Four-Session Guru Yoga*

Which I'll explain according to the Kagyupas of old.

The Four-Session Guru Yoga of the glorious and great Karmapa is composed of passages arisen from the secret speech of Karmapa Mikyö Dorje, himself the nature of all the victors, and additional verses that arose in the pure perception of a few of his siddha-disciples.

CHAPTER ONE: THE PURPOSE OF THE EXPLANATION

This vast ocean of suffering called samsara does not have even a speck of existence apart from the confused appearances of one's mind. If you wish to be freed from samsara, you need to realize mind-itself, the meaning of mahamudra. To realize this, you need to properly follow a qualified guru, receive the unmistakable instructions, and practice them accordingly—this is the way to perfectly receive the guru's blessings. However, if you cannot find a qualified guru, it is permissible to supplicate one of the Kagyu gurus of the past. From Karma Chakme Rinpoche's *Mountain Dharma: Advice for Retreat*:³

Regarding the guru from whom you receive mahamudra,
It is said that not just anyone will suffice.
As without a mold, the tsa-tsa will not take shape,
It is said that a realized guru is crucial.

3. Hereafter, this text is referred to as Karma Chakme's *Mountain Dharma*.

If you cannot find a realized guru, once you have
 Received the instructions and reading transmission,
 You can hold Gampopa, Dusum Khyenpa, Götsangpa,
 Or another Kagyu forefather who inspires you
 As your root guru, and by supplicating them,
 The realization of mahamudra will arise.
 This has been promised by the Kagyu masters of old.
 Thus is their great compassion for their followers.

Karmapa Mikyö Dorje also says in *Fifty Instructions on Mahamudra*: “Don’t consider me to be ordinary. Though you may think you have not met me, all who meditate on and supplicate me will not be deceived. Merely recalling me is sufficient.” Karma Chakme’s *Lucid Notes on the Visualizations for the Four-Session Guru Yoga*⁴ states the following about karmically-connected, fortunate individuals who exert themselves in *The Four-Session Guru Yoga*:

Four-Session is the greatest guru sadhana.
 Meditating on the guru once is better
 Than meditating on the completion stage
 For aeons without diversions or distractions

4. Hereafter, this text is referred to as *Lucid Notes*.

Or on ten million yidams' mandalas.
As taught in the tantras of the Secret Mantra,
A single supplication to the guru
Exceeds performing millions of approaches
And accomplishments of a yidam deity.

CHAPTER TWO: THE MANNER OF THE EXPLANATION

These are not mere rash musings of my own conjecture. This work is based on written explanations from Shamar Konchok Yenlak, the heart son of Mikyö Dorje, and the latter's intentional reincarnations—the Karmapas Wangchuk Dorje and Khakyab Dorje. I further have drawn on the writings of Karma Chakme, the protector of beings who attained the state of a scholar-siddha, and Karme Khenpo Rinchen Dargye. Thus, the basis for this work is teachings on and instructions related to *The Four-Session Guru Yoga* by the Kagyu gurus of the past. The expressive power of their experience and realization was complete, and the lineage of these great beings' words, their meaning, and their blessings remains unbroken.

I myself was born among a people who, for generations, have recited KARMAPA KHYENNO with their speech and one-pointedly and at all times held Karmapa inseparable from their minds—in the beginning at birth, in the middle during life, and at the end

during death. This work also incorporates the instructions I have repeatedly received on *The Four-Session Guru Yoga* from many kind gurus: principally the lord of wisdom, compassion, and power, Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje; Goshir Gyaltsab Rinpoche, the vajra bearer who truly holds the meaning of the three vows; and the siddha Kyodrak Selje Rinpoche. At the least, it can be said that I have received the stream of their blessings.

CHAPTER THREE: THE ACTUAL EXPLANATION

I. THE ALL-INCLUSIVE FOUR MOTHERS SUPPLICATION

The “Four Mothers Supplication” is well known throughout all the New and Old Traditions. From *Lucid Notes*: “It’s usual to start with the ‘Four Mothers.’” As this shows, it has long been the custom to begin *The Four-Session Guru Yoga* with this prayer. As it says in Karma Chakme’s *Mountain Dharma*:

Supplication is not for one’s own benefit.

Supplication is for all sentient beings

Throughout space to realize Mahamudra.

Since the focus is the benefit of others, we think: those who have been *my mothers, all beings throughout space, pray to the guru, the precious buddha*. Know that the object of the supplication, the precious guru, to be the essence of all Three Jewels gathered in one. From Karma Chakme’s *Mountain Dharma*:

It is said, “The guru is the precious buddha.”

One's guru is just that.

In the unexcelled Secret Mantrayana, it is said that

The essence of all buddhas is gathered in the guru.

All buddhas are gathered in the guru's mind.

All true Dharma is gathered in the guru's speech.

All Sangha are gathered in the guru's body.

All wealth deities are the guru's qualities.

And the assemblies of dakinis and Dharma protectors are
the guru's activity.

Thus, the all-encompassing guru is the precious buddha.

By supplicating the guru, one supplicates them all.

The dharmakaya is the dharmadhatu that contains all undefiled qualities; it's naturally perfect purity itself, completely free of all adventitious stains, the very essence of the two purities. The guru's mind is nothing other than this. Thus, we pray to *the guru, the all-pervasive dharmakaya*.

The sambhogakaya refers to those of the great Akanishtha that is densely arrayed with ornaments, whose forms are adorned by the marks and signs, and who uninterruptedly enjoy the Mahayana Dharma, exclusively, together with the noble bodhisattvas. From Karma Chakme's *Mountain Dharma*:

All buddhas are of the five sambhogakayas.

There is no sambhogakaya apart from the five families.

The sambhogakaya of the guru refers to these.

As this is the case, we pray to *the guru, the great bliss sambhogakaya*.

For beings who are not direct disciples of sambhogakaya emanations, it is the nirmanakaya forms that tame disciples for as long as existence endures. All nirmanakaya emanations are dependent on the guru's dharmakaya and arise from great compassion that wishes to benefit all beings. From Karma Chakme's *Mountain Dharma*:

Likewise, though buddhas and bodhisattvas in essence,
they emanate

As kings, ministers, gurus, and so forth for those to be
tamed.

All the emanations that are necessary to tame beings—as
well as

Secondary emanations, tertiary emanations, and seventh-
degree emanations—

Do not cower from taking one birth and dying

To bring just a singular benefit to a single being.

For example, it is said that there were

Some five hundred thousand emanations
 Of just Mikyö Dorje in Tibet, the Land of Snow.
 All of them were the guru's nirmanakaya emanations.
 All of them are to be supplicated.

Thus, we pray to *the guru, the compassionate nirmanakaya*.

2. THE STAGES OF MEDITATION FOR RECEIVING BLESSINGS

A. THE CLEAR APPEARANCE OF THE DEITIES, THE INVITATION, AND THE DESCENT OF BLESSINGS

Regarding the most superior means to give rise to whatever noble attributes you desire—experience, realization, qualities, or awakened activity—it says in Karma Chakme's *Mountain Dharma*:

Of the means to give rise to realization not yet arisen;
 Of the means to increase and consummate that which has
 arisen;
 Of the means to clear away all obstructions and errors;
 Of the means to bless your body, speech, and mind;
 Of the means to accomplish your wishes and dispel
 obstacles;

Of the means to have the lineage's Dharma protectors and
guardians accompany you;
Guru yoga, alone, is supreme.

Jalandharapa says: "Regarding the divisions of 'the blessings of the four sessions,' dawn, noon, afternoon, and evening are the four times for meditation." As this indicates, these are the four great sessions, but day and night can be divided into more or fewer sessions, as is appropriate.

Begin the practice session of guru yoga with mental resolve vowing that no matter what distraction arises, you will not get up until this virtuous session of practice is finished. Then, in that solitary place, on a comfortable seat, you should sit with crossed legs, a straight spine, hands placed evenly, the shoulders spread, the neck a bit bent, and your gaze raised, lowered, or straight ahead—whatever is appropriate at that moment. Physically, striking the balance between being too tight or too loose, sit in the seven-point posture of Vairocana.

Mentally, think: "All previously arisen happiness and suffering, as well as positive and negative events, were the compassion of the guru and the Three Jewels. From this time forward, please bless me with whatever is best." Then, free of even a hair's tip

of desire for anything other than that, recite: *Namo Guru*. Thus, with deep respect, begin by paying homage with body, speech, and mind, to the guru. From Karma Chakme's *Mountain Dharma*:

When supplicating, above your head;
 When making offerings, in the sky in front;
 Always, hold the guru in your heart.

Therefore, with you in your ordinary form, visualize that *above your head* and in the sky before you is *the* red *wisdom dakini*, beautiful and captivating. Facing you, wearing no ornaments, and *naked with bhaga and breasts so full*, she is radiant and blazing with light. Her lustrous black *hair* hangs *loose* in tresses covering her back, *and her three eyes are gazing to the depths of space*. She holds a sandalwood damaru in her right hand and a skull cup filled with nectar in her left. Delighted by untainted great bliss, she *performs* various *dance movements of unbearable bliss*. She appears *in the teeming midst* of an immeasurable assembly *of countless others like her*—white, yellow, red, green, blue, black, and pied goddesses who emanate from her and fill the sky and all space, like swirling motes of dust in a ray of sunlight. In the space directly above the crown of the principal red dakini, is a gathering of various rainbow spheres and formations. In the

middle of this is a dais of a stacked lotus, sun disc, and moon disc. From Karma Chakme's *Mountain Dharma*:

The realization of the Kagyu tradition is a lineage of
meaning.

Though you may take vows, receive oceans of
empowerments and reading transmissions,
Or train in numberless classical fields of learning with
someone,

This is not the root guru from whom you've received
kindness.

Likewise, even if you've received from someone many
stages of instruction—

Even introductions to stillness, movement, bliss, clarity,
and non-thought—

This is not the root guru from whom you've received
kindness.

But if by seeing their face, hearing their speech, or having
their hand placed on your head—

Whatever the greater or lesser connection based on
receiving teachings or empowerments,

Even down to if you have not met them but were just
given a letter and so forth—

If these resulted in realizing the naked essence of your
mind,

Then that is whom you hold as your root guru.

Gampopa trained with Kadampa gurus and was able
To rest in shamatha for seven days without wandering.
Pakmodrupa trained with Sakya Drakpa Gyaltsen and
Consummated the samadhis of bliss, clarity, and non-
thought.

However, since it was later that they beheld the essence,
They considered Milarepa and Gampopa as their root
gurus.

Understanding this, *your own root guru* appears as *Mikyö Dorje arrayed in bhikshu attire* with the saffron outer robe *and the gold-blazed black crown*. His two hands *hold a vajra and bell* with his arms crossed at his heart, symbolizing *means and prajna* inseparable as one. He sits with his two legs in the vajra posture. You could never tire of beholding his appearance; no amount of gazing upon him would seem enough. All his features complete, he is radiant, smiling, and composed. *His gaze is inseparable*

bliss-emptiness. Just supplicating him—the essence of all the buddhas—*makes* your *devotion* towards him *blaze* like fire. *The more* your *devotion* towards him *blazes*, that much *more the blessings* of the guru *surge* like clouds. *The more the blessings* of the guru *surge*, that much *more those bearing blazing jewels of supreme and common siddhis*⁵ *shower like rain from the sky above, the earth below, and everywhere*—from the four cardinal and four intermediate directions, from high and low. *Now is the time to supplicate* them *from your heart*. And how should you supplicate?

For the invitation, begin with *Kye*—calling out to the guru with intense, longing devotion. Then, one-pointedly supplicate *the guru's body* as *appearance-emptiness*, *the guru's speech* as *sound-emptiness*, and *the guru's mind* as *bliss-emptiness*, [and request him] to *grant* you *blessings*. Having done so, multicolored light radiates *from the guru's body, speech, and mind* and fills space. By invoking the compassion of the billions of the Karmapa's emanations that fill the billion worlds in the billion-fold universe and the compassion of all the buddhas and bodhisattvas who abide in the

5. This explanation differs from the translation in the Kagyu Monlam publication of *The Four-Session Guru Yoga*. According to Khenpo Ghawang's commentary, it is the gurus who bear (possess) the “jewels” of the supreme and common siddhis and come from all directions, showering like rain.

myriad pure realms of the ten directions, all of them take the form of guru Karmapa in bhikshu dress with the gold-blazed black crown. Extending their palms and soles, they make the “blazing splendor of blessings mudra.”

Kye! As the guru ratnas—the precious gurus⁶—fill the sky and *approach, light and rainbows*, a rain of flowers, and the fragrance of incense also *fill all of space. He sends forth emanated messengers* in the cardinal and intermediate directions.⁷ In an expanse where the *conflagration of blessings roars* and *experience and realization soar*, imagine that those who descend dissolve into the Karmapa above your head.

The descent of blessings begins with *Kye! Exalted root guru, so I can follow your example, pray come*, without hindrance, *to grant your blessings. Shower them on this supreme site. Bestow the four*

6. This explanation differs from the translation in the Kagyu Monlam publication of *The Four-Session Guru Yōga*. According to Khenpo Ghawang’s commentary, it is the gurus who bear (possess) the “jewels” of the supreme and common siddhis and come from all directions, showering like rain.

7. This line means: though the principal Karmapa is visualized in front of us and his other manifestations are being invited, at the same time, he is also sending out emanations of himself to perform his activity—messengers. Messengers need not carry messages. The term also can refer to those who do errands or work that entails going somewhere.

empowerments on me, the supreme practitioner. Grant the supreme and common siddhis, without exception. *Dispel* what's negative, all *adversity and obstacles*. *Quell all* hordes of *enemies and obstructors*. With these passages, perform the invitation and descent of blessings.

B. CLEARING MISDEEDS AND OBSCURATIONS: THE DAKINIS DISPELLING CONTAMINATION

All the dakinis that fill the sky and space dissolve into each other and into the seven different colored dakinis: one of each of the five colors, a black one, and a pied one. The pied dakini is the color of Dombini in Hevajra's mandala. Her face and lower legs are white. Her upper body, from her neck to her waist, is light red. Her waist area and arms are light blue. From her waist to above her knees, she is light yellow. Her knees and feet are blue.

The goddesses surround the Karmapa in the space above our heads. These yoginis are inseparable means and prajna—they are virinis who accomplish vast benefit for oneself and others. In the presence of each of these *wisdom dakinis*, as it says in *Lucid Notes*:

Green light from the green karma dakini

Strikes you along with the being to protect,
 Dispelling, just like sunlight striking frost,
 All illness, döns, and contamination⁸ from envy.

Imagine in the karma dakini's presence
 Confessing all your wrongs, veils, faults, and downfalls
 That have arisen out of envy from
 Lifetimes without beginning until now.

Likewise, the yellow ratna dakini
 Shines yellow light dispelling illness, döns,
 Contamination and the like that come from pride.
 Confess before her wrongs and veils from pride.

Light rays from the red padma dakini
 Eliminate döns, illness, and contamination
 Arising from desire. Confess before her
 Illness, döns, misdeeds, and obscurations from desire.

The light of the white buddha dakini

8. In the field of Tibetan medicine, the term ཁྲིབ (drip) can refer to episodes like strokes and seizures. A more general understanding is “contamination”—tainted states of body or mind arising from contact with impure beings or substances. In *Lucid Notes* it is translated as the former. Khenpo Gawang explains it as the latter, so the translation of this passage has been altered to reflect that.

Eliminates döns, illness, contamination
 And the like from delusion. Confess before her
 All of the faults arising from delusion.

The black samaya dakini radiates
 Dark-blue light rays dispelling violations
 And broken samaya. She is the same
 As Palden Lhamo. Confess in her presence
 Violations and breakages of samaya.

The light of the blue vajra dakini
 Eliminates döns, illness, and contamination
 Arising from hatred. In her presence, confess
 All obscurations and misdeeds from hatred.

The vishva dakini's pied body shines
 Light rays of various colors that dispel
 All of the illnesses, döns, and contamination
 Without exception that are accumulated
 In the three times in equal parts. Confess
 Every transgression, mistake, fault, and downfall.

Thus, *admit and confess* the obscurations of the five poisons, broken samayas, and *misdeeds* and *obscurations* that were motivated by a

mixture of the three poisons or committed through a combination of body, speech, and mind; all of which are *caught up in* or contaminate *your being*. Think that merely by the light striking you, these negativities are removed and you are purified. This simple visualization of the dakinis dispelling contamination is the supreme method for removing obscurations. It is difficult for an individual whose being is contaminated by broken vows, misdeeds, and obscurations to receive the guru's blessings. And since it is impossible to give rise to experience, realization, and qualities if one does not receive the blessings of the guru, it is crucial, at the outset, to dispel misdeeds and obscurations.

If the ritual is being performed to remove contamination for someone who is ill or what not, it says in the *Lucid Notes*:

Make seven tapers—clean, seven inches long.
 The Sangha wear *sha tra* hats and Dharma robes.
 With hands in the mudra of the one-pronged vajra,
 The guru holds a taper over the ill one.
 Visualize that it is the dakini,
 Just as above. Her light eliminates
 The sick one's illness and contamination.
 Recite the stanza for each dakini

Till the flame is on the verge of going out.
 Then when it goes out, throw the taper outside.
 Do this for each of the seven tapers in order.
 Recite the entire text of the *Four-Session*
 From the beginning to the end, concluding
 With the auspicious verses and tossing flowers.
 The masters taught that this is the ritual
 For the Dakinis' Elimination of Contamination,
 Taught here on the side.

This is explained as an aside, but it would be very good to do
 this practice. As it says in Karma Chakme's *Mountain Dharma*:

For example, the "jewel of many colors"
 Assumes the color of the mat it's set upon.
 Likewise, by meditating on the glorious guru
 In the form of whatever yidam appeals to you,
 You'll receive the blessings of that deity.
 A precious wish-fulfilling jewel
 Does not have thought.
 If you place it atop a victory banner and supplicate it,
 A rain of food, clothing, and riches will fall.
 Likewise, by placing the jewel of the guru

Atop the victory banner of devotion
 And supplicating them with intense devotion,
 A shower of the supreme and common siddhis will fall.

It is just like that.

C. USING THE PRANA: GATHERING THE CRITICAL POINTS

From *Entering the Middle Way*:

When you have freedom and supportive conditions,
 If you don't take care of yourself then,
 You'll fall into the abyss and lose that freedom.
 Then how will you escape and rise from that?

You must fervently long for freedom from samsara like an inmate longs to escape prison and fervidly arouse devotion towards the qualities of the Three Jewels like a dehydrated man craves water. For one who has generated these, wisdom nectar descends like rain from the hearts of the guru and all the dakinis and enters the aperture at the crown of your head. As the nectar fills you down to the space between your eyebrows, obscurations of body accumulated from beginningless time are dispelled. You receive the blessings of enlightened body and become a fortunate one

with the power to quickly attain vajra body. The stream of nectar descends to your throat and dispels obscurations of speech accumulated from beginningless time. You receive the blessings of enlightened speech and become a fortunate one with the power to quickly attain vajra speech. The stream of nectar descends to your heart and dispels obscurations of mind accumulated from beginningless time. You receive the blessings of enlightened mind and become a fortunate one with the power to quickly attain vajra mind. The stream of nectar descends to your navel and beyond. It completely fills your body and dispels subtle obscurations of body, speech, and mind along with their karmic imprints. You receive the blessings of wisdom and become a fortunate one with the power to quickly attain vajra wisdom.

The seven dakinis dissolve into the principal red dakini. She melts into light and dissolves into you, transforming your ordinary form into the wisdom dakini Vajravarahi, red but without the sow's head. Her three eyes gaze into space, and she is naked, exuding the best qualities of youth. Tresses of her hair hang down her back. She holds a hooked knife in her right hand and a skull cup filled with the nectar of immortality in her left. Other than a garland of red flowers, she wears no other ornaments and does not have the khatvanga. She stands in the dance posture, with

her right leg bent and the left extended, atop a seat of a lotus and sun disc, in the midst of a mass of light.

The Karmapa Jetsun Mikyö Dorje above your head then comes to the space before you and transforms into Chakrasamvara, the father alone. He is blue with three eyes and is both wrathful and smiling. His hair is in a topknot and adorned by crossed vajras and a crescent moon. He wears a tiger-skin skirt, an elephant-hide upper robe, and is bedecked with the six symbolic ornaments. His two hands make the dharmadayo mudra atop his head. He appears in the dance posture, with his left leg slightly bent and his right extended, in the midst of a mass of wisdom fire.

Visualizing yourself as the mother, the wisdom dakini Vajra-varahi, by merely offering him the nectar with your left hand, the blaze of the red wisdom fire surges. Light radiates from you and invites him through your bhaga. Think that he comes to rest upon a seat of a lotus and sun disc in your heart center.

For practicing with the prana: at “Filling space, Mikyö Dorje $\bar{A}H$,” inhale, as if drawing it in by a hook. At “Radiating light, Dorje Gawa HOH ,” fill, as if filling a vase. At “Blazing messenger, Yangchen Nupa HUM ,” bind or hold, like binding with a knot. And at “Clearing stains, Trinlay Drakpo OM ,” exhale, like shooting an

arrow. Thus, inhaling, filling, binding, and exhaling, utilize the prana with the four-faceted vase breath. You can also hold the intermediate breath: let the spine of the lower back be curved in, push the stomach out, and push the breath down a little—it's nothing other than that.

Imagine that the heruka in your heart has a white OM in his forehead, a red AH in his throat, a blue HUM in his heart, and a yellow HOH in his navel. Meditate that these are the essence of the body, speech, mind, and wisdom of all the buddhas. Many critical points are contained in these four syllables: OM is vajra body, the nirmanakaya; AH is vajra speech, the sambhogakaya; HUM is vajra mind, the dharmakaya; and HOH is vajra wisdom, the svabhavikakaya. There is also a relationship between the four states, the four modes of being and the four kayas, the four syllables E VAM MAYA, the four syllables OM AH HUM HOH, and the four activities. The first set includes: the purified dream state; vajra speech, the sambhogakaya; the syllables VAM and AH; and among the four activities, pacification. The second set is: the purified state of sexual intercourse; vajra wisdom, the mahasukhakaya; the syllables MA and HOH; and among the four activities, increase. The third set is: the purified state of deep sleep; vajra mind, the dharmakaya; the syllables YA and HUM; and among the four ac-

tivities, magnetism. And the fourth set is: the purified ordinary wakeful state; vajra body, the nirmanakaya; the syllables e and om; and among the four activities, forcefulness.

OM is body and the nadis. ĀḤ is speech and prana. HŪM is mind and bindu. HOḤ is wisdom. *Filling* means pervading. *Space* means the inner space—the central channel. *Mikyö Dorje* (Immovable Vajra) means the invincible or indestructible empty form endowed with all the supreme attributes, mahamudra. *Radiating light* means the emanation of the qualities of the marks, signs, and so forth. *Dorje Gawa* (Vajra Joy) means the HAM at the forehead. *Blazing messenger* means the A-stroke at the navel. *Yangchen Nupa* (Melodious Power) means the sound or life force of the indestructible nada. *Clearing stains, Trinlay Drakpo* (Forceful Activity) means the dispelling or clearing of the stains of perceiver and perceived of the right and left channels. Meditating on prana in this way is the forceful means to purify the karmic prana within the central channel.

Among the four names: Trinlay Drakpo is body; Mikyö Dorje is speech; Yangchen Nupa is mind, and Dorje Gawa is qualities. Each of the four syllables (OM ĀḤ HŪM HOḤ) has three components. During the impure time of samsara, they are the sperm,

the egg, and the wind. From the perspective of the abiding channels, they are the central, the left, and the right channels. From the perspective of the moving prana, they are the three inner pranas. Then during the time of purity, they are the three vajras of body, speech, and mind. From the perspective of the arrangement of bodhicitta, they are the three pure inner bindus. Regarding the components of syllables, in general: the bindu is the syllable HAM in the forehead; the visargaḥ is the A-stroke near the navel; and the nāda is pure heart prana.⁹

9. The *bindu* is the circle above some syllables. The visargaḥ is the two circles to the right of some syllables. And the *nāda* is a very small curved line atop the *bindu*.

3. SUPPLICATIONS TO INVOKE WISDOM MIND

A. RECALLING THE QUALITIES THROUGH THE KHYENNO SUPPLICATIONS¹⁰

Visualizing yourself as the wisdom dakini, call out with unbearable, one-pointed faith and respect to the heruka in your heart, the glorious and great Karmapa.

VERSE ONE

You are the *exalted* one who has the power to generate co-emergent wisdom in or transfer it to the minds of disciples. You are the *master* who liberates those with faith from the ocean of samsara. From Mikyö Dorje's *An Explanation of Mahamudra*: "Regarding the instructions on how we possess the three or four kayas: If you wonder how it is that the kayas are within our mind, look like this: Look inward at this present knowing. As it is non-composite and empty, that is dharmakaya. When you realize it to be like that, that is sambhogakaya. As it has many aspects,

10. Khyenno supplications: there are eight verses that each end in KHYENNO. KHYENNO is left untranslated as it has many connotations: know me, see me, regard me, etc. Leaving it in the Tibetan avoids reducing the meaning to one concept.

that is nirmanakaya. It's natural state is svabhavikakaya. In short, this union, this spontaneous presence, this indivisible unity of luminosity and emptiness is the svabhavikakaya. Everything is contained within this." Having realized this, you are *the lord of the four kayas*, and *whatever you do* to train sentient beings, your disciples, *appears* as the *play* of pure *wisdom*, free from the stains of faults. You are *the lord of all*—of the entirety of samsara and nirvana. The lord of the victors (*Gyalwang*), glorious and *great Karmapa*, as all *the buddhas* are gathered in you, you are an *ocean of blessings*.

VERSE TWO

You are *a mass of qualities* possessing the spontaneous completion of enlightened body, speech, and mind, utterly *cleansed of all faults* of the states of waking, dream, deep sleep, and sexual union. You are mind itself, *the heart essence of buddhas appearing as the guru*, the great *lord of compassion*, the *supreme nirmanakaya*, the *venerable master* Karmapa *Dorje Yangchen*.

VERSE THREE

For me and all other sentient beings, you are the *sole hope for attaining the everlasting aim*. The root of the interdependent cause for circling in samsara is affliction-laden ignorance. When we are not gathering any actions—be they virtuous, non-virtuous, or indefinite—when motivated by this ignorance, but are resting in selflessness, the abiding nature of mahamudra, appearance is appearance-emptiness; clarity is clarity-emptiness; bliss is bliss-emptiness; and awareness is awareness-emptiness. When this interdependence is established, one will be free from the craving and grasping which lead to the state of samsara. Further, great compassion will arise for those who have not realized this. This, in turn, creates the interdependence for the form kayas to appear. From abandonment comes the svabhavikakaya, and from realization comes the wisdom dharmakaya. These are the bases for the sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya. Thus, you are the *lord of the four kayas* and awakened activity, a guru of *the* unequalled *Dakpo Kagyu*. *You bless the mind streams of the fortunate* disciples who have abandoned worldly aims, possess faith, and have unimpaired samaya. Thus, the activity of *your lineage is without rival*.

VERSE FOUR

If the very concept of mindfulness that understands, experiences, and realizes all phenomena from form up to omniscience are not truly existent, is not contrived or corrupted with other or later conceptions, that very concept—the subject, prajnaparamita—enters into or is pacified into the object, the dharmadhatu, and *ordinary confusion* will *fall apart* effortlessly, *all on its own*, and, the *dharmadhatu's stainless essence* will *manifest*.

From Mikyö Dorje's *Fivefold Mahamudra Commentary*: “For mahamudra meditation, let the mind be free. Do not fall into the extremes of appearance, emptiness, bliss, clarity, non-thought, or anything else. It is not mixed with the essence of these. It doesn't rely on any effort of mindfulness. It is not composed of an instant or a continuum. It isn't produced. It doesn't cease. It doesn't abide. It doesn't stay. You won't find any word or a meaning to ascribe to it. Whenever an awareness free of any identifiable essence arises, if it long abides, let it long abide. If it abides just a bit, let it abide just a bit. Familiarization with sustaining this will lead to the highest consummation.” Luminous mahamudra is seeing your own face.

To teach this supreme path to liberation, you manifest to your disciples in various emanations—sometimes in the forms of the six classes of beings, or as Brahma, Indra, the protectors of the world, shravakas, pratyekabuddhas, viras, yoginis, buddhas, or bodhisattvas—and establish those disciples in higher births and the definitive excellence of liberation. Thus you are *the master of* all awakened *activity*, Karmapa Dusum Khyenpa (*Knower of the Three Times*), the *embodiment of* the mind of *great compassion*.

VERSE FIVE

In this degenerate time when the five characteristics of such are rampant—short life, little wealth, profusion of afflictions, wrong views, and inferior bodies and minds—*you tame beings* by employing *various* skillful *means* to ripen and liberate them; *you are the lord* of the *victors*. As *you are my* immediate *hope* and *the one whom I depend on* for the ultimate good, you are the *genuine wellspring of* all *the* supreme and common *siddhis*.

VERSE SIX

As you are the *lord* of existence and peace *who encompasses all the victors*—the perfect buddhas—*in one, you have the power to*

ripen the fortunate ones with previous karmic connections. *Sugata* (“one who travelled easily” to the supreme state) *of the Karmapa’s* practice lineage, the *Kamtsang*, you are *free of the filth of the two veils*—the afflictive veils that bind us in samsara and the cognitive veils that obstruct omniscience.

VERSE SEVEN

Lord of Dharma, precious guru, *since you’ve mastered the four activities* of pacification, increase, magnetism, and forceful activity, *just focusing your* realized *wisdom* mind *transmits blessings* to the mind streams of disciples. In *Dorje Yangchen*, the heart essence of all experience, realization, qualities, and activity of the *practice lineage* are contained *in* this *one* being. You are the glorious and great Karmapa, the omniscient Mikyö Dorje.

VERSE EIGHT

You are *Great Vajradhara*, endowed *with* the *eight qualities*. The eight are: Clearly and completely adorned by the marks and signs, you are the master of form; as your speech possesses the sixty qualities, you are the master of speech; since you directly and vividly see phenomena both as they appear and as they are,

you are the master of mind; having command over the three worlds, you are the master of miracles; effortlessly appearing to all disciples wherever they may be, you are the master of all beings; perpetually abiding in the mandala of great liberation, you are the master of place; enjoying an entourage of consorts and the five sense pleasures without attachment, you are the master of desire; and being the lord for all buddhas and bodhisattvas, you are the master of the retinue.

Regarding the meaning of the four syllables of “Shri Heruka,” *Two-part Hevajra Tantra* says:

Shri is non-dual wisdom.

He is emptiness—free from cause and so forth.

Ru is devoid of assemblage.

Ka is not abiding anywhere.

Thus, *Shri* is the non-dual wisdom that is desired, relied on, and is the object of approaching for those who seek the state of supreme vehicle. *He* is emptiness—all phenomena being free from arising from self, other, both, a cause, or arising without cause. *Ru* is freedom from all gathering that abides or is destroyed. *Ka* is not abiding in the two extremes of eternalism or nihilism. *Shri* is translated into Tibetan as *pal* (and into English as “glorious”).

The *seven traits* are related to the three kayas. The seven are: the sambhogakaya, union, great bliss, being without nature, being definitely filled with compassion, continuity, and being without impediment. The dharmakaya possesses one trait: the trait of being without nature. The sambhogakaya possesses three traits: the trait of the sambhogakaya—possessing all the qualities of the sambhogakaya and being adorned by the marks and signs; the trait of union—as we practice means and prajna in union, the deities of the secret mantra appear in father-mother form; and the trait of great bliss—the arising of untainted great bliss that is free from all suffering.

The nirmanakaya possesses three traits: the trait of definitely being filled with compassion—working to benefit sentient beings through non-referential compassion; the trait of continuity—that very compassion continuously working to benefit beings for as long as space endures; and the trait of being without impediment—the unimpeded and unhindered display of wisdom forms for those in need of taming.

Possessing these traits, he is the *lord of victors embodying all buddhas*, the *noble* guru of all existence and peace, the lord of victors (*Gyalwang*) Karmapa *Mikyö Dorje*.

He is *all victors in one* since he is victorious over the four demons: the afflictions, the skandhas, the lord of death, and attachment to sense pleasures. The afflictive, cognitive, and absorptive obscurations having been cleared (Tib. *sang*) and the wisdoms of things as they appear and as they are having fully developed (Tib. *gye*), he is *all buddhas* (Tib. *sang-gye*) *in one*. Having easily travelled (Tib. *de-war shek-pa*, Skt. *sugata*) to the very state of dharmata or suchness, he is *all sugatas in one*. He is the nature of all-inclusiveness. *All* that can be known—everything contained in samsara and nirvana—he is always *knowing* without obstruction.

Karma Chakme's *Mountain Dharma* says the following about the great and glorious Karmapa's name mantra:

“Karma” in the language of India

Is literally translated into Tibetan as “*le*” (action).

The meaning [of Karmapa] is translated as “agent of the activity of all buddhas.”

Therefore, all the lineage gurus are also none other than “Accomplishers of the activity of the buddhas.” So it is also Appropriate to recite *Karmapa Khyenno* with respect to them.

Then recite *Karmapa KHYENNO*.

Following this, supplicate the *embodiment of the compassion* of the victors and their heirs; the *embodiment of the buddhas* of the ten directions and three times; the one in whom *all* the gurus, yidams, dakinis, and Dharma protectors are *embodied*—the *lord of Dharma*, Karmapa: *KHYENNO*.

Pray to the supreme among gurus, Karmapa *Mikyö Dorje* and Karmapa *Chodrak Gyatso*. *Pray to the* supreme lineage, the unequalled *Dakpo Kagyu*, in general, and *pray*, more specifically, *to* the practice lineage of *the Karma Kamtsang*.

Having done this, what is it that we want? In order to liberate those with faith from samsara, *Jetsun may I be just like you*. In order to turn the wheel of Dharma in accordance with the dispositions, capacities, and proclivities of beings, *Dharma lord may I be just like you*. In order to bear the great load of qualities, *guru may I be just like you*. In order to perform great benefit for sentient beings filling space, *protector of beings, may I be just like you*. Thus, make these aspirations.

B. THE WEARY CRY OF APPEAL

Being *omniscient*, they know all that can be known. Being our *only father*, they protect and safeguard us. They go by the names *siddha Sangye Nyenpa* and *Gyalwang* Karmapa *Mikyö Dorje*. From Wangchuk Dorje's *Adornment to the Four-Sessions*:¹¹

Visualizing the guru as the essence of the four kayas,
 If you supplicate with fervor from your heart—
 Your hair standing on end and tears welling up—
 You will attain the two siddhis without effort.

Who else would *supplicate you, if not me*, your disciple? Guru, *who* else *looks with great compassion if not you*? Guru, as *I* genuinely *supplicate you* from the depths of my heart, *grant* me *your blessings* of body, speech, and mind. At this very moment, *bestow the ultimate siddhi of mahamudra on all sentient beings* filling space, *in general, in particular* upon *disciples* born in *times* when the five *degenerations* abound, *and especially* upon those who are never but *unswervingly steadfast, for whom trusting you*—the precious guru—*itself is enough*.

11. The first line has been altered to accord with Khenpo Ghawang's explanation.

By the blessings of the guru, may all the karma from my previous lifetimes—that would ripen in future lifetimes as endless circling in samsara—ripen now over a short period as encountering difficulty such as enemies, spirits, fits of insanity, conflicting diseases, louse-related illnesses, leprosy, dropsy, and various unjust accusations, and may it thus be cleared away. Guru, *who* else *has* the *blessings* to effect this, *if not you?* *Who* else *will you lovingly nurture if not me*, your disciple? *Who* else *will repay your*—the precious guru’s—*kindness if not me*—your disciple? Guru, *who* else *will tame disciples if not you?* *Who* else *can this wretch* of negative intentions and coarse actions who brings ruin to self and others *place hope in if not you*, lord guru? Guru, *mighty one*, *who* else *will you protect if not me?* You are the *guide to the ultimate aim in all my*—your disciple’s—*lives, everlasting jewel*, the lord of the family *who severs all doubts* regarding all dharmas, undeceiving *protector to whom I* and your other disciples *fully surrender*.

From Mikyö Dorje’s *Commentary on the Mahayana Paramitas*: “The interdependently arisen self-aware, self-luminous mind imputes “I” and “mine.” Becoming accustomed to these through the imputed mind of karma and afflictions, the clear appearances of mistaken phenomena develop—the appearances of dependent phenomena of the three realms of samsara. Since they

are not the nature of the mind, they can be abandoned. If this self-aware, self-luminous mind itself becomes habituated to the clear appearances of twofold selflessness and the creation and completion stages, that self-aware mind becomes wisdom that realizes emptiness and wisdom that realizes selflessness. By the power of binding the pure channels, drops, and winds in the form of the creation-stage visualization of the exalted deity, this very mind that realizes emptiness and selflessness is liberated into the essence of mahamudra in the completion stage. Thus, its forms and wisdoms are boundless.”

Thus, you are the *buddha who forever dries up the ocean of existence* detailed above. If one looks for faults, one with wrong views will see faults even in the Buddha. If one looks for qualities, even hell beings can be seen to have qualities such as being in a place where their karmic obscurations are being eradicated. Setting such ways of viewing aside, by looking impartially with discrimination, we see that the guru is an *ocean of qualities* of body, speech, and mind that is *beyond all* limit and *measure*.

You are the *sole mother of all beings throughout space* and able to protect them from suffering. Precious guru, *great trove* of perpetual, *inexhaustible compassion*, since they have no other hope,

no one else to rely upon, no other protector or refuge, and no one else to come to their aid, *who will think of beings in degenerate times if not you? When will you lovingly protect me* with your mind of great love *if not now? When will you grant* supreme and common *siddhis if not now? Let our minds be merged as one* so that I become equal to the guru in body, speech, mind, qualities, and activity. *Loose the knots of* conceptions about *confusion and freedom*.¹² *Now liberate forever* those who are not truly existent but like an illusion, that is, all *illusory beings* pervading *throughout* the entire expanse of *space*.

Exalted guru possessing all the requisite qualities, *look upon* the condition of *all limitless beings* who have accumulated many negative actions that are the source of suffering, who are oppressed by much unbearable suffering, and who have entered the vast expanse of inescapable samsara. Know that through supplication, non-virtue ends on its own, virtue is spontaneously perfected, samadhi dawns without effort, unerring prajna born of meditation blazes, the three trainings are completely perfected, obscurations are pacified, the power of antidotes is

12. Khenpo Ghawang's explanation of this verse differs from the explanation relied upon when translating the text for the Kagyu Monlam publication of the *Four-Session Guru Yoga*.

increased, obstacles are transformed into siddhis, the unfavorable eight worldly concerns are forcefully eradicated, and you'll accomplish the four activities. *Protect those who supplicate you* with great faith and respect. *In these times*, when intensely *terrible* suffering *torments* me, *when* all means are exhausted and *I'm desperate about what to do, look upon me at this time of* weariness from *panic and anguish*.

Though parents' kindness is beyond repayment, like a child who has done nothing in service but still harbors great expectations from them, if you entrust your heart, mind, and whole being to the guru, place your whole being in his lap, and supplicate, you will be capable of attaining the dharmakaya upon one seat.

From Mikyö Dorje's *Devotion Mahamudra Commentary*: "Buddhahood is joining one's mind of twofold purity with luminosity, or said in another way, being led to the state of buddhahood. There is no work other than that. By supplicating the guru, first, mind becomes the essence of intense devotion. Then the conceptual elaboration of that [devotion] will also wear away. Then devotion free of conceptual elaboration, like the expanse of the sky, will arise and all mental movements of mind's present fixations—conceptual or non-conceptual—will cease. Mahamudra

born of blessings' essence will arise as a vivid abiding in luminous cognizance. That itself is the wisdom of omniscience; that is the dharmakaya. Therefore, if the guru capable of bestowing the dharmakaya on one seat is not the vira who drives back the attack on the battlefield of samsara; if he is not the general who conquers the hordes of demonic obstacles, if he is not the ground from which all qualities grow; if he is not the ferryman who delivers you across the river of suffering; and if he is not the jewel from which all wants and needs arise, who is?"

C. RECEIVING THE GURU'S BLESSINGS

You are like a *precious* jewel from which all needs and wants arise according to one's wishes. On account of your superior qualities, you are the *guru* of all beings. The bridge of the siddhas' lineage remaining unbroken; the vital nectar of the pith instructions having not been lost; without interruption, from buddha to buddha, the minds of the masters and students have become one—you are one *who holds the true lineage* (the lineage of meaning). Merely by directing your mind, you *bestow* the *blessings* of body, speech, and mind upon the mind stream of fortunate ones. Jetsun Milarepa said:

When the confidence of non-arising is discovered,
 Fixation on previous and latter lives as two is dispelled;
 Appearances of the six realms are seen as false;
 Superimpositions of both birth and death are severed;
 The confidence of equanimity is discovered;
 Fixation on happiness and suffering as two is cleared away;
 Felt experiences are seen as false;
 Superimpositions of both adopting and abandoning are
 severed;
 The confidence of inseparability is discovered;
 Fixation on samsara and nirvana as two is cleared away;
 Traversing the levels and paths is seen as false;
 And superimpositions of both hope and fear are severed.

Like this states, you are one *with the confidence of realization* and possess the six *clairvoyances*: 1) the ability to demonstrate miracles such as changing many things into one and one thing into many; 2) the divine eye that knows close and distant forms—both subtle and coarse, the death of beings, and the places of their rebirths; 3) the divine ear that hears the sounds of numberless worlds; 4) awareness of others' minds that knows all sentient beings' states of mind; 5) knowledge of previous and future lives that knows the succession of births, from the past into

the future, of each sentient being; and 6) knowing that defilement is exhausted which is certain that all obscurations have been completely abandoned. You also possess the five *eyes*: 1) the physical eye that sees the subtle and coarse forms from one hundred leagues up throughout the billion-fold worlds; 2) the divine eye that sees the death and rebirth of all sentient beings of the ten directions; 3) the eye of prajna that sees the truth of the dharmata; 4) the Dharma eye that knows the Dharma of scriptures and realization as well as what Dharma an individual has grasped; and 5) the buddha eye that sees every aspect of all phenomena that can be known.

You manifest infinite *miracles*, performing assorted miracles of form; miracles of speech, such as beings hearing your teachings in their own language; and miracles of mind, such as entering all samadhis at once. You *extend*—in a manner *overwhelming* to the mind—vast *kindness*. If I have perfect devotion, without having to wait long for the goal, you will now *place* the state of *buddhahood in my palm*. You *transform* the profuse, long-held *common* samsaric *perceptions* in an instant *and* clearly *reveal* the *infinite purity* of what appears and is possible.

Noble Lokeshvara appearing in the form of Jetsun Karmapa, without needing to hope in or rely upon another, *from deep in my heart I pray to you alone who are enough. Please hold me in your great compassion—you with the power* to shower down a rain of the supreme and common *siddhis*. *Unassailable* are the stainless teachings (*Ka*) of the victor Vajradhara that comprise this lineage (*gyu*). As it's *unrivaled* by others, through your *activity*, including connections to you through sight, hearing, recollection, and touch, you *have the power to* tame even *the savage* ones of coarse character who have fallen sway to karma and the afflictions. You are an *exalted perfect buddha* who has consummated qualities of abandonment and realization. As it says in Sambuṭi: “Why? As the buddhas see that all the merit of the perfect buddhas and bodhisattvas exists upon the tip of a hair of the master, the bodhisattvas see the buddhas offering to the master.”

As it says in *Bodhicarya-avatara*:

Without any sense of loss, I surrender
 My body, likewise my enjoyments,
 And even all my virtue of the three times
 For the sake of all sentient beings.

For the sake of boundless beings, my elderly mothers, I offer you right now my three gates¹³ (body, speech, and mind) and virtue. Accept them fully with a mind of great compassion, and having accepted them,¹⁴ bless me from my heart so that I become like you, Jetsun Karmapa, a guru who is able to be a source of protection for all beings, without distinction, forever. As it says in Karma Chakme's *Mountain Dharma*:

In whatever guru yoga you practice,
 At the end, the guru melts into you,
 And you mix your and the guru's minds inseparably.
 By the power of this blessing, whatever experience
 Or realization arises will not be an obstacle or mistaken.
 Though without form, color, or substance,
 Emptiness—the guru's dharmakaya—
 Is not an emptiness of utter absence.
 Self-awareness and self-luminosity is the sambhogakaya.

13. In the root verses of *The Four-Session Guru Yoga*, the Tibetan is གསུམ་, usually translated as the idiomatically-less-than ideal “three gates.” In the translation, body, speech, and mind are listed instead of using the referent.

14. “Having accepted them” occurs in the root text, but it was left untranslated in *The Four-Session Guru Yoga* published by Kagyu Monlam as it seemed repetitive in English.

Being varied and unimpeded is the nirmanakaya.
 These three inseparable are the svabhavikakaya.
 The rivers of India and the rivers of Tibet
 Are distinct on account of their valleys;
 But just as the essence of the water is the same,
 The guru's mind and your mind
 Appear distinct on account of your physical forms,
 But in being emptiness and beyond elaboration, their
 essence is one.

Mixing your mind with the guru's as one,
 You will not find any object of supplication—
 This is the essential point of the Kagyu teachings.

The Heruka Chakrasamvara, in form, Karmapa Mikyö Dorje, in essence, that appears in your heart center melts into light, and Guru Karmapa's body, speech, and mind and your body, speech, and mind merge inseparably. You, visualized as Vajravarahi, also melt into light which disappears like vapor on a mirror or like a rainbow vanishing in the sky. Not focusing on anything, this is the practice of mahamudra. From Karmapa Wangchuk Dorje's *An Adornment to the Four-Session Supplication*:

From praying one-pointedly in this way,

Strong bliss, heat, and devotion blaze intensely.
 The splendor of blessings quells all fixation on reality,¹⁵
 Which, known but left unaltered, disappears; rest in that.
 No sight or sound or dualistic phenomenon
 Can be established as anything—thing, non-thing,
 Empty, not empty, existent, nonexistent, is, is not;
 Free of clinging to truth, dualism, and conception.

Remain unaltered, loose, free of action, spontaneous, in a state
 free from the root of fixation, with conceptual mind astounded,
 rest in equipoise. From *Sambuṭi*:

Through great ignorance's conception,
 Falling into the ocean of samsara.
 By resting in non-conceptual samadhi,
 Becoming free of stains, like the sky.

How should you practice this? The fifth Shamar, Konchok Bang, said in *Methods for Meditating on Mahamudra at the End of the Four-Session Practice*: “When you look at your mind, it is not established as the essence of anything; it is empty and vivid. Without being distracted from this, simply post the sentry of mindfulness. Other than that, simply rest serenely in equipoise

15. This line is slightly altered from the published translation.

without even any effort of meditation or meditating. If a thought occurs, look at the essence of just that which occurred, and rest as before. This is the method of resting based on internal awareness. Similarly, whatever external appearances—form, sound, and so forth—arise, rest without contrivance, without thinking of existing, not existing, being, or not being.

“Entirely cast away all wishes—any hope that from meditating in that way, you will develop experience and realization, achieve a result, and so forth. Rest serenely, without creating any dualistic hope or fear even of samsara being bad and nirvana being good. Whatever good or bad experience arises of recognizing your mind even a bit, view it as being like a dream and give up joy and despair. Being able to rest in such equipoise is the ultimate result of all generosity, discipline, listening, and contemplating. Just that is the destination, so it is important to sustain it for a long time. As the glorious Dipamkara said: ‘If your mind is stable in equipoise, don’t emphasize practices of body and speech.’”

Shamar Konchok Bang continues: “During post-meditation, view all appearances and sounds that arise in your mind like a reflection in a mirror or like an echo resounding off a rock face, appearance-emptiness and sound-emptiness. Because the

nature of phenomena is emptiness, view whatever results arise from the assembly of causes and conditions as worldly people see them, believing in karmic results. No matter how phenomena arise, without fixating on or solidifying them, view them as the noble beings see them—not existing as a true nature; nothing more than appearances that, like illusions and reflections, arise from the interdependence of assembled causes and conditions. In brief, seal all your conduct by catching it as much as you can with the mindfulness of a virtuous attitude.”

These are truly crucial pith instructions. If you continue with this meditation for a long time, once free from an intellectual object of meditation, you will truly see the non-referential utter pacification of the non-conceptual wisdom of the path of seeing.

In Mikyö Dorje’s *Commentary on Mahamudra Practice*, he says this about temporary experiences: “By practicing in this way, bliss, clarity, and non-thought will arise as special samadhis. There are two kinds of bliss: physical bliss and mental bliss. For physical bliss, first there is a blissful experience that does not feel the existence of the body in which the feeling of suffering would arise. Then whatever would arise as painful to the body is felt as bliss. Then the very essence of this mind that feels bliss

disappears, and eventually, a bliss arises where you think that the sense organ of body has vanished. Regarding mental bliss, the feeling of there being a mind disappears, and there is a bliss of not feeling the existence of mind. Then any anguish that might otherwise harm the blissful mind will not be able to sway it. Then the very mind that is principally samadhi arises as bliss, and thus, all suffering that might arise in mind is overcome.

“There are two kinds of clarity: the aspect of clarity that is able to engage with objects when the five sense organs’ consciousnesses are oriented outward and the aspect of clarity that is illuminated by the mental consciousness’s samadhi. Regarding the former, there are the five signs of the day and five signs of the night. Regarding the latter, once free of the five obscurations to mental stability, the prajna of all phenomena will arise without obstruction.

“As for non-thought, at first you can hold your mind on whatever it is directed towards without thinking of other things. Then coarse thoughts will subside. Then the objects to which the mind has been directed will also disappear. Then feeling, conception, and consciousness of all objects disappear; that is, the movements of feeling and conception cease. Now appearances do not arise in mind.

“When this happens, bliss will be free from experiences of attachment to lesser bliss or the bliss of the current absorption. Clarity will be free of scattering and excitement. Non-thought will remain free of fluctuation. And from that, a state will arise where conceptual mind will be incapable of fixation as all objects are experienced as non-existent.”

D. TURNING ONE’S ATTENTION TO DHARMA

Within the state of the practice of mahamudra—appearance-emptiness inseparable—*supplicate the exalted glorious guru*. Why do that? Mistaken appearances arise from students’ lack of purity, but other than this, in reality, how could it be that the glorious guru craves sensory pleasures? How could the guru engage in heedless behavior? How could the guru actually become angry and so forth? How could the guru harbor the eight worldly concerns? How could the guru deceive through wrong livelihood? How could the guru lie or teach perverted Dharma? How could the guru conceal misdeeds and downfalls of self or others? Therefore, request *blessings to see whatever* the guru *does as perfect*.

It is by merely teaching the symbolic path of means, the referential stages with attributes, that the guru causes the non-referential

wisdom that transcends attributes to instantaneously arise. Creation and completion, view and conduct, meditation and post-meditation, distraction or non-distraction—all these are a union. Don't consider techniques with conceptual supports to be not profound and cast them away nor hold as profound techniques without conceptual support and gather these. Regard all the critical points of Dharma equally, with all of them having the same worth. Since the guru has taught the pith instructions so you know how to practice mixing these techniques as one in each session, ask for *blessings to hold whatever the guru says as true*. Request *blessings that our minds*—ours and the guru's—*may merge* inseparably *as one*, like water poured into water.

Since the true means to attain liberation and omniscience is to gear all your actions towards fulfilling the wishes of the guru and to please and offer service to the guru, request this: *Birth after birth, life after life, bless me to never cease performing actions that please the exalted glorious guru*. As it says in *The Descent to Lanka Sūtra*: “Attend the guru through deeds of offering, praise, and service.” *Bless me to never in any way commit any displeasing action* with my being. *Birth after birth, life after life, bless me to be capable of performing whatever dharmic deeds*—all of them—*the only guru I'm devoted to commands*. [In order to encourage] oneself

and others to enter the gate of Dharma, it is more beneficial to practice Dharma oneself than to teach it to others in a superficial way. Thus request: *Bless me to abandon courting favor for the sake of food and clothing for this life*—as it says in *A Letter to a Friend*:

The knower of the world proclaimed:
 Gain and loss; happiness and sorrow;
 Fame and infamy; praise and slander;
 These are the eight worldly concerns.
 Not harboring them in mind, may I remain impartial.
 Not keeping them in mind, remain impartial.

Bless me to cut all ties of the eight worldly concerns. Bless me to have fortitude in my heart that is capable of undergoing hardship and sacrificing my body, life, and enjoyments for the sake of Dharma.

C. MANIFESTING THE SUPREME ATTAINMENT

From *The Sutra of Advice to King Bimbisāra*:

Among all footprints, the elephant's footprint is supreme.
 Among all flowers, the white lotus is supreme.
 Among all recognitions, the recognition of impermanence
 is supreme.

Among all intentions, the intent to arise from samsara is supreme.

Thus, *recall from* the depths of *your heart that death is certain*. Devotion to the guru is critical for your mind to go to Dharma, for Dharma to progress along the path, for the path to dispel confusion, and for confusion to arise as wisdom. Therefore, by *developing true* and perfect *devotion in my being* towards the exalted guru Karmapa who points out the dharmakaya—the definitive meaning of mahamudra—a consummate *longing for freedom with complete revulsion* that is unattached to both samsara and nirvana can arise. And then your being *may receive* the *blessings* of body, speech, and mind of Karmapa *Mikyö Gawa*.

In all my future *births* and lives, *may I serve* Mikyö Dorje, the *glorious Karmapa, as my guru and through* the very heart of the teachings, the pith instructions of the *unexcelled* Vajrayana *Secret Mantra's two-stage path*... As it says in the *Two-part Hevajra tantra*:

Through the yoga of the creation phase

An aspirant meditates on constructs.

Seeing the constructs as dreamlike,

These very constructs themselves become unconstructed.

...may you *thus achieve the unified kaya* which arises based on this two-stage path: The creation stage—using conception to impute a meditation of the container, the immeasurable mansion, and its contents, the deities; and the completion stage—meditating on these very constructs as dreamlike, the co-emergent nature of suchness. From *Sambuṭi*: “The accomplishment of the child of the awareness-consort¹⁶ doesn’t go anywhere; doesn’t abide anywhere; is free from beginning, end, and middle; is non-dual; appears as the three realms; pervades everywhere; is all knowing; it is everything.”

Through devotion, attachment to the guru. Through faith, attachment to the yidam. Through prajna, attachment to emptiness. Through compassion, attachment to sentient beings. By developing these, henceforth, you will be unable to be led into the affairs of this life. Thus, aspire: *in all my future births, may I be accepted by the supreme master*, who is, in general, truly our teacher, Shakyamuni, when receiving the vows of individual liberation; who is Lord Great Compassionate One when receiving the vow to generate bodhicitta; who is the yidam Chakrasamvara when receiving Secret-Mantra empowerment; and who is the Dharma

16. According to Khenpo Ghawang, “the accomplishment of the child of the awareness-consort” refers to the dharmakaya.

protector Glorious Protector when protecting the teachings of the buddhas. As this explains, all needs are complete in him, and so may I be accepted by the Karmapa, *the Black Crown's sole bearer*, and by *the essence of yidam deities, Chakrasamvara, glorious Sublime Bliss*.

From the *Lucid Notes for the Four Sessions*:

Due to the blessings of this devoted prayer,
 You won't have even one obstruction or pitfall
 To sustaining immediately the essence of
 Whatever occurs. Devotion mahamudra
 Is the short path of the Secret Mantrayana.

Knowing that the nature of the mind of devotion is empty, when you are able to effortlessly sustain a state of devotion free of all characteristics, you will see the guru as the buddhas' dharmakaya. This is *the heart of all paths*. From Karma Chakme's *Mountain Dharma*:

Devotion to the guru as dharmakaya,
 Mixing your and the guru's minds,
 And knowing the guru is free of meeting and parting,
 This the yoga of suchness.

Regarding how to rest in that, from Karmapa Wangchuk Dorje's *Adornment to the Four Sessions Supplication*:

From supplicating fervently in this manner,
Through the power of blessing, the mind evanesces.
With vivid devotion, free of all dualism,
Rest in the essence of devotion mahamudra as long as you
can.

This is *devotion mahamudra*. And from Mikyö Dorje's *Commentary on Mahamudra*: "Having revulsion towards this life's concerns, you will be free of the desires of this life, and objects of attachment and aversion based on that will be utterly eradicated. You will master pure appearances. Compassion will arise towards those who haven't realized this. You will experience equality or equal taste, so objects will generate neither attachment nor aversion. Sending and taking will be accomplished. This will eliminate obscurations. This will perfect the accumulations. Craving for your own peace and well-being will be uprooted completely, and from then onwards, self and self-clinging will be completely uprooted. At that time, since you will be liberated from the afflictions in your being, as well as from the motivations, actions, and results that arise from them, you will be permanently cut off from samsara."

When the *nature of* resting without wavering in the samadhi of *revulsion* transcends intellectual fixation, that is the appearance of the form of *the glorious guru*. When you have revulsion for the concerns of this life, your mind that desires or is attached to this life is purified. And thus, in future lives, the guru who teaches the means to well-being will arise as a pure appearance of your mind. You will be certain that the guru is the expanse and wisdom, *unified as* the dharmakaya, *the very state of Vajradhara*. *The very level of*, in name, *Lord Sangye, the great yogi Denma Druptop*. *So that all beings may easily achieve that, I dedicate all efforts to gather virtue that I and every being have made* towards this. This includes tainted virtuous actions gathered under the sway of the afflictions of attachment, aversion and so forth while holding to the view of self. It also includes untainted virtue: the accumulation of wisdom from meditating on the view of prajna that realizes the lack of an inherent nature—the cause of the dharmakaya; and gatherings of the accumulation of merit while knowing the lack of inherent nature—the cause for the form kayas. These dedications being fulfilled as intended, *in all my lives, may I never be parted from glorious Sangye Nyenpa*, Karmapa Mikyö Dorje, *and his sons*. There are two different ways to view this aspiration. From *Lucid Notes*:

If you are to continually take birth as a human,
 Since the emanations of the Karmapa will not end until
 The teachings of the thousand buddhas end,
 This is a prayer to serve them as your gurus.
 Or if you wish for rebirth in Sukhavati,
 Since the actual Karmapa, Lokeshvara,
 Dwells there as a disciple of Amitabha.
 This is a prayer to serve him as your guru.¹⁷

This section contains the critical points about the guru accepting disciples and the student and teacher's minds becoming inseparably mixed. Not separate from the practice of mahamudra is the perfect dedication of the non-conceptualization of the three spheres.

F. THE SUPPLICATION OF HEART-RENDING DEVOTION

Perform this while remaining in a state of the practice. As it says in Karma Chakme's *Mountain Dharma*:

There are three [visualizations] for outer guru yoga:
 In a tier, as a crowd, or all in one.

17. This translation is altered slightly from the published version.

For a more elaborate version, visualizing yourself as co-emergent Chakrasamvara in the father-mother form, meditate that above your head, the root guru and the gurus of the lineage of union are arranged in a tier or as a crowd. For a more concise version, it's also permissible to visualize that above your head, as Chakrasamvara, is your root guru, the Karmapa alone, the essence of all Three Jewels in one. In either case, as it says in Karmay Khenchen Rinchen Dargye's *Key Points and Main Topics of the Visualizations for the Four-Session Guru Yoga*: "During this passage, meditate vividly, the forms of ornaments and robes distinct; pellucidly, as the nature of clear, bright light; self-sustainingly, unsupported by anything; and nakedly, without being distracted by anything else from just the appearance of the natural radiance of awareness as the deity's body. Meditate that the body is brilliant, youthful with the marks and signs; speech is the clarion sound of Dharma, sounding and empty; and mind is vivid, the luminous dharmakaya."

In this state, *pray to* those of *unequaled* qualities and activity, the protectors of beings, the *Dakpo Kagyu*. *Pray to the supreme* one among two-legged *humans*, the glorious *Dusum Khyenpa* and that which arose from him—the tradition of those unrivaled in planting the victory banner of *practice*, the especially exalted

lineage of the *Karma Kamtsang*. *Pray to* him possessing *the* greatly *compassionate* mind that regards all sentient beings filling space, *Rangjung Kunkhyen*, the Dharma king Karmapa Chodrak Gyatso. *Pray to* him especially *powerful* in (or capable of) undergoing difficulty, *Sangye Nyenpa* Tashi Paljor.

Then pray to the especially exalted guru, Karmapa Mikyö Dorje, by reciting his various names: *Pray to him with* the special *blessings* to tame disciples, *Gaway Yangchen*. *Pray to* him who is a great treasure of oral instructions that liberate the faithful from samsara, *Jetsun Dorje Yangchen*. *Pray to* the *incomparable Dorje Gawa* who attained, without difficulty, the supreme siddhi through the paths of ripening and liberation. *Pray to* the great *peerless* scholar liberated into the intention of the buddhas' teachings, *Yangchen Zangpo*. *Pray to* him *unrivaled* in holding, protecting, and spreading the teachings of essential meaning, *Mikyö Zangpo*.

Pray to him of incomparable wisdom who is wise in all there is to possibly know. *Pray to him of incomparable compassion* who has the power to ripen those who have not been ripened, through mere sight, hearing, recollection, or touch. *Pray to him of incomparable power* for whom merely seeing his form, hearing his speech, smelling his scent, him directing his mind, or embracing his form

blocks consciousness, together with its taints, and generates unobstructed wisdom free of elaboration. Thus, his qualities of wisdom, compassion, and power are especially exalted.

The causes of death are many. Conditions that support life are few. The line between life and death is nothing other than whether our breath ceases within or without. Life is even more fragile than a bubble of water. From *Bodhicaryāvatāra*:

It's illogical to rest comfortably
Thinking, "At least today I will not die."
The time will come when we cease to be;
Harbor no doubt about this.

Bless me that the recollection of *death* and impermanence *may pierce my heart*. Samsara's higher and lower realms are nothing but the suffering of suffering, the suffering of change, and the pervasive suffering of formations. As it is said: "In samsara, there is never even a needle's tip of happiness." There's no attainment of happiness. And since it's like a pit of fire, an island of harmful spirits, or a nest of poisonous snakes, *bless me to be revolted from my depths*.

For all things comprising the environment and its inhabitants, though they may appear enticing to the mind, there is no essential truth to them at all. As it says in the Sutras:

Form is like froth.

Feeling is like a bubble of water.

Cognition is like a mirage.

Formations are like a banana tree.

Consciousness is like an illusion.

Thus taught the Kinsman of the Sun (Buddha
Shakyamuni).

Bless me to realize I don't need even a hair's tip of *anything at all*, be it something good or bad. Phenomena are just misleading and confused likenesses; they are changing each instant. From the *Sutra of Vast Play*:

The three worlds are unstable like autumn clouds,

Like seeing the birth and death of beings in a drama.

A person's life passes like lightning in the sky.

It goes fast, like water flowing down a steep mountain.

Bless me to be perfectly *certain* that all composite phenomena are the nature *of impermanence*. These four lines are especially exalted conception.

Pray to him whose compassion for sentient beings *is impartial*, free of all attachment and aversion. *Pray to him whose activity*—his display of deeds to tame beings—*is unbiased* in terms of those worthy or unworthy. *Pray to him whose blessings*, no matter when you supplicate, *are timely*. *Pray to him whose deeds* are deeply *meaningful*, temporally and ultimately, as just *seeing* his face or *hearing* his voice is beneficial.

Pray to the glorious Gyalwang Karmapa Chodrak Gyatso, to the *all-knowing* Karmapa *Mikyö Dorje*, and to the rest of the fathers and sons of the lineage. *Pray to him whose various emanations fill all* the pure and impure *realms*. *Pray to him who dwells as the master* or lord of all the vast and *infinite worlds*. *Pray to the master, the Jetsun Karmapa, who transcends conception, expression, and hope* with respect to qualities, activity, or any other aspect.

Reciting this especially exalted prayer—known by name as “Making a Connection is Enough”—just once within the hearing of the lowly beings in the animal realm will close for them the many gates of rebirth in the lower realms by cleansing the karmic obscurations

of that birth. *In the end, Jetsun Dorje Yangchen*, Karmapa Mikyö Dorje *himself*, who dwells there as *Noble Avalokiteshvara*, *will extend his far-reaching arm of brilliant white light from the western pure realm of Sukhavati and guide them there in an instant*, in no longer than it takes him to *merely extend and draw back his arm, as he has promised.*

Thus, for all sentient beings tormented by samsara and the peril and suffering of the lower realms, this victor's immeasurable compassionate activity protects those who have not found the path from the lower realms' peril and suffering. He protects from the mistaken paths of the tirthikas. He protects from the lesser paths of the shravakas and pratyekabuddhas and places beings on the path to Mahayana liberation. As he establishes beings in the attainment of unsurpassable awakening, *supplicate* him of *mighty* qualities and activity, the *Dharma lord* Karmapa Mikyö Dorje *who grants the great relief of fearlessness* of [the attainment of] the level of the supreme truth, he who is comparable to the Buddha and even superior to the Buddha in terms of kindness.

Then, while not even slightly wavering from the samadhi of suchness, self-aware and free of elaboration, maintain vajra pride thinking that you have arisen in the self-radiant, unobstructed

form of Chakrasamvara in the father-mother form, and go about your activities. This is arising in the unified form of the yidam deity for carrying practice.

4. ASPIRATIONS TO BECOME ADEPT IN THE PURE VIEW

In all my future lives, wherever I may be born, in all the forms I take, *may I be of good birth*—part of the Mahayana family—with a *bright* intellect to pursue knowledge. With a gentle and flexible being, may I be *free of pride*, and *greatly compassionate* towards all suffering beings. Because I am *respectful* from the depths of my heart towards *my guru* who teaches the perfect path, *may I abide within the samayas* of body, speech, and mind *to my glorious guru* who accomplishes great benefit for himself and others.

May I never have, not even for an instant, wrong views—negative states of mind—*toward* any aspect of *my glorious guru's life* which they display to tame disciples. On account of *seeing*, with true *devotion*, *all they do as* none other than *perfect* deeds that are skilled in means and done for the benefit of sentient beings: may I first understand all the objects of the six consciousnesses, the sense organs, and the apprehending consciousnesses to be devoid of inherent nature; in the middle, may I develop certainty from

valid experience; and finally, *may I* perfectly *receive the blessings of the guru* and thus realize non-conceptuality.

Never parting from the exalted *true guru in all my* future *lives* but always remaining in their company, *may I* ever *enjoy the splendor of the Dharma, perfect all the qualities*, without exception, *of the* worldly and transcendent *levels and paths, and swiftly attain* the ultimate result—*the state of* the dharmakaya, *Vajradhara*. Thus, make aspirations.

If one practices guru yoga properly, according to Karma Chakme's *Mountain Dharma*:

Unbearable, fervent yearning will blaze from within.
 You will have thoughts of nothing but the guru.
 You will know all the buddhas and bodhisattvas
 Of the ten directions to be emanations of the guru.
 When seeing or hearing of others' noble deeds
 Of wisdom, righteousness, or benevolence,
 You will know them to be emanations of the guru.
 When hearing of the power and ability
 Of the dakinis, Dharma protectors, and others,
 You will know these to be emanations of the guru's
 activity.

The guru is superior to all buddhas.
 Resolve from your heart that
 All Three Jewels are gathered in the guru.
 When offering to the guru, let not even an offering
 Of your flesh and blood content your heart.
 When recalling and supplicating the guru,
 Do so till tears stream uncontrollably like rain
 And you think that your body of flesh and blood
 disappears.
 At that time, even if you try to block
 Experience and realization, they will naturally arise.
 In meditative experiences and most of your dreams
 You'll meet the guru and receive empowerments,
 Reading transmissions, prophecies,
 See obstacles cleared, and your practice enhanced.
 And through symbols, smiles, or frowns,
 Affirmative and negative prophecies will be revealed.

In closing:

The Four-Session Guru Yoga,
 The guru sadhana of the Gyalwang Karmapa—
 The perfect buddha who comes in human form—

Is the heart practice of the Kamtsang.
 Entering this profound noble path,
 With no need for difficulty or great effort,
 By devotion to and blessings from the guru,
 You will accomplish great benefit for yourself and others.

This work is nothing other than a compilation
 Of the points taught as crucial pith instructions
 In various extensive and shorter commentaries—
 It is not merely my vain fabrication.
 However, if there are mistakes within,
 In the presence of the gurus and dakinis,
 I confess them from my heart.
 May they not amount to harmful obscurations.
 However vast the resplendent white snow mountain
 Of limitless accumulations of virtue may be,
 I dedicate it to the welfare of my parent sentient beings;
 May all quickly attain awakening.

This explanation of The Four-Session Guru Yoga entitled The Blazing Jewel, was earnestly requested by Yonten Tharchin, a noble monk of Nubri, proficient in teaching, practice, and activity. Additionally, the retreat master Lama Chöying Kunkhyab, born in Kyodrak, who strives

only in the practice of the essential definitive meaning, also presented an offering scarf and insistently requested this. Therefore, I, Ghawang of the land of Kyodrak, arranged this text in India's northern state of Himachal, at the top of Rewalsar in the pleasant cave of Chönyi Wangmo, a nun from Kyodrak. May virtue increase!

THE FOUR-SESSION GURU YOGA

This guru yoga is to be performed at all times and especially in the four great sessions. All those who have no thought for anyone but me, Mikyö Dorje, should visualize their body as the wisdom dakini amid a mass of light, naked, in the full bloom of youth with her tresses hanging down her back. She holds a skull cup filled with the nectar of immortality. She is adorned with red flowers but no other ornaments. In front is Jetsun Mikyö Dorje, wearing a tiger-skin skirt, an elephant-hide upper garment, and the six symbolic ornaments. His hair is bound in a topknot adorned by crossed vajras and a moon. His two hands are placed in the dharmodaya mudra atop his head. He stands in the middle of a mass of wisdom fire with his left leg drawn partly in and right extended. When the wisdom dakini, the mother, merely offers him nectar, the red wisdom fire blazes with a roar. Imagine that he enters you, the wisdom dakini, through your bhaga and comes to rest in your heart center. Join the winds forcefully, supplicate me in that state, and I, Mikyö Dorje, will bless you. Thus, perform the descent of blessings.

My mothers, all beings throughout space, pray to the guru, the
precious buddha.

My mothers, all beings throughout space, pray to the guru, the
all-pervasive dharmakaya.

My mothers, all beings throughout space, pray to the guru, the
great bliss sambhogakaya.

My mothers, all beings throughout space, pray to the guru, the
compassionate nirmanakaya.

Namo Guru

Above my head, the wisdom dakini—

Naked with bhaga and breasts so full, hair loose,

And three eyes gazing to the depths of space—

Performs dance movements of unbearable bliss.

In the teeming midst of countless others like her,

My own root guru, Mikyö Dorje, arrayed

In bhikshu attire and the gold-blazed black crown,

Holds vajra and bell, means and prajna as one,

His gaze inseparable bliss-emptiness.

Just supplicating makes devotion blaze.

The more devotion blazes, the more the blessings surge.

The more the blessings surge, the more those bearing blazing
jewels *

Of the supreme and common siddhis shower like rain *
From the sky above, the earth below, and everywhere. *
Now is the time to supplicate from my heart.

Kye! Appearing while empty, empty while appearing,
The guru's body is inseparable appearance-emptiness.
I supplicate the body of the guru:
Grant me the blessings of the guru's body.
Resounding while empty, empty while resounding,
The guru's speech is inseparable sound-emptiness.
I supplicate the speech of the guru:
Grant me the blessings of the guru's speech.
Blissful while empty, empty while blissful,
The guru's mind is inseparable bliss-emptiness.
I supplicate the mind of the guru:
Grant me the blessings of the guru's mind.

Kye! As the guru ratnas approach,*
Light and rainbows fill all space.
He sends emanated messengers.

The conflagration of blessings roars;
Experience and realization soar.

Kye! Exalted guru,
So I can follow your example,
Pray come to grant your blessings.
Shower them on this supreme site.
Bestow the four empowerments
On me, the supreme practitioner.
Grant the supreme and common siddhis.
Dispel adversity and obstacles.
Quell all enemies and obstructors.

The green wisdom dakini appears within the sky.
Her light eliminates the hosts of illness, dōns, and stains.
I admit and confess before the glorious yogini
The misdeeds, faults, and obscurations caught up in my being.

The yellow wisdom dakini appears within the sky.
Her light eliminates the hosts of illness, dōns, and stains.
I admit and confess before the glorious yogini
The misdeeds, faults, and obscurations caught up in my being.

The red wisdom dakini appears within the sky.
Her light eliminates the hosts of illness, döns, and stains.
I admit and confess before the glorious yogini
The misdeeds, faults, and obscurations caught up in my being.

The white wisdom dakini appears within the sky.
Her light eliminates the hosts of illness, döns, and stains.
I admit and confess before the glorious yogini
The misdeeds, faults, and obscurations caught up in my being.

The black wisdom dakini appears within the sky.
Her light eliminates the hosts of illness, döns, and stains.
I admit and confess before the glorious yogini
The misdeeds, faults, and obscurations caught up in my being.

The blue wisdom dakini appears within the sky.
Her light eliminates the hosts of illness, döns, and stains.
I admit and confess before the glorious yogini
The misdeeds, faults, and obscurations caught up in my being.

The pied wisdom dakini appears within the sky.
Her light eliminates the hosts of illness, döns, and stains.

I admit and confess before the glorious yogini
 The misdeeds, faults, and obscurations caught up in my being.

Filling space, Mikyö Dorje Āḥ
 Radiating light, Dorje Gawa Hoḥ
 Blazing messenger, Yangchen Nupa Hūṃ
 Dispelling stains, Trinlay Drakpo Oṃ

Exalted master, lord of the four kayas,
 Whatever you do appears as wisdom's play.
 The lord of all and Gyalwang, great Karmapa,
 Ocean of the buddhas' blessings, Khyenno.

A mass of qualities, cleansed of all faults,
 The essence of the buddhas appearing as the guru,
 Lord of compassion, supreme nirmanakaya,
 Venerable master Dorje Yangchen, Khyenno.

Sole hope for attaining the everlasting aim,
 The lord of the four kayas, the Dakpo Kagyu,
 You bless the mind streams of the fortunate;
 Your lineage is without rival, Khyenno.

As ordinary confusion falls apart all on its own,
 The dharmadhatu's stainless essence manifests.
 Master of activity and knower of three times,
 Embodiment of great compassion, Khyenno.

In this degenerate time, you tame all beings
 By various means—you are the lord of victors.
 You are my hope, the one whom I depend on.
 Genuine wellspring of the siddhis, Khyenno.

Lord who encompasses all victors in one,
 You have the power to ripen the fortunate.
 Sugata of the Karmapa's Kamtsang,
 Free of the filth of the two veils, Khyenno.

Lord, since you've mastered the four activities,
 Just focusing your wisdom transmits blessings.
 Dorje Yangchen, the practice lineage in one,
 Glorious and great Karmapa, Khyenno.

Great Vajradhara with eight qualities,
 Shri Heruka with the seven traits,

Lord of the victors embodying all buddhas,
Noble Gyalwang Mikyö Dorje, Khyenno.

All victors in one, Karmapa Khyenno.
All buddhas in one, Karmapa Khyenno.
All sugatas in one, Karmapa Khyenno.
All-knowing one, Karmapa Khyenno.

Karmapa Khyenno Recite this countless times.

Embodiment of compassion, Khyenno.
Embodiment of the buddhas, Khyenno.
All-embodying lord of Dharma, Khyenno.

I pray to Mikyö Dorje.
I pray to Chödrak Gyatso.
I pray to the Dakpo Kagyu.
I pray to the Karma Kamtsang.
Jetsun, may I be just like you.
Dharma lord, may I be just like you.
Guru, may I be just like you.
Protector of beings, may I be just like you.

Omniscient only father,
 Siddha Sangye Nyenpa,
 Gyalwang Mikyö Dorje,
 Who supplicates you if not me?
 Who looks with compassion if not you?
 I supplicate you; grant your blessings.
 Bestow the siddhi of mahamudra
 On all sentient beings in general,
 In particular disciples of degenerate times,
 And especially the unswervingly steadfast
 For whom trusting you itself is enough.
 Who has blessings if not you?
 Who will you lovingly nurture if not me?
 Who will repay your kindness if not me?
 Who will tame disciples if not you?
 Who can this wretch place hope in if not you?
 Mighty one, who will you protect if not me?

Guide to the ultimate aim in all my lives,
 Everlasting jewel who severs all doubts,
 Protector to whom I fully surrender,
 Buddha who forever dries up the ocean of existence,

Ocean of qualities beyond all measure,
 Sole mother of all beings throughout space,
 Great trove of inexhaustible compassion,
 Who will think of beings in degenerate times if not you?
 When will you lovingly protect me if not now?
 When will you grant siddhis if not now?
 Let our minds be merged as one.
 Loose the knots of confusion and freedom. *
 Now liberate forever
 Illusory beings throughout space.

Exalted guru,
 Look upon all limitless beings.
 Protect me who supplicate you.
 In these times of terrible torment,
 When I'm desperate about what to do,
 Look upon me at this time of panic and anguish.

Precious guru
 Who holds the true lineage,
 Bestower of blessings
 With the confidence of realization

And the eyes and clairvoyances,
You manifest miracles,
Extend overwhelming kindness,
Place buddha in my palm,
Transform common perception,
And reveal infinite purity.

Noble Lokeshvara,
From deep in my heart I pray to
You who alone are enough—
Please hold me in your compassion.
You with the power of siddhi,
The unassailable Kagyu,
Whose unrivaled activity
Has the power to tame the savage,
Exalted perfect buddha,
For the sake of boundless beings,
I offer you right now
My body, speech, mind, and virtue.
Accept them with great compassion,
And bless me from my heart
So I become like you,

A guru who is able
To protect all beings forever.

I supplicate the exalted glorious guru.
Bless me to see whatever you do as perfect.
Bless me to hold whatever you say as true.
Bless me that our minds may merge as one.

Birth after birth, life after life, bless me to never cease performing actions that please the exalted glorious guru.
Bless me to never in any way commit any displeasing action.
Birth after birth, life after life, bless me to be capable of performing whatever dharmic deeds the guru I'm devoted to commands.
Bless me to cut all ties of the eight worldly concerns and of courting favor for the sake of food and clothing.
Bless me to have fortitude in my heart.

Recalling from my heart that death is certain,
Developing true devotion in my being,
And longing for freedom with complete revulsion,
May I receive the blessings of Mikyö Gawa.

In all my births, may I serve Mikyö Dorje,
 The glorious Karmapa, as my guru
 And thus achieve the unified kaya through
 Unexcelled Secret Mantra's two-stage path.

In all my births, may I be accepted by
 The supreme master, the Black Crown's sole bearer,
 And by the essence of yidam deities,
 Chakrasamvara, glorious Sublime Bliss.

I dedicate all efforts to gather virtue
 That I and every sentient being have made
 So that all beings may easily achieve
 The heart of the path, devotion mahamudra,
 And the nature of revulsion, the glorious guru,
 Unified as the very state of Vajradhara—
 The level of Lord Sangye, the yogi Denma Druptop,
 In all my lives, may I never be parted
 From glorious Sangye Nyenpa and his sons.

I pray to the unequaled Dakpo Kagyu.
 I pray to the supreme human, Dusum Khyenpa.

I pray to the practice lineage, the Karma Kamtsang.

I pray to compassionate Rangjung Kunkhyen.

I pray to powerful Sangye Nyenpa.

I pray to you with blessings, Gaway Yangchen.

I pray to Jetsun Dorje Yangchen.

I pray to incomparable Dorje Gawa.

I pray to peerless Yangchen Zangpo.

I pray to unrivaled Mikyö Zangpo.

I pray to you of incomparable wisdom.

I pray to you of incomparable compassion.

I pray to you of incomparable power.

Bless me that death may pierce my heart.

Bless me to be revolted from my depths.

Bless me to realize I need nothing at all. *

Bless me to be certain of impermanence.

I pray to you whose compassion is impartial.

I pray to you whose activity is unbiased.

I pray to you whose blessings are timely.

I pray to you whose deeds are meaningful to see and hear.

I pray to Gyalwang Chödrak Gyatso.
 I pray to all-knowing Mikyö Dorje.
 I pray to the victor Könchok Yenlak.
 I pray to Jetsun Wangchuk Dorje.
 I pray to Garwang Chökyi Wangchuk.
 I pray to the sublime victor Chöying Dorje.
 I pray to glorious Yeshe Nyingpo.
 I pray to incomparable Yeshe Dorje.
 I pray to Palchen Chökyi Döndrup.
 I pray to Gyalwang Jangchup Dorje.
 I pray to Situ Chökyi Jungnay.
 I pray to Jetsun Dudul Dorje.
 I pray to Mipam Chödrup Gyatso.
 I pray to Pema Nyinche Wangpo.
 I pray to Gyalwang Tekchok Dorje.
 I pray to Jetsun Lodrö Thaye.
 I pray to Kunsang Khakhyap Dorje.
 I pray to Pema Wangchok Gyalpo.
 I pray to Palden Khyentse Öser.
 I pray to Rangjung Rigpe Dorje.
 I pray to my kind root guru.
 I pray to you whose emanations fill all realms.

I pray to you, the master of infinite worlds.

I pray to you who transcend conception, expression, and hope.

Reciting this prayer, known as “A Mere Connection Is Enough,” just once within the hearing of beings in the animal realm will close for them the many gates of rebirth in the lower realms. In the end, Noble Avalokiteshvara, Jetsun Dorje Yangchen himself, will extend his far-reaching arm of brilliant white light from the western pure realm of Sukhavati and guide them there in an instant of merely extending and drawing back his arm, as he has promised.

I supplicate the mighty Dharma lord who grants the great relief of fearlessness.

In all my lives, may I be of good birth,
Bright, free of pride, greatly compassionate,
And respectful of my guru. May I abide
Within samaya to my glorious guru.

May I never have, not even for an instant,
Wrong views toward my glorious guru's life.

Devotedly seeing all they do as perfect
May I receive the blessings of the guru.

Never parting from the true guru in all my lives,
May I enjoy the splendor of the Dharma,
Perfect the qualities of the levels and paths,
And swiftly attain the state of Vajradhara.

** Indicates where the prayer has been altered from the published version to reflect the explanations in Khenpo Ghawang's commentary.*



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