



A Collection of Commentaries on the

Four-Session Guru Yoga

Compiled by the

Seventeenth Gyalwang Karmapa
Ogyen Trinley Dorje

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FOUR-SESSION GURU YOGA

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Methods for Meditating on Mahamudra at the End of the Four-Session Practice

The Fifth Shamar Könchok Yenlak

In order for this practice to proceed well, divide the day and night into any number of sessions. To do the practice, make the commitment with strong determination that no matter what distractions arise, you will not get up until you have completed the practice. In an isolated place, sit on a comfortable cushion in the seven points of Vairochana with your legs crossed, spine straight, hands in the mudra of equipoise, shoulders broad, chin slightly tucked, and eyes gazing high, low, or in between, whichever is comfortable for the circumstances. The entire body should be neither too tight nor too loose.

Mentally, say to yourself, “Whatever has happened in the past—pleasant or unpleasant, good or bad—it is all the compassion of the guru, the jewel. Bless me so that from now on everything will be excellent.” Without harboring even the tiniest other wish in your mind, first visualize the descent of blessings. Or if you prefer

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something shorter, recite from “Above my crown, the wisdom dakini . . .,” up through the dedications, assiduously combining the oral recitation with the mental meditation. You should fervently rouse the intention to emancipate yourself from samsara, like a criminal longing to get out of prison, and engender devotion for the qualities of the Three Jewels, like a dehydrated person thirsting for water.

After that, to take the four empowerments of the profound path, visualize the gurus, the jewels. Wisdom nectar showers like rain from all of their hearts and enters you through the aperture in your crown in the form of flowing liquid. It fills you down to your eyebrows, purifying the obscurations of body accumulated from beginningless time. You receive the blessings of body and become capable of achieving the vajra body in an instant. The flow of liquid fills down to your throat, purifying the obscurations of speech accumulated from beginningless time. You receive the blessings of speech and become capable of achieving the vajra speech in an instant. The flow of liquid fills down to your heart, purifying the obscurations of mind accumulated from beginningless time. You receive the blessings of mind and become capable of achieving the

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vajra mind in an instant. The flow of liquid completely fills the navel and the entire body, purifying all the subtle obscurations of the three gates as well as their imprints. You receive the blessings of wisdom. You become capable of achieving vajra wisdom in an instant.

Receiving the four empowerments in this way ripens your being and brings you onto the path that liberates, the state of unelaborate mahamudra. 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 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

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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.

Then when you close the session, make dedications and aspirations. During postmeditation, view all appearances and sounds as arising 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

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and conditions. In brief, seal all your conduct by catching it as much as you can with the mindfulness of a virtuous attitude.

Written by Könchok Bang upon Sakyong Yulgyal's request that a mahamudra visualization be added for the end of the practice of the Four-Session Guru Yoga.

An Adornment to the Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

The Ninth Karmapa Wangchuk Dorje

NAMO GURU

In a meditation hut or cave, on a comfortable seat,
Sit properly in the posture of the seven points of Vairochana
Except renunciation, weariness, and devotion,
Utterly cast away all other thoughts.

Here, do the descent of blessings given in prose in the text:

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

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his head. He sits 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.



Alternately, to do the recitation and meditation in verse:

External appearances become a palace.
Appearance, existence, and sentient beings
Coalesce into the yidam deity.
Inside your body, the great hollow form,
The three nadis and four chakras manifest.
The outside is the dharmakaya wisdom dakini.
She's red in color, with one face and two hands;
Naked and youthful, with full breasts and bhaga.
Her hair is loose; her three eyes gaze into space.

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Amid a mass of light, her right hand raises a hooked knife;
Her left hand holds a skull cup filled with amrita.
Bedecked with red flowers, she has no other adornments.
She dances in movements of unbearable bliss.
Her bhaga is a measureless dharmodaya,
In the center of which is Bhagavan Mikyö Dorje.

This is just an illustration. You may visualize Wangchuk Dorje, Könchok Yenlak, or your own guru and change the text.

Occasionally, he is Gaway Dorje,
White with one face, three eyes,
and hair bound at his crown.
His head is adorned with a crossed vajra and moon.
He wears a skirt of tiger skin, an elephant upper robe,
And the six ornaments.
Above his crown, his two hands make
The dharmodaya mudra, mixing bliss and emptiness.
With his right leg bent and left straight, he sits
In the half vajra amid a wisdom fire.
The wisdom dakini giving him amrita
Causes the wisdom fire to blaze intensely.

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

Visualizing yourself as the yogini,
Draw up the lower prana and imagine that Gaway Dorje
Enters you through your bhaga and, by way of the central
nadi,
Comes to your heart.
Press the upper prana down.
Visualize your own, the meditator's, mind
As a red HRĪḤ, which via the central nadi
Dissolves into the hūṃ in the guru's heart.
Your minds merge into one; bliss, clarity, and nonthought
mix.

OM AKṢOBHYA VAJRA HŪṂ

OM ĪŚVARA VAJRA HŪṂ

OM RATNA DASA HŪṂ

Or the like. Mentally recite whichever name approach you wish as much as you can, eventually up to a hundred thousand times. In each session, do twenty-one or seven rounds of breathing. Then as you gradually relax the breath, think that while your mind, the HRĪḤ, remains in your heart, the HŪṂ and guru go to your crown.

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas



The guru comes up to your crown and sits
Above the upper end of the central nadi—
The ushnisha—atop a jeweled lion throne
Upon a wide, vast lotus, sun, and moon seat.
Glorious guru, the Three Jewels in one,
To protect our mothers, sentient beings, from existence and
 peace,
I go for refuge from the bottom of my heart
And cry out from my depths to invoke your compassion.

*Following that, recite as many times as you can the Four Mothers prayer
from:*

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

to:

. . . the compassionate nirmanakaya.

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

Again:

And then the guru Gaway Dorje becomes
A bhikshu on the outside, while on the inside
He is a guide for beings with various means
To eliminate students' five poisons and so forth
Through many manifestations to tame anyone.
Exalted guru, refuge and protector,
So that all beings and I may swiftly achieve
Your noble state, I supplicate from my depths.
I call out and exhort you. Look at me lovingly from your
heart.



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.

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

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 the blazing jewels
Bearing supreme and common siddhis shower like rain
Throughout the skies above, all over the earth below.
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,

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

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 ratna approaches,

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.



Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

From praying one-pointedly in this way,
Strong bliss, heat, and devotion blaze intensely.
The nectar of blessings quells all clinging to reality,
Which, known but left unaltered, disappears; rest in that.
No sight or sound or dualistic phenomenon
Can be established as anything—thing, nonthing,
Empty, not empty, existent, nonexistent, is, is not;
Free of clinging to truth, dualism, and conception.

Rest in equipoise.



I admit and confess to the guru and host of dakinis
The mass of misdeeds, obscurations, faults, downfalls,
Illness, dōns, and stains from beginningless time until now.
Burn them up swiftly with the fire of blessings.



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

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

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, dōns, 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, dōns, 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, dōns, and stains.

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

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

The blue 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 pied 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.

Filling space, Mikyö Dorje ĀḤ
Radiating light, Dorje Gawa HOḤ
Blazing messenger, Yangchen Nupa HUM
Clearing stains, Trinlay Drakpo OM



Think that:

Since the guru manifests as the essence of the four kayas,
If you supplicate with fervor from your heart—
Your hair standing on end and tears welling up—

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

You will attain the two siddhis without effort.

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.

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

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,
Great and glorious Karmapa, KHYENNO.

Great Vajradhara with eight qualities,
Shri Heruka who has 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.

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

It is said in a tantra:

Complete enjoyments, the embrace, great bliss, lack of
nature,
Being filled with compassion, continuous, and unceasing.

The dharmakaya has the one trait of lacking a nature. The sambhogakaya has the three traits of complete enjoyments, the embrace, and great bliss. The three traits of the nirmanakaya are being filled with compassion, being continuous, and being unceasing.

Of these seven, the trait of the dharmakaya lacking a nature is easy to understand.

- 1. Complete enjoyments: having all the qualities of the sambhogakaya and being adorned by the marks and signs.*
- 2. The embrace: the deities of Secret Mantra appearing as male and female due to practicing means and prajna conjoined.*
- 3. Great bliss: the undefiled great bliss—being free of all suffering.*

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

4. *Lack of a nature: its reality lacking a nature and being unidentifiable.*
5. *Compassion: benefiting sentient beings through unidentifiable compassion.*
6. *Being continuous: benefiting beings continuously as long as space endures due to that compassion.*
7. *Being unceasing: displaying a kaya without any hindrance to tame anyone anywhere.*

These notes were made from Shang Rinpoche's words.

All-knowing one, Karmapa KHYENNO.

KARMAPA KHYENNO

Recite this countless times, and recite whichever guru's name mantra is appropriate.



Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

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

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

For whom trusting you itself is enough.
Who has blessings if not you?
Who will you nurture with love 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.
Destroy confusion; untie the knots.
Now liberate forever
Illusory beings throughout space.

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

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,

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

The undisputed 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.

Thus supplicate.



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.

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

This is the basis for identifying devotion. Then, to summarize the teachings on how to serve the guru by accomplishing offerings, respect, and service and how to put them into practice in meditation:



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.

Incorporate the supplication into your being as much as possible.

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas



Next is the manner of taking the four empowerments:

From this birth onward, in my every lifetime,
I've no one to place hope in but the guru.
I offer you my body, possessions, and virtue.
Accept them gladly and bless me with empowerment.

The moment that I supplicate in that manner,
The guru arises in Gaway Dorje's form,
Embracing the wisdom dakini. From their union
Flows amrita, the white and red bodhichitta.
It enters my crown and fills the great bliss chakra,
Cleansing me of obscurations of body.
I receive the vase empowerment,
Empowering me for the creation stage.
The wisdom of joy arises.
I have the fortune to attain the result, the nirmanakaya.

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

Through the central nadi, it fills the enjoyment chakra,
cleansing me

Of obscurations of speech. I receive the secret
empowerment, Empowering me for chandali.

The wisdom of sublime joy arises.

I have the fortune to attain the result, the sambhogakaya.

Through the central nadi, it fills the dharma chakra,
cleansing me

Of obscurations of mind. I receive the prajna wisdom
empowerment,

Empowering me for absorption.

The wisdom free of joy arises.

I have the fortune to attain the result, the dharmakaya.

Through the central nadi, it fills the emanation chakra,
cleansing me

Of obscurations of the three gates.

I receive the word empowerment,

Empowering me for mahamudra.

Coemergent wisdom arises.

I have the fortune to attain the result, the svabhavikakaya.

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

The amrita again flows from the nadi chakras
Through all the key nadi points, filling the inside of the
body
And cleansing all misdeeds and obscurations.
I receive the empowerments in their entirety.
Swirling upward, the liquid touches the guru,
And he again becomes the nirmanakaya in form.

[At this point in the Tibetan text, there is a description of the visualizations for the six yogas, which is omitted from this translation.]



If you do not meditate on the six yogas, do this recitation and meditation after the empowerments, meditating on devotion mahamudra:

And then the guru melts into light and dissolves into you.
The guru's body, speech, and mind and your own mind then
merge
Inseparably as one, and you receive the blessings.
All realizations of the empowerment become manifest.

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

You also melt into light. In the state of threefold
motionlessness,
This body has no owner, like a corpse.
With speech, give up speaking, as if your tongue had been
cut out.
Jettison mind in the state of bliss, clarity, and nonthought.
Its essence is clear emptiness that lacks any nature.
Within that, cast away any meditator, thinking, perceiving,
Or experience without any ownership, and in that state,
If distracted, rest undistracted on the distraction.
In any case, free of clinging to truth, abandoning, and
taking,
Throw off all meditation, nonmeditation, and belief.
Take control with mindfulness, and in a relaxed state,
Don't get distracted.
Don't meditate.
Don't alter whatever arises.
As you are free of all hopes, fears, dualism, and evaluation,
Experience and realization are unobstructed.
Whatever good or bad arises
Is like a dream or illusion—be free of all joy and sorrow.

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

Look at the actual face of ordinary mind.

Rest in equipoise.

Since you are never free of the three applications in
postmeditation,
Within the illusory nature, treasure cause and effect
And the three trainings as if they were your eyes.
Make whatever you do be for the sake of beings.
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.
Never may I or anyone, in our beings,
Continuously show off our own talents,
Expose another's private, hidden faults,
Or rejoice over mishaps, and so forth.
Just as the victors and their offspring
Have trained in loving-kindness and compassion
And perfected ultimate coemergent wisdom,
Bless me to realize these directly.

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

[At this point, there is an incomplete verse in the Tibetan text that is omitted from this translation.]

In all my births, may I serve Mikyö Dorje,
The glorious Karmapa, as my guru
And then achieve the unified kaya through
Unexcelled Secret Mantra's two-stage path.
From this life onward, may I never mistake the lord of the family.
While upholding the mandala of the wrathful bhagavan,
May I drink the amrita of the lotus of prajna
And reach the end of existence at the essence of enlightenment.
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—

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

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.

Recite these and whichever supplications and aspirations you wish. Recite whichever dedication matches your mind or, for a concise dedication, recite this one by Lord Mikyö Dorje.



All buddhas and bodhisattvas dwelling in the ten directions, think of me. Just as all the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the three times and all those who have realization through the three gates of liberation dedicate all their own and others' defiled and undefiled virtues to enlightenment, we and all sentient beings throughout space likewise make similar dedications. We and all sentient beings rouse bodhichitta and make aspirations to the same degree as those buddhas and bodhisattvas roused bodhichitta and made aspirations.

Likewise, I dedicate the oceans of my own and all sentient beings' virtue from serving the guru; serving the sangha; being generous

Four-Session Supplication with Visualizations for the Six Yogas

to beings; dedicating tormas to spirits; creating images of body, speech, and mind; practicing the three trainings; listening, contemplating, and meditating; practicing the ten transcendences; and practicing the sutra, tantra, and pith instructions, so that the ocean of beings gain the state of the ocean of buddhas and manifest an ocean of enlightenment, causing oceans of wisdom and oceans of kayas to dry up the ocean of samsara.

At the request of several supplicants including Yangri Lama Sönam Sangpo, who said that additional supplications and visualizations for combined chanting and meditation of Mikyö Dorje's Four-Session were needed, the itinerant called Īśvara Vajra wrote this during one session at the isolated site, the Glorious Namtö Riwo Mountain. May the glory of auspiciousness blaze, may experience and realization increase, and may this become the ornament of receiving blessings.

Lucid Notes on the Visualizations for the Four-Session Guru Yoga

Karma Chakme

NAMO GURUKARMAKĀYA

The root guru Mikyö Dorje is taught to be
In nature truly Avalokiteshvara
And one in essence with the eight forms of
The Guru, the eight Shangs, and eight Karmapas.
Therefore, when Mikyö Dorje wrote the *Four-Session*,
He drew it from and augmented somewhat
Sealed teachings in the works of Lama Shang.
At Yangri Drungpa Sönam Sangpo's request,
Wangchuk Dorje wrote a long manual,
But it contains more than the visualizations
For just this text. It outlines mahamudra,
The six yogas, and devotion mahamudra.

There are too many stages of visualization,
Too many texts to insert in the middle,

Lucid Notes on the Visualizations

So no custom of reciting it developed.
It's usual to start with the "Four Mothers."

The meditation for the text itself:

Before your crown (in your ordinary form)
Is a beautiful, attractive red dakini.
Her hair is loose; her three eyes gaze into space.
She holds a damaru of acacia wood
And bhandha filled with amrita as well.
She's naked, without any ornaments,
And blazes with light rays of vitality.
As undefiled great bliss intensifies,
She performs various dancing steps and moves.
Countless millions and billions of dakinis—
White, yellow, red, green, blue, black, multicolored—
Like her fill space and sky, swirling like dust.

Amid them in the sky before your crown
Inside a rainbow tent of gathering lights
On a stacked seat of lotus, sun, and moon,
Is Mikyö Dorje, Chöying Dorje, or

Lucid Notes on the Visualizations

Whichever Gyalwang Karmapa you wish.
He wears three saffron-colored Dharma robes
And black crown with a gold blaze. His two hands hold
A vajra and a bell crossed at his heart.
He sits with his two legs in vajra posture.
Meditate he's the essence of all buddhas.

This is the visualization to be done
From “namo guru” to “supplicate from my heart.”
Then from “Appearing while empty . . .” up until
“The guru’s mind,” one-pointedly supplicate
His body, speech, and mind. From your doing so,
There shine from the guru’s body, speech, and mind
Light rays of various colors, filling the sky
And moving the Karmapa—whose emanations
Fill all the many billions of realms
Of the billion universes of the Three Thousands—
And the buddhas and bodhisattvas to compassion.
They all become in body the Karmapa
In a bhikshu’s robes and black crown with gold blaze,
Their hands and feet all in the blessing mudra.

Lucid Notes on the Visualizations

Filling the sky with rainbows, showers of blossoms,
And fragrances of incense, they all come
And dissolve into the Karmapa at your crown.
While meditating thus, recite the passage
From “As the guru ratna . . .” to “obstructors”—
The invitation and descent of blessings.
In Situ’s vision, they actually came like this,
And a custom of depicting it developed.

The dakinis who fill the sky and space
Then dissolve one into another till
Dakinis of five colors, black, and pied
Encircle the Karmapa at your crown.

Green light from the green karma dakini
Strikes you along with the being to protect,
Dispelling, just like sunlight striking frost,
All illness, seizures, strokes, and dōns from envy.

Imagine in the karma dakini’s presence
Confessing all your wrongs, veils, faults, and downfalls
That have arisen out of envy from

Lucid Notes on the Visualizations

Lifetimes without beginning until now.

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

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

The light of the white buddha dakini
Eliminates dōns, illness, strokes, and seizures
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.

Lucid Notes on the Visualizations

The light of the blue vajra dakini
Eliminates dōns, illness, strokes, and seizures
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, dōns, strokes, and seizures
Without exception that are accumulated
In the three times in equal parts. Confess
Every transgression, mistake, fault, and downfall.
This is the greatest cleanser of obscurations.

It is the Elimination of Strokes and Seizures
By Dakinis Focusing on the Unelaborate.
The need to do this here is that for people
Who have transgressions, misdeeds, and obscurations,
It's difficult to receive the guru's blessings.
Without the blessings, it's impossible
To develop experience and realization.
So this is to first purify wrongs and veils.

Lucid Notes on the Visualizations

In order to perform the elimination
Of strokes and seizures for the ill and so forth,
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 lama holds a taper over the patient.
Visualize that it is the dakini,
Just as above. Her light eliminates
The patient's illness, seizures, strokes, and dōns.
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
Strokes and Seizures, taught here on the side.

The main practice follows the supplication

Lucid Notes on the Visualizations

To the dakinis. The seven dakinis
Dissolve into the main red dakini
Who melts into light and dissolves into you.
This ordinary body of yours transforms
Into Vajravarahi. She's red and naked
With her hair loose and covering her back;
No other ornaments than just red flowers.
She holds a hooked knife and bhandha of amrita.
There's no sow's head. Her three eyes gaze into space.
Without a khatvanga, amid a mass of light,
She stands upon a lotus and sun seat
With her right leg straight and her left leg bent.
Then from your crown, the Karmapa comes before you,
Becoming Chakrasamvara in body,
Blue with three eyes and wrathful although smiling,
His hair in a topknot with a half moon and vajra.
He wears a tiger-skin skirt, fresh elephant hide,
And six bone ornaments. He blazes with fire.
His two hands make the dharmodaya mudra
Above his crown. He stands in a dance posture,
With his right leg extended and left bent.

Lucid Notes on the Visualizations

When you, the dakini, with your left hand,
Offer him amrita, the wisdom fire
Blazes forth. Light from you, the dakini,
Invites him into your bhaga and he sits
On a lotus and sun in your, the dakini's, heart.
If at this passage you are all alone,
Meditate forcefully on the vase breathing.
If not, intermediate breathing is sufficient.
The Heruka in your heart has a white OM̐
At his forehead, a red ĀḤ at his throat,
Blue HUM̐ at his heart, and yellow HOḤ at his navel.
Meditate that these are the essences of
All buddhas' body, speech, mind, and four wisdoms.
Chant three times the four lines from "Filling space"
To "Clearing stains, Trinlay Drakpo OM̐."

The Heruka in your heart, all buddhas in one,
Is the glorious Karmapa. With single-pointed,
Unbearable faith and dedication to him,
Recite a single time from "Exalted master"
Up through "All-knowing one, Karmapa KHYENNO."

Lucid Notes on the Visualizations

Recite KARMAPA KHYENNO as the approach.

When you recite “Protect all beings forever,”
The Karmapa in your heart melts into light.
The body, speech, and mind of the Karmapa
Inseparably merge into your own,
And you, the dakini, melt into light.
Then this dissolves in space just like a rainbow.

Observing nothing, practice mahamudra
And chant from “I supplicate . . .” to “and his sons,”
Making nonreferential dedications
That are completely pure of the three spheres.

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 shortest path of Secret Mantrayana.

There are two ways to make the aspiration,
“In all my births, may I serve Mikyö Dorje.”

Lucid Notes on the Visualizations

If you are reborn human, the emanations
Of the Karmapa will not end until
The end of the teachings of the thousand buddhas,
So this is a prayer to serve them as your gurus.

If you wish for rebirth in Sukhavati,
The actual Karmapa, Lokeshvara,
Dwells there as a disciple of Amitabha.
This is a prayer to serve him as your guru.
This point is made clear at the end of the prayer
Called “Making a Connection Is Enough.”

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
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.

Lucid Notes on the Visualizations

In meditation camps such as Yangri, Surri,
And Dratsang, there was a custom of reciting
These verses of prayer three sessions each day and each
night.

Three times—at evening, midnight, and 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.

Regarding the one to whom you supplicate—
You won't awaken praying to dogs or pigs.
Don't make a guru out of someone who's not.
It should be someone like Sangye Nyenpa, who is
A guru and comes as one, taught Mikyö Dorje.
The meaning of this is that the thirteen
Prophesied by the Shakyamuni Buddha
And given their names by Uddiyana Padma
From Dusum Khyenpa, the first, to Chöying Dorje,
Yeshe Dorje, Jangchup Dorje, and Dudul Dorje
Are actually Avalokiteshvara.

Lucid Notes on the Visualizations

There's no chance of there being any mistake—
Each predecessor leaves a letter that
Predicts where his successor will take birth.
When in retreat at the White Lake in Tsari,
By custom, the Karmapa will examine
While in meditation, and the predictions
Of the yidams and dakinis will be clear.
Therefore, all those who join this lineage,
Even if afterward they do not practice
True Dharma properly but just lie down
With their heads pointing in the guru's direction,
Will accomplish a great purpose, it is said.

To benefit monastics and disciples,
I, Raga Asya, made this short summary.
The scribe was Shenyen Tarchin. I confess
All contradictions and mistakes in it.

Because of this virtue, may everyone
Who sees, hears, remembers, or encounters this
Blaze with the wisdom of devotion mahamudra.

MAṄGALAM

Key Points and Main Topics of the Visualizations for the Four-Session Guru Yoga

Karmay Khenchen Rinchen Dargye

NAMO GURU VAJRADHĀRA KARMAKĀYA

The details of the visualizations for the *Four-Session* should be as in Karma Chakme’s manual. Here I shall only describe the key points and all the main topics.

The key points are all included in the four syllables, which should be combined with the main practice, vase breathing. Draw the breath in on “Filling space, Mikyö Dorje ĀḤ,” summoning like a hook. Fill on “Radiating light, Dorje Gawa HOḤ,” filling like a vase. Tighten or pack on “Blazing messenger, Yangchen Nupa HŪḤ,” tying it like a knot. Expel it on “Clearing stains, Trinlay Drakpo OM,” shooting it out like an arrow. It should have the fourfold pranayama—inhaling, filling, packing, and expelling.

The four syllables are the four kayas. OM (ॐ) is vajra body, the nirmanakaya; ĀḤ (ॐ) is vajra speech, the sambhogakaya; HŪḤ

Key Points and Main Topics

(𑖅) is vajra mind, the dharmakaya; and HOḤ (𑖇) is vajra wisdom, the svabhavikakaya.

When purified, the phase of dreaming is the sambhogakaya, the vajra speech, the syllables vaṃ (𑖆) and āḥ (𑖈), and among the four activities, the peaceful. When purified, the phase of lust and absorption is vajra wisdom, the great bliss kaya, the syllables MA (𑖂) and HOḤ (𑖇), and among the four activities, the enriching. When purified, the phase of deep sleep is the dharmakaya, the vajra mind, the syllables YA (𑖃) and HŪM (𑖅), and among the four activities, the magnetizing. When purified, the ordinary phase of waking is the nirmanakaya, the vajra body, the syllables E (𑖉) and OM (𑖀), and among the four activities, the wrathful.

OM (𑖀) is body, the nadis. ĀḤ (𑖈) is speech, the pranas. HŪM (𑖅) is mind, the bindus. HOḤ (𑖇) is wisdom.

Space means inner space, the central nadi. *Filling* is pervading. Mikyö Dorje means mahamudra, the empty form beyond destruction endowed with the greatest of all aspects. *Radiating light* means projecting the qualities of the marks, signs, and so forth. Dorje

Key Points and Main Topics

Gawa means the syllable HAM (ॐ) at the crown, the visarga is the a stroke at the navel, and the nada is the pure prana at the heart.

Second, to present just the main topics of the meditation: With NAMO GURU, first prostrate with great respect with body, speech, and mind. Then meditate that in the sky directly in front of the crown of your head is a red dakini, facing you, holding an acacia-wood damaru in her right hand and bhandha filled with amrita in her left. Her hair, which is shiny, black, and loose, covers her back, and her three eyes gaze into space. Meditate that swirling out from her is a crowd of white, yellow, red, green, blue, black, and multicolored dakinis who look like her, streaming like dust motes in sunlight. Above the red principal dakini's crown, as described in the text, is the guru, the Karmapa, whose kindness you have received.

Saying KYE! invoke the lama with fervent pangs of devotion and then supplicate the guru's body, speech, and mind. Due to this, white, red, and blue lights shine from the guru's three places.

Visualize that the buddhas and their offspring from the infinite realms in the ten directions, in the form of the guru Karmapa

Key Points and Main Topics

as you have visualized him or showing the palms of their hands and soles of their feet in the form called “The Blazing Glory of Blessings,” whichever is easier, come as if showering like rain and dissolve into the Karmapa above your crown. Do the invitation and descent of blessings with “KYE! As the guru ratna approaches . . .” and the following lines.

Then the dakinis dissolve one into another, condensing into seven dakinis. Think that merely being struck with their light cleanses the obscurations of the five poisons, violations of samaya, and misdeeds and obscurations from the three gates or five poisons in equal measure that are caught up in or stain your being, so that you are purified.

The other dakinis dissolve into the principal red dakini. Meditate that the principal dissolves into you, and you become Vajravarahi, red but with no sow’s head. Other than a garland of red flowers, you have no ornaments and no khatvanga. Your right hand holds a hooked knife and your left a skull cup filled with amrita. You are in the dance posture with your right leg bent and left leg straight.

Key Points and Main Topics

The Karmapa in the sky before you transforms into the solitary male Chakrasamvara. Visualizing yourself as Vajravarahi, give him amrita, which makes the wisdom fire flare up with a blaze. Meditate that he sits on a lotus and sun in your heart, visualizing yourself as Vajravarahi. Do vase breathing or hold the intermediate breath, which is no more than just tucking your chin slightly and extending your belly while internally pressing slightly. Visualize the four syllables—a white OM (ཨོཾ), red AH (ཨ) , blue HŪM (ཧཱུྃ), and yellow HOH (ཧཱེ) —in the Heruka’s four places.

“Exalted master” means that since he liberates the faithful from the ocean of samsara, he is the exalted master. He is exalted because he is able to produce or transmit the wisdoms of the four empowerments in the student’s being. “Lord of the four kayas” means that you conceive of him as being an actual buddha who has achieved mastery over the four karmas or four activities. In a state where the guru, your mind, and the buddha appear inseparable, recite KARMAPA KHYENNO and rest in equipoise.

The manner of resting is as described by the Great Rinpoche:

In the fresh mind of now,

Key Points and Main Topics

The empty essence is dharmakaya.

The clear nature is sambhogakaya.

The various appearances are nirmanakaya.

There's no buddha to be sought elsewhere.

Even meditating, don't meditate; rest in freshness.

Even looking, don't look; rest in freshness.

Even thinking, don't think; rest in freshness.

Even withdrawing, don't withdraw; rest in freshness.

Even distracted, don't be distracted; rest in freshness.

Let whatever occurs be. In freshness,

Naturally purified, it is like a clear ocean.

Bliss, clarity, and nonthought are spontaneously present.

As this says, whatever occurs, do not mentally alter that fresh essence of thought. When great meditators, resting in just that, extend the duration of their meditation, they are freed of any conception of meditation. Without any reference point and completely pacified, they directly see the thought-free wisdom of the path of seeing.

In this context, "Great Vajradhara with eight qualities" means:

Key Points and Main Topics

1. Mastery of the body: his body being adorned with clear and perfect marks and signs;
2. Mastery of speech: having the sixty traits of speech;
3. Mastery of mind: his mind seeing directly and vividly how everything is and its variety;
4. Mastery of miracles: having control over the three realms;
5. Mastery of traveling everywhere: going effortlessly to the locations of disciples who are present everywhere;
6. Mastery of place: always remaining in the mandala of great liberation;
7. Mastery of desire: enjoying without attachment the five sensory pleasures and disporting with the retinue of queens;
8. Mastery of retinue or mastery of qualities: being the principal one among all buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Key Points and Main Topics

“Shri Heruka who has the seven traits” means, according to Master Vageshvara Kirti, having the three kayas and seven traits:

(1) Complete enjoyments, (2) the embrace, (3) great bliss, (4) lack of nature, (5) Being filled with compassion, (6) continuous, and (7) unceasing.

“Shri Heruka” should be connected with the meaning of the four syllables, as described in the seventh chapter of the *First Book of Hevajra*:

ŚRĪ is nondual wisdom.

HE is emptiness of cause and so forth.

RU is being devoid of assembly.

KA is not remaining anywhere.

Shri is translated into Tibetan as *dpal*.

In *Chakrasamvara*, it is said:

HE is interdependence of causes and such.

RU is free of remaining, perishing, and combining.

Key Points and Main Topics

KA is not remaining in the two extremes.

From “Embodiment of compassion, khyenno” onward, generate fervent devotion and supplicate one-pointedly without letting the words and meaning become separate.

When you say, “A guru who is able / To protect all beings forever,” meditate that the Heruka in your heart—Karmapa in essence and Chakrasamvara in form—melts into light, and the guru Karmapa’s body, speech, and mind become inseparable from yours. Think that you, visualized as Vajravarahi, also melt into light like breath on a mirror, and rest in equipoise in a state without appearances, not focusing on anything. Recite from “I supplicate the exalted glorious guru” to “glorious Sangye Nyenpa and his sons.” These are the great key points for being accepted by the guru and for the teacher and disciples to become inseparable in realization.

While remaining within such a state of practice, recite the supplications and aspirations in their entirety. Or visualize yourself once again as the coemergent Chakrasamvara and the mother, meditate that your root guru is above your crown with the unified lineage up through Vajradhara in a column above your head,

Key Points and Main Topics

and recite, “I pray to the unequalled Dakpo Kagyu” For the simplest, it is also enough just to visualize your root guru, the Karmapa, above the crown of Chakrasamvara’s head.

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. Mind is vivid, the luminous dharmakaya. Not wavering even the slightest from the samadhi of self-aware suchness free of elaborations, engage in activities with the pride that you are the nature of the natural luminosity that appears unceasingly as Chakrasamvara and the mother. This is taking the yidam deity as the path, arising as the unified body.

According to the *Great Display of Ati Tantra*, the benefits of meditating on guru yoga are these:

Meditating on a hundred thousand deities

Key Points and Main Topics

Does not have even a hundred-thousandth of the merit
Of not turning your focus away from the guru's body.

A hundred trillion approaches, accomplishments, and
activities

Do not rival even a hundred-thousandth of the power
Of reciting three lines of supplication to the guru.

Abandoning diversions and meditating
For an aeon on the completion phase
Does not compare with even a twenty-thousandth
Of the merit of the guru appearing in your mind.

Meditating, praising, and contemplating the guru
Will definitely accomplish the result, buddhahood, at once.

As Master Padmasambhava said:

The guru who shows the definitive meaning
Is superior to all buddhas for you.
The guru who teaches the definitive meaning
Of secret mantra is all buddhas in actuality.

Key Points and Main Topics

It is well known that the Buddha Shakyamuni prophesied that the successive Karmapas, embodiments of the activity of all buddhas, would teach the mahamudra of definitive meaning as pointing out the dharmakaya, and that Uddiyana Padmasambhava gave them their names. Chokgyur Lingpa's revelation *The Summary of the Twenty-Five Sacred Sites* says, "There will be seven rebirths and a lineage of thirteen emanations." The last of the seven rebirths and first of the thirteen in the lineage of emanations is Mikyö Dorje. *The Four-Session Guru Yoga* he gave is extremely rich in blessings, a meditation that suffices on its own for all yogis who practice mahamudra and the six yogas.

During breaks in a retreat, Karmay Khenpo Duldzin wrote this for the bhikshu Karma Yeshe Sangpo of Lho Tsalgong to enhance his practice of devotional guru yoga as a complement to the visualizations written by the great practitioner Karma Chakme. May the students receive the blessings of Avalokiteshvara himself, the glorious Karmapa, in their beings, and, like lion cubs or garuda chicks, may their students become even greater, filling the entire earth. SARVA MAṄGALAM

Instructions on the Supplication “Granting the Great Relief of Fearlessness”

The Fifteenth Karmapa Khakhyap Dorje

The meaning of “I supplicate the mighty Dharma lord who grants the great relief of fearlessness” at the end of the prayer “Making a Connection Is Enough” is that all sentient beings are plagued by the fear and suffering of the lower realms. This is a supplication to the Victor who, through his activity of limitless compassion, grants us and others great relief: He protects us from not finding the path, which becomes the fear and suffering of the lower realms. He shields us from the wrong paths of extremists. He guards us from the lesser paths of the shravakas and pratyekabuddhas and places us on the Mahayana path of liberation, bringing us to the state of unexcelled enlightenment, the level of the sublime truth. This lord of Dharma is the embodiment of all gurus in the lineage of unity and has the great powers of the Karmapa’s qualities and activity. He is equal to the Buddha himself and even more kind than the Buddha. This is not a secret name or the like.

By the Fifteenth Karmapa at the request of Tulku Karma Jikme Dönyö Nyingpo Chödrakb.

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