

Wisdom Appearances

Instructions for Completion Stage Practice on Purity That has Always Been, Connected to the Demon-Taming Powerful and Fierce Dorje Drolö

By Dudjom Rinpoche

Homage to the great guru, Vajra Krodha Lokottaraye!

There are two parts to these instructions on the ever-pure completion stage, a profound commentary that is the life-force of practicing the unobstructed power of the extremely secret Duddul Wangdrak Dorje Drolö. The first part is to establish the foundation, peaceful-abiding or *śamatha*, as the preparation. The second part, which is the main practice, is to cultivate wisdom: further-seeing or *vipaśyanā*.

Establishing the Foundation: Śamatha

The root text says:

The profound stage of completion
is to concentrate breath-awareness
into the single red syllable HUNG
in the center of the heart and firmly focus there.

Take a comfortable seat in an isolated place that is free from the distractions of other people and noise. The key point related to body is to hold it straight in the correct seven-point posture of Vairocana, completely focusing on each and every aspect. The key point for speech is to breath naturally. The key point for mind is to sever thinking about the past, present, and future and not get mixed up in anything whatsoever, such as inviting thoughts of the future, remembering the past or analyzing the present. Rest the mind without meddling with it and without distraction. It is fine if it stays there. If, on the other hand, it doesn't, concentrate on a red HUNG syllable just the size it should be, visualized in the center of the heart. When the clarity of the image stands out, don't focus on it too strongly with your mind, but look directly into its vivid appearance and rest, naturally relaxing there.

If abiding there is difficult, put a syllable or stick or any suitable small or bigger thing in front of you. Without moving your eyes from that, focus your gaze without blinking your eyes. Don't get involved in making any distinctions whatsoever about good or bad states of mind. Don't think anything and don't try to meditate, but rest directly in the experience of that state itself. From there, no matter what thoughts arise, don't follow them. Merge your mind into the object of focus, and then thoughts will leave no ensuing traces. Maintain a state of pure non-conceptuality without getting distracted.

If your mind feels thick and heavy, lift your gaze. Tighten the body. Energize the mind. Bring alertness to awareness and pay attention one-pointedly. If your mind is active and over-excited, lower your gaze. Relax your posture. Rest naturally, relaxing from deep inside.

Likewise, you can focus on strong sounds, smells and so on. You can also follow the three phases of breathing: inhalation, exhalation, and resting, breathing naturally and settling down by

relaxing without thinking anything at all but with a slight consciousness of breathing. Or, you can rest your mind in its immediate state without any particular focal point. Placement in any one of these is acceptable.

Initially, you might think that thoughts are increasing through meditation. However, don't judge your practice. Rather, extend the continuity of the meditation, by and by, thoughts will settle down, and you will feel physically and mentally well. When you can rest single-pointedly in a non-conceptual state such that you feel you cannot, or don't want, to leave, then this is a sign of becoming familiar with *samatha* meditation.

The Main Part of Cultivating Wisdom: Vipāśyanā

The instructions for cultivating wisdom through vipāśyanā, which is the main practice, have four topics: coming to a definitive decision by the view, internalizing this through meditation, sustaining the continuity of the view through conduct, and actualizing the result. The first part has three further subdivisions: 1. making a determination about external perceived objects, 2. making a determination about the internal perceiving mind, and 3. identifying the view of the fundamental nature of reality.

Coming to a definitive decision by the view

1. Making a determination about external perceived objects

The root text says:

Demons, obstructing forces,
malicious and evil spirits
all are simply appearances of mind.

Although all that appears to us and to others as the world and its contents, illustrated by what we label obstacles and hindrances, seem to be real and truly existent, ultimately they are nothing more than the confused appearances of our own minds. Phenomena appear, but they do not truly exist. Like the misleading illusions of a conjurer or dreams, they seem real but are not. We should see them as insubstantial and elusive. Furthermore, other than our imputation of labels upon what we perceive, the nature of appearances is beyond being objects that exist, don't exist or any such limitations. So, in actuality what we perceive is merely illusions that have no reference point. All that appears can be established as the same, by wisdom that experiences everything to be self-appearances, impartial and illusory.

2. Making a determination about the internal perceiving mind

The root text says:

The mind has no characteristics to identify.

Position your body in the seven-pointed posture of Vairocana. Let the breath be natural. Don't hold the mind too tightly nor too loosely. Without doing anything to the mind at all, remain in fresh uncontrived awareness. Look directly into the essence of mind itself, by turning your attention inward. Looking in that way, a natural clarity arises that is free from all limits of thought. It is beyond duality, free from perceived objects and a perceiving mind, from what is seen and the

one who sees, from what is experienced and one who experiences, from subject and object. Right there, rest in evenness for a moment without sullyng it by fabricating or changing anything. That is how practitioners endowed with the highest capacity meditate: placement anointed with awareness.

The minds of ordinary individuals will be stirred up by thinking. So, since it will be harder for them to recognize this, they should seek the mind by pursuing awareness all by itself. When thinking twists and turns and pops in and out, first of all look into where it originates. Then examine where thinking abides in the present, and then look into where it finally ceases. Don't stop there. Continue by asking, "Who is awakened as Buddha?" "Who wanders in existence?" "Who is the agent of joy and pain?" If you think it is the mind, then does that mind have a beginning, middle and end? Is the mind itself an real or unreal? If you think it is real, what is its shape and color? If you think it is unreal, is it completely nothing or how is it? Ask yourself again and again and look into the mind without losing track of what you are doing.

Saying that mind is something real like this or that is solidifying it by apprehending it to truly exist. Saying that it exists as empty nothingness is just a guess. Not having found anything, you might think there is something that has been non-existent from the beginning. You might think there is something that is beyond existing that you have not found. If you are still not sure, then continue to search and question. You will see that there is nothing whatsoever to see: nothing to look at and no looking, nothing to see and no one seeing. Having searched and analyzed, finding nothing at all is similar to not seeing anything when looking into the space of the sky. There is no essence to identify. When naked awareness, empty, luminous and beyond any object dawns fully exposed, inexpressible, inconceivable, and unfathomable, the instructions have been fully understood.

3. Identifying the view of the fundamental nature of reality

The root text says:

The Ultimate Drolö of empty luminosity is not searched for elsewhere.
It is naked self-occurring awareness itself.
Certainty is found in this great sovereign encompassing the entirety of
samsara and enlightenment, the naturally occurring state.

The naturally empty essence of mind has always and only ever been free from dualistic concepts about its characteristics. This primordially pure essence in its natural state is beyond words, concepts, and their expression. The radiance of its clarity, the natural unobstructed power of unceasing wisdom, is spontaneously present as the great all-encompassing sovereign of the whole of samsara and enlightenment. The essence and its clarity have always been indivisible. Their natural way of being is as an uncompounded unity. Naturally abiding in naked self-occurring wisdom, pure from the beginning, is known as the wisdom that realizes the nature of reality. This is the view of the Great Perfection, and it totally transcends ordinary mind. Realization is actualized through recognizing this essence exactly as it is.

The practice of meditation

The second topic is on gaining familiarity, the way to practice.

The root text says:

Present knowingness –
when the past has ceased and the future not arisen –
is naked empty awareness, taken as the path.

Dharmakāya is not other than this great self-occurring empty lucid awareness. It is beyond ordinary mind, met as your own nature when past thoughts and memories have ceased and future ones have not yet arisen, and you do not do anything to contrive or adjust the instant of present knowingness. It is natural ordinary consciousness that is unsullied by past, present and future thoughts, “the fourth part without the three.” You must decide on this alone: that there is not a speck of any other meditation besides settling down into this natural state of awareness itself.

Have confidence that whatever arises in the mind is the panoply of dharmakāya: thinking immediately becoming liberated within naked empty awareness, beyond ordinary mind. Awareness is placed freely within a sky-like sphere, limitless, by relaxing at ease. At that time, objects of the six consciousnesses appear but there is no fixation, only distinct naked self-lucidity. Internally, within the mind, there is no engagement with concept and analysis, and thoughts are left in natural purity nakedly exposed to dissolve by themselves. Rest naturally in your own place between consciousness and its objects, uninterruptedly without getting entrapped by antidotes and unaffected by positive and negative objects. Don not spoil this by fixation. Without getting involved in intellectualizing what to avoid and correct, sustain awareness’s aspects of vivid presence and brilliance, nakedly and unimpededly within the immediate recognition that this is the special feature of the Great Perfection.

Sustaining the continuity of the view through conduct

The third topic is sustaining the continuity of the practice through conduct.

The root text says:

Stability is obtained through intimate familiarity in this manner.

In meditative equipoise, you are spaciously relaxed in the natural clarity without sullyng it by fixation upon and attachment to the wisdom of empty awareness laid bare. In the post meditation period, you have resolve that all phenomena are like illusory displays of confusion or like dreams and there is no fixation upon these lucid empty appearances. By taking that resolve as the path, meditation and post-meditation mix, becoming indivisible. There, whatever arises becomes liberated by itself, and then thinking dawns as a support for the meditation.

On the other hand, if thinking is bothersome, look directly into whatever thoughts are moving and like waves dissolving back into water, they fade without a trace. Having come to a decision that thinking has no foundation or basis, sustaining the practice becomes easier and more straight-forward.

In brief, without falling prey to wandering about in bewilderment throughout the activities of life, train in the yoga of remaining in non-distraction and non-fixation continuously, like a flowing river, and bring familiarity with the practice to completion.

How to actualize the result

The fourth topic concerns actualization of the result.
The root text says:

Overpowering all ordinary phenomena,
the glorious Heruka is actualized.

You own awareness is the spontaneously present essence of Buddhahood that from the beginning has never been confused. It has become obscured by temporary confused thinking that believes appearances are real. Trying to practice something other than this awareness is what traps us. Now, through the great kindness of the master, you have been introduced to the natural face of dharmakāya that dwells within. Sustaining realization of its being liberated from the start through relaxing at ease actualizes this original nature just exactly as it is, without striving to attain something new. This is called the result. To find freedom from accomplishing this quality of the blood-drinking Heruka, the sovereign that pervades all samsara and enlightenment, is to manifest the spontaneously present infinite wisdom activity of effortlessness.

Many students such as the crazy teacher Tsewang Paljor and others who are interested in following this path requested me, and so I, Jigdral Yeshe Dorje composed something brief primarily to be easy to understand and to practice, in the finger-pointing style of direct oral instructions.

Translated by Christina Monson, 2019